

The Impact of the United Nations Peacekeeping on Armed Conflict Resolution in South Sudan

Peter Chol Alim Jook¹, Dr. Jacob Dut Chol Riak^{*2}

¹PhD Candidate, Department of Political Science. School of Social and Economic Studies. University of Juba

²Senior Researcher and Associate Professor. Department of Political Science. School of Social and Economic Studies. Director (Dean), Institute of Japanese Studies. University of Juba

***Corresponding author:** Dr. Jacob Dut Chol Riak, Email: dutsenior@yahoo.com

Citation: Jook, PCA and Riak, JDC. (2026). The Impact of the United Nations Peacekeeping on Armed Conflict Resolution in South Sudan. *J Int Scient Re Rep: JISRR-104*. 2(1):1-12.

Received Date: 15 Sep, 2026; **Accepted Date:** 25 Sep, 2026; **Published Date:** 30 Sep, 2026

Abstract

This study examines the role of United Nations diplomatic interventions—mediation, negotiation, peacekeeping and sanctions—in addressing armed conflict in South Sudan. Guided by realism and liberal institutionalism theories. Liberal institutionalism places greater emphasis on the ability of institutions to encourage cooperation. Realism takes a more cautious position. Morgenthau (1948) argues that international politics is strongly influenced by power and national interests. It considers how power relations among states shape UN interventions and their contribution to conflict resolution. The study used an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design. Data were collected from 384 stakeholders in Upper Nile, Jonglei and Central Equatoria states through questionnaires, interviews, document analysis and field observation. Findings show that UN peacekeeping was generally viewed as moderately to highly effective, particularly in protecting displaced populations and providing humanitarian assistance. However, respondents were less satisfied with the UN's ability to achieve lasting political settlements. Principal component analysis identified four broad areas of conflict resolution—political, economic, armed and ethnic—accounting for 57.57% of the variance. Garrett ranking results also revealed a continuing gap between the UN's humanitarian achievements and its political and security outcomes. Respondents called for stronger mediation, greater accountability, including progress towards the proposed hybrid court, and greater local involvement in peace processes. The study concludes that UN diplomacy remains important in South Sudan but is constrained by political and institutional limitations. It recommends a more locally grounded and conflict-sensitive approach to diplomacy and peacebuilding.

Keywords: United Nations, Peacekeeping, Armed Conflict Resolution, South Sudan

1. Introduction

The long history of the African continent is characterized by diverse forms of strife. Before, during, and after colonial rule, communities across the continent experienced different forms of conflict and confrontation. During pre-colonial times, conflicts arose from internal uprisings within kingdoms, slave raiding, and competition for influence and resources. Ethnic rivalries, disputes over fertile territories, cattle raiding and retaliatory violence after the killing of community members also contributed to these conflicts (Bujra, 2002). During the colonial era, nature of conflict shifted toward resistance against imperial domination. Rationalized by African communities and emerging nationalists group fighting to oppose foreign control. With time, these struggles developed into organized liberation wars. Their main aim was to secure independence from colonial rule. Consisting of 193 member states, the United Nations (UN) is a global intergovernmental organization. The UN is mandated to promote human rights, maintain international peace and security, foster international cooperation, and provide humanitarian assistance. Diplomacy is principal to the UN peace and security mandate. It serves as an important means of preventing, managing, and resolving conflicts among and within states.

Chapter VI, Article 33 of the United Nations Charter establishes the principal legal foundation for the United Nations' peaceful settlement of international disputes. Article 33(1) requires

parties to a dispute whose continuation is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security to seek a solution through peaceful means (United Nations, 1945, Art. 33(1)). The provision identifies several mechanisms through which disputes may be resolved, including negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, and resort to regional agencies or arrangements. It also permits parties to employ other peaceful means of their own choice (United Nations, 1945, Art. 33(1)). This provision reflects the Charter's emphasis on the peaceful and consensual management of international disputes and establishes dialogue and cooperation as important instruments for preventing disputes from escalating into threats to international peace and security (White, 2015). Article 33(2) further provides that the Security Council may, where it considers necessary, call upon the parties to settle their dispute by such means (United Nations, 1945, Art. 33(2)). Consequently, negotiation and mediation have become important diplomatic instruments in UN conflict management, enabling the organization and its representatives to facilitate communication between conflicting parties, support confidence-building, and encourage the development of mutually acceptable settlements (Bercovitch & Gartner, 2006; United Nations, 2012).

Nevertheless, the changing nature of contemporary conflicts has required the United Nations to employ diplomatic and peace-and-security instruments beyond the traditional peaceful-settlement mechanisms associated with Chapter VI. Where peaceful means are unsuccessful, or where a situation

constitutes a threat to international peace and security, the Security Council may adopt measures under Chapter VII of the Charter (United Nations, 1945, Arts. 39–42). In practice, the United Nations has also developed peacekeeping operations as an important instrument of conflict management, although traditional peacekeeping is not expressly provided for as a distinct mechanism in the Charter (United Nations Peacekeeping, 2008). UN peacekeeping operations have evolved to perform functions including the protection of civilians, support for the implementation of peace agreements, monitoring of ceasefires, and assistance in creating conditions conducive to political dialogue and longer-term peace (United Nations Peacekeeping, 2008; United Nations, 2023). Researchers suggest that successful conflict resolution frequently depends on strategic combination and sequencing of different diplomatic instruments. It is less likely to depend on a single intervention mechanism (Bercovitch & Kadayifci-Orellana, 2009; Paris, 2014). In South Sudan, these diplomatic instruments have been employed in different combinations to address political, military, ethnic, and resource-based conflicts. This makes them suitable indicators for evaluating the effectiveness of the UN diplomacy in conflict resolution.

In an anarchic international system, realism is a dominant perspective that emphasizes national interests, state sovereignty, and power politics (Morgenthau, 1948). The theory is based on fundamental tenets of realism. They include states who are the main players in world politics, there is no central authority in the international system (anarchy), and nations act largely for their own self-interest, which is security and survival (Waltz, 1979). According to realists, international institutions, which include the UN, operate within that power-driven system. Their actions, therefore, reflect interest of powerful states rather than of neutral arbiters seeking global peace (Mearsheimer, 2001). The theory rests on key fundamental postulates: states as primary actors and are the principal units in global politics, operating in an anarchic international system lacking central authority (Waltz, 1979); pursuit of power: to secure their existence and further their national interests, states always aim to gain, hold and exhibit power (Mearsheimer, 2001); self-help system: states cannot rely on international organizations for security when there is no valid worldwide authority (Waltz, 1979); Security dilemma: when governments take steps to improve their security, other states frequently feel threatened, which feeds a vicious cycle of rivalry and mistrust (Jervis, 1978). For states to keep power and attain hegemonism, they develop alliances and counter-alliances with other states in the international system, (Bull, 2012).

When applied to the United Nations diplomacy in South Sudan, realist theory helps explain how the United Nations interventions through mediation, peacekeeping, sanctions, and negotiations are influenced by the strategic interests of powerful member states and regional bodies such as the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (Apuuli, 2015). For instance, the UN peacekeeping forces deployment aligns with the realist idea of maintaining international order. The broader security interest of the international community is served when further instability is prevented. Bellamy and Williams (2010) observe that peacekeeping missions in Africa must operate within complex internal political environments. They must work in situations surrounded by fragile institutions. Initially, the UN missions in South Sudan focused on state building and institutional support. As violence intensified across the country, especially with the creation of Protection of Civilian

sites, its priorities shifted. The attention was now on protecting civilians, emergency humanitarian assistance, and the creation of safe zones. Johnstone (2014) explores the successes and limitations of these interventions (Johnstone, 2014). In his study, he notes that while the mission helped save lives, it faces challenges including having inadequate resources and a hostile environment.

Peacekeeping is defined by Dag Hammarskjöld and Canadian Lester B. Pearson as principles enshrined and enforced by the United Nations Security Council, the United Nations Security Council upholds and enforces several core principles when deploying peacekeeping missions (Rana, 1994). These include obtaining the consent of the conflicting parties for the establishment of a mission, refraining from the use of force except in cases of self-defense, relying on voluntary contributions of personnel from smaller or neutral countries, maintaining impartiality, and ensuring that peacekeeping operations are under the authority of the United Nations' Secretary-General. In the case of South Sudan, the United Nations deployed peacekeeping forces to protect civilians and maintain stability following requests from both the government and the warring parties. These interventions, particularly after the outbreaks of conflict in 2013 and 2016, were aimed at supporting peace and serving as mechanisms for conflict resolution. The United Nations peacekeeping is operationalized as protection of civilians, reporting on cease fire violations, humanitarian and financial assistance as efforts in conflict resolution in South Sudan.

2. The Statement of the Problem

The rationale for this study is based on South Sudan's documented patterns of conflict and theoretical gaps in the scholarship on conflict resolution. These gaps are especially evident in studies of post-independence and fragile states. There is a considerable body of research examining UN peacekeeping and mediation efforts in established post-civil war environments. However, there is comparatively limited systematic assessment or empirical work on the extensive range of the UN diplomatic strategies in newly formed states. The instruments in question include mediation and negotiation, peacekeeping missions, targeted/individualized sanctions, and humanitarian diplomacy. South Sudan constitutes an important case to address this gap. It is the world's youngest nation and up to date, a top country most affected by persistent conflict. These unique institutional and political circumstances provide an important context for examining how different UN diplomatic interventions are implemented. These dynamics are yet to be fully theorized or empirically examined by existing literature.

Previous documentation proves that peace efforts in South Sudan have been analyzed separately. Scholars have examined the UNMISS's civilian protection mandate, the peace process facilitated by IGAD, or adherence to sanctions. Rarely has there been an integrated assessment to determine how they influence, reinforce, or constrain one another. With such fragmentation in the academic record, policymakers are left lacking empirically grounded framework. Therefore, sequencing and use of diplomatic measures in response to South Sudan's changing conflict environment remains challenging. Absence of systematic and evidence-informed analysis is representative of the wide gap in both literature and conflict management policy frameworks. This study, therefore, makes a bilateral contribution. First, it advances the scholarly grasp of how

international diplomatic instruments perform in fragile, post-independence environments. These environments are characterized by severely constrained institutional capacity. They also have elite incentive structures that actively resist stabilization. Second, it generates evidence-based guidance for policymakers and UN practitioners seeking to design more adaptive, conflict-sensitive, and structurally responsive diplomatic strategies not only for South Sudan, but as a transferable model for analogous fragile state contexts across the Global South.

3. Objective

To discuss the extent and effectiveness of the United Nations' peacekeeping in resolving armed conflict in South Sudan.

4. Literature Review

4.1 Conceptualizing United Nations Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution

International conflict management studies emphasize that diplomacy is the main channel through which international organisations use in the prevention and management of armed conflict. While diplomacy has traditionally denoted communication, negotiation and bargaining between states, its contemporary application within the United Nations (UN) system goes beyond and includes; mediation, peacekeeping, sanctions, humanitarian engagement and support for political settlements. According to Bercovitch (1991) international mediation cannot be understood merely as the intervention of a neutral third party; its outcomes are shaped by the characteristics of the conflict, the disputing parties, the mediator, and the strategies employed. Effectiveness, in other words, cannot be assessed independently of the surrounding political and security environment. The UN Charter provides the legal basis for peaceful settlement. Article 33 requires parties to disputes that may threaten international peace and security to seek solutions through negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement or regional arrangements (United Nations, 1945). Peaceful settlement is therefore central to the UN system. In practice, however, diplomacy faces difficulties when conflict parties have little interest in compromise or when domestic and external actors have strong interests in the continuation of violence. For this reason, the UN has developed a wider range of instruments, including peacekeeping and sanctions. These measures are not necessarily alternatives to diplomacy. Dorussen (2022) argues that mediation and peacekeeping can support each other. Peacekeeping can reduce violence and create conditions in which negotiations are possible, while mediation deals with the political disagreements between the parties. Sanctions may also be used to increase the cost of continued violence or failure to implement an agreement.

4.2. Theoretical Perspectives on UN Diplomacy

Two major theoretical perspectives help explain the role of international organisations in conflict resolution: liberal institutionalism and realism. Liberal institutionalism places greater emphasis on the ability of institutions to encourage cooperation. International organisations provide forums where states can negotiate, exchange information and monitor agreements. Peacekeeping missions can also help parties maintain cooperation by monitoring ceasefires and reducing the risk of renewed fighting.

Realism takes a more cautious position. Morgenthau (1948) argues that international politics is strongly influenced by power and national interests. Waltz (1979) describes the international

system as anarchic because there is no central authority above sovereign states capable of consistently enforcing international rules. Mearsheimer (2001) similarly argues that international institutions tend to reflect the existing distribution of power rather than fundamentally changing it. The realist perspective is particularly useful in the case of South Sudan. The UN may have a formal mandate to support peace, but its ability to influence political actors is not unlimited. Decisions on sanctions, peacekeeping mandates and other measures are made within a political system in which powerful states have considerable influence. The interests of these states can therefore affect the way international interventions are designed and implemented. Apuuli (2015) also draws attention to the influence of regional and international political interests in responses to conflicts in Africa. From this perspective, it is not enough to examine what the UN is formally authorised to do. It is also necessary to consider the political environment in which it operates, including the interests of powerful states, regional actors and the willingness of local parties to cooperate. Realism, therefore, does not mean that international organisations are ineffective. Rather, it helps explain why their effectiveness varies. Where there is political support and cooperation from the main actors, UN interventions may have greater impact. Where these conditions are absent, substantial international involvement may still fail to produce lasting peace. This provides an important basis for examining the mixed record of UN diplomacy in South Sudan.

4.3. Mediation as an Instrument of UN Diplomacy

Mediation involves a third party assisting conflicting parties to reach an acceptable settlement. It is one of the most widely used approaches in international conflict resolution. Bercovitch (1991) shows that its outcome depends on factors such as the intensity of the conflict, the relationship between the parties, the mediator and the methods used. Timing also matters. When mediation begins before a conflict has become highly violent, there may still be room for compromise. Once fighting has intensified, however, the parties may believe that they can achieve more through continued military action. In other situations, a military stalemate can encourage the parties to consider negotiation.

Bercovitch and Gartner (2006) further emphasise the importance of the mediator's credibility, leverage and choice of strategy. Depending on the circumstances, a mediator may facilitate communication, help establish procedures, persuade the parties, offer guarantees or apply pressure. South Sudan provides a useful example of the difficulties involved. Following the outbreak of civil war in December 2013, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) became a central actor in the mediation process. The UN, African Union and other international actors were also involved. Although IGAD was not a UN institution, its mediation formed part of a broader international diplomatic effort. Verjee (2020) shows that the different actors involved did not always have the same understanding of what the peace process should achieve.

The problem did not end when agreements were reached. Bercovitch and Simpson (2010) identify weak implementation arrangements, distrust, weak institutions and incentives for parties to abandon agreements as common reasons why peace agreements fail. South Sudan reflects many of these problems. The 2015 Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict was followed by renewed fighting, while implementation of the 2018 Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) has remained slow. Joshi

(2025) reports that implementation had reached approximately 50 per cent by the end of 2023, with important governance and institutional reforms still delayed. The implication is clear: South Sudan's continuing conflict cannot simply be explained by a lack of mediation. The difficulty lies in turning negotiated commitments into sustained political action.

4.4. Negotiation and the Search for Political Settlement

Negotiation involves direct discussion and bargaining between parties that have competing interests. In armed conflicts, these disagreements may concern political power, territory, control of resources or the distribution of government positions. Negotiation is therefore an important part of efforts to achieve a political settlement. An agreement to stop fighting, by itself, may not be enough. Doyle and Sambanis (2006) argue that international interventions are more likely to support sustainable peace when they are suited to the circumstances of the conflict and have adequate resources and institutional support. Parties also need credible arrangements for dealing with security concerns and sharing political authority. This has been a continuing problem in South Sudan. Peace processes involving national political actors, IGAD, the African Union and the UN have produced agreements, but implementation has often been delayed. Nyuon (2024) argues that elite bargaining has played an important role in the implementation of R-ARCSS. Political and military elites have concentrated heavily on power-sharing, while wider institutional reform and public accountability have received less attention. The literature therefore suggests that negotiation should not be judged only by whether an agreement is signed. Its implementation is equally important. A settlement that reduces fighting but leaves local grievances, competition over resources, weak institutions and fragmented security arrangements unresolved may only provide a temporary reduction in conflict rather than lasting peace.

4.5. UN Peacekeeping and Conflict Resolution

Peacekeeping is one of the most visible forms of UN involvement in armed conflict. Although it is not expressly established as a separate mechanism in the UN Charter, it has developed into a major instrument for maintaining peace and supporting political processes. Earlier peacekeeping operations were largely based on consent, impartiality and limited use of force. Modern missions have much broader responsibilities, including civilian protection, human rights, institutional support and assistance to political transitions. Research generally indicates that peacekeeping can reduce the risk of renewed armed conflict. Doyle and Sambanis (2006) find that UN peace operations can support peacebuilding when missions have suitable mandates and sufficient resources. Peacekeeping tends to work better where there is already an agreement that can be monitored and supported. It becomes more difficult when peacekeepers are deployed while major fighting is still taking place and the parties have little interest in negotiation.

These conditions are evident in South Sudan. UNMISS was established following independence in 2011, and its responsibilities changed significantly after the outbreak of civil war in December 2013. Day and Hunt (2014) describe the difficulties the mission faced in balancing support for the government, civilian protection and political neutrality. Civilian protection has received particular attention. Murphy (2017) notes that Protection of Civilians sites provided refuge for thousands of displaced people. This was an important humanitarian contribution, although many civilians outside these sites remained exposed to violence. Frafjord Johnson

(2018) also identifies problems involving resources, deployment and operational support. The evidence therefore gives a mixed picture of UNMISS. The mission has made meaningful contributions to protecting civilians and supporting humanitarian activities, but it has faced considerable difficulty in changing the political and structural conditions that sustain conflict. UN peacekeeping should consequently be assessed on several dimensions rather than simply on whether violence has ended.

4.6. UN Sanctions and Coercive Diplomacy

Sanctions provide the UN with a more coercive means of influencing conflict parties. Under Article 41 of the UN Charter, the Security Council can impose measures that do not involve military force, including economic and diplomatic restrictions (United Nations, 1945). The intention is normally to influence behavior by increasing the cost of continued non-compliance.

There is considerable debate about whether sanctions achieve this purpose. Cortright and Lopez (2000) argue that sanctions can influence political behavior under certain conditions, although their effectiveness varies. Eriksson and Wallenstein (2015) view sanctions as political instruments whose impact is influenced by the structure of the UN system and the interests of member states.

Literature distinguishes between comprehensive sanctions and targeted sanctions. Targeted measures focus on individuals, military actors, financial assets or commodities to limit harm to the wider population. Tostensen and Bull (2002), however, caution that even targeted sanctions face political and practical problems.

In South Sudan, sanctions have included travel bans, asset freezes and arms-related restrictions against individuals associated with the conflict. Their impact depends partly on whether states and regional actors are willing and able to enforce them. Targeted individuals may also find alternative political and economic networks.

Sanctions may create pressure without immediately changing behavior. In some circumstances they can encourage negotiations, while in others they may make parties less willing to compromise. Their contribution to conflict resolution therefore needs to be considered together with the political circumstances in which they are applied.

4.7. Complementarity and Sequencing of UN Diplomatic Instruments

Earlier studies often examined mediation, peacekeeping and sanctions separately. More recent work gives greater attention to the way these instruments interact. Dorussen (2022), for example, argues that peacekeeping can reduce violence and create room for mediation, while mediation addresses the political disagreements that lie behind the conflict. The order in which interventions are used can also make a difference. Negotiations conducted in an environment of intense insecurity may fail because the parties do not believe that an agreement will be respected. On the other hand, peacekeeping without a credible political process can become focused mainly on containing violence. Doyle and Sambanis (2006) emphasize the importance of suitable mandates, adequate resources, institutional support and political commitment. In South Sudan, this suggests that the effectiveness of mediation, negotiation, peacekeeping and sanctions cannot be fully understood by examining each instrument separately.

4.8. Local Ownership and the Sustainability of Peace

The importance of local ownership has received increasing attention in peacebuilding research. Internationally designed interventions may have limited results when they do not sufficiently reflect local political and social realities. Von Billerbeck (2016) notes that although international organizations frequently describe local ownership as important for legitimate and sustainable peace, local actors do not always have meaningful influence over peace processes. This concern is especially relevant in South Sudan. Conflict occurs at different levels. National political struggles interact with disputes involving ethnicity, land, cattle, natural resources and local authority. A settlement negotiated mainly among national political elites may therefore leave many local sources of violence unresolved. Kalyvas (2006) shows that civil-war violence is shaped by local social and political relationships as well as national political objectives. This means that national-level negotiations cannot necessarily deal with all the factors that keep local violence going.

4.9. Empirical Literature on UN Diplomacy in South Sudan

The literature presents neither a complete success nor a complete failure of UN intervention in South Sudan. UNMISS has contributed to civilian protection, humanitarian assistance, human rights monitoring and support for political engagement. Its Protection of Civilians sites have been particularly important for displaced populations, while the mission has continued to support the peace process. Limitations include inadequate resources, political constraints and difficulties protecting civilians outside UN facilities. The mission has also had to balance cooperation with the government against the need to respond to government actions and human rights concerns. These difficulties are consistent with the realist argument that formal international authority is constrained by political realities. The record of peace agreements presents a similar pattern. South Sudan has received extensive international mediation and negotiation, yet implementation remains incomplete. Joshi (2025) reports that approximately half of the R-ARCSS provisions had been implemented by the end of 2023, with important governance and institutional reforms still delayed. Nyuon (2025) identifies political economy, institutional capacity and elite bargaining as important obstacles to implementation.

5. Methodology

Pragmatic philosophy and mixed methods were appropriate because armed conflict involves both measurable outcomes, such as reductions in violence, civilian casualties, displacement, and ceasefire violations, and subjective experiences of communities and institutions affected by conflict. An explanatory sequential mixed-methods design was employed, whereby quantitative data were collected and analyzed first to establish patterns in the effectiveness of the United Nations peacekeeping operations, followed by qualitative data to provide deeper explanations of the quantitative findings. Owing to this approach, an integration of stakeholder perspectives was used.

Therefore, this provided a comprehensive evaluation of peacekeeping effectiveness.

The study focused on regions that have experienced recurrent armed conflict and sustained UN peace-keeping interventions. The regions were Upper Nile, Jonglei, and Central Equatoria states. The target population consisted of stakeholders that were directly affected by or involved in armed conflict and consequent peacekeeping operations. They included government representatives, the United Nations peacekeepers and officials, security personnel, humanitarian agencies, civil society organizations, political actors, community representatives, youth and women leaders, conflict-affected civilians and traditional leaders. Using a stratified random sampling, a sample of 384 respondents was selected. The selection process ensured adequate representation in different stakeholder groups. Purposive sampling was also used. It helped identify key informants with specialized knowledge of conflict mediation, peacekeeping operations, civilian protection, and security management.

The quantitative data was obtained using structured questionnaires containing closed-ended Likert-scale items. These items measured perceptions of the effectiveness of the UN peacekeeping in resolving armed conflicts. The indicators included civilian protection, support for disarmament, protection of humanitarian corridors, prevention of armed violence, and facilitation of humanitarian access. Also among the indicators were security stabilization, ceasefire monitoring, and cooperation with national and local security institutions. The study obtained qualitative data using semi-structured interviews, analysis of relevant documents, and direct field observations.

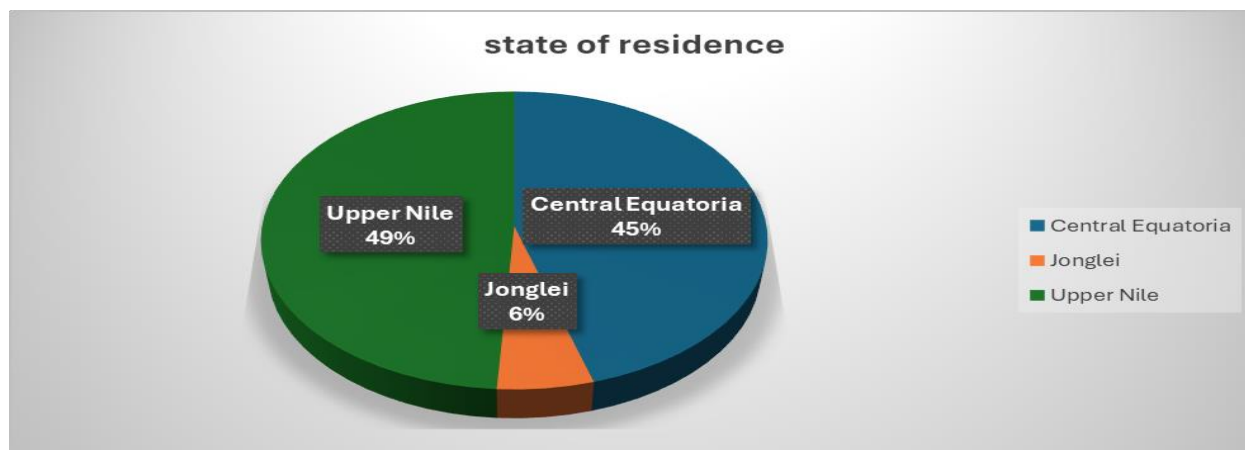
Participants took part voluntarily, and all participants provided informed consent. To protect participants from potential physical, psychological, or political harm associated with discussing armed conflict confidentiality was maintained. Data were securely stored, and the participants' identities were anonymized throughout the research process. The reliability of the research instrument was established. This was done through a pilot study involving approximately 10% of the sample. Cronbach's Alpha was used to assess internal consistency. Content validity was established through expert review. To further enhanced the validity and trustworthiness of the study findings, methodological triangulation involving questionnaires, interviews, observations, and documentary evidence was used.

6. Findings

6.1. State of Residence

The participants state of residence is an important contextual variable in conflict studies. This is due to the significant dissimilarities in conflict intensity and peacebuilding experiences across regions of South Sudan. Levels of political contestation, ethnic violence, displacement, and humanitarian intervention have varied across different states in the country. Understanding respondents' geographic distribution, therefore, assists the study to contextualize their perceptions of the UN mediation, sanctions, peacekeeping, and negotiations.

Figure 5.1: Respondents' State of Residence.



From the figure above, the results indicate that most respondents reside in Upper Nile (49.0%). Following closely by Central Equatoria with (45.4%). Jonglei accounts for 5.6% of the sample.

Historically, Upper Nile region has experienced intense armed confrontations and ethnic tensions. This particularly applies during the civil war period. Therefore, respondents from the region are likely to have direct experience of displacement, ceasefire violations, and peacekeeping operations. Central Equatoria, and its capital Juba, has been a primary setting for political dialogue and diplomatic negotiations. This may have shaped respondents' views of mediation efforts and administrative reforms.

a. The United Nations' Peacekeeping in Armed Conflict Resolution

Findings on the degree and impact of the UN peacekeeping in managing armed conflict in South Sudan are presented in this section. In the analysis, we addressed the research question: How effective are the UN peacekeeping operations in addressing armed conflict in South Sudan? Stronger agreement and greater perceived effectiveness are indicated by Lower mean scores. The peacekeeping strategies evaluated align with the operational authority of the UNMISS. The mission was constituted under the UN Security Council authority to promote stability in South Sudan.

Table 6.2: The United Nations' Peacekeeping in Armed Conflict Resolution.

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. D
The UN protection of civilians is effectively high in South Sudan.	249	2.36	1.472
The United Nations reporting on ceasefire violations is effectively high in South Sudan	249	2.45	1.391
The United Nations humanitarian assistance is effectively high in South Sudan.	248	2.18	1.366
The United Nations financial assistance in armed conflict resolution is effectively high in South Sudan.	249	2.73	1.518
Valid N (listwise)	248		

Descriptive statistics (Valid N = 249) indicate mean values varying from 2.18 to 2.73. These results suggest general agreement that the UN peacekeeping has proven effective in addressing armed conflict. "The UN humanitarian assistance to people displaced in armed conflict is effectively high in South Sudan," registered the lowest mean score (M = 2.18, SD = 1.366). This implies that humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons are perceived as the most effective dimension of UN peacekeeping. Protection of civilians affected by armed conflict registered a mean of 2.36 (SD = 1.472). This indicates strong agreement that measures to protect civilians play a significant role in alleviating armed conflict.

6.3. Factor Analysis of the United Nations Diplomatic Interventions in Conflict Resolution

6.3.1 Preliminary Diagnostics

The Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was used, and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Sampling Adequacy Measure produced a value of 0.882. This surpasses the recommended minimum threshold of 0.60. It falls within the range considered meritorious (Kaiser, 1974). The result indicates that the correlations among the 17 items are sufficiently compact. It also suggests that the sample size (N = 249) was adequate for reliable

factor extraction. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was also statistically significant, $\chi^2(136) = 1348.162$, $p < .001$. This result rejects the null hypothesis that the population correlation matrix is an identity matrix. It therefore confirms that meaningful correlations exist among the variables. It also supports the suitability of data for factor analysis (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019).

6.3.2. Communality Estimates

Communalities — representing the proportion of each item's variance accounted for by the extracted components — ranged from 0.347 to 0.616 after extraction, indicating moderate to strong item-level representation within the factor solution. The highest communalities were observed for the appointment of mediation experts in political conflict resolution (0.616), bans on financial transactions with international institutions (0.610), and financial assistance for political conflict resolution (0.578). These values indicate that these items are particularly well captured by the extracted latent dimensions, reflecting their conceptual centrality to the UN diplomatic architecture. Items recording moderate communalities in the range of 0.50 to 0.56 — including stakeholder engagement in political mediation (0.544), travel bans on government and business leaders (0.559),

humanitarian assistance to displaced populations (0.554), and the appointment of envoys in ethnic negotiations (0.550) also demonstrate meaningful alignment with the factor structure. Financial assistance to monitor sanctions (0.347) and reporting on ceasefire violations (0.403), had communalities below the commonly accepted threshold of 0.40: The financial assistance item requires particular attention. Reason being that values below 0.40 generally indicate weak alignment between the item and the extracted factors (Field, 2018). However, only one item falls clearly below the threshold. Overall, the communality

results support the coherence and interpretability of the factor solution.

6.3.3. Factor Extraction and Variance Explained

The PCA identified three principal components with eigenvalues above 1.0. Together, these components explained 50.65% of the total variance after orthogonal rotation. The scree plot supported the three-factor solution. It showed a clear point of inflection, followed by a leveling-off after the third component. This finding is consistent with the retention criterion proposed by Cattell (1966).

Table 6.3.3: Total Variance Explained — Rotated Component Solution.

Component	Eigenvalue	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.888	22.87%	22.87%
2	2.786	16.39%	39.26%
3	1.936	11.39%	50.65%

In social science research, the total explained variance of 50.65% is moderate. Still, it is consistent with established expectations for perception-based survey instruments. Attitude and institutional assessments are often multidimensional. Therefore, explained variance levels of 50–60% are generally considered acceptable (Hair et al., 2019; Costello & Osborne, 2005).

6.3.4. Interpretation of Extracted Components

Component 1 with 22.87% of the variance, emerged as the dominant dimension. It captured the largest share of the explained variance. The item loadings indicate that this component represents diplomatic and mediation-oriented interventions. These include the appointment of mediation experts, financial assistance for political conflict resolution, and sanctions-related measures such as bans on financial transactions. Overall, the component closely reflects the UN's use of coercive diplomacy and political engagement. These instruments are intended to create conditions and incentives supporting negotiated settlements.

Component 2 with 16.39% variance appears to represent enforcement and mechanisms that monitor compliance. The mechanisms include sanctions implementation, travel bans targeting political and business elites, and financial monitoring of sanction compliance. These measures limit movement of elites and financial transactions as a means of shaping behavior of actors involved in the conflict. Component 3 constitutes 11.39% of the deviation. It reflects a dimension defined by humanitarian diplomacy and peacekeeping measures. It is reflected in items related to humanitarian aid for internally displaced populations, protection of civilians, and stakeholder involvement in ethnic conflict negotiations. This component aligns with the protection of civilians (PoC) operational scope that is central to UNMISS. It also demonstrates the participatory dialogue frameworks encouraged through IGAD-backed peace initiatives.

6.3.5. Overall Interpretation and Implications

Highlighted by the factor analysis, the respondents regarded the UN diplomatic measures in South Sudan as forming three consistent and statistically reliable dimensions. This differs from the four theoretically defined dimensions of economic, political, ethnic, and armed conflict resolution. This evidence-based

integration shows theoretical contribution. It suggests that practitioners and well-versed informants on the ground do not view these areas of intervention as distinct functions. Instead, they consider them as intersecting and collectively strengthening elements of a coordinated peacebuilding structure.

Political negotiation and economic sanctions measures' alignment into a single influential component is noteworthy. Rather than evolving as two separate factors, the two appear to be closely linked. This indicates that respondents view economic policies and diplomatic participation as mutually supportive tools, instead of substitutes. This finding is uniform with the theoretical argument by Cortright & Lopez, (2002) and Biersteker et al., (2016). It attributes that the success of targeted sanctions partly depends on their incorporation within a broader mediation framework.

The sturdiness of the factor solution is confirmed by the solid KMO coefficient (0.882) and the empirically significant Bartlett's test. The pattern of communalities further shows that most indicators add meaningful contribution to the latent structure. Generally, these findings support the conceptual validity of the assessment instrument. They also indicate that views of the UN conflict resolution measures in South Sudan are multifaceted yet, theoretically integrated in practice.

6.4 Factor Analysis of the Conflict Resolution

The aim of the analysis was to determine whether the observed variables grouped into coherent underlying dimensions that were consistent with the study's theoretical framework. The analysis aimed to determine:

6.4.1 Communalities

Table 5.2 presents the communalities obtained after factor extraction. Most items recorded extraction values above the recommended threshold of 0.50, indicating that a substantial proportion of the variance in each observed variable was explained by the extracted components. The highest communalities were observed for protection of civilians (0.720), stakeholder engagement in political mediation (0.711), funding assistance for ethnic negotiations (0.687), and financial transaction bans (0.659). These results suggest that the retained indicators adequately represented the underlying conflict resolution construct.

Table 6.4.1. Communalities for Conflict Resolution in South Sudan.

Communalities	Raw Extraction	Rescaled Extraction
The United Nations' funding assistance to peace mediation process leads to effective political conflict resolution in South Sudan.	1.228	.595
The United Nations appointment of mediation experts in peace mediation process leads to effective political conflict resolution.	.947	.505
The United Nations engagement of stakeholders in peace mediation process leads to effective political conflict resolution.	1.394	.711
The United Nations appointment of envoys to peace mediation leads to political conflict resolution in South Sudan.	1.153	.581
The United Nations arms embargoes lead to effective economic conflict resolution in South Sudan.	1.413	.622
The United Nations bans on financial transactions and businesses with international financial institutions lead to effective economic conflict resolution in South Sudan.	1.420	.659
The United Nations travel bans on government, and business leaders lead to effective economic conflict resolution in South Sudan.	1.256	.560
The United Nations financial assistance for sanction monitoring and reporting leads to effective economic conflict resolution in South Sudan.	1.111	.543
The United Nations protection of civilians led to effective armed conflict resolution in South Sudan.	1.572	.720
The United Nations reporting on ceasefire violations leads to effective armed conflict resolution in South Sudan.	.995	.510
The United Nations humanitarian assistance to people displaced in armed conflict leads to effective armed conflict resolution in South Sudan.	1.325	.625
The United Nations financial assistance for peacebuilding leads to effective armed conflict resolution in South Sudan.	1.180	.526
The United Nations engagement of stakeholders in peace negotiations leads to effective ethnic conflict resolution in South Sudan.	1.233	.588
The United Nations funding assistance to peace negotiations leads to effective ethnic conflict resolution in South Sudan.	1.374	.687
The United Nations creation of an enabling environment in peace negotiations leads to effective ethnic conflict resolution in South Sudan.	1.076	.571
The United Nations appointment of envoys in peace negotiations leads to effective ethnic conflict resolution in South Sudan.	1.173	.572
The United Nations appointment of mediation experts in peace negotiations leads to effective ethnic conflict resolution in South Sudan.	1.383	.652

6.4.2. Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

The communalities demonstrate that all retained indicators adequately captured the latent construct, thereby providing evidence of good convergent validity.

6.4.3. Total Variance Explained

The PCA extracted four components with eigenvalues greater than one, jointly accounting for 57.57% of the total variance after Varimax rotation. This level of explained variance surpasses the commonly recognized threshold in behavioral and social science research. The findings verify that conflict

resolution is a multifaceted construct. It consists of four distinct aspects: resolution of economic, political, armed, and ethnic conflicts.

6.4.4. Component Transformation Matrix

The component transformation framework formulated after Varimax rotation is presented in Table 5.3. A strong alignment between the rotated and original component axes is indicated by the relatively high diagonal coefficients. This suggests limited intersection among the extracted components. It also supports the construct differentiation of the measurement model.

Table 6.4.4. Component Transformation Matrix.

Component	1	2	3	4
1	.700	.400	.441	.395
2	-.511	.859	.013	.021
3	-.274	-.168	.886	-.333
4	-.417	-.271	.142	.856

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax rotation with Kaiser normalization.

6.4.5. Discussion of the Extracted Components

Closely aligned to the theoretical structure guiding this study are the four extracted components. The first component represents political conflict management. It comprises stakeholder participation, the engagement of mediation experts, allocation of mediation funding, and designation of peace envoys. Together, these indicators reflect the diplomatic strategies used by the UN to foster political settlements reached through negotiation. Economic conflict resolution is represented by the second component. It consists of restrictions on financial transactions, arms restrictions, sanctions oversight, and travel restrictions. These variables demonstrate sanctions-based measures intended to change behavioral conduct of conflict actors. They influence through economic and financial constraints. Armed conflict resolution is represented in the third component. It is characterized by ceasefire oversight, protection of civilians, peacebuilding assistance, and humanitarian aid. The comparatively high communality for protection of civilians (0.720) highlights its central role in UN peacekeeping operations. Ethnic conflict resolution is represented by the fourth component. It entails mediation competence, stakeholder involvement, assignment of envoys, negotiation funding, and the establishment of a conducive environment for dialogue. These variables highlight representative negotiation and

6.5.1. Overall Satisfaction Distribution

Overall satisfaction findings

Table 6.5.1. Garrett Ranking.

Satisfaction Category	Frequency (f)	Rank (R)	Garrett Value (G)	Total Score (f × G)	Mean Score
Satisfied	82	1	74	6,068	26.61
Mixed/Partial	77	2	50	3,850	16.89
Not Satisfied	69	3	26	1,794	7.87
Total	228	—	—	11,712	51.37

Source: Field Survey Data (2024). Garrett Values based on standard 3-item conversion table: Rank 1 = 74, Rank 2 = 50, Rank 3 = 26 (Garrett & Woodworth, 1969). N = 228 valid responses.

First, Satisfied fit the modal response category. This suggested that most respondents hold a widely favorable view of the UN’s engagement. However, positive endorsement is largely qualified and not entirely unconditional. This is indicated by the small difference between the Satisfied (n = 82) and Mixed/Partial (n = 77) categories. Second, the combined Mixed/Partial and Not Satisfied responses accounted for 64% of the valid responses. This indicates that concerns about the effectiveness of the UN are widely shared among the participants. Third, the overall mean Garrett score of 51.37 was above the midpoint. Even so, it remained below the maximum possible score. This further suggests that satisfaction with the UN’s role is moderate and conditional as opposed to strong and widespread.

6.5.2. Thematic Analysis of Satisfaction Patterns

Qualitative responses were analyzed with NVivo thematic coding. Respondents identified humanitarian assistance and civilian protection as the intervention areas receiving the

reconciliation initiatives. They aimed at addressing conflicts driven by ethnic differences.

6.4.6. Overall Findings

The factor analysis validates that conflict resolution in South Sudan is a multifaceted concept. Comprehensively, the results provide strong evidence-based support for the theoretical structure adopted in this study. They also established the validity of the conflict resolution concept for subsequent statistical inference.

6.5. Respondent Satisfaction with the UN Role in Conflict Resolution in South Sudan

In this section, we present findings on respondent approval of the UN role in conflict resolution in South Sudan. The analysis focuses on the effectiveness as assessed by respondents across five areas of operation. The areas include mediation efforts, humanitarian aid, peacekeeping operations, protection of civilian populations, and implementation of sanctions. NVivo-informed approach to inductive thematic analysis and the Garrett Ranking Technique (Garrett & Woodworth, 1969) are combined in the analysis. This approach provides both weighted ranking scores and frequency distributions by category. In total, 249 responses were collected during the study. Of these, 21 responses with no recorded data were excluded. This resulted in a valid sample for analysis of N = 228. Categories of satisfaction were grouped into three. They included Satisfied, Mixed/Partial, and Not Satisfied.

strongest endorsement. It received a combined Garrett mean of 16.60.

6.6. Additional Actions Recommended by Respondents

The subject question is: "What additional actions should the United Nations consider in enhancing its effectiveness in conflict resolution in South Sudan?" The same dual-method framework was applied: NVivo-style inductive thematic coding for categorical frequency analysis and the Garrett Ranking Technique for weighted prioritization scoring. A total of 227 valid responses were retained for analysis. Given that some responses were coded at multiple thematic nodes, the total coded reference count exceeds the response total. Frequencies are expressed as percentages of valid responses.

6.6.1. Thematic Frequency and Garrett Rankings

Sixteen thematic nodes were identified through inductive coding. The ranked distribution of themes, frequencies, and percentage shares is presented in Table 5 below.

Table 6.6.1: Garrett Ranking of Recommended Additional Actions for the United Nations.

Rank	Theme /Node	Description	Freq (n)	%
1	Diplomacy & Mediation	Engaging conflict parties; negotiations; dialogue facilitation	31	13.7%
2	Accountability & Justice	Sanctions; perpetrator accountability; rule of law; hybrid court	22	9.7%
3	Education & Peace Awareness	Peace education; community counselling; awareness campaigns	21	9.3%
4	Peacekeeping Operations	Expanding/strengthening UNMISS; troop deployment; mobility	20	8.8%
5	Local/Community Engagement	Grassroots engagement; civil society; traditional leaders	18	7.9%
6	Neutrality & Impartiality	UN must not take sides; equal treatment; bias concerns	15	6.6%
7	Civilian Protection	Protection of civilians and IDPs; humanitarian corridors	15	6.6%
8	Regional/International Cooperation	Coordination with AU, IGAD; international law enforcement	14	6.2%
9	Skepticism & Criticism of UN	Dissatisfaction; UN bias; ineffectiveness; resource interests	13	5.7%
10	Economic Development	Job creation; infrastructure; poverty reduction; livelihoods	12	5.3%
11	Peace Agreement Monitoring	Monitoring and enforcing ceasefire and peace deal compliance	12	5.3%
12	Root Causes of Conflict	Ethnic tension; inequality; resource competition; governance	9	4.0%
13	Humanitarian Aid & Funding	Aid distribution; financial support; IDP services	9	4.0%
14	Sovereignty & non-interference	Respect SS sovereignty; African-led solutions; self-determination	8	3.5%
15	Transparency & Good Governance	Governance reform; transparency; elections; council reform	7	3.1%
16	Women & Youth Inclusion	Women empowerment; youth demobilization; gender mainstreaming	4	1.8%

Source: Field Survey Data (2024). N = 227 valid responses. Multiple coding applied; total coded references exceed response total.

Diplomacy and Mediation (n = 31, 13.7%) was the dominant theme. Respondents called for more deployment of qualified mediation experts, inclusive negotiations, and a sustained dialogue facilitation. Skepticism and Criticism of the UN points to a significant lack of confidence among respondents. Lower ranking concepts included: Economic Development (n = 12, 5.3%), Peace Agreement Monitoring (n = 12, 5.3%), Root Causes of Conflict (n = 9, 4.0%) and Humanitarian Aid and Funding (n = 9, 4.0%). The last three scoring concepts were: Sovereignty and non-interference (n = 8, 3.5%), Transparency and Good Governance (n = 7, 3.1%), and Women and Youth Inclusion (n = 4, 1.8%).

6.6.2. Interpretation of Priority Findings

The Garrett ranking results and thematic coding identified six analytically significant findings

Recording the highest Garrett score and largest frequency of coded responses was Diplomacy and Mediation. This establishes sustained and expert diplomatic engagement as the most preferred proposed action. According to this finding, the current UN diplomatic initiatives are regarded as inadequate. They lack in terms of inclusion, magnitude, or technical

proficiency. Therefore, respondents consider stronger capacity for mediation as the most important factor for strengthening outcomes of conflict resolution.

The findings indicate that respondents want UNMISS to adopt a more proactive approach to protecting civilians, including stronger early-warning systems, increased patrols, and firm intervention during active violence. They also viewed justice, particularly the establishment of the Hybrid Court for South Sudan, as essential for addressing impunity and building lasting peace, consistent with transitional justice perspectives (Teitel, 2000; Lederach, 1997). At the same time, persistent neutrality concerns and skepticism, accounting for about 12% of implied references, revealed a significant trust and legitimacy gap between UNMISS and local communities. Respondents further criticized top-down approaches and called for greater involvement of civil society, local peace facilitators, and traditional leaders to make UN peace efforts more responsive to local realities. Among the sixteen thematic nodes, women and youth inclusion ranked last. This does not necessarily mean that gender-responsive peacebuilding is viewed as unimportant. Instead, it may indicate limited awareness among respondents of the gender dimensions of conflict. This points to the need for

targeted sensitization and education initiatives. Ones that are preferably aligned with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security.

6.6.3. Recommended Improvements for Peacekeeping Operations

A deep analysis of respondents’ recommendations for improving peacekeeping operations in South Sudan is

performed. A particular focus is placed on UNMISS. Approximately 25–30% of the 249 total responses, did not provide any recommendation. The remaining responses were grouped into thematic categories. They were ranked using a simplified Garrett ranking technique. Nine improvement categories were identified. These ranged from protection-focused reforms to a minority view advocating for the UN withdrawal.

Ranked Improvement Priorities

Table 6.6.3. Simplified Garrett Ranking of Recommended Improvements to Peacekeeping Operations in South Sudan.

Rank	Recommended Improvement Category	Weight (%)	Priority Classification
1	Strengthening Protection of Civilians (POC)	24%	Very Strong Priority
2	Enhance Local Community Engagement	18%	Strong Priority
3	Clarify and Strengthen Mandate Enforcement	14%	High Priority
4	Increase Troops, Funding and Logistics	12%	High Priority
5	Improve Training and Professionalism	10%	Moderate-High Priority
6	Strengthening Political Engagement and Mediation	8%	Moderate Priority
7	Accountability and Human Rights Enforcement	6%	Moderate Priority
8	Support Development (Economy, Roads, Schools)	5%	Moderate-Low Priority
9	Withdrawal / non-interference	3%	Minority View

Source: Field Survey Data (2024). N = 249 total responses; approximately 25–30% nil responses excluded from weighted ranking.

Ranking as the highest- recommendation was strengthening the protection of civilians. With 24% of the weighted responses, it was classified as a very strong priority. Respondents called for increased troop deployment in vulnerable areas. They also recommended immediate intervention during outbreaks of violence and daily patrols in conflict hot spots. Other recommendations included improved early warning systems and clear mandate provisions for protecting women and children. According to these findings civilian protection remains the main benchmark for evaluating peacekeeping legitimacy among respondents. They also indicate that protection gaps, especially in remote and rural areas, continue to undermine confidence in UNMISS operations. Enhanced Local Community Engagement ranked second at 18%. This finding is analytically important. Most respondents endorse the restructuring and enhancing of peacekeeping involvement rather than withdrawal. This affirms the continued validity of global peacekeeping efforts as an agency even among populations expressing concerns about its current efficiency.

6.7. Discussions

6.7.1. Satisfaction, Effectiveness, and the Humanitarian-Security Gap

The cumulative findings presented in section demonstrate a picture of the United Nations involvement in South Sudan that is valued, operationally restricted, and structurally deficient. Generally, the Garrett satisfaction score was 51.37. This shows that respondents widely recognize the UN’s support. However, their capacity to create political conditions is not effective. The humanitarian-security gap recognized in this study mirrors findings from comparable mission environments. Fundamentally, UN is perceived as more effective in delivering humanitarian relief than in achieving lasting conflict resolution. Undeniably, UNMISS has evidently saved lives. However, the mission has operated under persistent, limited resources and within a deeply challenging political environment, Johnstone (2014). Bellamy and Williams (2010) agree that peacekeeping

missions in Africa often operate within complex internal political settings and fragile state institutions. These conditions can limit their operational effectiveness regardless of the mandate or troop capability. The margin between satisfied and dissatisfied respondents was relatively narrow. There is minimal change even when combined with concentration of endorsement in humanitarian rather than political domains. This suggests that the UN’s stabilization role is recognized. However, its conflict resolution mandate is perceived as unfulfilled.

6.7.2. Diplomatic Engagement, Accountability, and Local Ownership

Diplomacy and mediation ranked highest among the recommended actions. This indicates the impression that existing UN negotiation attempts have been lacking. This applies in terms of consistency, inclusion, and technical knowledge. This supports existing criticism of the R-ARCSS, particularly concerns about weak implementation, elite non-compliance, and limited civil society participation in peace negotiations (de Waal, 2014; Crisis Group, 2019). Respondents also stressed accountability and fairness, with repeated references to the Hybrid Court for South Sudan suggesting that justice is viewed as important for preventing renewed conflict, not simply as a matter of principle. They further criticized top-down approaches and called for stronger involvement of local communities, civil society, and traditional leaders. This reflects peacebuilding scholarship, which emphasizes that sustainable peace is more likely when interventions are built on local ownership, cultural knowledge, and customary conflict-resolution practices (Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013; Paffenholz, 2015).

7. Conclusion

Overall, the findings demonstrate that the United Nations has made a significant contribution to conflict resolution in South Sudan, although its role has remained constrained. The UN has provided an important platform for diplomatic engagement,

humanitarian assistance, peacebuilding and sustained international attention to the conflict. These contributions have been particularly important in maintaining international involvement in a conflict that has continued despite repeated peace initiatives. However, the findings also indicate that the UN has faced considerable difficulties in translating diplomatic interventions and negotiated settlements into lasting peace outcomes. In nutshell, the United Nations remains an important actor in South Sudan's conflict-resolution process, but its capacity to produce sustainable peace depends on more than diplomatic intervention alone. The evidence suggests that effective conflict resolution requires stronger implementation of peace agreements, credible accountability, coordinated political and security interventions, and meaningful participation by local actors. Addressing these interconnected dimensions would provide a stronger foundation for translating UN-supported peace initiatives into more durable and locally grounded peace in South Sudan.

References

- Bellamy, A. J., & Williams, P. D. (2010). *Understanding peacekeeping* (2nd ed.). Polity Press.
- Bercovitch, J., & Gartner, S. S. (2006). What is International Mediation? In J. Bercovitch & S. S. Gartner (Eds.), *International conflict mediation: New approaches and perspectives* (pp. 1–22). Routledge.
- Bujra, A. (2002). *African Conflicts: Their Causes and their Political and Social Environment*. Development Policy Management Forum.
- Cortright, D., & Lopez, G. A. (2000). *The Sanctions Decade: Assessing UN strategies in the 1990s*. Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- De' Waal, A. (2014). *When kleptocracy Becomes Insolvent: Brute Causes of the Civil War in South Sudan*. African Arguments.
- Doyle, W. M. W., & Nicholas Sambanis, N. (2006). *Making war and building peace: United Nations peace operations*. Princeton University Press. (UNESCWA)
- Gerbing, D. W., & Anderson, J. C. (1988). An Updated Paradigm for Scale Development Incorporating Unidimensionality and its Assessment. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 25(2), 186–192. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002224378802500207>
- Ginty, R., & Oliver P. Richmond, O. P. (2013). The local turn in peace building: A critical agenda for peace. *Third World Quarterly*, 34 (5):763–783.
- Hair Jr., J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2022). *Multivariate Data Analysis* (9th ed.). Cengage.
- International Crisis Group. (2019). *Salvaging South Sudan's Fragile Peace Deal*. International Crisis Group.
- Johnstone, Ian. (2014). *The Power of Deliberation: International Law, Politics and Organizations*. Oxford University Press.
- Lederach, J. P. (1997). *Building peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*. United States Institute of Peace Press.
- Morgenthau, H. J. (1948). *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*. Alfred A. Knopf.
- Paffenholz, T. (2015). Unpacking the local turn in peacebuilding: A critical assessment towards an agenda for future research. *Third World Quarterly*, 36(5), 857–874.
- Ruti., T. G. (2000). *Transitional Justice*. Oxford University Press
- Tabachnick, B. G., & Fidell, L. S. (2019). *Using Multivariate Statistics* (7th edition.). Pearson.
- United Nations. (1945). *Charter of the United Nations*. San Francisco, 26 June 1945.
- United Nations. (2012). *United Nations guidance for effective mediation*. Department of Political Affairs.
- United Nations. (2023). *United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines*. United Nations Department of Peace Operations.
- United Nations Peacekeeping. (2008). *United Nations peacekeeping operations: Principles and guidelines*. United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations.
- United Nations Security Council. (n.d.). *Security Council sanctions*. United Nations.
- White, N. D. (2015). *The United Nations and the maintenance of international peace and security* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.

Copyright: © 2026 Riak, JDC. This Open Access Article is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International \(CC BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.