Organizational Learning in International Organizations

- The Case of UN Peace Operations -

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List of Acronyms

ACABQ	Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions
AfP	Agenda for Peace
Brahimi-Report	Report of the Panel on UN Peace Operations
BSU	Boundary Spanning Unit
C'34	Committee of 34 (Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations)
DPA	Department of Political Affairs
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EO	Executive Office of the Secretary-General
GA	General Assembly
IMTF	Integrated Mission Task Force
IO	International Organization
IR	International Relations
MONUC	United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
NAM	Non-alignment Movement
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OL	Organizational Learning
P5	Permanent Members of the UN Security Council
SC	Security Council
SG	Secretary-General
UN	United Nations
UNAMASIL	United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone
UNAMIR	United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda
UNEF	United Nations Emergency Force
UNMIS	United Nations Mission in the Sudan
UNPROFOR	United Nations Protection Force
USG	Under-Secretary-General

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"There is no such thing as the United Nations."

John Bolton, designated US-ambassador to the United Nations[1]

This statement illustrates the perspective shared by many political scientists and some Western policy makers that international organizations (IOs) are nothing more than reflections of the interests of their members. The dominance of this perception of IOs in political science has led to a neglect of research on their actual functioning as organizations. With the United Nations and the Bretton-Woods institutions approaching their 60th anniversary and most other IOs having been established decades ago, there is still little systematic research about how they change over time, whether they can adapt to changes in the international system, or whether and how they can learn about new problems, actors, or altering requirements for effective action. The end of the Cold War and the process of globalization with its various dimensions have fundamentally changed the organizations' environment and modified the conditions under which most of our current international organizations were created to function. Some IOs have successfully changed, while others persist and have lost importance, and only very few organizations have ceased to exist (cf. Shanks, et al. 1996). However there is little convincing theory to account for this variance (cf. chapter IV). The mentioned negligence of the internal functioning of IOs, has led to a theoretical blind spot to explain phenomena of organizational persistence and change.

Theory of Organizational Learning

One strand of theory addressing organizational change over time is Organizational Learning theory (OL), which has largely been developed in management science and is rarely applied to public sector organizations (cf. LaPalombara 2001b). The OL perspective can integrate the analysis of processes inside the organization and the influence of environmental conditions, and could thus offer explanatory power for the analysis of change and persistence in IOs. This research paper is an effort to transfer the concept of OL and develop a model of learning that accounts for the specific setting of IOs. Because there have been only very few attempts to do

[1] Cited on http://www.stopbolton.org/in_his_words.html, accessed on 6 April 2005

so (cf. Haas 1990, Böhling 2001) and there is no sound theoretical basis we could build our hypothesis on, this paper firstly serves the explorative purpose to build a plausible explanation of IO change from the OL perspective. It is thus crucial to identify the underlying assumptions of the OL concept and makes a somewhat detailed theoretical discussion essential to assess its utility for the analysis of IOs. As the result of our explorative considerations, we argue that IOs have great difficulties to learn as complexity and ambiguity are characteristic of their environment, they depend on support of their Member States, and their internal structures provide weak capabilities to identify relevant information and create a consensus for change. It is proposed that an external shock and a subsequent crisis can nevertheless trigger learning processes and lead to change. We hereby perceive change as a major restructuring effort involving policy change, which goes beyond a simple adaptation of existing procedures.

The case of UN peace operations

In a second step this model will be used to explain persistence and change in the UN Secretariat regarding peace operations between 1988- 2004. This allows us to examine the plausibility of the proposed mechanisms and more generally to assess the utility of an OL perspective in the study of IOs. We argue that the rigid and complex structures of UN peace operations blocked learning processes and change in the early 1990s, until dramatic policy failure in Bosnia (1994) and Rwanda (1995) eventually led to a reform attempt in 1999/2000, which resulted in organizational change. We are thus proposing that our learning model of change can explain why the so-called Brahimi-process can be considered a relatively successful learning attempt of the UN.

Reflecting the two purposes of an explorative theory-building process and the subsequent empirical assessment to consolidate our model, this paper is divided into two major parts. In the first part, we proceed in three explorative steps to construct a plausible model of learning in IOs, before fourthly addressing alternative explanations of IO change. Firstly, we introduce the theory of organizational learning by identifying its core concept, as well as the differences between selected approaches. Drawing upon these differences we propose an analytical scheme that allows identifying the learning conditions in a given setting, and introduce the concept of “learning triggers” as causes of change (chapter I). Secondly, we use the developed analytical scheme to assess the general learning conditions of IOs and propose how a learning

model of change should assimilate these characteristics (chapter II). Thirdly, we propose our main hypothesis that learning and change in IOs is triggered by external shocks followed by crises and specify the variables and underlying mechanisms of our model (chapter III). In the fourth chapter the learning model is located in the general debate on IO change in international relations theory, and we hereby identify control variables that allow us to assess the utility of our approach in the case study analysis.

In the second part, we use the proposed model to explain persistence and change in UN Peace Operations in the time period between 1988- 2004. After the justification of our case study design and the case selection, we propose process tracing as a constructive methodology and introduce an according analytical scheme, which contains the analysis of two time periods separated by the emergence of our independent variable, an external shock followed by crisis (chapter V). Consequently, we begin our analysis in chapter VI with the time period of 1988-1995 to assess the general learning environment of UN peace operations and to account for organizational persistence in the face of environmental changes (e.g. power relations, nature of addressed conflicts, underlying norms), i.e. the prevalence of a number of control variables we identified in chapter IV. In the second period (1995- 2004) we attempt to explain organizational change in UN peace operations with our learning model (chapter VII). Following the proposed process tracing methodology, we identify the external shock caused by the dramatic failure of UN peace operations in Bosnia (1994) and Rwanda (1995), which led to a subsequent crisis. We further highlight the underlying processes of our main hypothesis in the analysis of the major reform attempt of UN peace operations between 1999-2004, the so-called Brahimi process, by pointing at unlearning processes in the Secretariat and underlining the effort of the Brahimi panel to form a new consensus. Lastly, it is assessed, whether the organizational changes reflect a learning process. In the concluding chapter we indicate the theoretical repercussions of the case study for our hypothesis and assess the explanatory power an OL approach can offer to the study of international organizations.

Chapter I
Theory of Organizational Learning

1. Introduction

As has been outlined in the introduction it is proposed to explain IO change with the concept of organizational learning. Because very few approaches systematically address this problematic (cf. chapter IV), our theoretical considerations follow an explorative structure. This allows us to build a theoretically informed hypothesis and to construct a plausible model of learning in international organizations (IOs) that spells out its underlying mechanisms. In this first chapter we proceed in two steps.

Firstly, the concept of organizational learning (OL) as a branch of organizational theory is specified, in order to comprehend its analytical approach and to adopt its conceptual language, which will help us to attain a plausible definition and hint at an operationalisation of OL. Additionally we build upon the differences in OL approaches to highlight perspectives on the factors in the learning environment. Secondly, we spell out conditions and causes of learning processes, as identified by OL research in order to develop an analytical framework for the analysis of IOs. The concept of an inner and outer environment is introduced as an analytical tool to assess the likelihood of learning in a given setting. Introducing the concept of learning triggers, we identify an external shock followed by crisis as a plausible cause of learning for our model.

2. The concept of organizational learning

In this chapter we introduce the concept of organizational learning as a perspective on organizational change. We identify the core shared by most OL concepts consisting of three elements: a cognitive perspective, learning as a process of collective information-processing, and the notion of different levels of learning. After having introduced these three elements, the major differences between OL-models are highlighted in order to present the diverse perspectives on the learning process. We will build upon these differences, when addressing the conditions and causes of learning in the next section.

2.1. The conceptual core of OL approaches

There are various perspectives to look at organizational change. Generally one can identify three distinct perspectives in modern organizational theory (cf. Türk 1989): organizational learning is opposed by selection and adaptation models.[2] What distinguishes OL from the other perspectives is its view of system change as a reflective interaction with the environment and not as the result of a selection of known characteristics or system-immanent driving forces. Furthermore, OL approaches shift the focus away from more traditional contingency approaches[3] towards the emphasis of change within structures and deals with the inside of the process, i.e. its quality and dynamics (Gmür and Klimecki 1997: 1).

The discipline of organization learning within the field of management science consists of a vast number of theoretical and empirical applications and serves as a label for a number of heterogeneous approaches (cf. Glynn, et al. 1994). But there are certain characteristics the different OL concepts have in common. Klimecki et al. (1999) suggest that two assumptions are implicitly being shared in the literature. Firstly, OL is based on a cognitive conception of learning in independent systems for action, i.e. relatively independent, self-governing belief systems established in the face of a quite problematic "objective" world, affect systematically what is learned.[4] Secondly, resulting from these premises, learning is understood as a process of collective information processing through which social realities are created. A third element that can be found in almost all OL-concept is the idea of different learning levels. These three elements deserve further discussion.

2.1.1. Cognitive conception of learning[5]

From the OL-perspective behavior is not controlled by environmental stimuli, but by "what is in the head"- by images or plans, maps or schemes, theories or causal beliefs, or generally spoken by cognitive structures and processes (Klimecki and Laßleben 1998: 15). This assumption has its roots in the observation that organizations operate under conditions of ambiguity, i.e. that the information they receive about their actions can be interpreted in

[2] See also Scott 2003: 220
[3] Refer to chapter IV for the continued relevance of contingency approaches in IR theory.
[4] Within this systemic understanding of organizations the OL approaches only differ in adopting an "Open Systems-Approach" or a "System Dynamics-Approach" of organizations (cf. Klimecki, et al. 1999: 1).
[5] Klimecki et al (1999: 7) observe that the traditional behavioral concept have lost their importance. They stress that it is often overlooked that even the work of March (cf. Levitt and March 1988; March 1991), which is sometimes labeled the behavioral approach to OL, has a change of cognitive structures at its centre. This may be caused by the fact that they include behavioral change in their learning model.

different and sometimes conflicting manners. Organizations are seen to receive heterogeneous stimuli from an unstable environment with dysfunctional reward systems and incomplete or lagged feedbacks (Hedberg 1981: 2). In the words of March and Olsen (1976b: 147): "In a world in which it is hard to determine what happened yesterday, why it happened, whether we liked it, or whether yesterday is comparable to today, it becomes difficult to entangle the causality of events." As a consequence, organizations face multiple realities depending on different interpretation and collective meanings (Hedberg 1981: 5).

Cognitive structures include rules, procedures, conventions, strategies, and technologies around which organizations are constructed and through which they operate, as well as the organizational culture, myths and paradigms through which the environment is interpreted (cf. Levy 1994). These structures serve as a perceptual filter to reduce the information that has to be processed and to cope with uncertainty, as the filters tell us to pay more attention to some facts than to others and thus influence our interpretation of reality.[6] Accordingly, choice situations are seen to provide not only occasions for decision-making, but also for argumentation and interpretation (Hedberg 1981). Ideas, beliefs and attitudes are important outcomes and inputs of the process. Nevertheless, most approaches agree that the extent to which organizations can control their environment is limited, as the interpretation cannot ignore, at least not in the long run, the reality structures.[7]

In most approaches *successful learning* is seen to make organizations more able to deal with problems, as it improves their understanding of reality, i.e. environmental structures (Hedberg 1981: 1). Successful learning thus leads a system to build a more sound reality construction of its environment through the differentiation or redesign of cognitive structures (cf. Klimecki, et al. 1999). From this perspective learning is a struggle to come to terms with reality rather than a controllable process.

In conclusion, it can be observed that learning is viewed as change of cognitive structures conditioned by the environment (reality structures), which in the case of success, leads to a more sound conception of the environment.

[6] The view of cognitive structures or theories being a filter through which we see the world, is best illustrated by Popper's three-world theory (Popper 1984: 254-271).
[7] Cf. I, 2.2.2.

2.1.2 Learning as a process of collective information-processing

After having distinguished what can be defined as successful learning in a rather abstract fashion, it is now important to highlight its underlying process, i.e. how learning actually is seen to happen in organizations, and how it can be observed or measured.

All OL- approaches more or less perceive the learning process in terms of the following three steps. Firstly, information is acquired from the environment, secondly, this information is being interpreted along the cognitive structures of the organization, and thirdly, this new knowledge is saved in the collective meanings, i.e. the organizational memory (cf. Klimecki, et al. 1999: 7). Furthermore, OL models stress the importance of learning as an active internal process. Learning is seen as an action, not something that happens automatically[8], i.e. whether or how an organization learns lies in its own hands (Berthoin Antal, et al. 2001b: 865). This differentiates OL from the classic behavioral understanding that learning follows a stimulus-response model in which learning is inevitably reactive and adaptive (Zimmer 1987: 47).[9] Accordingly, OL accounts for both adaptive and manipulative understandings of learning, i.e. the inclusion of both offensive and defensive purposes (Hedberg 1981: 3).

In sum, the OL concept perceives learning as an internal, interactive practice of collective information-processing through which collective meanings, as saved in the organizational memory, are further developed.

2.1.3. Levels of learning

The third common characteristic of most OL models is the distinction between two or more different learning levels. This distinction is based on the observation of a certain hierarchy of cognitive structures, as some ideas are of a more fundamental importance than others. On the one hand incremental changes in one or more aspects of routine and content within a certain system, which itself remains unchanged, are seen to happen quite regularly. On the other hand

[8] In this regard, Klimecki and Lassleben observe that "learning" exists in almost all language only as an active verb, without any passive form (Klimecki and Laßleben 1998: 6).
[9] As Levy highlights "learning can be less influenced by history than by frames applied to that history" (Levy 1994: 285).

multidimensional changes in context and goals challenging underlying paradigms that result in a new state of being take place only on rare occasions.[10]

These levels of learning have a number of different labels.[11] One such distinction was proposed by Argyris and Schön (1978) with the concept of single- and double-loop learning. Successful single-loop learning permits the organization to carry out its present policies or achieve its existing objectives. The process of double-loop learning goes further and involves the modification of the organization's underlying norms, policies, and objectives, i.e. the framework of single-loop learning (Argyris and Schön 1978: 2-3). A third level of learning can be seen in deuteron-learning, in which organizations improve their capacity for learning. For example deuteron learning can be seen as an organizational reform to enhance the quality of information search and analysis, to improve organizational memory, to incorporate new decision rules or analytic techniques, or to utilize technical and academic expertise (Levy 1994: 287). Unsurprisingly most of the learning activities of organizations were found to be single-loop learning (Argyris 1999: 69). The empirical studies have shown that, if applied strictly, double-loop learning is a very ambiguous process and too much of an ideal-type, which is rarely found to be undertaken in organizations (Gmür and Klimecki 1997: 2).

As developed in the introduction, we want to explain organizational change beyond a simple adaptation of existing procedures, but rather major restructuring efforts involving policy change. Consequently, we assume that single-loop learning does not suffice to instigate such changes. Double-loop learning however seems to be too difficult. We thus propose for the purposes of our analysis a less ambitious distinction between *simple and complex learning*. *Simple learning* involves the improvement of existing operational tools and the adjustment of given structures, rules, and procedures within a certain framework. *Complex learning* is the proposed label for changes of basic values, structures and procedures, in which both means and ends are changed.

It remains important to note that there are different levels of learning and that some changes can be more easily achieved than others, depending on the importance the changes have for the underlying cognitive structure.

[10] These kinds of distinctions can be found in many other theories, e.g. the theory of scientific revolutions (cf. Kuhn 1963).
[11] For an overview over the different labels for learning levels see Fiol and Lyles 1985: 809, or Levy and Merry 1986: 265.

Summing up the conceptual core of OL, learning is seen as a cognitive, internal process, involving different levels of norms, by which collective meanings are created, assessed and changed to create a better fit with the environment. For our study of IOs, OL highlights internal, cognitive processes as an essential pre-condition for organizational change and defines the success of learning as a better fit of the collective meanings with environmental structures.

2.2. Differences between OL approaches

Having outlined the similarities of OL approaches, it is important to stress the fact that the numerous approaches diverge to a considerable extent. We will utilize these differences to enumerate the different factors that influence the learning process. As in virtually all the social sciences, the approaches differ along the following dimensions:

- holistic vs. individual approaches
- reflectionist vs. constructivist approaches
- cognitive vs. behavioral approaches

2.2.1. holistic vs. individual approaches

This first dimension of differences between OL approaches relates to the role of the individual in the learning process.

Some approaches stress the significance of the individual in the process (cf. Levy 1994, March and Olsen 1976a) by stating that OL is nothing more than a metaphor, and individuals are singled out as the key agents of learning for the organization (cf. Argyris and Schön 1978). The so-called March School supplements this view by emphasizing the function of rules and standard operating procedures as vehicles of organizational learning (Berthoin Antal, et al. 2001a: 922). These approaches put the accent on learning as a multistage process in which a) environmental feedback leads to individual learning; b) individual learning is translated to individual action; c) individual action aggregates into changed organizational procedures and change in organizational behavior; which leads to d) new feedback from the environment.[12] From this perspective, organization learns through individuals by encoding

[12] This last step is not typical of individualistic approaches, but of approaches that see a change of behavior as a necessary indicator for learning (cf. Levy 1994).

individually learned inferences from experience into organizational routines, while learning blockades can occur at each of these steps (March and Olsen 1976a: 55).[13]

Other authors stress the interactive characteristic of learning in which individuals act to assigned roles within collectively shared meanings. From this viewpoint, OL is seen as a purely systemic process and not simply the cumulative result of its members', managers' or groups' learning, because the organization functions as the interface between the individuals and the institutional setting (Hedberg 1981: 8). In consequence, the cognitive structures of the system predetermine the scope for individual inaction. These authors accentuate that the learning of individuals will not result in OL, unless it has consequences on the structures underlying organizational behavior.[14] Simon uses the concept of bounded rationality of individuals to show that the organizational level goes beyond anything we could simply infer by observing learning processes in isolated individuals (Simon 1991). He views organizations as a system of interrelated roles, which tell the organizational members how to reason about the problems and decisions that face them, where to look for appropriate and legitimate informational premises and goal premises, and what techniques to use.

The difference between these approaches should not be seen as black or white, but as a question of the degree with which decisions of individuals depend on the social structures and the consequences this has for OL. For the proposition of our model, we can conclude that OL approaches can incorporate both systemic and individualist concepts of learning, which will be further discussed in chapter III.[15]

2.2.2. reflectionist vs. constructivist approaches

The reflectionist and constructivist approaches differ on the importance they give social interaction in the learning process.

For the more reflectionist approaches learning is largely a question of coping capacities and necessary resources to process information.[16] They emphasize factors such as increased

[13] March and Olsen (1976a: 56- 59) differentiate according to the sequence of steps between learning under ambiguity, role-constrained experiential, audience learning and superstitious experiential learning. These blockades or rather their underlying conditions are implicitly included in the section on the conditions and causes of learning.

[14] As Levitt points out the "lessons of history are maintained and accumulated within routines despite the turnover of personnel and the passage of time" (Levitt and March 1988: 321).

[15] Cf. III, 3.3.

[16] For reflectionists, knowledge is seen as a 'reflection' - a 'mirror' of an external, objective reality (Klimecki and Laßleben 1998: 19).

uncertainty; new actors, new settings and new problems, and stress levels for the organization (cf. Huber 1991). This is not to say that interpretation is no longer a part of the concept, but it becomes less important, as only one correct image of the reality exists. From this perspective the key for an organization in the learning process is to increase its information processing power (cf. Daft and Huber 1987).

The more constructivist view stresses the characteristic of knowledge as a 'construction' of reality, which leads to ambiguity of information. Learning is perceived as a political process during which actors make great efforts to influence how others interpret experience and try to build internal coalitions. Both the conceptual framework through which experience is interpreted and the communication structures through which information is diffused become very important (cf. Levy 1994). Learning is seen as an internal struggle towards the development of new shared mental models and an emphasis in placed on intra-organizational conflict, i.e. conflict between subgroups or different parties with different political interests (Klimecki and Laßleben 1998: 9).

Somewhere in the middle of this debate is the mainstream OL view that reality is experienced through cognitive structures, but that a misfit between the image of reality and the responses the organization gets will lead to learning. An emphasis is therefore placed on the responses of the outside world to the organizational behavior (cf. March and Olsen 1976b). In this view, the experience of environmental responses might lead to unbridgeable performance gaps, when the discrepancy between expectations and results becomes too great (cf. Duncan and Weiss 1979). The same notion is shared by Argyris and Schön (1978) who see mismatches between outcome and expectation, which indicate errors in the underlying cognitive structures, as the ultimate triggers for learning. From this perspective, the reality conditions the socially constructed cognitive meanings.

In sum, these three different perspectives tell us to pay attention to three different aspects of OL that all seem to be important: The existence of information and capacities to process the former, internal struggles to reach a shared consensus, and the experience of feedback from the environment, i.e. the quality of environmental signals. To develop a model of learning in IOs it seems to be important to take into account these three elements.

2.2.3. cognitive vs. behavioral approaches

Having identified OL as a cognitive theory, the debate of cognitive vs. behavioral approaches relates to the dilemma regarding the measurement of change of cognitive structures (Fiol and Lyles 1985: 811). As the process of learning is seen to happen within a learning entity, it is invisible from the outside, which makes learning very difficult to define, isolate, measure, and apply empirically (cf. Levy 1994). What can be observed are the results of learning - different behavior or different knowledge - but not the internal processes that produce them (Klimecki and Laßleben 1998: 6). Changes of behavior, then, are possible but not necessary outcomes of learning, while, on the other hand, learning is an indispensable condition for behavioral change (Stevenson 1983: 214). Successful learning could also result in deciding to leave things as they are under changed conditions (Böhling 2001: 15). Some approaches however exclude purely cognitive elements of learning and expect a behavioral change as a consequence of a change of cognitive structures (cf. Levy 1994, March and Olsen 1976a). For our approach, this dilemma does not exist, as we want to use the OL concept to explain change in IOs. It is important to note that generally OL approaches agree that behavioral change also points at a change of cognitive structures, i.e. learning.[17]

In this section we have identified the shared core of OL approaches as being a cognitive theory of collective information processing. Building upon this core, OL approaches differ on the measurement of learning, the influence of individuals and the importance of social interaction in the creation of new knowledge. We will include these various perspectives in the proposed analytical framework of conditions and causes of learning.

3. Developing an analytical framework: conditions and causes of learning

After having established the basic concept of OL and how it defines learning, it is now crucial to make out favorable contexts to identify conditioning and causal variables of learning. To conceptualize the conditions of learning, we propose the framework of an inner and outer environment, which we adapted from Hedberg (1981) and in which we include elements of the different schools of OL that were identified above. Secondly, we point at possible causes and triggers of learning, while especially analyzing external shocks and crises, which are proposed as the learning triggers in IOs.

[17] This is congruent with psychological definitions of learning, in which relatively permanent behavioral changes are considered essential indicators of learning (Levy 1994: 289).

3.1. The learning environment

As we have developed, OL assumes that learning cannot be directly and rationally controlled. Accordingly the focus of research consists of identifying favorable contexts, constructive conditions or advantageous environments in which OL is likely to happen (Klimecki, et al. 1999:1). We have already observed the factors in the learning environment stressed by the different OL approaches. Older, more behavioral approaches stress external environmental factors, while constructivists and reflectionists are more inward-looking with an emphasis on absorptive capacity and the internal capability to learn, while the "experience school" emphasizes the boundaries of the organization and the ambiguity of information.

One can include these perspectives in a concept of a learning environment that includes a) environmental factors that influence the amount and quality information the organization receives and b) the capacities of the organization to receive this information at its boundaries and process it internally. It is proposed here to label the former outer learning environment, while the latter is the inner learning environment for the organization.[18]

3.1.1. Outer learning environment

The outer environment is the "real world" and the source of variation, as it provides potential inputs in the form of information to the learning organization (Hedberg 1981: 10). It includes institutional elements (norms), the political conditions (interests and power), problem-issues and technology, including cognitive (solutions) and material-resource aspects.[19] As we have developed the quality and quantity of information the outer environment offers are equally important (Nonaka 1994: 22). We will address these elements in turn.

Quality of information

In a learner friendly environment information shows little ambiguity and the environment is predictable to make it easier to draw lessons from experience. Four different criteria can be identified to measure the ambiguity of information: firstly, the existence of well-defined evidential standards for determining success and failure; secondly, a possibility to conduct

[18] Very few OL approaches explicitly define their concept of the organizational environment, leading the OL debate to be poorly linked to other debates in organizational theory (Klimecki, et al. 1999: 36). For a similar concept of an inner and outer learning environment, cf. Hedberg 1981.

[19] Caused by the lack of explicit definitions of the environment of OL approach, this definition is adapted by the author from Hall 1999 and Scott 2003. See chapter II for its application to IOs.

controlled experiments to eliminate alternative causal hypotheses; third, a well developed and unambiguous instrument of measurement, and lastly quick and unambiguous feedback regarding the correctness of one's predictions (Breslauer and Tetlock 1991: 35- 36). A lack of clear feedback can thus be caused by the existence of strategic ambiguity and scientific uncertainty. A high quality of information is one of the key conditions for learning (cf. Nonaka 1994).

Amount of information

For the organization it is important that it does receive new information, but not too much at a time, because it has limited capacities to process the information load. The perfect learning environment lies somewhere between a stable and a turbulent environment, i.e. the rate of change of the environmental elements should be modest (Hedberg 1981: 12). In fast changing environments, organizations reduce their information load by limiting their time perspective and by attending to stimuli sequentially (cf. Cyert and March 1963). The amount of information also depends on the complexity of the environment, measured through the number of its decision factors and components. Similar to the rate of change, both extreme ends of the spectrum, being a very complex or simplistic system, are not favorable to learning (cf. Gmür and Klimecki 1997).

To sum up, a learning friendly environment offers clear, unambiguous signals for the organization and a medium level of stress caused by the environmental complexity and rate of change.

3.1.2. Inner learning environment

The inner environment relates to internal conditions and practices influencing the learning process, i.e. the ability to exploit outside sources of knowledge. Learning is seen not only as a function of the nature of the environment, but also of the permeability of the organization's boundaries and the internal absorptive capacity (cf. Child and Heavens 2001).

Nexus environment- organization

The permeability of the organizations' boundaries refers to the organization-environment nexus, the so-called boundary spanning activities (Crozier and Friedberg 1979: 94). This nexus is crucial as it steers the selective attention and inattention processes, as external changes are identified and external disturbances are buffered to absorb uncertainty (Hedberg

1981: 9). Organizations possess so-called boundary-spanning units, i.e. institutionalized boundary-spanning activities that transfer outside signals such as expertise, demands and expectations into the organization. Through the boundary spanning activities it is decided whether the new information can be used as a chance to adjust or innovate, or whether the transferred impulses are perceived as disturbances to organizational routines and procedures (Child and Heavens 2001: 320). Most OL approaches suggest that an increased permeability of boundaries increases the organization's responsiveness to changing demands and conditions in the environment (cf. Klimecki and Thomae 1997). Böhling adds that the mode of interaction and the existence of consensual perspectives are factors that condition the accomplishment of boundary spanning units to successfully transfer knowledge (Böhling forthcoming: 24).

The absorptive capacity and the need to unlearn

The absorptive capacity refers to the ability to harness prior related knowledge, to recognize the value of new information and then to assimilate and apply it (Cohen and Levinthal 1990: 128). Rigidities in administrative routines and procedures or other role constraining structures make learning more difficult. While these procedures protect the individual from information overload and reduce uncertainty, they also block new and useful information. Learning is made easier by open communication channels, access to information and a redundancy of resources and knowledge (Nonaka 1994: 28). Other factors that influence the absorptive capacity can be seen in the preference orderings of the organizational members, leadership, and corporate culture (cf. Böhling 2001, Levy and Merry 1986: 271, Simon 1991: 128). In this regard, Hedberg (1981: 9) highlights the necessity for organizations to unlearn, before new knowledge can be created. To be receptive for new ideas or causal beliefs, organizations need to dispose their old knowledge, as the rigidity of cognitive maps can be enormous. Unlearning involves the acceptance of the need for change, allows for a discontinuity from the past and thereby opens space for change (cf. Levy and Merry 1986). Unlearning thus increases the absorptive capacity and the likelihood of learning and change.

In sum, the absorptive capacity was found to be the highest in organizations with non-hierarchical, flexible structures, open and pluralistic communication channels, visionary leadership, redundant resources and a permissive external boundary.

To conclude the considerations on the learning environment, we have determined that the outer and inner environment provide the key conditions of learning, as they influence the quality and quantity of information available to the organization, as well as its capacities to process information from the environment to create a consensus for change of the cognitive structures. We will use this concept in the next chapter and in the case study to analyze the learning environment of IOs.

3.2. Triggers of Learning,

In the following, we highlight possible triggers of learning, i.e. factors that change the dynamics of the learning process and influence the constitution of the internal and external learning environment. Firstly, we highlight the different triggers in various approaches. Secondly, we will take a closer look at external shocks and crises as triggers of learning in very difficult and political learning environments, which we will identify as a characteristic of IOs.

3.2.1. Theoretical perspectives

All OL models identify a number of triggers of learning, but there is no common model of the learning process, beyond the abstract notion that was proposed above. This lack of consensus is reflected by the wide range of factors that are identified to trigger learning. It goes beyond the scope of this study to mention let alone discuss all of these factors. In an attempt to structure the debate on what causes OL, Klimecki and Laßleben (1999) have identified four categories of OL triggers: experience, conflict, information and vision. This distinction is somewhat similar to the one made above when comparing constructivist and reflectionist approaches. The reflectionists stress informational triggers (e.g. new actors, new problems, new settings), the constructivists emphasize internal conflict and vision, and the via-media "experience school" stresses the interpretation of information, i.e. experience of environmental responses through the collectively shared cognitive structures.

Having identified the different modes of learning and the greater difficulty of organizations to change underlying beliefs, it was observed that simple learning can be triggered more easily by new information and happens on a somewhat steady and incremental basis. Complex learning requires not only a favorable environment, but also stronger triggers that lead to unlearning, i.e. the letting go of old beliefs, and relearning, i.e. the establishment of a new

consensual cognitive basis. As we will analyze in more detail in chapter II, the learning environment of IOs is very ambiguous, and we therefore reject purely informational triggers for complex learning in IOs. Additionally the focus on internal conflict of constructivist triggers is neglected in favor of the more interactive, "experience" perspective, as we will determine below that the dependence of IOs on their environment is very high.[20]

3.2.2. Learning from external shocks and crises

In difficult learning environments, external shocks and crises are the pivotal triggers for attempts to overcome inertia and to spur the demand for information (e.g. Levy 1994: 305; Nonaka 1994; Eberwein, et al. 1998). Fiol (1985: 808) observes that "considerable evidence suggests that some type of crisis is necessary for changes in higher level-learning."

An *external shock* refers to events that were either unexpected at the time or unpredictable in retrospect. They can be caused by traumatic experiences revealing unambiguous policy failure, i.e. a manifest anomaly incongruent with the cognitive structures, and thus offering a higher "quality" of information from the environment. The shock visualizes an unfamiliar set of problems through a complex disturbance, not amenable to one-shot solutions. Of essential importance is the membership's recognition that the recurrence is brought on by the insufficiency of institutional routines to avert it (Haas 1990: 87).

A crisis can encompass imminent threats to survival of the organization, a rapid decline of performance (Nonaka 1994: 28) or constantly perceived policy failure leading to an unbridgeable performance gap, i.e. the discrepancy between expectations and results becomes too great (cf. Duncan and Weiss 1979). A crisis can also result from intra-organizational conflict arising from contrary courses of individual and organizational adaptation or different political interests (Cangelosi and Dill 1965, Huff and Chappell 1994). Crises and external shocks are closely related concepts, as an external shock is usually seen to lead to a crisis of the organization. However, crises can also be caused by purely internal processes in the view of more constructivist approaches. Given our above justified concentration of "experience"-triggers for learning in IOs, we focus on crises as caused by external shocks and treat them as a joined concept in the following.

[20] Cf. II, 3.3.

Poorly understood conditions, constant failure and/or unbridgeable performance gaps may create enough turbulence for established procedures to break down, making institutions unworkable and establishing a consensus that change is necessary (cf. Haas 1992). If the shock is too small, it may however disappear in the perceptual filters of the organization (Hedberg 1981: 12). The shock is needed to drag defensive routines into the light, demonstrate the failures of the current cognitive structure (cf. Argyris 1999) and lead to "unlearning" to open up space for new cognitive structures (cf. Nystrom and Starbuck 1984). This loosening of encrusted structures and crossing of formal boundaries reflecting a readiness for organizational opening can be understood as a precondition for complex learning and a paradigm-shift (Gmür and Klimecki 1997: 3). Some contributions highlight that complex learning is psychologically so difficult that policy-makers reconsider their basic goals or objectives only after strategic failures (Levy 1994: 286). This perspective is congruent with the psychological observation of a tendency for people to overweight dramatic events and underweight statistical averages in their assessments of frequency and probability (cf. Tversky and Kahnemann 1987).

Through unlearning of cognitive structures external shocks/crises provide opportunities to initiate a general review and reveal knowledge that has long existed, but has been hidden by the perceptual filters or in the individuals' cognition. Crises offer an opportunity to turn this hidden/tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge[21], as participants will seek the chance to put forward solutions which they have already developed (cf. Halperin 1974). What is learned depends thus on what is already known and what kinds of information are present in the organizational inner and outer environment. Crises can also be seen as increasing the absorptive capacity through reducing the bureaucratic power of an organization. The amount of power that bureaucratic organizations actually exert depends not only on their own resources for extending their influence, but also upon the passivity of other participants in the process. Bureaucratic power is thus greatest in the matter of routine; it is the least in a period of crisis (cf. Eberwein, et al. 1998).

Other authors stress that external shocks/crises might lead to an information overload, as the organizations search for security in terms of unambiguous and sufficiently controllable

[21] Polanyi (1966) first introduced the concept of tacit and explicit knowledge to highlight the fact that existing knowledge may be hidden. Polanyi's pivotal argument is that "we can know more than we can tell" (Polanyi 1966: 4). Nonaka further elaborated this concept and sees learning as the result of a constant dialogue between tacit and explicit knowledge (1994: 14).

situations; otherwise the organizational response might be cognitive avoidance, boundary choosing and structural rigidity (cf. Gmür and Klimecki 1997). Accordingly, the impact on the cognitive structures is often not immediate, as the organization needs to digest the information and create controllable situations. The work of boundary spanning units is essential to make information digestible, i.e. offering not too much new information, which is incongruent with the cognitive basis. This notion is supported by Hedberg (1981: 16) who points to the fact that unlearning takes time, as the external shock and crisis need to transcend the perceptual filters.

Jervis (1976) points out that learning from crises or external shocks does not always have to lead to an improvement of the fit of cognitive structures with the environment, as people pay more attention to what has happened than to why it has happened. Thus learning can be superficial, over-generalized, and based on post hoc ergo propter hoc reasoning (Jervis 1976: 281). As a result, the lessons learned will be applied to a wide variety of situations without careful effort to determine whether the cases are similar on crucial dimensions (Levy 1994: 305). This is illustrated by the statement of Jervis (1976: 275) that “those who remember the past are condemned to make the opposite mistakes”, as they tend to overestimate the extent to which their own policies were responsible for success, to neglect the importance of the contexts in which the success occurred, and to compare them with the current situation.

In sum, we observed that external shock/crises improve the quality of information, spur unlearning and stimulate the search for new information about causal relationships and the conception of the environment. External shocks/crises increase the absorptive capacity of the organization and provide additional, less ambiguous information. Moreover, it has been pointed out that the new information has to be accompanied by effective boundary spanning units to avoid information overload. We will further refine these mechanisms in our model, after having studied the conditions under which these have to operate in the environment of IOs. Additionally, the point was made that a better fit of the cognitive structures with reality configurations is not guaranteed, and successful learning is not an automatic process after the occurrence of an external shock followed by crisis.

Thus, we have proposed the analytical concept of an inner and outer learning environment, which allows to incorporate key conditions for learning, Favorable learning conditions were seen in outer environments offering a high quality and medium quantity of information, and an inner environment with a high absorptive capacity and permissible boarders. External

shocks/crises were identified as triggers of learning, as they can be seen to spur unlearning, offer clear information and decrease the rigidity of the learning environment.

4. Conclusion

In this chapter we have identified the concept of learning from the perspective of OL approaches. Although there is no consensus on definitions, conditions or causes of learning, the cognitive focus, the understanding of learning as collective information processing and different modes of learning have been identified as common features of most OL approaches. Drawing upon the differences of the approaches, we have developed a concept of an outer and inner learning environment to provide a framework for the key conditions of learning stressed by the different OL schools. Possible causes of learning have been discussed with a special focus on external shocks followed by crises, which emerged as a powerful trigger for complex learning in rigid settings, as they spur unlearning and create possibilities for change.

Chapter II
Towards a model

1. Introduction

After having established OL as a theoretical concept and language for analyzing organizational change and having developed an analytical scheme to evaluate the learning conditions for an organization, this concept is now being transferred to international organizations, as the *unit of analysis* of this study. During the following analysis the specificities of IOs as learning organizations are detected and the limited learning capabilities are demonstrated. From this analysis we will develop the *underlying mechanisms* of the main hypothesis when arguing why external shocks and crises are essential to trigger learning in IOs.

Firstly, a definition of IOs is introduced. In the second part we take a closer look at the general characteristics of their outer and inner learning environment. Hereby, we address the dependence of IOs on Member States and highlight how a learning model of IOs can incorporate this dependence. Thirdly, we build upon the discussion of external shocks and crises as learning triggers to propose how they could work in the environment of IOs. In the concluding section we sum up our observations in form of propositions for a learning model of change in IOs.

2. Definition International Organizations

Before proceeding to establish a model of learning in IOs, it is indispensable to define what is actually meant by this term and thus to determine our universe of cases for the model.

Our definition of *International Organizations* is limited to formal international governmental organizations[22] (IGOs) having been established by an international treaty by at least three Member States, performing operational tasks, and consisting of an administrative body (or Secretariat) and one or more supervising intergovernmental decision-making bodies. In 2003/2004 the Yearbook of International Organizations identified 238 such IGOs.[23]

[22] We conceive organizations as distinct from institutions; they can be defined as task executing mechanisms, or formalized institutions (Citrin 1965: 4-5)
[23] Cf. Union of International Associations 2003: Yearbook of international organizations 40th edition, K. G. Saur: München: 414: 2003

In order to apply the concept of OL, we need to understand IOs as something more than arenas for strategic bargaining or rule-guided behavior (Böhling (forthcoming)), but as corporate actors with a certain independence from their Member States.[24] For this reason we have limited our definition of IOs to organization conducting operational tasks, such as the allocating of resources, the provision of technical assistance and relief or the deployment of forces, and have an administrative apparatus in charge of managing collective activities, such as a Secretariat with independent staff.

There are some difficulties to generalize on the learning environment for accordingly defined IOs, they perform very distinct functions and operate in divergent settings (cf. Haas 1990).[25] However they still share a number of characteristics that highlight the difficulties for IOs to learn. In the following sections these common characteristics will be identified through the analysis of their inner and outer learning environment.

3. Learning environment of IOs[26]

In this section it will be shown that the inner and outer environment of IOs provide very difficult conditions for learning, stressing the importance of boundary spanning activities. Moreover, the dependence of IOs on the interests of their Member states is demonstrated and the necessity to receive support for change from a dominant coalition of member states is highlighted.

3.1. The outer learning environment of IOs

We defined the outer environment as consisting of norms, political conditions, problem issues and technology, which together determine the quality and quantity of information that is available from the environment.

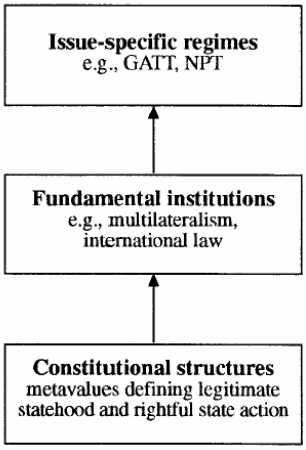
3.1.1. Norms and Institutions

The normative structure of the international system can be conceptualized as consisting of three hierarchical levels (cf. Reus-Smit 1997). The constitutional structures define the nature of the state-system through norms of legitimate statehood and rightful state action. This refers

[24] See Rittberger and Zangl 2003 for a similar distinction. We will further discuss this topic in II, 3.3.
[25] E.g.: Abbot and Snidal (1998: 4-5) identify six functions: Informational tasks, serving as a forum for dialogue, normative tasks, rule-creation, rule-supervision, and operational activities.
[26] See Annex I for a schematization of the environment.

to the so-called Westphalian order of independent, sovereign nation states. Based upon these structures are the fundamental institutions of the international system, which can be encoded in international law or also exist informally like the institution of multilateralism or the norms of humanitarian intervention.[27] The final level is made up by issue-specific regimes, which are often based on international treaties or informal agreements between states and increasingly also non-state actors. These regimes are often accompanied by a formal organization with which we have reached our level of analysis. The issue-specific regimes are situated on the border of the formal organization and can also be seen as boundary spanning activities, as they translate abstract norms into more manageable information.

Scheme I



The constitutive hierarchy of international norms, taken from Reus-Smit 1997: 259[28]

Changes in the constitutional structures are rare occasions, very difficult to achieve, and a rather slow process, as they have to be socially constructed and constituted through the interaction of states. They are only slowly codified and it takes time for them to become consolidated and visible (cf. Wendt 1999, Wendt 1994). This hierarchy of norms of the international system can somewhat be seen as analog to the hierarchy of the cognitive structures of organizations in which underlying cognitive structures inform the operational rules and procedures. Accordingly, drawing upon the introduced concept of different modes of learning, we can conclude that learning becomes the more difficult for IOs the higher the

[27] In fact international law is built to large extent on informal rules that become international customary law (Herdegen 2002: 133)
[28] GATT: General Agreement of Tariffs and Trade; NPT: Non-Proliferation Treaty

affected norm ranges in the proposed distinction.[29] This level of the norm concerned by the learning process will be identified as an *intervening* variable for our model.

International norms often intentionally contain informal or non-specified elements, allowing for different, sometimes conflicting interpretations (cf. Lipson 1991). The ambiguity of norms depends on the specificity and formality (e.g. treaty vs. informal arrangement) of the individual regime. This built-in strategic ambiguity decreases the quality of information for the organization.

As IOs often lack clear standards for success and failure (cf. II, 3.1.2.), they are dependent on the support and legitimacy of these underlying normative structures (Finnemore 1996: 329; Finnemore and Sikkink 1998: 903).[30] Accordingly, IOs cannot apply the concept of instrumental rationality (or a logic of consequentiality), but have to function along the logic of appropriateness, i.e. they have to act in accordance with rules and norms, which prescribe behavior in a certain situation (cf. March and Olsen 1998, Haas 1990).[31] This reliance on definitions of appropriateness combined with the above identified ambiguity of international norms may lead to vague, diffuse, contradictory and even conflictory goals and purposes for the organization, further decreasing the quality of information that is available from the environment.

In sum, international norms can be seen as fundamental, but a very static element offering little and slowly forthcoming information for IOs. The strategic ambiguity of its norms and the considerable time-lag until norms become visible further lower the quality of information. The proposed hierarchy of norms illustrates that learning is made more difficult, when constitutional structures or fundamental institutions are concerned.

3.1.2. Problem-issues

This part of the environment refers to specific problems in the "real world" the organization is supposed to address through the goals formulated in the issue-specific regime. Depending on the organization this may for example include security issues (e.g. UN, NATO), economic

[29] E.g. The norm of sovereignty will be more difficult to change than the departmental structure of the World Bank.
[30] See Wiener 2004 for an overview over the importance given to norms by the different IR approaches in general and especially constructivist approaches.
[31] Following the distinction from Scott we would thus speak of an institutional environment, as opposed to a technical environment (cf. Scott 2001).

development (e.g. Word Bank) or global health (e.g. Word Health Organization). One can generally observe that IOs address complex, multi-causal problem-issues, involving various actors in multifaceted settings. This brings about compound tasks often requiring specialized expert knowledge and substantial material resources (cf. Haas 1990). In addition, the process of globalization has led to an increasingly complex nature of the ever-widening range of issues considered of the international agenda (Haas 1992: 12). In conclusion, IOs face an increasing number of complex, multi-causal problems which require expert knowledge and material resources.

3.1.3. Technology

The technology existing in an organization's environment contains both cognitive and material elements and refers to the means organizations' need to perform their work, i.e. the resources it requires to address the specific problem issues (Scott 2003: 231).

Cognitive elements or solutions

The cognitive element of technology refers to scientific knowledge about causal relationships, which offer solutions to problems faced by the IO. Solutions usually materialize in terms of operational knowledge, i.e. plans for action, rules, standard operating procedures or manuals. Scientific uncertainty may exert a great impact on IO policy making and thus the learning process, as it increases the ambiguity present in the environment (Brown 2000: 578). The multi-causal problem issues faced by IOs require very intensive social technology that is very difficult to organize (cf. Haas 1990). Additionally IOs often lack clearly defined standards for success or failure and have no unambiguous instrument for measurement, which might lead to quick and unequivocal feedback. This usually leaves the organization without any measures for efficiency or effectiveness that go beyond the political judgments of the involved actors (Dicke 1994: 352).[32]

Material Resources

The material resources refer to the "hardware" to conduct the organization's work such as human resources, financing, IT-technologies or transport capabilities. IOs usually stand on a weak material basis, as their access to material resources depends on the commitment of

[32]Cf. also II, 3.1.1.

Member States and is being determined in the intergovernmental decision making bodies (Cf. II, 3.2.2.).

We can conclude that the survival of IOs depends more on the normative structure and the continued commitment of member states, than on objective criteria for performance or the raising of revenues. This further contributes to the ambiguity of the environment. It also highlights the contribution an OL-approach could make, when compared with rationalist models often found in selection or adaptation models.[33]

3.1.4. Political conditions

The political conditions are determined by the interest and power of the involved actors. For IOs these include sovereign nation-states, i.e. governments, non-governmental organizations, social movements, multi-national corporations, individuals, other IOs, and epistemic communities[34] (Karns and Mingst 2004: 211). The high number of independent actors reflects a heterogeneous political environment involving many different interests and constituencies. This leads to an overload of information and increases the politically sensitivity and ambiguity of information (cf. Haas 1990, Lipson 2003). The international system has further experienced fundamental growth of complexity in terms of the number of actors and the extent of interactions during the last years (Haas 1992: 12, Karns and Mingst 2004: 11). Through their normative core and the subsequent aspirational goal structure, the IOs further increase the number of actors they are accountable to (Haas 1990: 55).[35] Due to the identified international constitutional structure the political conditions are dominated by nation-states. Furthermore, they are predisposed by the power relations of the involved actors, i.e. the unequal distribution of influence on the outcome. These issues will be dealt with in a special section on nation-states at the end of the chapter (section 3.3.).

The identified ambiguity of norms and cognitive technology strengthen the reliance on the political conditions, i.e. the evaluations of how well or poorly IOs are doing will not be driven by objective criteria but rather political ideology and partisanship. As IOs usually do not face

[33] This is not the adaptation we referred to earlier (cf. Türk 1989), but a rational adaptation reflecting a contingency on environmental factors. This approach is often implicitly adopted in the analysis of IOs. See chapter IV for details.
[34] Epistemic communities are defined as communities of knowledge (cf. Haas 1992). Membership can overlap with other institutions (such as governments or NGOs).
[35] E.g.: The UN Charter, although founding an intergovernmental organization, begins by the statement: "We the peoples of the United Nations…". Furthermore many IOs refer to human rights and address problems at the individual and not the interstate level (cf. Karns and Mingst 2004).

direct competition, another important instrument to transport unambiguous information about the performance or the threat to survival, and to level out inefficiencies is not available (cf. Pierson 2004).

In sum, the political conditions of IOs have become increasingly complex and involve various classes of actors with conflicting political interests. This further increases the ambiguity of the environment.

3.1.5. Assessing the quality and quantity of information

In conclusion, one can assess that IOs operate in a very complex outer environment offering only very ambiguous and politically sensitive information. Globalization has both increased the rate of change and the complexity of the environment as new problems emerged on the international agenda. The large quantity of information coupled with weak access to technology and the strategic and scientific ambiguity in the environment make it very difficult for the IOs to observe environmental change and draw the necessary conclusions. The outer environment is further characterized by a large dependence of IOs on their member states. *For our model the ambiguity of the learning environment highlights the importance of boundary spanning units and their effectiveness must be seen as a major condition for learning. We will further use this framework for the more detailed analysis of the learning environment UN peace operations in our case study.*

3.2. The inner learning environment of IOs

The inner learning environment was defined as the combination of boundary spanning activities and of the absorptive capacity of an organization. Following our definition of IOs, we distinguish between IOs' Secretariats as the organizational core, while the intergovernmental decision-making bodies are seen as institutionalized boundary spanning activities.[36]

[36] This distinction is not unproblematic. The intergovernmental decision-making bodies do not only transfer information and knowledge through statements, but also take part in the decision making process through the direct assignments of tasks or their influence on the allocation of resources. Hence, they constrain the independence of the Secretariat substantially and could be seen as a zombie of a boundary spanning unit and an element of the organization. Despite these limitations, the proposed distinction is upheld, keeping in mind that it is done for analytical and not substantial reasons (cf. also II, 3.3.).

3.2.1. Absorptive capacity

As we have developed above, the absorptive capacity of an IO depends on the flexibility of structures, openness of communication channels, leadership, and the existence of redundant resources.

The structures of the Secretariat of IOs are usually very rigid, as the founding treaty is very hard to change; the formal structure is the one of bureaucratic organizations with explicit rules and specific assignments of rules to individuals and groups (Keohane 1989: 4); recruitment processes are usually highly formalized and are subject to national quotas and political considerations[37]; innovative leadership is severely limited by role constraints, and the corporate culture is dominated by routine and top-down communication (cf. Etheredge 1985).[38] Regime Theory enlightens us that this built-in rigidity of IOs is one of its functional elements selected by nation states, because they are seen to serve as stabilizers of international cooperation to prolong the shadow of the future, assure a credible commitment and thus create possibilities for cooperation (cf. Axelrod and Keohane 1986; Keohane 1982; Putnam 1988). This rigidity makes the needed unlearning-processes very unlikely and creates a learner-unfriendly culture (Simon 1991: 128).[39] Instead it leads to the formation of implicit knowledge, as individuals are constrained by the formal structures, so that knowledge about environmental changes remains hidden (cf. Nonaka 1994, March and Olsen 1976a).

IOs usually do not have their own revenues and depend on contributions from Member States. These are sometimes of a voluntary nature, but often fixed in formal agreements between the members (cf. Rittberger and Zangl 2003). Member States generally control the financial resources of international organizations through the yearly budget that has to be approved by intergovernmental decision-making bodies. Only in rare occasions IOs receive additional funding through private funds, foundations or donations. This leads to a close control of resources and makes it very unlikely that redundant resources exist for learning. Faced with

[37] This often hinders the recruiting on terms of merit and makes difficult for IOs to have access to new and highly specialized knowledge.
[38] In his seminal work on learning in foreign policy, Etheredge made the observation, that "subordinates were at personal risk, if they told the truth" (cf. Etheredge 1985).
[39] LaPalombara (2001a: 565) points out that complex learning in the public sector is even more impeded and therefore rarer than in the private sphere, because politics both in the organization and in the environment infuse every aspect of organizational life. He argues that "the impulse, on the basis of what is learned, to replace existing organizational structures with better ones, is rare in the public/political sector as it may actually be alien to it" (LaPalombara 2001b: 139).

the complexity of the environment and the resulting amount of information, most IOs could rather be seen as lacking adequate resources to conduct learning.[40]

Hence, the absorptive capacity of IOs is limited by rigidity in structures and culture, and the lack of redundant resources. *For our model we can conclude that learning in IOs seems to require a strong trigger to break rigidities, overcome political blockades, offer opportunities for hidden knowledge to be put forward, and instigate the provisions of additional resources to conduct learning.*

3.2.2. Boundary spanning units

As has been developed above IOs operate in a very complex environment and show a high dependence on the external environment, especially on nation states as the major actors in the international system. Thus the communication processes at the nexus of organization and environment are of paramount importance.

IOs have several boundary spanning units. These generally include usually one plenary intergovernmental decision-making body and one intergovernmental executive organ (Rittberger and Zangl 2003: 94). [41] Together they form the main instrument through which the members communicate their interests, i.e. expectations, demands and commitment. The boundary spanning units communicate with the Secretariat through the explicit formulation of norms, rules or procedures, as reflected in the issues-specific regimes we have identified above. They also communicate in a more indirect fashion through the additional provision or withholding of resources, through political statements, through informal working groups, personal networking or diplomatic démarches. These units usually produce a high number or resolutions, decisions and statements that are supposed to inform the organization.[42]

Very often IOs further possess additional boundary spanning units for the communication with non-state actors such as NGOs or scientific communities (Karns and Mingst 2004: 229). These usually consist of advisory boards, discussion tables or informal exchanges. In

[40] The most prominent illustration of this understaffing among UN bureaucrats is the example that New York City Police Department alone employs over 50.000 staff, while the UN Secretariat staffs about 7.000.
[41] For example the United Nations General Assembly and Board of Governors of the World Bank representing each member with one voice on the one hand, and the United Nations Security Council or Board of Directors of the World Bank with differentiated veto power or weighted voting rights on the hand.
[42] E.g. each year the UN General Assembly deals with over 150 agenda items and passes more than 300 resolutions accompanied by over 9000 official statements by members. Data compiled from http\\:www.un.org/ga/59

opposition to the boundary spanning activities involving states, these mechanisms usually have no power to influence the issue-specific regimes, but might nevertheless find access to the cognitive maps of the organization through more informal elements.[43] Boundary spanning units also include ad-hoc working groups that are set up for a limited time. These activities are usually reactions to demands for reform or unexpected events and might involve state and non-state actors (cf. Luck 2002). An additional boundary spanning unit of IOs exists in the operational units[44] that operate outside the physical and often also structural bureaucratic environment of the organizations headquarters and are in close contact with the recipients of policy. These missions are often composed of organizational members as well as outside experts and transport environmental feedback from the operational activities through reports, informal exchanges and rotation of personnel. The problem for the IOs learning ability can thus not simply lie in the existence of boundary spanning units, but in the effectiveness of their activities, i.e. ability to transmit the relevant information about the structure of the environment.

In this section, we could see that the absorptive capacity of IOs is low and the autonomy of the operational units is limited. On the other hand the nexus of organization and environment is very permissible, as reflected by the great number of boundary spanning activities. The learning capability thus depends on the effectiveness of the boundary spanning units highlighting once again the role of the nation states, which will be dealt with subsequently.

3.3. IOs as corporate actors

We have determined that we need to see IOs as something more than pure arenas for nation-states, in order to apply the concept of OL. The analysis of the learning environment has repeatedly hinted at a great dependence of IOs on the interests and behavior of Member States. In this section it will be discussed whether the assumed more autonomous role of the organization can be upheld and how a learning model for IOs needs to be adapted to the dependence on Member States. Accordingly, we begin by highlighting this dependency of IOs on nation states. Secondly, we emphasize arguments that point at the autonomy of the Secretariat and the ineffectiveness of control through nation-states. Thirdly, we combine these

[43] For example certain NGOs such as amnesty international have arguably raised the awareness for human rights issues (Karns and Mingst 2004: 230).
[44] E.g. Refugee camps, peacekeeping missions, political missions or policy advisory groups

two elements and propose how the model of OL needs to be adapted to include both elements, as their consensus is determined as essential for complex learning and change.

3.3.1. Dependence and state power

Throughout the preceding analysis of the learning environment of IOs, it has been observed that nation states play a pivotal role. IOs are highly dependent on nation-states to perform their assigned function, both in terms of resource providers and recipients of outputs. Being the principal actors in the Westphalian state system and the authors of international law they manipulate the normative setting. Through intergovernmental decision making bodies they function as rule providers and exert close control over the operational activities of the IO. As in many other public settings, a hierarchical division of labor between policy-making in legislative bodies, and execution through the administration is prevalent (LaPalombara 2001a: 560). This leads IOs to be restricted in the definition of their own goals and embeddedness in a tight frame of rules and legal obligations (cf. Gordenker and Saunders 1978). In fact IOs can only survive, when they manage to identify and please the demands and expectations emanating from national governments (Haas 1964; Haas 1990; Rittberger and Zangl 2003).

This explains the overriding importance most approaches give to nation states and their interests and power, and led to the conclusion of Gordenker and Saunders (1978: 87) that "IOs can rarely pursue their goals in a straight-forward fashion under the administration of experts in the inertial and partly hostile environment of the state system". Or to put it even more drastically in the words of Morgenthau: "There is no such thing as the policy of an organization, international and domestic, apart from the policy of its most influential member or members" (Morgenthau 1973: 150).

From this perspective learning in IOs becomes a matter of international politics and power and organizational change emerges as a question of inter-state decision-making processes. The overriding importance of nation-states seems to challenge the OL assumption of an interactive relationship between the organization and its environment and leads to the conclusion that IOs might be contingent on their environment, namely the interests of states.[45]

[45] Cf. chapter IV

3.3.2. Autonomy beyond state power

However, this dependence on nation-states also has its limits, as IOs operate somewhere in-between autonomy and dependence (cf. Lequesne 2000). In the following we highlight the arguments that justify the perception of IOs as corporate actors.

Firstly, some activities of IOs require a certain centralization of resources and the independence of the Secretariat, for example the role of an honest broker between conflicting party or the allocator of resources from joint production.[46] This independence enables IOs to shape understandings, influence the terms of state interactions, elaborate norms, and mediate or resolve member states' disputes (Abbot and Snidal 1998: 7).

In addition, the institutionalists' argument was introduced above that IOs are designed to produce stability through credible commitment.[47] This built-in rigidity is reflected by bureaucratic structures. Bureaucratic theory has instructed us that the essence of a bureaucracy is its reliance on routine, repetitive and orderly action, which gives the organization an important independent role, even if stakeholders desire change (cf. Niskanen 1971; Barnett and Finnemore 1999: 707-710; Halperin 1974).[48] Neo-Institutionalist approaches further reiterate that political institutions are more than simple mirrors of social forces (March and Olsen 1984: 739) and that processes external and internal to the corporate agents of political institutions affect the flow of planning and execution (DiMaggio and Powell 2001: 30). LaPalombara (2001a: 560) illustrates this point with the statement that "it is not easy to separate, say, the legislature (as principal) and the bureaucracy (as agent) for the simple reason that in many circumstances the bureaucrats not only administer policies but also de facto make policies".[49]

Furthermore, the direct control of IOs is severely limited through the ineffectiveness of the decision-making procedures in the intergovernmental bodies. As the voting in plenary meetings is usually consensual and the executive organs include several veto players, decision making is very complex and slow (cf. Tsebelis 2000; Pierson 2004: 144). From this viewpoint

[46] Abbot and Snidal (1998: 10- 20) identify the functions of pooling of resources, joint production, norm elaboration and coordination, laundering of state activities, and neutrality as requiring a certain degree of centralization and autonomy of the IO.
[47] Institutions are designed to be change resistant in order to decrease uncertainty and make the control of the institutions through an opponent impossible (Pierson 2004: 144).
[48] Principals may have insufficient time, technical competence, or interest what is actually going on with policy implementation (LaPalombara 2001a: 565).
[49] In this regard the historical institutionalist argument of unintended consequences through the differences between the creating and governing coalition could also be mentioned (cf. Lindner and Rittberger 2003).

intentionally designed changes of the status quo become very unlikely. Political tensions and power issues can further bloc efficient decision-making, as could be observed in the UN Security Council during the Cold War (cf. Malone 2004b). In addition, the outputs of the intergovernmental decision-making bodies are normally far from being precise prescription for actions, but offer only highly symbolic and ambiguous declarations or resolutions that can be interpreted by the Secretariat in various ways (Haas 1990: 59).

Liberal approaches further teach to us that the perception of nation states as unitary actors in the international realm is misleading (cf. Moravscik 1997; Putnam 1988). Rather nation states should be seen as a coalition of sub-national actors, which can even be influenced by IOs. E. Haas (1990) speaks in this context of the need of "coalitions of coalitions" to reach decisions in international decision-making bodies.[50] He identifies the need of an establishment of a dominant coalition of states (or coalition) to make decisions, as a very volatile social process that opens possibilities for independent actions of the IO. Through their influence on the decision making processes IOs' agents may even gain opportunities to influence the success criteria, which external bodies may apply to them (Böhling (forthcoming): 6). Accordingly, neo-functionalist (cf. Haas 1964) and constructivists approaches point at the possibility of IOs to change the interests of nation-states through norm elaboration and diffusion, as reflected in the claim of Barnett and Finnemore that "IOs exercise power autonomously in ways unintended and unanticipated by states" (Barnett and Finnemore 1999: 699).

In sum, one can conclude that IOs possess a significant amount of independence beyond the interests and power of nation-states and various possibilities to resist change. They are not merely instruments for the attainment of converging interests of Member States, but also develop their own dynamics as agents. These observations are congruent with the introduced view of OL-approaches that external influences do not have a direct impact on organizational life, and organizational change is not merely an outcome of environmental and other contingencies.

3.3.3. Combining the perspectives

When combining these two perspectives, the conclusion surfaces that one element cannot learn without the other. Member States cannot achieve organizational change against the will of the Secretariat. Unless receptiveness for change is developed, the signals will get lost in the

[50] This is just another label for the two-level game logic put forward by Putnam (1988).

perceptual filters of the bureaucracy. On the other side, the Secretariat cannot learn without the support of a dominant coalition of Member States that translates learning into the policy-making process, offers clear signals for the Secretariat, and provides the necessary resources for change. This reflects a need to build a relationship across the boarders of the organization. A perspective of interplay between political goals and consensual knowledge thus seems to be appropriate. This indicates however further limitations for the ability of IOs to learn, as fresh ideas could be viewed as threats to the delicate equilibrium between the internal and external forces (LaPalombara 2001a: 558). On the other side, a shift in this equilibrium can also create moments of opportunity for organizations to learn. These observations highlight once again the importance for IOs to function with a special sensitivity to their environment.

In sum, new knowledge needs to be compatible with the cognitive structures of the organizations as well as the interests of the Member States, respectively the dominant coalition of Member States. This accords with the view of OL approaches that learning is a matter of social interaction. *Accordingly, a complete model of learning in IOs needs to account for a dominant coalition of member states in support of change, as well as mechanisms that allow to overcome administrative resistance*.

4. External shocks/crises as learning triggers in IOs

Based on the discussion in the theory chapter, it is proposed in this section, how external shocks/crises work as learning triggers in the IO environment through affecting the absorptive capacity as well as the work of the boundary spanning units.

In accordance with the general discussion on external shocks and crises (cf. I, 3.2.2.), we propose that they jointly serve as a trigger that breaks up the bureaucratic rigidities of the inner learning environment, as they provide the organization with relatively unambiguous information about policy failure and the need for change. This is seen to lead to the search for new solutions and thus opens up possibilities to forward implicit knowledge.

Furthermore, we expect the external shock followed by crisis to lead to a greater uncertainty of nation-states regarding their policy preferences and to reduce the importance of political considerations in the light of unambiguous failure. This gives IOs the opportunity to increase their autonomy and influence the policy-making in the boundary spanning units, when nation-

states turn to the IO in search for a solution. This search for a solution can also increase the influence of epistemic communities and facilitate the formation of a dominant coalition in support of change, as a common response is demanded. Moreover, IOs often react to crises with an increase of boundary spanning activities, reflecting a rising number of resolutions and declaration, and often also with the formation of new boundary spanning units, such as working groups, reform commissions or more informal consultation processes (cf. Luck 2002).[51] These groups might be more effective in the communication of environmental changes and adept to raise resources outside the regular budget to provide the necessary resources for change, as they are not caught in procedural rigidities and continuing turf wars.

In sum, crises/external shocks can be seen as powerful triggers for learning, as they lead to new, possibly more effective boundary spanning activities, reduce ambiguity, and loosen the rigidities of the bureaucracy.

5. Conclusion and propositions

The analysis of the learning environment, which offers a lot, but very ambiguous information, has shown that complex learning in IOs is very difficult. The absorptive capacity of IOs was identified to be low and the boundary spanning units as active, but very political and ineffective. As the dependence on the environment and especially nation-states was highlighted, the implication for complex learning was drawn that consensus-building on new knowledge is required both in the organization and the boundary spanning units. This reflects a dynamic and interactive relation between organizational agency and the environment. It was then proposed how an external shock followed by crisis might nevertheless trigger learning processes, leading to change in IOs.

Building upon this analysis of the learning environment we make the following propositions for our model:

- IOs operate in a very difficult learning environment, as the available information is ambiguous and politically sensitive, and the absorptive capacity is low.

- The difficult learning environment leads to learning blockades, i.e. new, implicit knowledge is often not translated into change of cognitive structures.

[51] See for example the high number of working groups of UN General Assembly. cf. http//:www.un.org/ga

- OL in IOs requires a powerful trigger to lead to unlearning and the loosening of the existing, rigid structures.
- IOs posses a certain degree of independence and are not simply a function of the members' interests, but change requires the support of a dominant coalition of states.
- OL in IOs relies on effective boundary spanning units that succeed at building consensus inside and at the boarders of the organization.
- International decision making bodies are usually ineffective and slow boundary spanning units offering ambiguous information to the organization.
- IOs react to crises with an increase of the boundary spanning activities or even new boundary spanning units.

Chapter III
A learning model of change in IOs

1. Introduction

In this chapter we condense the theoretical observations by introducing an explanation of organizational change in IOs from the OL perspective. For the formation of the model, i.e. the main hypothesis and its underlying mechanisms, the conceptual analysis of the IOs' learning environment is combined with the introduced mechanism of an external shock followed by crisis as a learning trigger. After the proposition of the main hypothesis and the definition of the main variables, the central underlying mechanisms are specified to allow for a process-tracing case study design in the empirical part of this study.[52] The model is informed by the theoretical considerations of the first chapter, the analysis of IOs' learning environment and the subsequently deemed necessary adaptation of the OL model to include the particular characteristics of IOs.

2. Main Hypothesis and Variables

After having identified the concept of OL and its application to analyze the learning capabilities of IOs, we concluded that complex learning leading to change is a very difficult endeavor for IOs. In the first chapter an external shock followed by crisis were identified as a very powerful trigger to overcome inertia and unleash learning processes. Hence, we propose:

2.1. Main Hypothesis

If an international organization experiences an external shock followed by crisis, organizational learning and change become more likely.

The hypothesis is deliberately left probabilistic, as we have determined in the theoretical chapter that learning is not an automatic process and not contingent upon distinct factors.

[52] Cf. to chapter V for more detail on the process tracing methodology.

2.2 Independent variable

The independent variable is the occurrence of an external shock and a subsequent crisis. In the following model the two are always listed as a joined concept, because we perceive them as closely interrelated with the external shock as the cause of a crisis of the organization (see discussion in I, 3.2.2.). Nevertheless they are defined separately, as they describe different phenomena, and a crisis could also develop from continuous policy failure or internal conflict. For the purpose of this study however, we will concentrate on the joined independent variable of an external shock, followed by crisis.

Definition *External shock*:

An external shock is defined as a traumatic experience revealing unambiguous policy failure.

Definition *Crisis*:

A crisis is defined as a marginalization and/or threat to survival of the IO.

Operationalisation

In the case of an *external shock,* we expect a heavy reaction form environmental actors, including international public opinion (e.g. media reaction, opinion polls), reactions from Member States (e.g. participation in operations, political statements, public speeches) and the epistemic communities (e.g. academic articles, conference papers) to an operational activity of the IO, which is perceived as a dramatic policy failure. This external shock is seen to discredit the operational activities of the organization and lead to crisis.

Crisis, as caused by the external shock, can be identified through a sudden reduction of the legitimacy and authority of the concerned IO, which is possibly threatening the survival of the organization. Legitimacy can be measured through the demand of its operations (number and scope), the implementation of its collective measures (e.g. conventions, standards of behavior, sanctions), and the contributions of Member States (personnel, finances, participation in operations), as well as the public image (media, public speeches). The authority of IOs consists of their ability to have their decisions and recommendations implemented irrespective of the goodwill of the members concerned.[53]

[53] The two measures of legitimacy and authority are adapted from Haas 1990. We have chosen to stick to these labels. Legitimacy could have also been labeled credibility; an alternative label for authority could be seen in

2.3. Dependent variable

As developed in the introduction, we are interested in the explanation of change in IOs from the OL perspective. Accordingly, as we have already elaborated above in more detail, we perceive permanent organizational change as a reflection of changed cognitive structures.[54] The dependent variable is thus organizational change, as caused by organizational learning, which we defined as a change of cognitive structures leading to a more sound conception of the environment (cf. III, 3.4.).

Definition *organizational change*

Organizational change is defined as a modification of organizational structures, policy and goals.

Operationalisation

We propose to measure these changes through modifications of organizational behavior (e.g. conduct and set-up of operations, resource allocation, public statements), the modification of rules and procedures (organizational structures, guidelines, changes of standard-operating procedures), and the emergence of new norms (e.g. international law, modification of the founding treaty, policy doctrine) that go beyond a simple adaptation of the existing make-up (cf. III, 3.3.). As developed, these changes are seen as indicators for modified cognitive structures. The greater soundness of the new conception of the environment, i.e. the success of the learning process, should lead to an enhancement of the operational capabilities (new instruments, better access to resources, efficiency and effectiveness criteria [if applicable[55]], favorable assessments by environmental actors) and the termination of the crisis, i.e. an increase of the legitimacy and authority of the IO.[56]

It is conceivable to further quantify the operationalisation of the main variables to allow for a more precise definition and guide for observation. We consider these specifications as sufficient for our proposed methodology of a case study design, in which we lay the focus on tracing processes (cf. chapter V)

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independence. Furthermore these two should not be seen as independent variables, as an increase in legitimacy is very likely to result into an increase in authority as well.

[54] See I, 2.2.2.

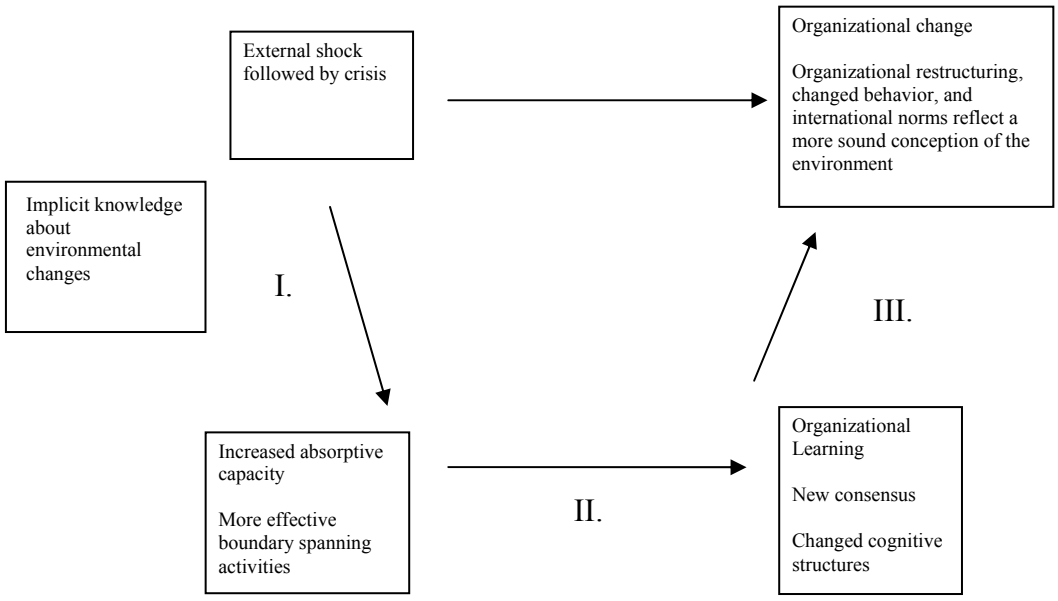
[55] As we have discussed, this measure is very problematic in the ambiguous environment of IOs. Nevertheless it is conceivable that certain activities can be measured with unambiguous instruments.

[56] As specified in III, 2.1.

3. Assumption and underlying mechanisms

Underlying this main hypothesis we can identify one basic assumption concerning the process of knowledge creation and three mechanisms as illustrated in scheme II. We will briefly develop the assumption and consider each mechanism in turn.[57] Furthermore, we propose one intervening variable, which reflects the discussed notion of a hierarchy of norms and different learning levels.

Scheme II.



Complex learning as an explanation of change in international organizations, compiled by the author

3.1. Assumption: Constant creation of knowledge through experience

Considering the learning environment of IOs, we have proposed that learning beyond certain cognitive limits, or complex learning, is very difficult and occurs rarely. Following the identified approach of the "experience" school of OL, we see IOs as constantly receiving information about the nature of the outer environment through their operational activities and

[57] In a strict sense all of the proposed mechanisms and sub-mechanisms are hypotheses on their own. Based upon the preceding theoretical considerations, we assume each of them to be plausible. Their main purpose is to make the mechanisms underlying our main hypothesis as explicit as possible, to be able to conduct an informative case-study.

the boundary spanning units, leading to new knowledge conditioned by reality.[58] However, if this knowledge is not congruent with existing cognitive structures, it is not included in these structures, due to the described rigidity in the learning environment of IOs. Following the introduced notion of Polanyi (1966) and Nonaka (1994) this leads to the creation of implicit/tacit knowledge hidden in the organization.

3.2. Mechanism I

Firstly, it is proposed that external shocks and crises will increase a) the absorptive capacity and b) the effectiveness of the boundary spanning activities of IOs. The trigger of external shocks followed by crises is seen to improve the learning conditions, as unambiguous information becomes less ambiguous and the processing capacities of the organization increase through unlearning. In the following, the sub-mechanisms, drawing upon insights from the OL and the identification of the IOs learning environment, are introduced to serve as guide for our empirical observations in the case-study.

a) External shocks/crises increase the absorptive capacity of an organization

Sub-mechanisms

- Unambiguous policy failure and the resulting decrease in authority and legitimacy lead to consensus that institutional routines are inadequate; it decreases bureaucratic power, and encourages unlearning and an acceptance for change.
- Unlearning spurs the demand for information, new concepts, and innovative leadership.
- Participants will seek this opportunity to put forward solutions, which have already been developed, and to turn implicit knowledge into explicit knowledge.
- Unlearning increases the willingness of the Member States to provide the resources necessary for change.

[58] The creation of knowledge is not seen as a rational or contingent process, but one in which the construction of knowledge is conditioned by reality, as the material reality resists certain interpretations (cf. Wendt 1999).

b) External shocks/crises increase the effectiveness of the boundary spanning activities and the quality of information

Sub-mechanisms

- External shocks/Crises stipulate processes of international norm formation as common interpretations and solutions are demanded by Member States.
- The acceptance for change in the Secretariat and the search for a response by Member States lead to additional, more effective boundary spanning activities with a more pragmatic and analytic decision-making style.[59]
- An external shock followed by crisis encourages scientific research, leads to better and more consensual cognitive technology (problem solutions), which is being increasingly advocated by epistemic communities, and thus aids the work of the boundary spanning units.
- The more effective boundary spanning activities smooth the formation of a dominant coalition supporting organizational change.

3.3. Mechanism II

Secondly, the improved learning conditions make the change of cognitive structures possible. We have already elaborated that learning is a process that cannot be observed directly. Therefore there are no explicit sub-mechanisms proposed to be traced in the empirical study. Only the result of learning becomes observable.[60]

[59] Haas (1990: 79-81) differentiates between an eclectic, skeptical, pragmatic and analytic decision-making styles. Pragmatic and analytic decision-making styles are seen to reflect a knowledge base that is becoming more consensual.

[60] As has been highlighted above, among others March and Olsen break the learning cycle down to individual perception and action (March and Olsen 1976a: 56-59). This is also possible at this point, but is not done for three reasons: Firstly, it provides no further insights on the actual learning process, but only at its aggregation. Secondly, in the identified role constrained and bureaucratic nature of the IOs environment individuals are very limited in their scope for individually motivated action. Thirdly, only very few approaches to IOs try to analyze them at an individual level (cf. for an exception Frey 1997). This observation points either at a research gap or at a plausible simplification. Our work has to live with this simplification, but we consider it worthwhile enlarging the proposed model by an individualist perspective, if it emerges as necessary during the analysis. We thus propose a black box explanation of internal learning processes, as we lack the empirical data of individual motivations (Eberwein, et al. 1998: 277). Bennett (2003) points out that "not all macro-causal mechanisms are of a character that makes it necessary or possible in every study to explain or study them at the individual micro-level, and the acceptable level of generality of causal mechanisms will vary depending on the particular research question and research objectives under investigation".

The increased absorptive capacity and the more effective boundary spanning activities allow for change of the collectively shared cognitive structures.

3.4. Mechanism III

Thirdly, as developed above, the cognitive structures modified in the learning process will result in organizational change. Following the introduced operationalisation, we propose:

The new consensus is institutionalized through organizational restructuring, changed behavior and its codification in international norms, reflecting a more sound conception of the environment.

Sub-mechanism

- A more sound conception of the environment is reflected by an increase of operational capabilities and increased legitimacy and authority of the IO, reflecting the end of the crisis.

3.5. Intervening Variable

Both in the theoretical discussion on the levels of learning and in the analysis of the normative environment of IOs, we have determined, a hierarchy of norms in the inner and outer environment. Building on the introduced hierarchy by Reus-Smit (1997), we propose:

The effect of the external shock on the learning conditions decreases with the augmenting level of importance of the concerned norm.

Sub-Mechanism

- The importance of the envisaged change for the underlying cognitive structure makes learning processes in the organization and the decision-making processes in the boundary spanning units more difficult.

Chapter IV
Organizations and change in international relations (IR) theory

1. Introduction

This chapter serves the purpose to display the addressed research gap and to locate our explanation of change through organizational learning in the debate covering the dependent variable, organizational change in IOs, to be able to identify alternative explanations. Caused by the explorative design of our theory chapter, we have already discussed the most important elements of the relevant OL literature. Therefore, we will direct the attention to alternative explanations of organizational change in the international relations (IR) theory debate, drawing upon the theoretical concepts they often implicitly rely on.

We begin by briefly outlining how the mainstream rationalist IR approaches neglect the organizational perspective and treat change as rational, negotiated responses to environmental developments, while mainstream constructivist approaches emphasize the role of the underlying normative structures. In the second section, we introduce a number of approaches that allow the inclusion of learning concepts, and draw attention to a few attempts, which have tried to employ alternative concepts from organization theory to the study of IOs. Thirdly, we assess the different perspectives and provide an overview over alternative explanation of change, which should serve as control variables for our case study analysis.

2. Mainstream Approaches[61]

In the following, we demonstrate how organizations are viewed by the most common IR approaches and exhibit how they tend to neglect formal organizations as the unit of analysis. We adhere to the common distinction between rationalist and constructivist approaches.

2.1. Rationalist theories

Realism (including Neo-realism) and liberalism (including its various modified kinds), the two main rational approaches in IR, share the assumption that the international system is

[61] Due to space constraints this overview is reduced to vary basic concepts and includes unjust simplifications. For a thoroughly, yet compact and well written summary, we recommend Burchill, et al. 2001.

shaped by the interaction of independent nation states.[62] These are seen as rational, power- and utility- maximizing actors in an anarchic environment (cf. Burchill, et al. 2001). For both approaches IOs are nothing more than intentional problem-solving mechanisms deriving directly from the desires of political actors, i.e. nation-states. From this perspective IOs reflect current power relations and the interests of their members and they are designed intentionally as the function the organization performs for its members determines its forms (cf. Koremenos, et al. 2001, Lipson 1991: 762). Implicitly, they thus adopt a functionalist view of organizations associated with contingency approaches in organization theory.[63] The Regime-Theory[64] sub-branch of rationalist IR-theories (cf. Krasner 1982; Keohane 1984; Hasenclever, et al. 1997) has shown some interest in the actual functioning of international regimes, defined as "as principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures, around which actor expectations converge in a given-issue-area" (Krasner 1982: 1). They have offered useful insights to determine the conditions under which international cooperation is possible and demanded (cf. Keohane 1982, Alt, et al. 1988)[65] and how regimes may affect states in terms of constraining their actions (cf. Krasner 1982), but have little to say how these regimes behave over time.[66]

Rationalist approaches very rarely address the issue of change. Koremenos et al. (2001: 761-799) identify two perspectives on institutional change in rationalist IR approaches: a) development through adaptation and b) development through selection processes.[67]

a) From the perspective of adaptation, international institutions evolve as members learn, new problems arise, and international structures shift. States may modify institutions in stages, by making purposeful decisions as new circumstances arise, by imitating features from other institutions that work well in similar settings, or by designing explicit institutions to

[62] However, they differ whether these should be considered as unitary actors (cf. Moravscik 1997, Putnam 1988).
[63] Scott summarizes the core of these theories, as "the best way to organize depends on the nature of the environment to which the organization relates" (Scott 2001: 96).
[64] The constructivist approaches of Regime Theory fall victim to this simplification (cf. Hasenclever, et al. 1997).
[65] Usually IOs are perceived as public goods that are either provided by powerful or hegemonic states (realist perspective) or the result of cooperative bargaining settings (cf. Hasenclever, et al. 1997).
[66] An exception can be seen in approaches that include learning elements in iterated prisoners' dilemma games (cf. Axelrod and Keohane 1986). A further exception can be seen in punctuated equilibrium models, which emphasize moments of openness and rapid innovation followed by long periods of institutional stasis or lock-in (Goertz 2003, Krasner 1989).
[67] Very similarly Goodin identifies three traditions of change in the rational-choice literature on organizational change: social change by accident, by evolution, or by intentional design (Goodin 1996: 24). This rationalist concept of adaptation should not be confused with the adaptation mentioned by Türk 1989).

strengthen tacit cooperation. Organizational development thus involves deliberate choices in response to changing conditions.

b) Institutions may evolve as states select among them over time. States favor some institutions, because they are better suited to new conditions or new problems, and abandon or downplay those that are not.

These perspectives on change reflect the mentioned functionalist perspective, as institutions are treated as rational, negotiated responses to the problems international actors face.[68] Regime theorists treat IOs the way, pluralists treat the state, as non-purposive actors. Thus research has paid little attention to formal organizations and how IOs actually behave after they are created (Barnett and Finnemore 1999: 699). In addition, realist and liberalists treat interests and ideas as concrete, discrete objects rather than beliefs or mental events that are socially constructed (Laffey and Weldes 1997: 196). This leads them to adopt static decision-making concepts that are not fit to explain changes of interest and do not allow the discussion of effects of norm diffusion or learning (Goldstein and Keohane 1993: 5).

In sum, rational mainstream approaches of IR are behavioral, rationalist and state centric, and have been largely limited to explanations of international cooperation. If they consider change, they explain it as a process of rational adaptation, as members design and select organizational elements.

2.2 Constructivist theories

Constructivist IR approaches challenge the rationalist and positivist paradigm underlying realism and liberalism. They attach importance to cognitive structures, such as beliefs, knowledge, and interpretation, as are seen to influence the interest formation of states (cf. Wendt 1992, Wendt 1999; Reus-Smit 1997). Many constructivists go beyond the state centric approach and analyze processes of norm diffusion, global governance, and the construction of meaning through social interaction at different levels of international cooperation. Most of these approaches however are more concerned with developing meta-theoretical models beyond positivist understandings of theory and leave empirical research to the "problem-solving" theorists of the mainstream (Reus-Smit 2001: 227). Some of the exceptions we stress

[68] See the special issue of International Organization 2001 Vol. 55 No.4 for an overview of the work of the so-called Rationalist School of institutional design.

below can also be seen as belonging to this broad category, as constructivism and the OL-perspective share the focus on cognitive processes through which the world is giving its meaning, and on the constraints actors experience through social structures. It is hard to generalize the perspective constructivists have on change in organizations, but they are open to internal cognitive learning concepts, as well as more structural explanations (cf. Wendt 1999).

Certain constructivist approaches explicitly hint at a possible independent and stronger role of organizations in the learning process, but fail to analyze the internal functioning of the organization (cf. Abbot and Snidal 1998). In the few exceptions (cf. Barnett and Finnemore 1999, Albert and Hilkermeier 2004) norms and global polity are seen as the major drivers of change.[69] Only in their most recent book Barnett and Finnemore (2004) explicitly focus on organizational development. They include insights from neo-institutionalist theory, cultural perspectives on organizations, and bureaucratic theory (ibid: 17- 20)[70]. Similar to the OL view proposed here, they point at the autonomy of IOs and see them as active agents in the process of change. The authors detect the interplay of bureaucratic assertiveness and bureaucratic expansionism as a key factor for change (ibid: 156), and also identify crisis as a trigger for change, but fall short to employ a systematic concept of learning, or respectively the learning environment (ibid: 159). In sum, very few constructivists have shown an interest to explain change in formal international organizations, but similarly to the OL approach stress the need for shared understandings and the influence of social interaction. For constructivists, organizational change is usually a consequence of normative changes in the environment.

In conclusion, we can observe that formal IOs have been "strikingly left aside" by mainstream IR theories and there is a considerable neglect of the concepts available in organization theory (Albert and Hilkermeier 2004: 178). This neglect leaves the field with an essentially naïve view of organizations as simple mechanical tools that act directly and precisely at the bidding of their creators or as a function of the normative structure (Ness and Brechin 1988: 267). To the extent they do think about IO change, most IR theorists assume that factors outside IOs, e.g. state demands or environmental changes, are its causes.

[69] This refers to the constitutional structure or fundamental institutions, we defined as belonging to the external environment (cf. II, 3.1.1.)
[70] See also Barnett 2002 for a comparable notion.

3. Exceptions to the rule

In the following, we introduce other theories, which have treated the subject of organizational development and learning in international politics and have influenced the proposed model of OL in IOs. We can identify theories in the functionalist and the neo-institutionalist tradition, including one OL approach, as well as foreign policy analysis approaches.

3.1. Functionalism[71]

One strand of theory paying attention to the development of IOs over time is the functionalist approach (cf. Mitrany 1975, Claude 1966). Early functionalist approaches stress that IOs can only operate successfully in technical, non-political areas and are created to solve problems. They accent needs or problems as triggers of change, following the premise "form follows function" (Dicke 1994: 336). Neo-functionalist approaches (cf. Haas 1964) underline the capacities of IOs to change their environment and the perceptions of the involved actors through socialization and "spill-over" processes. They thus include internal processes as catalysts for change. In opposition to the OL-concept, they see change as an essentially incremental, quasi-automatic, and path-dependent process towards the final destination of an "international government" (Dicke 1994: 338). This strand of theory with its various modifications and applications is especially prominent in the study of European integration (cf. Rosamond 2004), but has not received the same amount of attention in the study of IOs.

However, variations of this approach stressing the importance of the so-called epistemic communities, i.e. communities of knowledge operating with shared paradigms, have addressed international institutions and proposed research programs emphasizing processes of norm diffusion and policy evolution (cf. Adler and Haas 1992). These more recent approaches are however not addressing formal organizations directly, but assume that these depend on the underlying institutions and a dominant community of knowledge will be able to change them. We have included this idea of epistemic communities in our concept of the IOs environment, as we see them as influential actors in the learning process. In opposition to epistemic community approaches, we include the dependence of learning on internal organizational processes.

[71] This is not the equivalent to a "functionalist" perspective on organizations (cf. IV, 2.1.)

The analysis of learning process in formal international organizations by Ernst Haas (1990) stands in this tradition and builds upon his earlier work on epistemic communities as well as insights from the OL-literature. He identifies four conditions for IOs to learn: 1) The existence of a dominant coalition of states, 2) the existence of a credible epistemic community supporting the dominant coalition, 3) the existence of sufficient consensual knowledge and 4) a reflective mode of thinking in the organization. Throughout the preceding chapters we have referred to Haas' work and drawn upon his ideas for our model-building process. However, Haas neglects the importance of the absorptive capacity and the internal structures of IOs, and falls short of identifying possible triggers of learning, as he concentrates on the description of three different patterns of learning to be found in different environmental settings.[72] Furthermore he does not reinforce his argument through a systematic empirical analysis. His book can nevertheless be seen as a very constructive first step to introduce learning models to IOs and his considerations offer a valuable foundation to deduct more explicit explanations.

In sum, functionalist and neo-functionalist approaches stress evolutionary process that lead to enhanced problem-solving capacities. The influence of epistemic communities for norm diffusion and the political nature of information are especially stressed by neo-functionalist approaches.

3.2 Neo-institutionalists and organizational theory approaches

Neo-institutionalists[73] challenge the simplistic view of organizations in political science in general and pledge for a "resurgence of concern with institutions" (March and Olsen 1984, DiMaggio and Powell 2001). They emphasize the embeddedness of organizations in institutional contexts and focus on cognitive and normative mechanisms of organizational change. The "institutionalist turn in political science" has especially influenced the study of European integration both in the rationalist and the constructivist tradition (cf. Aspinwall and Schneider 2000). Institutionalist influences can be detected in modifications of Regime Theory (cf. Hasenclever, et al. 1997), approaches addressing international political orders (March and Olsen 1998), and historical institutionalists approaches (e.g. Pierson 2004, Daase

[72] Haas (1990) distinguishes between a) adaptation through incremental growth, b) adaptation through non-growth or c) learning to manage interdependence.

[73] Again we want to highlight that we have made a somewhat problematic simplification. The neo-institutionalist label, following a distinction of Guy Peters (Peters 1999: 19-21), could also include rational-choice institutionalist , international institutionalists, empirical institutionalists and societal institutionalists. We see the first two approaches as belonging to rationalist IR mainstream and Regime Theory, while our label consists only of what Guy Peters calls normative institutionalism and historical institutionalists.

1999). But once again we can conclude that these approaches have very rarely included formal IOs in their analysis. However, they stress very important concepts we included in our analysis, such as the ambiguity of information, inefficiencies in history (March and Olsen 1998), or institutional transformation through radical shock (March 1988: 64).[74] Comparable to OL approaches; Neo-institutionalists focus on cognitive-cultural factors, the bounded rationality of actors, and the influence of underlying norms.

Recent studies taking into account concepts from organizational theory include the work of Lipson, who has employed a "garbage can" model of organizational choice[75] to explain how peacekeeping concepts were changed in the early 1990s (cf. Lipson 2004). Böhling (2001, forthcoming) has begun to relate OL concepts to IOs, but has not yet advanced beyond the working paper status. So far her work seems to lack a systemic analysis of the IOs learning environment, and she does not go beyond abstract theoretical considerations. These approaches reflect an increasing willingness of IR scholars to include concepts from organizational theory in the analysis of IOs, but they remain isolated[76], as the mutual neglect of organization theory and the study of IOs has increased the uncertainty regarding the applicability of the relevant concepts (Barnett and Finnemore 1999: 276).

3.3. Learning in Foreign Policy Analysis

One strand of theory dealing with international politics that has explicitly included learning concepts is the branch of foreign policy analysis (e.g. Breslauer and Tetlock 1991; Eberwein, et al. 1998; Jervis 1976; Levy 1994).[77] Their analysis focuses on the identification of key events, which shape future perceptions, something we have already discussed under the heading of triggers of learning.[78] These approaches have proven very useful for the analysis of crises and the myths surrounding it, and we have adopted elements of their studies to reinforce the proposed underlying mechanisms of our model. With the exception of Eberwein (1974, 1998) and Halperin (1974) the studies have not paid attention to the organizational

[74] As March and Olson have also written on OL, we can identify many similar concepts in their analysis of political institutions (cf. March and Olsen 1989).
[75] Cf. Kingdon 1984, the garbage can model does indeed show many similarities with the OL approach (see also March and Olsen 1989), as they see adaptation as more likely in times of a confluence of problems, solutions, and context (see also the concluding remarks of this study).
[76] See Fosdick 1999b and Lipson 2003 for further examples.
[77] See Goldstein and Keohane 1993 for an attempt to include cognitive learning elements in a rationalist framework of foreign policy analysis.
[78] Levy (1994: 279) illustrates this by his assertion that "Massada still moves the Israelis and Kosovo drives the Serbs."

dimensions of foreign policy change, and often treat dramatic events as offering direct inferences for learning.

In sum, we have identified functionalist, neo-institutionalists and foreign policy approaches that have highlighted learning processes in the study of international politics. However, with the few exceptions pointed out, they fail to address formal IOs and neglect the internal processes of the organization.

Table I

Approach	**Mode of Change**	**Cause of Change**
Rationalist IR mainstream	Rational Adaptation, Selection	Change of power and/or interest structure of the state-system or policy-change of dominant states
Functionalists (traditional)	Rational Adaptation	New problems or new technical knowledge
Neo-Functionalists	Norm Adaptation[79] and Learning	Epistemic communities (P.M. Haas), Dominant coalitions, epistemic communities, consensual knowledge, reflective culture (E. Haas)
Constructivists	Norm Adaptation or Learning	Social construction of new knowledge (externally and/or internally)
Neo-institutionalists	Bounded rational adaptation (Historical institutionalists, Garbage can)	Path-dependency, unintended consequences; confluence of problems, solutions, and context
Foreign Policy Approaches	Learning	Inference from single events, leadership
Organizational Learning in IOs	Simple and Complex Learning	Experience of external changes and triggering events

Overview: explanations of change in international organizations, compiled by the author

4. Assessment alternative explanations of change

In this chapter we have seen that the mainstream IR approaches neglect formal IOs as the unit of analysis, while functionalist and neo-institutionalists have stressed elements of change in IOs we included in the formation of our proposed mechanisms. Some key studies have been

[79] This means adaptation to the underlying normative structures or the norms shared by the dominant political coalitions. The underlying norms can be seen as contingent, external factors.

spotted that directly address change in IOs. The comparison with other models has highlighted the following specificities of our approach:

a) We consider change as not contingent upon external factors (norms, power, interests or problems), but as dependent on both internal and external factors.

b) We see shocks/crises as triggers to unblock learning processes, not as offering a direct inference for learning.

c) We see learning not as a pure act of social construction of knowledge, but also as a process reflecting the experience of reality structures.

d) We do not see organizational change as an unintended consequence, but as a result of learning processes, i.e. the attempt to achieve a more sound conception of reality limited by the configuration of the inner and outer learning environment.[80]

[80] Learning is seen as intendedly adaptive to organizational changes (cf. Simon 1991). This includes the concept of bounded rationality, which is of course also used in many concepts highlighting change as unintended consequences.

Chapter V
Research Design and Methodology

1. Introduction

In the introductory remarks we have outlined the double purpose of this study. Firstly, we wanted to transfer the concept of OL to the study of IOs in a systematic fashion, in order to propose a model to explain change in International Organizations. Secondly, we sought to apply this model in an empirical analysis to be able to make a better judgment on the feasibility of the main hypothesis and the made assumptions. To increase the explanatory power of the analysis, it is imperative to reflect on the external validity, internal validity and construct validity of the research design, which can be improved through the specification of the variables, control variables and research tools (cf. Geddes 2003). The main variables and their underlying mechanisms have already been discussed and operationalized in chapter III. In the literature overview we have further categorized alternative explanations of change, which should serve as a guide for observation regarding control variables (cf. table I). The aim of this chapter is to specify the research tools we use for the analysis and to outline the analytical framework of our case-study. Accordingly, we begin by justifying, why we have chosen a case-study design. In a second step we explain our case-selection; thirdly, we propose a more precise research design introducing the structure of the case- analysis of UN peace operations.

2. Case study design

In this section we justify the case-study design of our study by briefly discussing our conception of causality and introducing the concept of process tracing as a useful tool to analyze the proposed hypothesis.

2.1. Issue of causality and correlation

In the preceding chapter, we have already analyzed that the learning process is an internal and hidden phenomenon and it is hard to entangle any direct causes of learning. Rather we identified the task of OL concepts to identify favorable contexts of learning. Our main hypothesis was introduced not as a direct, deterministic relationship, but as a trigger and catalyst that unleashed certain processes, which make learning possible. We thus adopted a

broader conception of causality, in which causation means that the presence of a given variable changes the likelihood of a given outcome (cf. Pearl 2000).

In addition, we have identified complex learning as a process, which may extend over considerable time periods and be subject to considerable time lags, before change is institutionalized. Along the lines of this argument Pierson (2004: 140) observes that what seems to be a relatively rapid process of reform is often only the final stage of a process, which has in fact been underway for an extended period. Thus we cannot assume a direct connection between effects and intentions; “we have to go back and look“(Pierson 2000: 14). Like most social phenomena of interest to political scientists, we identified learning as a multivariate, interacting, historically contingent, and probabilistic phenomenon. Steinberg (2004: 4) comes to the conclusion that the “ontological underpinnings of correlational techniques are poorly suited to the study of these complex phenomena”. These blurred boundaries between phenomenon and context of learning point at the usefulness of a case study (Yin 2003: 13). Arguably, conducting a case study and searching for and identifying sources of variation in outcomes can lead to richer models than a quantitative research strategy that “can easily use controls and randomization to build a wall separating a larger causal mechanism from a small number of variables of immediate interest”(McKeown 1999: 174). Some authors even point out that the process of constructing a case study is superior to other methods for the task of theory construction, because completing a case study requires the researcher to decide what exactly something is a case of and exactly how causation works (McKeown 1999: 175).

2.2. Concept of historical process tracing

Historical process tracing is a relatively new label for the practice of analyzing causation by examining the streams of events mediating the relationship between antecedents and outcomes (cf. Bennett and George 2001). It can be seen as especially useful to analyze and to understand the evolution of institutions, policy processes, and social demands (Steinberg 2004: 2).

George and McKeown (1985) defined process tracing as the study of the "process by which various initial conditions are translated into outcomes." In contrast to correlational approaches, process tracing considers "a stream of behaviour through time... Any explanation of the processes at work in this case thus not only must explain the final outcome, but also must account for the stream of behaviour.”(George and McKeown 1985: 35-36) Accordingly,

process tracing breaks down complex relationship into smaller pieces, and distant relations between antecedents and outcomes into more proximate cause-and-effect couplings. Causal processes are selectively decomposed further and further until the plausibility of the component cause-and-effect relationships is so high that further explanation is unwarranted (Steinberg 2004: 4). Process tracing thus combines the advantages of quantitative research, i.e. the coherent specification of variables, and the adherence to a coherent and explicit methodology, with the analytical depth of historical narratives. As Bennett and George (2001: 42) point out "process-tracing is an analytical explanation couched in theoretical variables that have been identified in the research design." It further allows the researcher to place events in sequence, as it is often necessary to know not just "what" but "when" (Pierson 2004: 169).[81] We have tried to break the learning process down into these component cause-and-effect relationships and operationalized our variables in the introduced model of learning in IOs (chapter III). We strived to make every single sub-mechanism plausible through the theoretical discussion and to offer observation guidelines for the case- study through the explicit statement of underlying sub-mechanisms, which is also seen to increase the internal validity of our study (Yin 2003: 34).

The great problem of case studies is their limited external validity (cf. King, et al. 1994; Geddes 2003). Pierson (2004) underlines that single cases often have great difficulties to identify the role of structural facts. We have addressed this problem through a strict separation of the theoretical model-building and the analysis (Yin 2003: 34). Accordingly we propose that the developed model can be applied to the whole universe of cases we have already defined. The analysis thus serves only as a first test of the theoretical considerations and our aim should be seen in the exploration of the relationships between variables and theory-guided propositions, "systematizing the information in descriptive case studies [… for] descriptive or causal inference" (King, et al. 1994: 45) In consequence, we will assess the explanatory power of the model, propose possible changes, and hint at further research strategies in the concluding chapter.

In sum, we can stress that a case-study design seems adequate for the analysis of learning processes. We further introduced the concept of process tracing as a useful research tool when conducting a case study analysis of processes of change, as it combines the advantages of a quantitative approach with the depth of historical narratives.

[81] Lipson (2003: 19) highlights the usefulness of a process tracing methodology to study the complex environment of IOs.

3. Case selection

In this section, we introduce general criteria for case selection and then justify our selection of the United Nations in the field of peace operations.

3.1. Research objective and criteria

In the words of one ethnographer, a good case is not necessarily a ‘‘typical’’ case, but rather a ‘‘telling’’ case, in which ‘‘the particular circumstances surrounding a case serve to make previously obscure theoretical relationships sufficiently apparent’’ (cited in McKeown 1999: 174).[82] The primary criterion for case selection should thus be the relevance to the research objective of the study (cf. Bennett and George 1997). Keeping in mind that we are looking at OL as a possible explanation for change in IOs and that we need to understand resilience, to understand development (Pierce 2004: 154), we need to identify a case in which a time of relative constancy was followed by change, which may have been caused through learning processes. Consequently it seems adequate to conduct a longitudinal case-study in which the same single case is studied at two different points in time, interrupted by the independent variable (Yin 2003: 42). This choice also facilitates the observation of control variables and alternative explanations and increases the external validity of the analysis (De Vaus 2001: 220). We are thus looking for a single case with variation of the independent and dependent variable over a certain span of time.

3.2. Justification of our case selection of UN peace operations

Such a case can be found in the United Nations Secretariat in the field of peace operations, i.e. the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and elements of other UN Departments involved in this activity.[83] UN peace operations are seen to encompass traditional peacekeeping, as well as the more complex second generation missions, but exclude enforcement missions, undertaken without UN Secretariat support, and purely political missions, which are largely conducted by the DPA.[84] The term we adopt reflects the terminology preferred by the UN Secretariat, while peacekeeping is the better known

[82] See Yin (2003: 43) for an overview over case selection rationales.
[83] Such as the Department of Management (DM), Department of Political Affairs (DPA) and the Secretary-Generals Executive Office (EO).
[84] cf. a more detailed discussion in VI, 2.1., as well as VII, 4.2.

expression and refers to the same concept.[85] In the analysis we will use both terms synonymously.

As we will develop, the issues specific regime of UN peace operations developed during the Cold War as a technique to control violence by means other than enforcement or counter-violence. In the early 1990s its tasks were however rapidly expanded, which challenged the underlying cognitive structures and formal organizational procedures. In 1994 and 1995 the UN experienced major failures during their mission in Rwanda and Bosnia. After a period of marginalization, the UN started a major reform attempt of its UN peace operations resulting in a key reform proposal in 2000, called the Brahimi-Report, which was partially implemented in recent years and led to policy change and major restructuring of the Secretariat. We can thus observe the required variance of the independent and dependent variable. Furthermore we can identify a number of control variables already present in the early 1990s, i.e. changes in the external environment such as new problems, changes in the power relations, states interests, and changed norms.

Of course, the UN activities in the field of peace operations do not constitute an independent organization in a strict sense, but a section within the formal structures of the UN Secretariat. Haas (1990: 53) argues that it makes little sense to study the UN as a whole, since we know that certain of its subunits have independent programs and personnel activities. In his view it is thus more instructive to deal with entities of conflict management, economic development, human rights, and global commons as separate units of analysis. UN peacekeeping and its underlying cognitive and organizational structures developed during the Cold War relatively independent from other parts of the Secretariat. It can be seen as a distinguishable policy area, being one of the most visible UN activities and by far the largest operational activity of the UN Secretariat.[86] Although it shares many of its institutions with other parts of the Secretariat, it seems reasonable to analyze it as a separate unit rather than looking at the UN Secretariat as a whole. To simplify matters and make reading more comfortable, this dissertation will in the following simply refer to the Secretariat or the "organization", although only referring to the elements of the UN involved in peace operations.

[85] The term "peace operations" has been introduced as a substitute for peacekeeping by the Brahimi-Report to reflect the wide range of operations the UN "peacekeepers" have to address. The UN Secretariat has no role to play in pure enforcement mission, which are usually conducted by a coalition of member states upon authorization of the Security Council (Chesterman 2004a: 4).

[86] E.g. Peacekeeping accounts for over 80 % UN Secretariat procurement of goods and services (cf. Durch, et al. 2003: 93).

In conclusion, the UN in the field of peace operations with its main operational unit being the DPKO, seems to be the "telling case", which is needed to enlighten the understanding of the underlying process that cause organizational change in IOs, because we can observe two time periods separated by an external shock/crisis, and we can identify a number of control variables that are present at both periods in time.

4. Research design and analytical scheme

In this section we develop an analytical scheme from the concept of the IO learning environment and our theoretical model in order to allow for the proposed process tracing analysis. We can distinguish two different time periods interrupted by the appearance of the independent variable of an external shock/crisis.

4.1. Time period I (1988- 1995)

To analyze our propositions we will firstly apply the developed analytical framework of an outer and inner learning (cf. chapter II). This allows us to assess the learning capabilities of the Secretariat and to identify the learning blockades that hindered change and led to organizational persistence. Furthermore we will highlight the environmental changes that took place at the end of the Cold War to illustrates the existence of a number of control variables, i.e. causes of changes, as identified by the alternative explanations (cf. chapter IV), which failed to trigger OL and the creation of new consensual knowledge that could be translated into changed policy and organizational restructuring. The exact framing of this period from 1988- 1995 is explained by the fact that the UN Secretariat, following a long period of stability during the Cold War, experienced a number of changes beginning in 1988, which began to challenge the traditional concept UN peacekeeping. The end of this period cannot be defined as a distinct point, but is made up by the reaction of the outer environment to UN policy failures in 1994 and 1995. Both events cumulated to the external shock/crisis we will assess in the second part of the case study.

4.2. Time period II. (1995-2004)

During this time period we predict that the proposed mechanism of our main hypothesis can be observed. Accordingly we expect the external shock and the subsequent crisis to lead to a decrease of authority and legitimacy of the UN and the beginning of unlearning processes in

the Secretariat. We expect that this period of unlearning is followed by a period during which new boundary spanning activities are launched, the Secretariat shows a willingness to change and innovative leadership opens up possibilities for change. New dominant coalitions of states should form in response to the crisis and in support of reform. These processes should lead to a change in the cognitive structures, which in turn should result in new norms, changed policy and organizational change. To analyze these underlying mechanisms we will give an account of the external shock of the mid-1990s, the crisis of UN peace operations in the late 1990s and identify the changed conditions for the DPKO. Subsequently we will look in more detail at the events that led to the establishment of the Brahimi panel in 2000, which in turn led to the so-called Brahimi process of implementing the recommendations voiced in the report. In the last section we will evaluate, whether one can speak of a successful learning in the UN through assessing organizational change in the Secretariat.

5. Data sources

In principle, we rely on three different data sources. Firstly, the most important data source is the secondary literature appearing in academic journals or books addressing policy related issues such as the design and conduct of particular missions or changes in the nature of peacekeeping. Fortunately UN peace operations have attracted a dramatically escalating number of publications in recent years, but most of the articles lack a theoretical framework (Paris 2000: 27). Secondly, primary documents, such as official UN documentation, conference protocols and speeches, are considered. Lastly, the author has conducted a small number of personal interviews (see annex IV) to fill the gaps in the literature or to get personal accounts of internal proceedings. Interviewees include members of the DPKO, the Executive Office of the Secretary General (EO), think tanks and national governments. With this attempt to use multiple sources of evidence, we aim to increase the plausibility of our argument and to increase the construct validity of the study (Yin 2003: 43). The multitude of sources further allows us to look at a high number of variables over a fairly long time-period.

Chapter VI
The learning environment of UN peace operations (1988- 1995)

1. Introduction

In this chapter we will introduce the learning environment of the UN in the field of peace operations to identify environmental changes at the beginning of the 1990s and point at organizational persistence. It is highlighted how the learning processes, reflecting these environmental changes, are blocked by the ambiguity of signals, inefficient boundary spanning units, the rigidities of the cognitive structures, as well as the internal configuration of the DPKO. As has been proposed in the research design, we analyze the elements of the environment and the identified changes following the analytical scheme of the learning environment introduced in chapter II. Accordingly, we begin by analyzing the outer environment, before addressing the inner environment.

2. Analysis of the outer environment

Following the developed analytical scheme, the outer environment consists of norms, problem-issues, technology and political conditions. We will address each element in turn by taking a closer look at the outer environment of UN peace operations and hereby attend to the changes that became visible during the addressed time-period from 1988- 1995.

2.1. Norms

In the preceding chapter we have identified three layers of international norms relevant for the functioning of IOs. Due to the identified importance of norms for IOs, we will address the three elements in more detail than before. We will begin with the fundamental institutions, followed by the issue-specific regime, and finally emphasize the constitutional structures of UN peace operations.

2.1.2. Fundamental institutions

The emergence of peacekeeping[87] was a creative effort during the Cold War to "marry the limited means at the disposal of the UN to the lofty ends of maintaining international peace

[87] Cf. V, 3.2. for a discussion of the terminology of peacekeeping and peace operations.

and security" provided by its fundamental institutions consisting of international law in general and the UN Charter (Chesterman 2004a: 5). Accordingly, peacekeeping can be seen as a reaction to the stillbirth of the envisaged collective security functions of UN Charter during the Cold War. There is no reference to the concept in the United Nations Charter, as it has evolved slowly and in an ad hoc manner without ever leading to a codification of its fundamental institutions (Banerjee 2005: 1). As a tool for the UN it was largely invented by the former Secretary-General (SG) Dag Hammarskjöld and it illustrates very nicely the elasticity of the UN Charter, as Hammarskjöld located peacekeeping in the interstices between the peaceful and coercive measures available to the UN Security Council — 'Chapter VI½' as he famously called it[88] — a blurring of the distinction between the two that suggests the early origins of a doctrinal problem regarding the use of force (Johansen 1998: 90). Throughout the Cold War peacekeeping developed into the most prominent operational approach to international peace and security for the UN and developed its own issue-specific regime.

2.1.3. Issue-specific regime

Most analyses view the UN Emergency Force I (UNEF) mission in Egypt in 1957 as the first example of a peacekeeping mission, although the UN had already conducted a number of observation missions before (Bothe 1994: 575- 577).[89] The mode of operation of UNEF became the model for almost all future efforts of peacekeeping, and a convention with distinctive principles, norms, rules, and procedures was developed (cf. Daase 1999).[90] The foundation of this convention was the so-called "Holy Trinity of Peacekeeping" (Bellamy and Williams 2004a: 2), which required each mission to hold up the principles of a) consent of the conflicting parties, b) impartiality and c) the minimum use of force (cf. Diehl 1993, Warner 1995). These norms were reflecting the traditional functions of peacekeepers to implement cease-fire agreements, facilitate the withdrawal of forces, and monitor tense borders (Johansen 1998: 90). In addition to these three fundamental norms the practice was established that a Security Council (SC) mandate, or in a few occasions one from the General

[88] Formally, almost all missions until 1999 were established without reference to chapter VII, which would have allowed enforcement measures (Bothe 1994: 590 pp).
[89] UNEF was in fact the first armed UN peacekeeping force, which tasks was to supervise withdrawal of invading forces and act as buffer between Egyptians and Israelis; see http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/index.asp for an overview over all conducted missions.
[90] SG Hammarskjöld issued a report following the experiences of UNEF, commonly called "The Summary Study" in which the principles and modus operandi that were applied in later operations were first documented (cf. Shimura 2001).

Assembly (GA), authorized the establishment of a lightly armed interposition force under supervision of a leader appointed by the SG, with troops being provided by non-aligned and/or smaller states (Diehl 1993: 5).[91] The forces were designed to be strictly neutral in action and purpose, and were not to intervene in the internal affairs of the involved states. Force was rigorously to be used in self-defense only (cf. Warner 1995). With the exception of ONUC in 1960[92] and UNTEA/UNSF in West Guinea of 1962, all missions before 1988 were following this doctrine and it became lodged in the institutional memory of the UN and of the "peacekeeping community" (MacKinlay 2001: 55). This impartiality and neutrality resulting in the aversion to use force had a considerable influence on the organizational culture of the Secretariat and the self-image of the UN, as they saw themselves as soldiers without an enemy, not deployed to fight against an aggressor (Johansen 1998: 90). Beyond these general principles there were no precise definitions for what missions should entail, no criteria for when operations were to be established, and no guidelines for how to plan and deploy (Guéhenno 2002: 69). The management of UN field operations thus relied to a large degree on improvisation, ad hoc arrangements, and 'close working relationships' among members of the Secretariat and between officers and civilian personnel in the field (Berdal 1995: 182).

2.1.4. Constitutional structures

From our observation above we can distillate two constitutional elements that were at the base of traditional peacekeeping operations: The norm of sovereignty of nation-states and the non-intervention principle in internal affairs as reflected in Article 2 (7) of the UN Charter. Building upon these two norms peacekeeping was trying to introduce measures of collective security in an impartial, neutral and peaceful way (cf. Diehl 1993).

Changes in the 1990s

All of the three addressed norm-levels were challenged at the end of the Cold War. The relationship between sovereignty and international order was challenged by a new

[91] The main contributors to peacekeeping operations during the Cold War were Australia, Austria, Canada, Denmark, Fiji, Finland, Ghana, India, Ireland, Nepal, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Senegal and Sweden (cf. Jakobsen 2000).

[92] Chesterman (2004:8) points out that this failed operation in the Congo (ONUC) already laid bare the contradictions between the political basis for peacekeeping and the military imperatives on the ground. He indicates that it "split the Security Council, almost bankrupted the United Nations, and ensured that force was not used on a comparable scale for decades". Far from being regarded as a new type of operation, Congo was regarded as an aberration: the UN Secretariat and the member states were 'more interested in forgetting than in learning, more interested in avoiding future ONUCs than in doing them better."

"humanitarianism", as the normative climate shifted towards a greater concern for issues of human rights reflected by a growing interest in matters that previously would have been considered to fall under the principle of non-intervention in internal affairs (cf. Holzgrefe and Keohane 2003; Chesterman 2004b; Barnett 1995). Issues of good governance, human rights and democratization became increasingly part of the international agenda, as was also acknowledged by the vision set out by the SG Boutros-Ghali in the Agenda for Peace (AfP) in 1992.[93] The linkage between human rights and security had become an element of the post-Cold War environment. As human rights abuses became the cause for UN intervention, the UN could no longer carry out peacekeeping missions without promoting human rights (Barnett and Finnemore 1999: 712). This trend was however only revealing very ambiguous information for the Secretariat, as it was highly disputed and contested among states and other actors in the international system and early talk of a "New Global Order" was quickly giving way to more sober proclamations of liberal norms (Karns and Mingst 2001: 222). However, in hindsight we can observe that the notion of state sovereignty, international community, and national and international responsibility had changed (Thakur and Schnabel 2001b: 4-5). Human rights and humanitarianism, democratization, and, more broadly, liberalism had emerged as relevant norms for the environment of peace operations (Lipson 2003: 2). The information the Secretariat received was however very vague, as the new norms were not codified and heavily contested, as the continuing debate over the right or the duty of humanitarian intervention nicely illustrates (Berdal 2001: 40).

The development of the so-called "second generation" peacekeeping missions[94], in which peacekeepers were increasingly sent into intrastate conflicts, was stretching the issue-specific regime of peacekeeping. These missions addressed intrastate, rather than interstate, conflicts, and involved significant nation-building and enforcement activities in addition to the traditional interposition and truce observation role of peacekeepers (cf. Lipson 2004, Doyle 2001). They led to a further blurring of the borders between the concepts of enforcement and peace operations, and were increasing the ambiguity about their purpose and proper design of peace operations. The "Holy Trinity" of peacekeeping was however upheld both inside the

[93] Peou observes however that the idealism of the AfP was never realized and it had a limited impact on global peace in general (Peou 2004: 54).

[94] There are a number of classifications and typologies trying to encompass the different nature of peacekeeping after 1988. Doyle and Sambanis (2000) and Karns and Mingst (2001) identify three generations, though they define and classify missions differently. Thakur and Schnabel (2001a) even identify six generations. Following Lipson (2003) we will use the term second generation peacekeeping to encompass the entire spectrum of new peacekeeping missions, because it illustrates that the nature of peacekeeping had fundamentally changed.

UN and in several national governments, as they saw nothing fundamentally new in the emergencies in the Balkans and Somalia or the internal security challenges faced by UNTAC in Cambodia (MacKinlay 2001: 58). Early success in Namibia and Cambodia were seemingly giving the signal that the fundamental principles of peacekeeping were not in need for change and should serve as the basis for future operations (cf. VI, 3.).

It can be concluded that UN peace operations, as largely consisting of traditional peacekeeping missions during the Cold War, were based on a number of implicit rules on the fundamental institutions level and maintained distinctive principles, norms, rules, and procedures at the level of the issue-specific regime. At the beginning of the 1990s new types of peacekeeping missions were challenging the implicit fundamental institutions as the borders between enforcement and peacekeeping were further blurred and the conception of state sovereignty seemed to have changed. We will address the changes to the issue-specific regime in more detail below, but the conclusion remains that the modifications in the normative structures were sending very ambiguous signals to the organization, as they were contested and, in the best tradition of peace operations, not codified into fundamental institutions, such as the UN Charter. This created conceptual ambiguity and as a consequence gave the Secretariat the space to ignore these changes and to adhere to existing norms and principles.

2.2. Problem- issues

In this part we will highlight the specific problem issues the UN faced in the realm of peace operations and how these changed during the early 1990s. The Cold War offered a period of relative stability in the state-system, as the superpower stand-off was only permitting minor international wars and the UN was largely excluded from interference in intra-state conflict (cf. section 2.3.). Conflicts were to the greater extent taking place between government armies and along national frontiers. Peacekeepers were operating in stable environments and their presence was often rather passive and symbolic than requiring operational activities (MacKinlay 2001: 56).

Changes in the 1990s

At the end of the Cold War, conflict in the international system became an increasingly sub-state or intra-state character, often involving ethnic unrest, and bearing little resemblance to

an engagement between standing armies of states. The early 1990s saw a sharp rise in internal wars that ended (cf. Marshall and Gurr 2003) and the emergence of the phenomenon of failing states, i.e. very weak unsubstantial states with a high level of domestic conflict (Sorensen 1999: 38). Intra- state conflict and state failure involve an increasing number of conflict parties, such as rivaling warlords, para-military forces, or criminal groups who do not feel bound by international law (Karns and Mingst 2001: 221). These new large-scale domestic conflicts, often not providing a peace to keep and outside the dynamics of classic Clausewitzian warfare, presented an awkward problem for the UN, being a collective security system based on sovereign states (cf. Sorensen 1999). Furthermore, the already outlined normative shift towards a greater concern for human rights broadened the scope of problem-issues relevant for peacekeepers towards the protection of civilians in the field, seeing that local authorities were too weak or not willing to guarantee protection.

The changing nature of the addressed conflicts was accompanied by an extreme task expansion for the peacekeepers. The former observers were now engaging in tasks as diverse as monitoring of elections, administering governmental ministries, maintaining internal security, repatriating refugees or protecting UN personnel and humanitarian relief workers (Johansen 1998: 90). The increasing involvement in operational activities lead inevitably to an engagement in the internal and external strategic elements of the conflict, and thus making an impartiality of peacekeepers beyond a declaration of purpose practically impossible (cf. Sanderson 2002). As the political situations became much more dynamic and involved far more variables, the problem environment in which mission had to operate became vastly more complicated and dangerous.

In conclusion, the changes of the addressed problem-issues are pointing at more uncertain, unstable, and unpredictable operations than the ones, which had dominated Cold War realities (Simai 1997: 202). This led to a lot of information about environmental changes for the UN, but also a lot of uncertainty and ambiguity about the nature of the emerging problem-issues.

2.3. Technology

In this section we treat the cognitive and material elements we identified to constitute the technology offered by the environment to assess the scientific ambiguity and redundancy of resources available to UN peace operations.

As was developed above, traditional peacekeeping was largely limited to the observation of peace treaties and interposition between hostile forces, and did not require special cognitive resources or skills.[95] The well-established issue-specific regime was offering relatively clear guidelines for the behavior of peacekeepers. As the forces were not directly involved in the resolution of the conflict through operational activities, no clear measures for operational success or failure of the mission beyond the judgment of the Security Council (SC) existed, which also led to longstanding observation missions.[96] This lack of direct operational goals created an atmosphere that was indifferent to the operational efficiency of the organization and the missions (Shimura 2001: 50). On the material resource level, the peace operations were organized on an ad-hoc basis once mandated by the SC, and were conducted by contingents of national armies, leaving the size of the mission dependent on the willingness of Member States to contribute troops. The cost of peacekeeping operations were billed to the UN members according to the peacekeeping scale of assessment, an informal arrangement, which is derived from the UN's regular budget scale of assessment[97] and continued from mission to mission. There also existed a small regular budget for headquarter support, which is controlled by the General Assembly (Durch, et al. 2003: 122). As the UN has no power to tax or borrow, the "UN's coffers rapidly run dry", when its members fail to contribute their dues (Durch 1997: 13).

Changes in the 1990s

The outlined task expansion and a substantial upsurge in the number of missions led to a greater need of cognitive and material resources to operate successfully. Between 1988 and 1995, the Security Council authorized 27 missions, compared to 13 in the preceding 40 years. From fewer than 10,000 troops deployed in five missions in 1988, the number of personnel deployed in the field in peacekeeping missions peaked in 1994 at 77,783, with an annual cost of $3.6 billion as compared to $230 million six years earlier.[98] The new types of missions demanding substantial operational capabilities made it more and more difficult to attain the necessary resources, as Member States were increasingly unwilling to provide the human and

[95] The needed skills could easily be found in national militaries (cf. Ratner 1997).
[96] E.g.: Since 1948 UNMOGIP is monitoring ceasefire lines between Pakistan and India in the Kashmir and Jammu region, UNTSO was also established in 1948 in the wake of the Arab-Israeli war. Both missions still continue until today (cf. http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/index.asp).
[97] The regular scale, revised every three years by the UN's Committee on Contributions, roughly reflects ability to pay, as the GNI adjusted for national indebtedness, low per capita GNI and others minor indicators (Durch, et al. 2003: 4).
[98] Figures compiled from http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/contributors/index.htm

financial assets needed to fulfill the mandates the SC had authorized (cf. Johansen 1998). This imposed key limitations on those operations, especially when states declined to contribute forces (Durch 1997: 9). This increase in demand, unmatched by the contribution of Member States, led to the danger of overstretching the capabilities of the UN, as the SG Boutros-Ghali already observed in the Agenda for Peace in 1992 "a chasm has developed between the tasks entrusted to the organization and the financial means provided to it."[99] During the early 1990s it became the rule that the mandates assigned to the UN were not matched in the composition of the force, its resources, or its equipment and weaponry (cf. Banerjee 2005).

The new tasks also required specialized knowledge and skills, regarding activities such as public information or local administration, that were available neither in the Secretariat nor in many national armies of troop-contributing states and had to be developed on a learning-by-doing basis (Durch 1997: 23). The vast difference between the individual set-up of missions and personnel turnover, as new national contingents were deployed, made it complicated to draw lessons and almost impossible to transfer knowledge from one mission to the other (Barnett and Finnemore 1999: 721).

Furthermore the mounting academic research on UN peace operations did not help to decrease ambiguity. Even though a growing amount of academic literature was addressing peacekeeping and mentioning lessons to be learned, no agreement emerged over how to systematically distinguish success or failure of peace operations (cf. Lipson 2003). Analysts still disagree on how to think about peacekeeping and how the operational impact should be evaluated, as different actors with different constituencies have different objectives and criteria (cf. Druckman and Stern 1999). It is unclear both at the academic and at the decision-making level, whether missions should be evaluated along broad objective criteria, such as conflict resolution or the reduction of human suffering, or more unique, mission-specific criteria, such as the fulfillment of the mandate and short-term impact on the local population.[100] These difficulties in assessing peacekeeping missions are both conceptual and methodological, pointing both at strategic and scientific ambiguity and leading to normative (political) assessments of mission success or failure. Additionally, systematic evaluation of peacekeeping began only after the first wave of new missions had taken place, coming too late to offer knowledge in response to the emergence of the new problems. Furthermore

[99] UN document, A/47/277, para. 69,17 June 1992,
[100] There is a vast amount of literature on this subject. (e.g. Diehl 1993; Durch 1997; Featherston 1994)

scholars were often “chasing headlines”, i.e. altering their research priorities to accommodate the interests of policy-makers in order to continue producing work that is deemed to be policy-relevant (cf. Paris 2000).

In conclusion the technology of the outer environment of UN peace operations in the time-period from 1988- 1995 can be characterized as offering insufficient cognitive and material resources, leading towards scientific and strategic ambiguity, and insufficient provision with financial and human capabilities.

2.4. Political conditions

In this section, we will address the political conditions under which peacekeeping operated in the addressed time period and illustrate the changes in the early 1990s.

Traditional peacekeeping operations, which usually dealt with international conflicts, involved a limited set of similar actors and the political conditions during the Cold War were characterized by inertia, thus offering stability for the organization. The political environment of peace operations is dominated by the five permanent members of the Security Council (P5), as their veto can block decision-making and thus any action of the UN in peace operations. To overcome the blockade in the SC, the GA mandated three peacekeeping missions during the Cold War.[101] This exception has however not become the rule and since the end of the Cold War there has been no UN-mission authorized outside the SC. Secondly, troop-contributing countries are of essential importance as resource providers, although they are, as a group, not formally included in the decision-making process.

Changes in the 1990s

This situation of political stability changed dramatically at the end of the Cold War, as foreign policy shifts of the Soviet Union and the USA in the late 1980’s led to an increased cooperation among the P5. In addition, Western states showed a growing willingness to intervene in the domestic affairs of states and especially in intra-state conflicts (Lipson 2004: 5). After Namibia’s successful transition from South African rule under UN auspices in 1989 an "atmosphere" of optimism and enthusiasm for UN peacekeeping developed and it came to be seen as a kind of magic bullet for dealing with regional conflict (Durch 1997: 12). The

[101] This refers to the missions UNEF I in Egypt (1957- 67) as well as UNSF/UNTEA in Indonesia and Iran (1962-63) (Bothe 1994: 576).

enthusiasm however was not universal; especially the developing world responded with apprehension and was very reluctant to accept this new kind of interventionism (Peck 1999: 428). Another source of turbulence was the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1992 and the increase in UN membership from 154 to 184 in just two years.

The emergent coalition of Western states in support of the new kinds of peace operation at the beginning of the 1990s showed early frictions. The policy of the remaining superpower, the United States of America, was far from uniformly supportive towards UN peacekeeping and continued to focus on an asset of issues quite distant from those that dominated the UN's agenda (Jones 2004: 9). The expansionist US role in Somalia in 1993 was followed by the famous Presidential Policy Directive 25 of 1994, which set out tough conditions for US involvement in UN peacekeeping and resumed a position of reduced commitment (cf. Luck 1999). There was no dominant coalition of states in univocal support of the expansion of UN peace operations, which could set the guidelines for UN policy and offer the Secretariat clear information about its future role and tasks. The cool response to the visions set out by SG Boutros-Ghali in his Agenda for Peace (AfP) and its failure to instigate fundamental reform serve as a further illustration. The states could be seen to be divided into two opposing camps: Firstly, the advocates of traditional UN peacekeeping missions, usually developing states from the South, which focused on the traditional norms of sovereignty and non-interference, and adhered to the strict distinction between peacekeeping and enforcement action.[102] Secondly, advocates of humanitarian intervention and human rights, usually from the developed North, were in support of more robust and multi-dimensional missions. (cf. Malone and Lotta 2002).

Along with the larger quantity of missions, the task expansion of peace operations led to a dramatic increase in the number of the involved actors at mission and at headquarters level (Ratner 1997: 81). Multiple national, international, or nongovernmental groups became gradually implicated in the operations, often with their own policy priorities, field objectives, and sources of funding (Durch 1997: 3). The Secretariat and the peace forces on the ground had to increasingly interact with these groups to coordinate activities, leading to more information that had to be processed.

[102] One could argue that these states were interested in a low performance or even failure of the more robust UN peace operations, as they did not agree with the SC mandating practice. Accordingly they had not interest to strengthen the Secretariat and increase their capabilities to conduct these types of missions (cf. Seibel 1996). In the language of OL, we refer to this line of argument as a lack of a dominant coalition in favor of reform.

We can assess that the political conditions of UN peace operations turned from a stable inertia into a very complex, rapidly changing turf with a set of new actors, an increase in ambiguity and a lack of a dominant coalition of states offering a clear direction for the organization.

The analysis of the outer environment has illustrated very difficult learning conditions during the first half of the 1990s. An increase of complexity in the political conditions, problem issues and the involved norms was accompanied by scientific and conceptual ambiguity. This instability offered a high amount of information about environmental changes, but also a lack of consensual knowledge and interpretation.

3. Analysis of the inner environment

In this section we examine the inner learning environment of the UN in the realm of peace operations and point at changes that occurred during the addressed time period. It will be analyzed how the organization dealt with the increased complexity and ambiguity offered by the outer environment. Following the introduced analytical scheme, we firstly evaluate the activities of the boundary spanning units and secondly the absorptive capacity of the Secretariat.

3.1. Boundary spanning units

The UN provides for several boundary spanning units that deal with peace operations. These are the Security Council (SC), the General Assembly (GA), including its Fourth and Fifth Committee, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) and the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C 34), as well as the missions established by SC mandates, which are also considered as UN organs for whose acts the organization is responsible (Bothe 1994: 591).

3.1.1. Security Council

As established in the UN Charter, the SC is its main organ in matters of peace and security, and this primacy has been transferred to the informal institution of peacekeeping operations. With the already noted exceptions, the SC set up all mandates of peacekeeping forces, a convention that has been unchallenged up to today (Bothe 1994: 591). Blocked by superpower stand-off during the Cold War the SC did not adopt many resolutions and left a

large space for discretion for the SG in the set-up of missions within the well established issue-specific regime of traditional peacekeeping operations (Shimura 2001: 48).

Changes in the 1990s

As was pointed out before, the work of the SC was revived at the end of the Cold War with meetings taking place almost on a constant basis. It quadrupled the number of resolutions and mandated an increasing number of missions, involving more and more complex tasks, which offered a great deal of information about environmental changes to the Secretariat (Doyle 2001: 530). Nevertheless the SC was also the source for a lot of ambiguity for the organization.

Firstly, after the first enthusiasm had passed and the complexity of peacekeeping became apparent, the SC decisions were often lacking a clear sense of direction, and, as a former advisor of the DPKO noted, mandates were often very vaguely formulated and sometimes changed several times as subsequent resolutions were at times even contradictory in their assessments.[103] The SC regularly responded on a reactive ad-hoc basis as crisis emerged without providing performance benchmarks for the organization, and was sending peacekeepers to situations for which they were not prepared and ill-suited. (cf. Thakur and Schnabel 2001a). It did not grant the leadership that would have been required for a coherent policy of the Secretariat, as only ambiguous signals were provided to the organization on how peacekeeping operations should be organized and what was expected by the Secretariat (Karns and Mingst 2001: 232). This was also a consequence of an emerging lack of consensus vis-à-vis the conduct of missions and a great deal of uncertainty regarding the nature and sources of proliferating interstate, ethnic, and civil conflicts in the SC (Lipson 2003: 22).[104] Secondly, the already addressed gap between the assigned tasks and the lack of adequate financial and military resources was providing the Secretariat with indistinct signals. Gordenker observes that governments were often pretending to have little responsibility for acting on what had been approved in the SC and that the resulting gap between SC rhetoric and the realities on the ground could be described as a "self-fulfilling prophecy of failure" (Gordenker 1999: 5). Thirdly, the effectiveness of the boundary-spanning activities of the SC

[103] Interview with Ekkehard Griep, 22 February 2005

[104] Ambiguity was especially evident regarding the rules of engagement, as there was no clear doctrine on when and how force was to be used by peacekeepers. As Chesterman (2004: 20) points out, the reluctance to use military force was often serving as a cover for disagreement among the major powers about their objectives and the continuing absence of a coherent policy towards the conflict itself. See also Berdal 2000.

was hampered by the practices of the Secretariat. As a former advisor of the DPKO pointed out, the Secretariat was usually operating on best-case assumptions in order to please Member States and more worried about diplomatic consequences than the operational realities.[105] The optimism about the capabilities of peace operations was thus accompanied by wishful thinking about UN managerial capacities for military operations (Weiss 1999: 417). In the light of the developed ambiguity in the technological environment and the pre-eminence of political judgments on mission performance, this kind of Secretariat behavior seems however only consequential.

3.1.2. The General Assembly (GA)

The GA, being the plenary organ of the UN considers peacekeeping related issues in a number of sub-committees. The Special Political and Decolonization (Fourth) Committee, one of the six Main Committees of the GA, bases its considerations on the on-going work of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, which was established as early as 1965, when it was mandated to conduct a comprehensive review of all issues relating to peacekeeping. While the Committee began with a membership of 34 troop-contributing states (therefore it is still called the C'34), it now encompasses over one hundred states. Other UN Member States can also participate in the work of the C'34 and its working groups as observers.[106]The C'34 follows a consensual decision-making style and is reflecting different majorities than the SC as Southern and developing states can substantially influence outcomes.

Another subsidiary organ of the GA being of essential importance for UN peace operations is the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), a 16-member body that reviews and makes recommendations on every budget-related document sent to the GA's Fifth (Financial) Committee.[107] In opposition to most other UN organs, the members of the ACABQ consist of individual experts appointed on a personal capacity, but still reflecting the principle of equitable geographical representation. The ACABQ has the power to block any reorganization of the Secretariat involving changes of the budget.

[105] Interview with Winrich Kühne, 15 February 2005; Kühne highlights that the "Secretariat was telling the Council what they wanted to hear. If the Secretariat called for 30.000 troops, but the Council was only willing to mandate 3 000, the Secretariat would issue an according report."
[106] For further information, see: www.un.org/depts/dpko/dpko/ctte/CTTEE.htm
[107] As William Durch points out, the "ACABQ is one of the most powerful, but largely unstudied organs of the United Nations". interview with William Durch, 25 February 2005

Although the ACABQ has purely an advisory function to the Fifth Committee, its recommendations are generally adopted (Meng 1994: 855).

Changes in the 1990s

The new activism and enthusiasm that could be observed in the SC in the early 1990s was not univocally reflected in the GA and its subsidiary organs, thus decreasing the effectiveness of boundary spanning activities of the two central decision-making bodies as information providers for the Secretariat and as actors in the reform process. Especially the C'34 remained skeptical towards the deployment of peacekeepers in hostile environments. The Committee, reflecting the majority of developing states in the GA, adopted much more reserved positions on the expansion of peacekeeping, especially with respect to more militarily robust missions. It continued to stress the importance of the "Holy of Trinity" and the successes of traditional missions of peacekeeping throughout the early 1990s and was blaming the SC for an overstretch of missions and for taking peacekeepers where they do not belong.[108] The reports and work of the C'34 were however largely of a symbolic nature, as they often did not contain concrete proposals for reform and received little attention in the Secretariat. As a member of the DPKO points out: "The Under Secretary General made his statement at the beginning of the annual session [of the C'34]. Afterwards the C'34 was left going about its own business."[109]

The ACABQ was also skeptical towards reform, especially when it involved the strengthening of the Secretariat in military aspects. For example, externally financed military advisors had to be hired beginning in 1995 to increase the capabilities of the DPKO, as it was impossible to achieve an increase of the regular budget. In fact these military advisors had to leave the DPKO in 1997, when the GA decided to no longer tolerate the externally financed staff, which was hired outside the proportional recruitment scheme. As a member of the DPKO at the time points out: "We had to fight over every single additional post with the ACABQ and we always lost". [110]

[108] UN document A/53/127, paras 47- 48, 21 May 1998
[109] Interview with Eiko Ikegaya, 16 February 2005
[110] Interview with Ekkehard Griep, 22 February 2005

3.1.3. Missions

Peacekeeping missions also serve as boundary spanning units for the organization, as they transfer information about the "realities on the ground". We have already discussed the general composition of the missions above. The nature of the missions during the Cold War did not require substantial feedback from the field level and there were no structures in the Secretariat to process information, as just a handful of civilians and military officers traced the peacekeeping operations underway (Durch 1997: 2-5). The focus of the Secretariat was to suit the SC and not to draw lessons from the field (cf. Durch 2004; Thakur and Schnabel 2001b). Additionally, hardly any exchange of personnel between headquarters and field level took place, and mission staff was treated as "temps" whose advice did not count for much in the Secretariat.[111] There had been no attempt to systemize knowledge from one mission to the other, as long as the missions followed the well-established doctrine.

Changes in the 1990s

As determined above, the task expansion of peace operations led to an increasing need for cognitive technology in the organization. However, continuing with the established practice, missions were only very ineffectively used as an activity through which information could be gathered. This is due to a number of reasons. Firstly, the missions tended to have a hurried, improvised character that patched together various organizational elements in very incongruent patterns, leading to very complex mission structures making effective communication almost impossible (Gordenker 1999: 2). Secondly, the Secretariat was extremely understaffed for its tasks, as there "was never quite enough time in between fighting fires to compile the guidelines, set down the lessons, find the best people, or design the best structures and processes in which to work" (Durch 2004b: 4). Thirdly, the Secretariat continued with the priority of "keeping member states' New York missions happy" instead of meeting field missions need (Durch, et al. 2003: 51). Usually headquarters did not seek the advice from the field on policy matters or consult them on how missions ought to be structured or run (cf. Sanderson 2002; Fleitz 2002). This gap between Secretariat and mission level was deepened by the fact that UN missions required more and more military expertise, regional knowledge and logistic support, which could not be given by the Secretariat (cf.

[111] Interview with William Durch, 25 February 2005

Shimura 2001: 51). The last two observations already hint at a low absorptive capacity of the Secretariat, which we address in the next section.

Assessment of boundary spanning units

We have identified three sets of boundary spanning units of UN peace operations. For complex organizational learning to occur all three units need to be taken into account both as information providers and implementing agents, as the GA, including the addressed sub-committees, controls reform through the financial resources, the SC sets up the missions and their mandates, and missions implement any changed policy. Although the GA and the SC were identified as very active boundary spanning units in terms of the number of resolutions, their disagreement and incoherence both inside the two bodies and in between each other provided a lot of ambiguity for the Secretariat. In fact, the reluctance of the GA to follow the SC's notion of peacekeeping towards a stronger military role was blocking reform efforts. The ineffectiveness of missions as boundary spanners also owes to the Secretariat, which refused to make an honest attempt to systemize knowledge from previous missions. Taking a look back at the changes of the political conditions, we can also spot that the UN was lacking boundary spanning activities that took into account the new actors on the scene such as other international agencies, regional organizations or NGOs.

3.2. Absorptive capacity

In this section, we try to assess the absorptive capacity of UN peace operations and highlight the cultural rigidities and inadequate resources that were blocking a learning process in the Secretariat.

During the Cold War traditional peacekeeping operations support was run by the Office for Special Political Affairs, largely influenced by the leading figures of Ralph Bunche and Sir Brian Urquhart, who had been at the UN since its founding. Shimura (2001: 51) notes that this unit remained a small group of capable and dedicated officials for 40 years and UN headquarter support for peacekeeping operations was the job of a relative handful of bright and increasingly hardworking people.[112]

[112] See also Ratner (1997: 72 pp.) for a more detailed account of the functions of the Secretariat.

Changes in the 1990s

As peacekeeping was becoming more and more important for the Secretariat as a whole, the Office for Special Political Affairs was expanded in 1992 in part by incorporating a division from the Department of Management and was renamed Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO). The work of the DPKO in peace operations is still assisted by the Department of Management, the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Public Information. As any bureaucracy however, the UN Secretariat is regrettably often prone to interagency rivalries and turf protection leading towards difficult coordination between the departments (Shimura 2001: 55). Under the new leadership of the Under-Secretary-General (USG) Kofi Annan the DPKO was further reorganized in 1993, creating a new internal structure including the Office of Operations, the Office of Planning and Support, and a 24-hour situation centre.[113] These structural arrangements were intended to increase the Secretariat's capacity to process information and to serve the missions' need better. However they did only very inadequately so, as they were "designed to match the needs of traditional missions, but not responding to the changed nature of conflict".[114] In our opinion the reforms cannot be seen to reflect complex learning for two reasons: Firstly, the Secretariat continued to adhere to the cognitive structures of traditional peacekeeping. Secondly, the rearrangements were not accompanied by the provision of sufficient resources, i.e. staffing and finance, and the reform of bureaucratic procedures. We will address these two elements in turn.

Cognitive structures

As we have already elaborated above, UN's peacekeepers considered themselves as independent, objective, neutral actors who simply implement SC resolutions, not being the instrument of any great power, but as representatives of the "international community" (Barnett and Finnemore 1999: 709). This is best illustrated by the aforementioned Brian Urquhart when he stressed that "a true peacekeeper has no enemies — just a series of difficult and sometimes homicidal clients".[115] This led to an UN culture "which, while not being explicitly pacifist, is opposed to associating the UN with the management of force".[116] The

[113] See annex II for an organizational chart of the DPKO in 2003.
[114] interview with Winrich Kühne, 15 February 2005; Kühne further notes that these reforms were reflecting the AfP's focus on interstate-conflict. He highlights that the AfP did not mention the robustness of mandates, or the phenomenon of spoilers and failed states, reflecting an increasing divergence between field level and the headquarter.
[115] cited in Chesterman 2004a: 7
[116] cited in Weiss 1999: 417

result has been both a hesitancy to respond to post-Cold War crises and what Urquhart has characterized as the use of the Blue Helmets outside "the political or diplomatic contexts, which made traditional peacekeeping viable".[117] Accordingly, Kühne spots that the enthusiasm about the expansion of peacekeeping was not shared by the Secretariat, as it kept calling for "a peace to keep". In his opinion the DPKO continued to think in the old categories and "refused to realize that the world had changed and that they would need to reform to not be out of business".[118] The successes of more traditional missions at the end of the 1980's and the Nobel Peace Prize of 1988 recognizing the work of UN peacekeeping troops were contributing to this resistance (Diehl 1993: 2-3).[119]

This dominance of a more traditional view inside the Secretariat is also reflected in the General Guidelines for Peacekeeping of 1995, which stated: "Peacekeeping and the use of force should be seen as alternative techniques and not adjacent points on a continuum. There is no easy transition from one to the other."[120] This reluctance to use force is consistent with the traditional concept of peacekeeping as an impartial activity undertaken with the consent of all parties, in which force is used only in self defense. As a result, a great deal of unwillingness to accept the new, more robust UN peace operations and to plan accordingly was prevalent in the DPKO.[121] Durch (1997: 26) further analyzes that the DPKO was not realizing that every action taken by outsiders in a civil war situation affects the local balance of power, so that any mandate, no matter what the intent, operating in an active war zone is bound to be charged politically. A former advisor to the DPKO stresses that the Secretariat had the expertise for traditional missions and that was what the DPKO wanted and tried to do, as it preferred to operate on known territory.[122] This lack of unlearning in the face of the new challenges, led the Secretariat to blame solely the SC for policy failures, which was viewed to continue to send peacekeepers to contexts in which they do not belong. This attitude is illustrated by the statement of SG Boutros-Ghali that the problem of UN peacekeeping was

[117] cited in Fosdick 1999a: 6
[118] Interview with Winrich Kühne, 15 February 2005
[119] This reluctance to accept changes to the traditional concept of peacekeeping is also reflected in the AfP of 1992. Although Boutros-Ghali is sharing the optimism regarding a new conception of sovereignty and human rights, he advocates a strict division of enforcement and peacekeeping missions (cf. Chesterman 2004). Kühne stresses that the AfP was drawing an academic and artificial distinction that was not matching the realities on the ground, but rather reflecting the absence of lessons learned. Interview with the author, 15 February 2005
[120] UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, General Guidelines for Peacekeeping Operations, UN Doc UN/210/TC/GG95 (October 1995), source: http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/training
[121] See also Chesterman (2004) on the attitude on the use of force. He lists the example of a French Deputy Force Commander of UNTAC who was dismissed after advocating the use of force against the Khmer Rouge(Chesterman 2004: 13).
[122] Interview with Winrich Kühne, 15 February 2005

not a lack of credibility, but "a crisis of too much credibility".[123] That this resistance on part of the Secretariat was hindering reform was acknowledged by Marrack Goulding, a senior UN Peacekeeping official from 1986-1992, in 2002 when he stated that "I now realize that we in the Secretariat adjusted too slowly to the demands of the new types of conflict, which proliferated after the end of the Cold War" (Goulding 2002: 17).

As already mentioned in the analysis of the gap between missions and the Secretariat, the DPKO, in the light of an ambiguous environment, focused their attention on the diplomatic consequences of its actions rather than on the impact in the field. As the long-time observer of the DPKO William Durch points out: "Diplomatic considerations were overruling operational needs, as the Secretariat was lacking the capabilities to conduct military analysis, the interests of troop contributing countries were more important than the requirements on the ground, and the Secretariat was not in the position to say no to Security Council demands".[124] This lack of a fruitful dialogue between the field level and the Secretariat caused many important lessons to pass without finding entry into the cognitive structures of the DPKO. Griep indicates that the soldiers in the field had long learned the lesson that the realities of the new conflicts faced by peacekeepers required certain robustness.[125] In sum, we can observe that changes were chosen to be ignored by the Secretariat, as the incoming signals were outside their perceptual filters.

Understaffing and bureaucracy

Secondly, the already mentioned understaffing continued after the first reshuffling of the Secretariat in 1992 and 1993. As a running theme throughout his memoirs the aforementioned Marrack Goulding (2002) highlights that there was little time for strategic planning or thinking in between missions. What hampered the DPKO in the early/mid-1990s was not so much incompetence and corruption[126], but chronic overstretch and under-support.[127] The lack of resources and the absence of an effective bureaucratic structure able to produce a vast amount of work quickly were at the heart of the problem (Shimura 2001: 51). Especially pertinent was the lack of adequate military expert knowledge and of expertise within the Secretariat about the country or region, in which a new operation was to be deployed. As one

[123] cited in Van Baarda and Van Iersel 2002: 28
[124] Interview with the William Durch, 25 February 2005
[125] Interview with the Ekkehard Griep, 22 February 2005
[126] See Fleitz 2002 for these arguments blaming the DPKO for policy failures.
[127] This note is supported by all the interviews that were conducted by the author. Griep points out that the "understaffing was a real problem and was hindering the DPKO to learn lessons from previous missions".

of the military advisors joining the DPKO in the mid-1990s, Griep remarks that the arriving officers had to start everything from scratch, as there were no strategic capabilities for military mission planning or for the logistical support of the operational units in the field, indicating a strategic disconnect between the needs in the field and the caliber and professionalism of military advice available to the SG in New York.[128]

Moreover, the close control through the GA and the ACABQ allowed only for reforms in the civil sector, reflecting their skeptical role regarding an increasingly military role of the Secretariat. The military capabilities thus had to come from the externally financed military officers who began arriving in 1993, but were forced to leave by the GA in 1997.[129] Furthermore national governments had created a dense web of control and watchdogs for the Secretariat leading to very rigid bureaucratic structures, which could not be loosened in the early 1990s (cf. Gordenker 1999). The SG could only modestly rearrange the structure and reassign existing staff members, as the boundary spanning units could not agree on reform. This led a long-term observer of the UN state "where inefficiency exists, it is often due less to the inadequacy of individuals than to the convoluted procedures imposed on the Secretariat by Member States" (Boulden 2001: 43).

However, it needs to be noted that these first reforms of 1993 did lay a foundation for later reform and should not be overlooked as a progressive step towards a more professional management of peace operations. The creation of the DPKO itself was an important step, as the Secretariat was entering completely new territory with no reference they could draw upon (cf. Fosdick 1999a). A former member of the DPKO sees this lack of operational experiences and knowledge as another internal blockade to learning processes in the early 1990s.[130]

Assessment absorptive capacity

It can assessed that the absorptive capacity of the UN was low during the first half of the 1990s as the newly created DPKO did not have redundant resources to engage in learning and the necessary unlearning of the cognitive structures of traditional peacekeeping had not happened, so that signals about environmental changes were partially lost in the perceptual

[128] Interview with Ekkehard Griep, 22 February 2005
[129] UN document, A/RES/51/243, 10 Octobre 1997
[130] Interview with Ekkehard Griep, 22 February 2005

filters of the Secretariat. Furthermore a lack of experience regarding the conduct of these new missions both in the SC and in the Secretariat was also blocking learning and change.

In conclusion, the analysis of the inner learning environment of UN peace operations has highlighted ineffective boundary spanning units and a low absorptive capacity, which were hindering the Secretariat to conduct a substantial reform. The learning process was blocked by the advocates of traditional peacekeeping both in the Secretariat and in the boundary spanning units, who were unwilling to accept a change of the traditional principles of peacekeeping and resisted the perceived undermining of the concept of sovereignty of the nation-state through the SC. Secondly, there was a lack of expertise and consensual knowledge both in the SC (too optimistic) and the Secretariat (traditional thinking) about how peacekeeping could work in the changed environment. Thirdly, the Secretariat was not offered the discretion and resources to conduct fundamental reform.

Assessing UN Peace Operations from 1988-1995

In this chapter we have discovered the very difficult learning environment of UN peace operations, as both strategic and conceptual ambiguity were prevalent in its outer environment. We have further identified a growing complexity of the environment in the early 1990s, including fundamental changes of the problem issues faced by the UN, new political conditions and a change of the underlying norms of sovereignty and human rights. These environmental changes were calling for adjustment of the cognitive structures of the Secretariat. However it was shown that ineffective boundary spanning units, reflecting the lack of a dominant coalition of states in support for change and uncertainty, as well as a very low absorptive capacity of the Secretariat have not allowed the development of new consensual knowledge that could be reflected in the cognitive structures of the organization. Initial reform attempts had been made with a restructuring of the DPKO and the Agenda for Peace, but they did not succeed in triggering complex learning, which seems to be required by the environmental changes, but the traditional concept of Peacekeeping remained unchanged. We can conclude with the assessment of Mats Berdal that in the early 1990s the “UN has too often been informed by what one wishes to see happen, rather than by careful analysis of what actually happens on the ground” (Berdal 2001: 37).

Chapter VII
Organizational learning in UN peace operations (1995- 2004)

1. Introduction

This chapter analyses organizational change in UN peace operations from 1995- 2004 and assesses whether this process could be considered successful learning. Following the scheme we have introduced in our methodological considerations, we will proceed by addressing three time periods. For the analysis of the first time period from 1995- 1999, we briefly focus on the failure of UN peace operations in Rwanda in 1994 and Bosnia in 1995[131], before highlighting the subsequent crisis of UN peace operations that led to unlearning both in the Secretariat and in its boundary spanning units. Secondly, in the time period of 1999- 2001 we attend to the processes leading to the major reform effort of UN peace operations, called the Brahimi process, draw attention to its content and illustrate the first reactions from the Secretariat and Member States. Lastly, we evaluate the impact the Brahimi-Report has made on the organization, point at organizational changes and assess whether the implementation reflects a learning process of the UN, i.e. the UN is now better prepared to conduct successful peace operations.

2. Crisis of UN peace operations (1995- 1998)

In this first section we highlight how UN peace operations underwent a period of crisis following the external shocks of 1994 and 1995, which led to unlearning processes both in the Secretariat and in boundary spanning units. Following the proposed scheme we begin by identifying the external shock triggered by the failures of UN peace missions in Rwanda and Bosnia. Secondly, we point at the crisis of UN peace operations, as indicated through a decrease in legitimacy and authority. Lastly, first signs of unlearning processes will be exposed.

[131] Arguably the failure of the UN peace operation in Somalia could already be seen as an external shock, because it led the USA and other states to withdraw from peace operations and led to "a sense of exhaustion in dealing with failed states."(UN Diplomat, cited in Fosdick 1999a: 8). The Somalia experience is often viewed as being accountable for the weak enforcement in Bosnia and the failure to respond in Rwanda (cf. Barnett and Finnemore 2004 for this line of argument). We exclude Somalia, because the Security Council continued to mandate very complex and dangerous missions after 1993 and the Secretariat has until today failed to take the blame for this mission, because it was viewed as a failure of enforcement missions. As we will develop, references to the traumata caused by the incidents in Rwanda and Bosnia were dominating the agenda during the unlearning process.

2.1. "External Shocks" Rwanda and Bosnia

In the following, we briefly outline the dramatic failures of UN peace operations in Rwanda and Bosnia and point at the initial reactions of the Secretariat and Member States.

2.1.1. Rwanda and the failure of UNAMIR[132]

UN peace operations in Rwanda began with a rather traditional observation mission, when the UN Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR) was established in 1993 to oversee the Arusha accords, which had ended the civil war between the Rwandan Patriotic Front and the Rwandan government. In April 1994, genocide against the ethnic Tutsi-minority broke out, leading to the killing of more than eight hundred thousand Rwandans in just over one hundred days. In the initial reaction to the killings the SC decided to reduce the UNAMIR force from approximately 2,500 to 270 military personnel. Although some states were advocating intervention, the Secretariat offered initially no support for their position and was reluctant to send more peacekeepers to the conflict, as they reasoned along the principles of traditional peacekeeping (Barnett and Finnemore 2004: 121, 142). Despite an intensification of the crisis, the SC continued to reject both an enforcement proposal and "the more limited 5,500 troop option" eventually floated by the Secretariat (Fosdick 1999a: 4). UNAMIR was eventually augmented to include nearly 5,500 troops, but the Blue Helmets did not arrive until late in the genocidal frenzy and were coming too late to stop one of the worst genocides of the twentieth century.[133]

The failure of the UN to respond adequately to this dramatic humanitarian crisis can be seen as a failure of the UN system as a whole. The lack of political will of SC members and other troop-contributing states left UNAMIR suffering from a chronic lack of resources and an inadequate mandate, but also the DPKO could be blamed for "serious mistakes that were made with those resources, which were at the disposal of the United Nations".[134] The failure of the UN to prevent or respond quickly to the escalation of the conflict came at the prize of hundred of thousands of lives and horrendous damage to the credibility of UN peace operations (cf. Barnett 2002).

[132] For a complete account of the events in Rwanda, consider the Report of the Independent Inquiry into the actions of the United Nations during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, which will be analyzed further below, UN document, S/1999/1257, 16 December 1999.
[133] Ibid Para. I
[134] Ibid Para. I

2.1.2. Bosnia and the failure on UNPROFOR[135]

The United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) was set up in 1993 in Croatia and then extended to Bosnia and Herzegovina to support delivery of humanitarian relief, monitor "no-fly" zone and "safe-areas". During May and June 1995 over 400 peacekeepers were taken hostage to serve as human shields against air-strikes of NATO bombers, who were operating under a chapter VII UN-mandate.[136] Following the hostage crisis a heated debate at the UN took place whether UNPROFOR should be given a more robust mandate and be supported by heavily armed ground forces. During this debate the Secretariat continued to voice the opinion that enforcement and peacekeeping should be kept separately, while some states were even calling for withdrawal of UN peacekeepers (cf. Berdal 2004). On July 6th, 1995 Serb forces began an attack on the "safe-area" in Srebrenica, which had been established by UNPROFOR. Lightly armed peacekeepers from the Netherlands were overrun by 2000 well-equipped Serb forces and were leaving the safe-area and the refugees without protection. Following the departure of the Dutch troops, Serb forces engaged in the systematic massacre of over 8.000 Bosnian unarmed civilians.

Again the failure to prevent or stop the atrocities can be seen to lie partially with the UN Secretariat, the SC and also other Member States. UNPROFOR was lacking political support, adequate resources[137], and a clear mandate (cf. Berdal 2004). As a military unit, it was incapable to offer credible protection of the safe-area. The Secretariat on the other hand was opposing a more robust role of peacekeepers and was not realizing the emergency of the situation, as is recognized in the UN report on the fall of Srebrenica[138]: "Through error, misjudgment and an inability to recognize the scope of evil confronting it, the UN failed to do its part to help to save the people of Srebrenica from the Serb campaign of mass murder."

2.1.3. Initial Reactions

The initial response of the Secretariat was the already discussed blaming of the SC to send UN peacekeepers into settings in which they did not belong. The Secretariat chose to draw back to the traditional principles of peacekeeping, which was most prominently articulated by

[135] Facts are compiled from the 1999 Report of the SG on the fall of Srebrenica, which offers a complete account of the events leading to the massacre, UN document, A/54/549, 15 November 1999.
[136] Ibid, para. 185
[137] The SG had warned that UNPROFOR would require 34.000 troops to deter attacks on the safe areas, but the Security Council authorized only 7,600 (cf. Gray 2001: 273).
[138] UN document, A/54/549, para. 503, 15 November 1999

SG Boutros Boutros-Ghali. He posits in his 1995 Supplement to An Agenda for Peace "the last few years have confirmed that respect for certain basic principles of peacekeeping are essential to its success." These include "the consent of the parties, impartiality and the nonuse of force except in self-defense."[139] This response resembled the UN reaction to policy failure in Somalia in 1993, when the appointed lessons-learned conference was structurally arranged, so that no information could come out that would blemish the UN's record (cf. Chopra 1996). This seems to indicate that the organizations' initial reaction was to ignore signals for change and perceived the failure as a disturbance rather than an opportunity to change.

On the part of Member States, the inefficient decision-making procedures of the SC and the imperfect capabilities of the Secretariat were heavily criticized and blamed for the lack of an international response to prevent the atrocities (cf. Barnett 2002). Brian Urquhart called what followed "a terrible hangover" from the optimism of the early 1990s leading to a "retreat to isolationism" (cited in Fosdick 1999a: 6). The optimism regarding the role of UN peacekeepers had vanished and the conventional wisdom in policy circles was to refrain from UN military operations and to disdain UN involvement in crises (Weiss 1999: 409). The former US ambassador to the UN, Richard Holbrooke, expressed this dominant view when stating "The damage that Bosnia did to the United Nations was incalculable" (cited in Weiss 1999: 411). The Secretariat was in fact used as a scapegoat for the failure of the SC, at the same time as the Secretariat was blaming the SC.[140]

In conclusion, for both sides the unambiguous signal had emerged from the traumatic experiences in Bosnia and Rwanda that UN peace operation could no longer continue like it had in first half of 1990s. As we have pointed out, the contemporary analysis of these events sees weaknesses of both the UN and its Member States as responsible for the dramatic failure. However, the Secretariat and Member States seemed to draw different conclusions. While the former was advocating a retreat to and concentration on traditional missions, the later turned away from the UN (cf. VII, 2.2.). Although the UN had also experienced considerable successes in the first half of the 1990s, the fresh failures in Bosnia and Rwanda seemed not to allow for a careful stock-taking. Instead of leading to reform, the UN peace operations stumbled into a time of extensive crisis, as was illustrated by the current USG of the DPKO Guéhenno: "After the fall of Srebrenica in 1995, the future of UN peacekeeping seemed bleak" (Guéhenno 2002: 71).

[139] UN document, A/50/60-S/1995/1, p. 14, 3 January 1995
[140] Interview with William Durch, 25 February 2005

2.2. Crisis

We proceed by looking at the crisis of UN peace operation that developed after the traumatic experiences of peace operations in Rwanda and Bosnia. Following our methodological scheme, we illustrate this crisis by pointing at a decrease in the legitimacy and authority of UN peace operations.

Legitimacy

In the proposition of our model, we suggested to measure legitimacy through the demand of operations[141], the implementation of its collective measures, the contributions of Member States, as well as the public image. Following this specification, we can analyze that UN peace operations severely lost legitimacy after 1995.

Firstly, the demand of UN peace operations considerably shrank after 1995, as peacekeeping deployments declined from a high of approximately 80,000 troops to levels of just over 12.000 at the beginning of 1999.[142] UN peace operations were more and more marginalized, as Member States turned towards regional organizations for peace operations and the SC began to delegate complex peacekeeping missions.[143] Between 1995 and 1999, the UN launched just one robust operation, in eastern Croatia, and took on one police monitoring mission, in Bosnia.[144] Other new peacekeeping deployments in the latter 1990s were only small military observer missions (Georgia, Tajikistan, Liberia, and Sierra Leone) or political missions. In spite of this, deployment levels remained well above the levels of the Cold War (Jakobsen 2000: 170). [145]

Secondly, the declining number of troops deployed also had negative side-effects on the work of the Secretariat and their capabilities, as a considerable financial crisis became apparent. Throughout the early 1990s the peacekeeping support account, designed to finance missions, had been increasingly used to cover shortages in the UN regular budget. Not only did the

[141] Demand is an unfortunate label for this case study, as the demand of peace operations depends to a large degree on the occurrence of conflict. Therefore the demand of UN peace operations has to be seen in relations to the general demand of peace operations.
[142] Troop contribution data was compiled by the author from www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/contributors/index.htm
[143] By 2000 NATO and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) were in fact conducting larger peace operations than the UN (cf. Jakobsen 2000).
[144] Durch et al. (2003: 3) stress that ironically, both missions could be considered successful.
[145] This assessment ignores however the rise in the number of conflict and the fact that regional organizations were increasingly used to perform similar tasks than the UN peacekeepers had done in the early 1990s.

global expenditure for peace operations fall from $ 3-4 billion per year around 1993 to just over $ 800 million in 1998, but the Secretariat was also facing the increasing practice of Member States to pay their dues late or not in full (Durch, et al. 2003: 10). Especially, the Republican controlled US-Senate used the peacekeeping failures as a justification to withhold funding to the United Nations, reflecting the prevailing image of the UN on Capitol Hill as one of inefficiency and overstaffing (Durch 1997: 11).[146] As already mentioned, the GA further ordered an end to the use of the "gratis military personnel", which had grown to over 130 military officers in the DPKO. By 1999 their departure had left much of DPKO's operational support capacity and institutional memory for military and logistical planning severely depleted (cf. Durch, et al. 2003).[147]

Thirdly, the increasing lack of commitment from the formerly supportive Western states became also visible in the reluctance to deploy their own troops to UN peace operations. The burden fell increasingly on the developing world, on countries that were sometimes unable to provide forces with sufficient weapons, resources and training (cf. Jones 2004, Banerjee 2005).[148] It is important to note that Western troop commitment did not decline overall, but shifted to regional organization operating under UN-mandates.[149]

Fourthly, as already illustrated (cf. VII, 2.1.3.) the image of the capability of the UN to run peace operations had become very negative, sometimes even hostile, in national capitals and discredited in international public opinion (Kühne and Prantl 2001: 1). Berdal (2001: 35) notes that only few in the aftermath of Rwanda and Bosnia still envisaged a major role for the organization in international security, as the consensus emerged that the UN had become irreparably damaged by a "succession of catastrophic peacekeeping failures". USG Guéhenno (2002: 71) sums this view up by stating that "the common wisdom was that UN peacekeeping had run its course." This "crisis of confidence" (Ekeus 2001: 518) is also highlighted by a

[146] In his analysis of US-UN relations Durch (1997) points out that US leaders at the beginning of the 1990s had began to see the UN as a vehicle through which America's security burden could be shared, much like NATO during the Cold War, assuming that UN was a functioning military alliance with compatible forces, operational doctrine, and elaborate structures of command and control. Somalia, Bosnia and Rwanda led US leaders to withdraw from this vision that had raised unachievable expectation.

[147] Ekkehard Griep, who was in charge of organizing the "phasing out" of the gratis military personnel, remarks that it was tried to store the developed knowledge by writing manuals and the development of standards of operations, but few people were left with the sufficient knowledge to implement these lessons; interview with Ekkehard Griep, 22 February 2005.

[148] As documented in Jones 2004, this trend is especially drastic in mission deployed to Africa, as troops coming from developed countries account today for only 6% of the total forces.

[149] E.g. NATO states' contributions to UN-authorized, non UN commanded operations rose from a few thousands in 1995 to over 60.000 troops in 1996, a level sustained until today (Jones 2004: 8).

European military officer: "I do not think that it is sufficiently understood in New York that DPKO's credibility is virtually zero in many Western capitals."[150] "The world's disappointment" with the performance of UN peacekeeping operations after 1995, even became a symbol for the failure of the UN as a whole to adapt to the post-Cold War challenges (Thakur and Schnabel 2001a: 5).

Authority

The variable of authority, we defined here as the ability to have decisions and recommendations implemented irrespective of the goodwill of the members concerned, seems to be less relevant for the proposed case, as we have determined that UN peace operations work in a very dependent environment, in which missions have to be mandated by the SC, troops are provided by willing Member States and the work of the Secretariat takes place under close supervision from the GA. Still, one can assess that the "authority" can rather be viewed as diminishing, because the UN Secretariat was given less resources, and operational tasks were shifting towards regional organizations.

In sum, we can assess that Member States increasingly marginalized UN peace operations in the period from 1995 to the first half of 1999. A negative public image, especially among the formerly supportive Western states and in the regions where the missions had failed, was accompanied by a decrease in the responsibilities and resources available to the Secretariat. Following the conceptual language of our model, we can conclude that the external shock of Rwanda and Bosnia was followed by crisis of UN peace operations, thus increasing the quality of information for the organization that change was necessary.

2.3. Signs of unlearning

Subsequently, it is evaluated whether the crisis of UN peace operations was leading to unlearning processes in the UN Secretariat and creating possibilities for learning. As we have observed above, unlearning is required both at the state level and inside the organization, and can be impinged on by the work of epistemic communities.

[150] Cited in Kühne and Prantl 2001: 15

2.3.1. States

In her analysis of changing attitudes towards UN peacekeeping during the second half of the 1990s Fosdick (1999b) points out that the analysis of the bitter experience, but also the successes of the early 1990s, were slowly beginning to lead to a more realistic vision in national capitals of what is achievable through peacekeeping and what is not. She cites a US State Department official who remarked in this regard "Peacekeeping is like motherhood: it sounds like a good idea, but in practice involves much more and takes effort."[151] A member of the French mission to the UN also sensed a "far greater pragmatism [in the Security Council] in the wake of the realization that we tried to do too much originally."[152] The difficulties of regional organizations faced in their peace operations were also leading Member States to reassess the failures of the Secretariat.[153] It became gradually clear that the UN offered a unique legitimacy for peace operations, and that not all regions of the world were offering adequate regional instruments (cf. Biermann 2001).

2.3.2. Secretariat

Also inside the Secretariat there were signs of unlearning processes. As early as 1995 a lessons-learned unit was established to systematize the knowledge of missions and to increase the ability of the DPKO to absorb, retain, and transmit an institutional memory with respect to conflict management activities. This unit was however very poorly staffed and meeting heavy resistance from the DPKO, when pointing at the “wrong lessons”, such as preparing for more robust engagements.[154] A member of the advisory board of the lessons-learned unit argues that the unit was nevertheless opening doors for further developments and was leading to an increased acceptance for change.[155] It is noteworthy that the lessons-learned unit had to be externally financed, i.e. by contributions outside the regular UN budget, in the light of the lack of agreement on reform in the GA. The main achievement of the lessons-learned unit and the presence of the gratis-military officers was a closer a relationship to the field and an enhancement of Secretariat capabilities to support operational activities.[156] Durch (1997: 3)

[151] Cited in Fosdick 1999a: 8
[152] Ibid: 10
[153] Biermann 2001: 100) observed that increasingly the “notion had to be dispelled that the UN are ineffective and can therefore be sidelined”. See also Guéhenno 2002
[154] Interview with Winrich Kühne, 15 February 2005; Kühne points out that the lessons learned unit staffed not more than 4 persons.
[155] Interview with Winrich Kühne, 15 February 2005
[156] Interview with Ekkehard Griep, 22 February 2005

assessed in 1997 that the DPKO had made impressive innovations, had improved in the management of missions and had become more effective than any other department of the UN, but was limited in its reform attempts by the existing structures (cf. also Doyle 2001: 540).[157] Many of the lessons later incorporated in the Brahimi-Report had initially emerged from the lessons-learned unit (cf. Gray 2001). Reflecting this new willingness to learn, Kofi Annan wrote in 1996, just before his election to become SG: "In this partial lull that has resulted from the closure or scaling down of a few operations, we have a unique opportunity. We should take advantage of this relatively quiet period, to build on the organizational achievements of the last few years." He further advocates a strengthening of the DPKO, to "regain the organization's legitimacy and credibility, its indispensable assets. The organization must face this reality [of involvement in intra-state wars] by adapting and learning to do things differently and by strengthening its machinery" (Annan 1997: 186).

Although the enduring missions were smaller and involved less complex tasks, it needs to be revealed that the Department still had to run on average sixteen missions.[158] In an study of an external management consulting firm, the headquarter-field ratio was still found to be lower than in any national ministry of defense and the workload for the DPKO remained very high, especially after the forced departure of the gratis-military personnel in 1997.[159] Thus understaffing remained a problem and was hindering fundamental reform.[160] The traditional norms of peacekeeping were upheld, especially the strict division between peacekeeping and enforcement missions, as the possibility of an intermediate type of operation was treated with great skepticism (Chesterman 2004a: 17).

In sum, the need to learn increasingly emerged, as experiences from the field were reconsidered, but the on-going missions, which had to be managed with few resources, were not giving the Secretariat the feeling that it was about to be marginalized. Instead, the advocates of traditional missions in the DPKO were content that the overcommitment had eased and the missions became less risky.[161] Nevertheless, with Kofi Annan, a Secretary-General seemed to have arrived who had grasped the necessity to learn, as he was aware that

[157] In addition to the reforms of 1993, the DPKO had been augmented to include a planning and support office, a policy and analysis unit, a civilian police unit, a mission planning service, a situation center, a military advisor's office, an office of operations, and a training unit (Jakobsen 2000: 172 pp.). Cf. also annex II
[158] Source: http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/contributors/index.htm
[159] Interview with Ekkehard Griep, 22 February 2005
[160] Interview with William Durch, 25 February 2005
[161] Interview with Winrich Kühne, 15 February 2005

"UN peace operations will in many cases be the only instrument available" and identified new and challenging operations on the horizon (Annan 1997: 186).

2.3.3. Epistemic communities

The dramatic failure of UN peace operations also led to an increase of research and academic literature, increasingly advocating that consequences had to be drawn from the experiences in Bosnia and Rwanda.[162] According to Jakobsen (2000: 174) the mainstream argument evolved that the UN Secretariat needed a dramatic reform and strengthening to make it fit to deal with the new tasks and play an effective role in the new millennium (see also Ekeus 2001: 524). Increasingly, researchers and returned national military officers were assessing the missions of the 1990s and proposing their own account of the lessons to be learned. Especially in Western military circles the doctrine surfaced that peacekeeping forces should be robust enough to defend themselves and provide credible deterrence (cf. Boulden 2001). Many voices were advocating the reassessment of peacekeeping doctrine to account for the experiences of the early 1990s[163], when the UN was seen to have an obligation to act in the face of humanitarian disasters, which transcended the concept of traditional peacekeeping (cf. Van Baarda and Van Iersel 2002). Analysts stressed that too little had been learned from both successes and failures of UN military operations and the UN still had to "make a substantial effort to digest the lessons and formulate a workable strategy for future military operations" (Weiss 1999: 422).

In sum, first signs of unlearning were becoming visible in the Secretariat and at the state-level, but a new consensus on UN peace operations had not yet emerged. However, there were increasing signs of an emergent epistemic community calling for change in the UN Secretariat and reform of UN peace operations.

[162] E.g. Otunnu and Doyle 1997; Kühne 1996. Paris (2000: 44) points at two new scholarly journals, a number of special issues, and the Social Sciences Index citing over 330 articles under the subject heading "United Nations—Armed Forces" between April 1990 and March 1999.

[163] Chesterman (2004: 18) stresses: "By the second half of the 1990s it had become clear that there was a need to revise peacekeeping doctrine. It had to provide for situations in which a party's consent had been given in general terms but the peacekeepers could nevertheless expect to encounter armed resistance from some of that party's adherents or, in states without effective government, from armed bandits with no political agenda."

Conclusion

In this section, we identified the dramatic failure of UNPROFOR and UNAMIR to avert a humanitarian tragedy. This external shock has led to a crisis of UN peace operations, as indicated by its lower legitimacy and authority. We have detected elements of inertia as a reaction to the crisis, but also first signs of unlearning processes in the Secretariat and at the state level. Lastly, we observed that in the academic discussion the dominant view emerged that fundamental reform of the Secretariat's institutions was needed, a notion that was also shared in the outlined statements by the new SG Kofi Annan.

3. The Brahimi process (1999- 2001)

In this section we look at the development of UN peace operations from 1999- 2001 with the Brahimi Process at the centre of attention, as it presents a fundamental reform attempt and arguably reflects complex learning processes. Following our analytical scheme, we will proceed by uncovering how further unlearning processes and a sudden resurgence of UN peace operations were opening the window of opportunity for reform. Secondly, we deal with the work of the Brahimi panel and show how its report tries to build a new consensus on UN peace operations and to instigate reform. Thirdly, we focus on the first reactions of the Secretariat and of the boundary-spanning units to this reform attempt.

3.1. Catalyzing developments

In 1999 the UN was subject to two major developments concerning peace operations. The first was the sudden revival of peace operations in the middle of 1999 with four major missions being launched. Secondly, the SG released two crucial reports concerning the failure in Rwanda and Bosnia that were acknowledging the failure of the UN as a whole and helped to create receptiveness for change. We will address the two elements in turn.

3.1.1. Sudden resurgence of UN peace operations

In the spring of 1999 NATO began to use force in Kosovo without a UN-mandate, and was raising fears in New York that the organization was heading towards irrelevance (Jakobsen

2000: 167).[164] But by June 1999 the events took an opposite turn. In rapid succession, the UN was called on to administer Kosovo, under the protection of NATO ground forces, to replace Australian-led forces in East Timor and to provide a temporary government for that emerging nation; to replace Nigerian-led regional forces in Sierra Leone and oversee a shaky cease-fire in the regional war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). As a consequence two-thirds of troops and police forces active in UN operations were deployed to these four missions by April 2000, as the total number of personnel in UN operations more than tripled.[165]

These missions stood for a massive resurgence of UN peace operations, but were also creating the danger that the mistakes of the mid-1990s were repeated and were thus threatening the future of UN peace operations. By 2000 none of the four big operations begun in 1999 looked like a winner, but involved complex, new tasks, as well as massive risks and security problems (Durch, et al. 2003: 102).[166] Fears were further inflated in May/June 2000 when UN peacekeepers in Sierra Leone were taken hostage by the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and the mission threatened to collapse. The country seemed poised to descend into full-blown war, with the "credibility of the UN irreparably damaged once again, as had happened in the mid-1990" (Guéhenno 2002: 76). The painful memories of 1994 and 1995 thus ensured that the renewed growth of UN involvement was accompanied by more critical and searching questions inside the Secretariat, as it had to acknowledge that the problems of the early 1990s were coming back to the UN (Berdal 2001: 36).

Furthermore, these missions were once again highlighting the operational weaknesses and the massive understaffing of the Secretariat. By the end of 2000 only 32 officers in the DPKO were responsible for over 28,000 soldiers in 30 separate operations. In addition, just nine civilian police officers at headquarters were responsible for over 7,000 officers in the field, revealing a miniscule 0.1% headquarters to field ratio (Bratt and Gionet 2001: 31- 32).[167]

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[164] The NATO attack raised considerable concern in the Secretariat, leading the SG to invite UN Security Council members to an informal, closed-door meeting in June 1999 to discuss the problem and ways of overcoming it (Jakobsen 2000: 167).

[165] Source: http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/contributors/index.htm

[166] Durch et al. (2004:102) highlight that "UNMASIL, in Sierra Leone, seemed hamstrung by thugs. UNMIK in Kosovo, was pleased merely to be able so say that nobody froze to death. UNTAET in East Timor was still finding its footing and MONUC's military observers were starting an operation that few believed could accomplish even its limited task of monitoring withdrawal of foreign armies from the DRC."

[167] Bratt and Gionet (2001: 31-32) especially highlight the UN Assistance Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) where an operation commanding over 13,000 soldiers and a budget of $ 480 million, was supported by only five people in New York.

3.1.2. Unlearning continues

By mid-1999 the UN leadership had realized that "as long as the clouds of Rwanda and Srebrenica remained overhead, it would be difficult to get Member States to invest in rebuilding the organization's peacekeeping foundations" (Guéhenno 2001: 488). As a signal both to the Secretariat and to Member States[168], the SG made an effort to come to terms with the failures and tragedies of the past and requested two throughout reports of the mission failures in Bosnia and Rwanda, which were issued in November/December 1999.[169]

Both reports enumerated how each of the peace operations constituents (Secretariat, Member States, peacekeepers on the ground, SC) had failed to do their job properly at critical junctures in the conflicts and reminded all elements of their responsibility in the process of learning from these failures.[170] In the report the authors explicitly call for a mutual effort to improve UN peace operations and to strengthen UN capacities. They suggest concrete reform proposals and point at the Millennium Summit as a possibility to gain political momentum for reform.[171] Additionally they indicate the inadequacy of changes-made and the necessity to reconsider "a range of doctrinal and institutional issues that go to the heart of the United Nations ability to keep the peace".[172]

In substance the two reports formed the background of Kofi Annan's decision to commission a review of UN peace operations and to include in that review a clear set of specific, concrete and practical recommendations (cf. Berdal 2001). After the issuance of the reports the USG Guéhenno detected a new willingness of the Secretariat "to recognize what went wrong, and then to digest, to learn the lessons and to move ahead."[173] This exceptionally self-critical step was not only an innovative practice in the Secretariat, but also reflects substantial unlearning at least at the leadership level, as the fundamental basis of traditional peacekeeping was

[168] Interview with Winrich Kühne, 15 February 2005
[169] The report on Rwanda, UN document, S/1999/1257, 16 December 1999, was commissioned from an external panel led by Ingvar Carlsson, the former Prime Minister of Sweden. The report on the fall of Srebrenica, UN document, A/54/549, 15 November 1999, was written by two senior DPKO staff members, David Harland and Salman Ahmed.
[170] UN document, S/1999/1257, para. 50, 16 December 1999; UN document, A/54/549, para. 498, 15 November 1999
[171] UN document, S/1999/1257, para. 53, 16 December 1999
[172] UN document, A/54/549, para. 499, 15 November 1999. Harland and Ahmed point at matters such as the "inadequacy of symbolic deterrence in the face of a systematic campaign of violence; the pervasive ambivalence within the United Nations regarding the role of force in the pursuit of peace; an institutional ideology of impartiality even when confronted with attempted genocide" (Ibid, para 499).
[173] Cf. Guéhenno (2001: 490), he further stresses that it was tried to find a balance between humility and self-confidence, as he states that "The DPKO has a memory that can be used to make it more effective or that can hinder it, if it becomes too defensive and if it looses self-confidence."

finally questioned.[174] The release of these self-critical reports "added to the crescendo in the calls for reform".[175]

In sum, together with the operational difficulties faced by the freshly launched peace operations these reports opened the space for a fundamental reform, as an overstretched DPKO was facing a "potentially terminal crisis of UN peace operations" and it seemed obvious that piecemeal solutions to peacekeeping's problems would no longer suffice (Durch, et al. 2003: 102). Furthermore the upcoming Millennium Summit seemed to provide an excellent opportunity for the SG to introduce reform proposals and to attempt to raise the needed political and financial support for reform. Speaking in the conceptual language of our model, we can detect further unlearning processes and a re-emergence of the problem-issues faced in the early 1990s, because the new missions were reminding the Secretariat of the settings in which the external shock had occurred.

3.2. The Brahimi-Report

In the light of these developments the UN administrative leadership decided that a reform attempt was necessary "with a view to minimizing as far as possible the likelihood of such tragedies [as in Bosnia and Rwanda] occurring again in the future."[176] In this section, it is outlined how the so-called Brahimi-Panel was created as an additional temporary boundary-spanning unit, how it proceeded to create a new consensus on peace operations, and which recommendations the report contained.

3.2.1. Work of the Panel[177]

At the beginning of 2000 the SG asked Under-Secretary-General Lakhdar Brahimi to chair a panel of experts who were to supervise and steer the work of an author whose study and recommendations were to be both conceptual and operational in focus, and "cover the full spectrum of UN activities in the general area of peace and security, from prevention to post-

[174] In the reactions the reports were welcomed as "one of the most candid and self-critical documents ever to come out of the United Nations" (cf. Guéhenno 2002) or "as the most impressive exercise in UN soul-searching in recent years."(cf. Berdal 2001). Kühne stresses that the content of the reports was not at all that new. He asserts, what was essential and unheard of, was that the reports were issued by the Secretariat itself and became official UN documents; interview with author, 15 February 2005.
[175] Interview with William Durch, 25 February 2005
[176] UN official cited in Durch 2004a: 1
[177] The work of the Panel is described in greater detail in an working paper for the High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, which can be found in the bibliography; cf. Durch 2004a.

conflict peace-building, including observation missions, peacekeeping and enforcement."[178] The Panel[179] was selected and the writing team[180] appointed from late February to early March with the first of three sessions taking place on March 21. Given the limited time available, so that the report could be considered at the Millennium Summit in September, and political considerations (see below), the report focused more closely on peacekeeping in the complex settings of recent internal conflict than on conflict prevention, peacebuilding, or enforcement (Durch 2004a: 1).

During the research process the writing team conducted over 200 staff interviews, including staff from all departments and agencies involved in UN peace operations, as well as Member States' missions, and conducted a field study in the Kosovo.[181] Furthermore current UN-mission were asked for their top-three priorities for support given by UN headquarters, leading to insightful and well-prepared reports from the field-level.[182] A further emphasis at the research level was put on off-the-record interviews, which were seen as essential to raise the knowledge of officers who were "constrained by the system".[183] As a consequence, although also building on earlier studies and on academic literature, the team "interviewed more than it read" (Durch 2004a: 4). In the drafting process Secretariat staff was not systematically included, as it was feared that the "baby would be choked in the cradle" by the bureaucracy.[184] Early reactions to draft versions by the Secretariat, and especially by the DPKO, showed that this precaution had been taken with reason.[185] The key audience for the report was essentially viewed in the heads of states attending the Millennium Summit, but

[178] Cited in Durch 2004a:1
[179] Panel members, selected on personal capacity, included Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi (Algeria), Mr. J. Brian Atwood (United States), Ambassador Colin Granderson (Trinidad and Tobago), Dame Ann Hercus (New Zealand) Mr. Richard Monk (United Kingdom), General (ret.) Klaus Naumann (Germany) Ms. Hisako Shimura (Japan), Ambassador Vladimir Shustov (Russian Federation),General Philip Sibanda (Zimbabwe) and Dr. Cornelio Sommaruga (Switzerland). Although the Panel was officially called "Panel on United Nations Peace Operations", it became known after its president Brahimi. The same happened to the name of the report and the subsequent implementation process. For information on the Panel members and documentation confer to http://www.un.org/peace/reports/peace_operations.
[180] The writer was William Durch from the Washington D.C. based Henry L. Stimson Center (more details on his persons are available in Annex IV). He was support by two co-writers, one from the Henry L. Stimson-Institute and one DPKO official with considerable field experience and "extensive 38th Floor [Executive Office of the Secretary General] connections" (Durch 2004a: 1) For administrative work the writing staff was able to use EO resources.
[181] Further studies were planned to be conducted in Sierra Leone and East Timor, but fell victim to the hostage crisis in Sierra Leone and the time constraints of the study; interview with William Durch, 25 February 2005.
[182] Interview with William Durch, 25 February 2005; Durch points out that this was in fact the first time that headquarters had systematically queried the opinion of its field operations on such matters.
[183] Interview with William Durch, 25 February 2005
[184] Ibid
[185] Ibid

also in the elements inside UN bureaucracy, the bureaucrats "who would promote and embrace effective change as well as those inclined to resist it"(Durch 2004a: 5).[186]

Next to reviewing and contributing to draft versions, President Brahimi served as the "main political filter and spearhead" and assured that the report was undergoing a "constant reality check" to be sure that innovative recommendations were accompanied by realizable goals.[187] Although the mandate had been to consider all aspects relevant to peace operations, the panel decided to leave issues out that "seemed so politically charged as to risk diverting attention from everything else, if addressed in any detail by the report" (Durch 2004a: 5). These included in the main more fundamental aspects, such as SC reform, arrears in the payment of UN dues, changes in UN scales of assessment, and the whole concept of "humanitarian intervention."[188] The work of Brahimi involved intensive discussion with the C'34 and Member State delegations, especially the ambassadors of the P5. Furthermore he maintained close contact with the SG and the members of the panel who met in New York to discuss the draft version proposed by the writing team (Durch 2004a: 4).

Durch admits that ultimately, the Brahimi-Report "drew together a lot of common wisdom", but it "gave a license to change to those within the system who desired change, at a time when its issues were deemed crucial and change deemed essential" (Durch 2004a: 2).[189] This notion is supported by external observers who stress that the recommendations were not essentially new, but constituted a systematic stock-taking of prior experiences, the acknowledgment of incapacity, and the concrete recommendation of reform steps to be taken by the SC, GA and the Secretariat.[190] Berdal (2001: 49) agrees that the real value of the report lay in "its galvanizing potential and its explicit recognition of the need for change". In a final meeting of the panel at the end of July 2000 the report draft was reviewed line by line. The purpose of this last step was less to consider further changes, but for the "effect of building consensus and ownership by the Panel of a report that was drafted largely by staff" (Durch 2004a: 6). The final report[191] was then delivered to the SG who in turn distributed the report to Member States on August 21st, two months later than initially planned and just three weeks before the

[186] Cf. UN document, A/55/305- S/2000/809, para 265. , 21 August 2000
[187] Interview with William Durch, 25 February 2005
[188] Other issues, such as HIV/Aids, security of UN personnel, and prevention, were left out, because they were simultaneously addressed by other reports (Durch 2004: 4).
[189] Durch points out that an internal report, prepared by Under-Secretary-General Marrack Goulding in 1997, had reached very similar conclusions, but remained nothing more than a report "for insiders by an insider" (Durch 2004: 3).
[190] Interview with Winrich Kühne, 15 February 2005; interview with Ekkehard Griep, 22 February 2005
[191] UN document, A/55/305- S/2000/809, 21 August 2000

Millennium Summit, leaving too little time for substantial review by capitals, let alone the drafting of the complex implementation documents by the Secretariat (Durch 2004a: 6).[192]

We can observe that the Brahimi-Panel and its writing staff were trying to heave implicit knowledge from individuals in the organization and to increase the input from the field level. At the same time the panel served the purpose to spread ownership of the report, to identify "no-go zones" and to build a powerful coalition around the report to raise the likelihood of implementation. The purpose was thus not only the creation of knowledge, but also to make it consensual or at least to propose knowledge that stood a change to be adopted in the cognitive structures of the Secretariat and to be implemented by the boundary spanning units.

3.2.2. Substance of the report

The Brahimi-Report came out as a 58-page document with some 57 explicit and more than 100 implicit recommendations ranging from calls for clear mandates to concrete proposals for the Secretariat structure. As there are numerous summaries, comments and interpretations available[193], we will limit ourselves to key recommendations that reflect the un- and relearning of the rules for peace operations. Following a categorization by Durch, et al. (2003) one can distinguish three different headings for the contained reform proposals: issues of doctrine and strategy; the capacity for anticipating, planning and managing operations; and thirdly the rapid and effective deployment of UN peace operations.

Regarding issues of doctrine and strategy the Brahimi-Report made two major recommendations, reflecting the lessons of Rwanda and Bosnia. Firstly, Member States were called upon to no longer use peace operations as a means to be seen 'doing something', but focus on clear, credible and achievable mandates.[194] Stressing the importance of the consent of the conflict parties, the report calls upon states to acknowledge that there are situations in which peacekeeping can do more harm than help. Secondly, it called for Member States and the Secretariat to acknowledge that certain situations require a robustness of forces with specific rules of engagement, and that the nature of conflicts required a reassessment of the

[192]This late handover caused further troubles, as Durch indicates: "Moreover, sending the report directly to capitals bypassed standard diplomatic channels and ruffled some New York PermReps whose support for later implementation efforts would have been helpful. The late release also left UN staff not enough time to draft complex initial implementation documents and their companion budget requests and meet General Assembly rules for review time."(Durch 2004a: 7)
[193] To name just a few White 2001; Kühne 2002; Zittel 2002; Griep 2002
[194] UN document, A/55/305- S/2000/809, paras 56- 64, 21 August 2000

norms of impartiality and non-use of force.[195] The reports points out "no failure did more to damage the standing and credibility of United Nations peacekeeping in the 1990s than its reluctance to distinguish victim from aggressor"[196], and calls for an implied authority to halt violence against civilians.[197]

To increase the capacity for anticipating, planning and managing operations the report makes a wide range of concrete proposals aimed at strengthening the UN Secretariat and increasing the effectiveness of the SC.[198] In essence it calls for a massive increase in staffing, especially concerning police functions, knowledge management and mission support, an increase in coordination between departments and agencies through Integrated Mission Task Forces (IMTF), and the change of the management culture towards a greater focus on effectiveness and recruiting on merit. The Secretariat is reminded that a greater professionalism is necessary, that it needs to learn to manage the lessons from prior missions and value the input given from the field. Member States are appealed to close the gap between expectation and commitment, and to provide the Secretariat with the necessary resources it needs to fulfill the assigned tasks.[199]

Regarding rapid and effective deployment the report calls for the improvement of mission leadership, the creation of information and strategic analysis capacities in the Secretariat, the enhancement of stand-by arrangements and pre-deployment resources for the DPKO, as well as increased logistical support, common training and support programs for peacekeepers, and the establishment of fast and effective public information in the field.[200] Furthermore the report urges to set concrete deployment benchmarks once a mission is established. On the other hand the report contained only very rudimentarily lessons that could have been drawn from the new missions, which had started in 1999 and involved new tasks and challenges, as UN missions in the Kosovo and East Timor were effectively administering territory. Furthermore, the report is almost entirely quiet about the cooperation with regional organizations.[201]

[195] Ibid, paras. 48- 55
[196] Ibid, page ix
[197] Ibid, para. 62
[198] Ibid, paras. 170- 264
[199] Ibid paras 172- 197
[200] Ibid, paras 84-169
[201] Without consulting or informing the Panel, Brahimi hurriedly added a paragraph in the last minute, interview with William Durch, 25 February 2005

We can observe that the report deals with a wide range of issues addressing especially the elements that had failed in Rwanda and Bosnia: political support and doctrine, the capacities of the Secretariat and also the rapidness of deployment once a mission is launched. In addition, we can stress that the report explicitly addresses both the Secretariat and Member States, carefully trying to avoid favoring one side over the other, as the authors were aware that both sides are needed for a successful implementation of the report (Brahimi 2001: 9).[202]

3.3. Initial Reactions

Subsequently, we expose the initial reaction of states, Secretariat and epistemic communities to the report, in order to determine whether the Brahimi-Report succeeded at creating a political momentum and helped to build a new consensus on UN peace operations.

The report was introduced to the delegates at the Millennium Summit by the SG who urged member states to take the recommendations serious and help to strengthen the United Nations.[203] The SC welcomed the report when meeting during the Millennium Summit and endorsed its recommendations, including the elements concerning the content and character of mandates and the call for closer consultation with troop-contributing countries, in a more detailed resolution in November.[204] In the Millennium Declaration, the GA "took note" of the Brahimi-Report, which was already foreshadowing later struggles in the C'34.[205]

3.3.1. States

Among states the report was generally more welcomed by developed states, although voicing fears of financial overcommitment to UN peace operations, than by developing states, (cf. Malone and Forman 2001). Above all, a number of troop contributing and Western states showed early enthusiasm and organized a concerted campaign, spearheaded by Britain, to "sell the report" (cf. Berdal 2001; Brahimi 2001). Together with a number of think-tanks they organized four regional meetings to discuss the Brahimi recommendations and generate

[202] "The whole philosophy of the Brahimi Report is to say, there are some fundamental issues that are really the responsibility of the Security Council and of the Member States, but there is also a responsibility of the Secretariat […]." (Guéhenno 2001: 489)
[203] UN document, A/55/1, 30 August 2000
[204] UN document, Security Council Resolution 1318, 7 September 2000; and UN document, Security Council Resolution 1327, 13 November 2000
[205] UN document, A/Res/55/2, 18 September 2000

support for their implementation.[206] The United States government as well as many traditional UN critics on Capitol Hill also welcomed the Brahimi-Report, especially since it offered reform without a large requirement for money (Durch, et al. 2003: 9). When the earlier mentioned US payment crisis finally ended in compromise in December 2000, it was also perceived as a sign for support for the Brahimi proposals (Bell and Tousignant 2001: 41).

The reaction of the Group of 77, mainly voiced by India, Cuba, Egypt and Jordan, was however distinctly reserved, as they saw in the Brahimi-Report a Western agenda to undermine the sanctity of the principles of sovereign equality and non-interference by states in the internal affairs of other states (cf. Kühne 2002: 11).[207] Accordingly they called the UN to stick to its traditional peacekeeping concepts and stressed that any fundamental reform had to be accompanied by a reform of the SC to increase the legitimacy of UN missions (cf. Malone and Forman 2001). Furthermore fears were raised that the Brahimi agenda and the costs for increasing the budget of the DPKO would be felt in other departments, and relegate issues of economic and social development to a secondary status within the UN system (cf. Malone and Lotta 2002).

Along these lines delegates in the C'34, the key body for recommendations regarding the capacity of the Secretariat, became rapidly entrenched in confrontational, often hostile debate (Malone 2004: 7).[208] Ill-informed discussions often in bitter and damaging tone were delaying the implementation recommendations of the C'34. Nevertheless the debate was not reflecting a friction along the usual North-South divide in the GA and eased over time towards a more practical approach. Many troop-contributing states from the South had learned in the 1990s that a greater capacity of the Secretariat along with a greater robustness was needed to conduct successful peace operations, as one African military officer stated: "For those who have seen the humiliation, degradation and suffering of the people in armed civil conflict and

[206] The regional meetings, largely funded by the British government, were organized by the International Peace Academy in cooperation with further regional think tanks. Four regional meetings (Africa, Asia, Europe and America) took place in February and March 2001, with a concluding debate in New York on March 12. For more information see Malone and Lotta 2002; Malone and Forman 2001.

[207] The intensity of rejection by many states from the non-alignment movement (NAM) was even taking Brahimi, a long term member of the NAM, by surprise, as he states that "Measures meant to strengthen the UN capacity to analyze and to respond to conflict situations were particularly singled out for criticism and even outright rejection, because it was feared that such capacity would be used to undertake intelligence activities for the benefit of Western countries, specifically the US. Although an active NAM member since its earliest days, I confess that I was at first surprised, indeed, at times intrigued, by some of the positions expressed during the debate" (Brahimi 2001: 5).

[208] Brahimi observes that many of the reservations raised against the Brahimi recommendations were not so much a rejection of a particular element, but "reflected a profound dissatisfaction with the state of international relations" (Brahimi 2001: 4).

cannot offer meaningful assistance, robust mandates are a welcome development."[209] Bridging the often-cited North-South divide a broad alliance of troop-contributing states emerged, which was unified in the interest to strengthen the DPKO for the profit of their own troops (Kühne 2002: 13). Accordingly, ideological differences over the Brahimi recommendations, that also became visible during the mentioned regional meetings, were "swallowed" due to this common stake in the effectiveness of the DPKO (Malone and Lotta 2002: 7).

In sum, the Brahimi-Report led to a massive increase of boundary spanning activities with alone over 160 meetings of the C'34, and the additional activities of the regional meetings organized outside the formal UN structures. Early evidence also seems to point at more pragmatic decision-making, reflecting an emerging consensus, and a promising coalition of states in support of the Brahimi recommendations.

3.3.2. Secretariat

Inside the Secretariat, parts of the EO headed by the Deputy-Secretary General Fréchette and the freshly appointed USG of the DPKO, the high-ranking French diplomat Jean-Marie Guéhenno, took over the implementation process.[210] UN leadership was very supportive of the report and immediately started implementation, while there were also signs of a greater receptiveness inside the bureaucracy (Griep 2002: 64). In his first implementation report[211], which was more a declaration of intent due to the mentioned time constraints, the SG nevertheless voiced some reservations regarding controversial issues inside the Secretariat, and took into account first responses of Member States.[212] In 2001, an external management review, which had long been called for by the C'34, supported many of the recommendation of the Brahimi-Report and gave it further credit inside the Secretariat and in the C'34.[213] In sum, the Brahimi-Report gave the administrative leadership a very welcome tool for reform. Implementation started almost immediately and the report has continued to dominate the

[209] cited in Kühne and Prantl 2001: 13
[210] Interview with von Einsiedel, 18 February 2004
[211] UN document, A/55/502, 20 October 2002
[212] This relates especially to the reform of the division of labor in the Secretariat and on the capacities of the Secretariat to gather intelligence, as for the former the resistance inside the bureaucracy was detected as too high, while on the other side Member States had shown a high reluctance to see the proposed ECPS Information and Strategic Analysis Secretariat (EISAS) established.
[213] Interview with Denise Wilman, 28 February 2005

agenda of the DPKO for the past five years and evolved into something like a yardstick for the departmental working plan.[214]

3.3.3. Epistemic communities

Within the Western-dominated academic circles the Brahimi process was welcomed as a long-due reform attempt, reflecting the lessons that were learned in the first half of the 1990s, and the "long-held convictions by the peacekeeping community" (Thakur and Schnabel 2001a: 22). It was generally seen as a step in the right direction and offering a worthy compromise in light of the political realities inside the UN.[215] Other analysts stressed that the report should only be seen as the minimum threshold for reform, because it failed to address larger, more fundamental issues, was only working within the existing framework, and was dominated by headquarter considerations.[216] The conducted regional meetings also reflected a greater disinclination of NGOs and non-Western academics to accept the Brahimi recommendations, often reflecting the mentioned arguments of the Group of 77. But these meetings also revealed that there was a growing consensus, especially among practitioners from the field and academics, that the implementation of the Brahimi-Report was necessary and its implementation would make an improvement of UN peace operations possible (cf. Malone and Forman 2001).

In sum, it could be observed that the Brahimi-Report, despite difficulties and intensive debate, helped to create a coalition both inside and at the boundaries of the organization with a consensus on a number of changes to be made in the conduct of UN peace operations. The report, building on the crisis of the mid 1990s, created a political momentum without which "we [the DPKO] would never have had the clout to really move things forward" (Guéhenno 2001: 489).

Conclusion

In this section, we have highlighted the continued unlearning of the UN, as reflected in the self-critical reports regarding the failures in Rwanda and Bosnia, and a dramatic resurgence of UN peace operations , as the number of peacekeepers tripled in less than one year. We have

[214] Ibid
[215] E.g. Kühne 2002; Griep 2002; Bell and Tousignant 2001; Thakur and Schnabel 2001b
[216] E.g. Bellamy and Williams 2004b, White 2001

seen that in the light of these developments, a new boundary spanning unit was set up, and the Brahimi-Panel tried to propose changes that honestly address the key failures, at the same time as creating a consensual perspective for reform. Analyzing the initial reaction of the relevant actors, we have shown that a dominant coalition in support of reform seemed to have developed, as the effectiveness of the boundary spanning activities increased through the reform agenda proposed by the panel.

4. Organizational change in UN peace operations (2001- 2004)

In this last section of the case analysis, it is analyzed whether the Brahimi process has led to organizational change and whether this change can be considered successful learning of an IO. To do so, we will analyze the successes and failures of the implementation process, according to the indicators we proposed in our learning model of change in IOs. We projected that successful learning would lead to greater legitimacy and authority of the IO through organizational restructuring, changed behavior and policy, and the codification of new norms.[217]

4.1. Organizational restructuring at headquarter level

The Brahimi process achieved considerable improvement concerning the badly needed increase of resources for the DPKO, which also allowed for substantial restructuring efforts. Keeping in mind the fierce battles with the ACABQ over single posts during the second half of the 1990s; the DPKO gained an astonishing number of 191 new posts since 2000, which means an increase of staff by 50%. Accordingly the field-staff ratio improved to 0.2% for military staff and 0.4% for civilian police forces.[218] The increasing overall staff level allowed for the establishment of a very active Best Practices Unit, the strengthening of military components and logistical support, and the establishment of adequately staffed Civilian Police division, reflecting the increasing importance of police functions of peacekeepers.[219] Furthermore changes were made to recruiting-schemes leading to a reduction of political posts and allowing for a massive rise in staff with field experience.[220] The USG further

[217] To assess organizational change, we rely largely on an substantial, independent study on the implementation of the Brahimi Report conducted on behalf of the newly established Best Practices Unit of the DPKO, (Durch 2004a), as well as official UN documentation.
[218] Statistics compiled from Durch, et al. (2003: 53- 55).
[219] See also annex II for an organizational chart of the DPKO from 1993.
[220] The author did not find any available statistic. The development was observed by DPKO officer Denise Wilman; interview with the Denise Wilman, 28 February 2005

established an office of change management, which is constantly assessing the progress that has been made with the implementation of the Brahimi-Report and of subsequent reports by the C'34.[221] The office is overseeing the implementation of annual business plans and results-based budgeting, as well as conducting staff surveys to improve the internal procedures (Durch, et al. 2003: 61). Improvements of the efficiency of the DPKO are also acknowledged by a soon to be published Board of Auditors report review that was recently conducted.[222]
The restructuring of the Secretariat and especially the establishment of the Best Practices Unit[223] considerably ameliorated the exchange of information between HQ and field level. The unit constantly surveys and evaluates ongoing missions, provides key studies and guidelines on their web-site, and is organizing workshops and seminars for peacekeepers.[224] Current projects of the unit include the establishment of an internal web-based communication system to improve communication with missions and inter-missions, as well as several knowledge management projects, involving community of practice approaches.[225] Furthermore the Best Practices Unit functions as a tool to communicate with academic experts and has started to publish reviews on the literature on peacekeeping.[226]

However, the reforms have failed to strengthen the Secretariat in some very important aspects. The reform process did not instigate a major reconsideration of the division of labor in the Secretariat, leaving the cooperation between the DPKO and other departments in a problematic state and coordination continues to rely on the ad-hoc Integrated Mission Task Forces (IMTFs).[227] Overall the elements associated with peace operations in other UN departments have made much less progress than the DPKO, which successfully took the Brahimi-Report as a yardstick for reform (Durch, et al. 2003: 56- 57).

While the proposition of a new, operational-focused management culture has made some progress inside the DPKO, reporting lines still remain hierarchical and rigid, causing slow communications processes.[228] In the opinion of Durch, this problematic might need to await

[221] Interview with Eiko Ikegaya, 16 February 2005
[222] Interview with Denise Wilman, 28 February 2005
[223] This unit is in fact the successor of the above mentioned Lessons Learned Unit, but has massively expanded.
[224] http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/lessons/
[225] Interview with Eiko Ikegaya, 16 Febuary 2002
[226] See for example http://pbpu.unlb.org/pbpu/Document.aspx?docid=603
[227] In the words of one DPKO officer: "The DPKO remains the US of the UN. We are happy to cooperate, as long as it is on our terms" (cited in Jones 2004: 15). Kühne is of the opinion that the IMTF offers no real solution to the coordination problem inside the Secretariat, which should take part on a constant basis; interview with the Winrich Kühne, 15 February 2005.
[228] Interview with the William Durch, 25 February 2005

further personal turnover to be fully solved.[229] Additionally, as was already mentioned before, Member States refused to give the Secretariat the proposed unit for strategic information gathering (EISAS), hence reducing the capabilities of the Secretariat for pre-mission planning and preventive action. Furthermore, rule of law components and civilian administration capabilities, having emerged as an increasingly important element of peace operations during the early 2000s, have not been strengthened to the same extent as military and police functions.[230]

In sum, without having gone into detail of the restructuring effort made in the DPKO and other departments, we can assess that the operational capabilities of the Secretariat in the realm of peace operations have increased, as new instruments were created, the DPKO has access to supplementary material and better cognitive resources, and environmental actors welcome the reforms made in the Secretariat. The amplified financial resources and operational capabilities point at a greater legitimacy and authority of UN peace operations, as it has given, on a very cautious notion, more room for independent analysis and action.

4.2. Changed behavior and policy

As a consequence of the organizational restructuring, the communication between the Secretariat and the boundary spanning units has greatly improved and become much more instrumental. Reports of the SG regarding mission requirements are more straightforward and with an operational focus.[231] The DPKO now prepares an insightful report[232] as a direct response to the report of C'34 well in advance of its annual sessions, in order to allow for review in national capitals, which has led to much more fruitful and analytical dialogue between C'34 and the department.[233] Furthermore, annual performance reports, comparing the conduct of the DPKO with the prior resolutions from the boundary-spanning units[234], are issued for consideration in the ACABQ. Informal meetings of the DPKO with troop-contributing countries are now taking place on a weekly basis and have led to much more effective communication of mission needs.[235] Although only rudimentarily mentioned in the Brahimi-Report, the Secretariat has also made efforts to improve the cooperation with

[229] Ibid
[230] Interview with Denise Wilman, 28 February 2005
[231] Interview with William Durch, 25 February 2005
[232] UN document, A/59/608, 15 December, 2004
[233] Interview with Denise Wilman, 28 February 2005
[234] E.g. UN document, A/58/703, 5 February 2004
[235] Interview with Denise Wilman, 28 February 2005

regional organizations, especially since these have strived to improve or establish structures for rapid deployment capacities.[236] On the other side the SC has also issued clearer and more consistent mandates reflecting a greater sensitivity to operational needs (Durch, et al. 2003: 17- 18). Changes have however not included the envisaged institutionalized consultations of the SC with troop contributors, but improvements have been made and consultations take place more frequently.[237]

The set-up of current missions and the restructuring of the DPKO, i.e. the strengthening of the military and civilian police component in the department, reflect a new consensus on the robustness of peace operations. This is visible in their operational set-up and equipment, as well as in their mandates, as they are now usually mandated under chapter VII of the UN Charter (Durch, et al. 2003: 22-23).[238] This new robustness has been accepted both in the Secretariat and the C'34, pointing at a reassessment of the principle of non-use force. The same can be observed concerning the principle of impartiality, leading to a move towards the called-for implied authority to halt violence against civilians, which has been made explicit in recent SC mandates.[239] However the protection of civilians remains a dilemma for UN peace operations, as relatively small forces are deployed to cover large territories and erratic settings, making it impossible to guarantee an effective protection. This has led to calls from troop-contributing countries to exclude such responsibilities (Durch, et al. 2003: 25).

On the other side, current missions are also raising doubts whether the SC has learned the lesson that the capacity of the UN to conduct peace operations has its limits and there are also situations in which it should not be used. In 2004 alone, four complex operations were either newly mandated and deployed or significantly expanded, namely in Côte d'Ivoire, Burundi, Haiti and the DRC, leading to record high of over 73,000 peacekeepers deployed in 17 peace operations.[240] Despite urgent warnings from the Secretariat that resources were being overstretched and that the realities were already "outstripping the assumptions underpinning the reform effort"[241], the SC launched a further 10,000 troop mission in Southern Sudan (UNMIS) in March 2005. Moreover several characteristics of the MONUC mission in the

[236] This counts especially for NATO, EU, ECOWAS as well as the OSCE (Durch 2004b: 10).
[237] Interview with Ekkehard Griep, 22 February 2005
[238] Consider for example the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS), which is essentially observing a peace agreement, but was nevertheless given the authority to act under Chapter VII; cf. UN document, S/Res/1590, 24 March 2005.
[239] E.g. MONUC mandate, UN document, Security Council Resolution 1291, 24 February 2000, para. 8.
[240] www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/contributors/index.htm
[241] UN document, A/59/609, 15 December 2004, paras 2-4

DRC, but also the deployment of UNMIS, remind the observer of the critical missions of the early 1990s.[242] MONUC further reflects the fact that the Secretariat has been unable to persuade Western states to either provide the necessary resources or refrain from creating new missions in areas where they are less interested (Chesterman 2004a: 8). The political support for peace operations, especially in Africa, thus remains dangerously volatile. Jones (2004: 11-13) asserts that the European Union as an emerging international actor with a positive attitude towards the UN, as well as South Africa, Brazil and China[243] have begun to play a positive role in UN peace operations. The support of the US however, especially regarding failing states, seems to be limited and the US defense policy will be most likely geographically bound to "the Greater Middle East" and Central America (Jones 2004: 12). This lack of continuous support from Western states is also made visible by the fact that the Brahimi process and the reform of peace operations have not succeeded to increase the contributions of developed states to UN commanded missions. Over three-quarters of the troops participating in peacekeeping operations are now typically from developing countries.[244] In fact, the P5 in total contribute less than four percent of all peacekeepers and four out of five P5-states have led non-UN commanded peace operations during the last years (Jones 2004: 20).

In sum, we can assess that peace operations now tend to be more robust, the relationship between the Secretariat and the boundary spanning units has improved, and that current missions reflect a new consensus on both sides. This led a long term peacekeeping observer to reiterate that the UN is now closer to the realities on the ground than in pre-Brahimi times.[245] Nevertheless current operations underline that political support remains volatile and reveal the dangers of overstretching of UN capacities with possibly perilous consequences for the whole organization. Looking at our indicators of legitimacy and authority, the changes in behavior point at a moderate increase for the UN, as a number of new complex and robust missions are launched, the communication with the environment has improved and peace operation are better equipped to deal with the problems they face in the field. The mandating practice of the SC has however again led to an overstretching of the UN capacities, which could lead to further crises and poses a threat to the credibility of UN peace operations.

[242] Interview with Winrich Kühne, 15 February 2005
[243] This can certainly not be said, about the role of China regarding the conflict in the Darfur region in the Sudan.
[244] Data compiled from http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/contributors
[245] Interview with Winrich Kühne, 15 February 2005

4.3. Norm codification

Despite the fact that organizational restructuring and the new robustness of missions seem to point at a reassessment of the traditional principles of impartiality and non-use of force, the Brahimi-Report has not led to the codification of these changes into doctrine, clear rules of engagement or a general strategy of peace operations. In its reports the C'34 continues to reinstate the traditional principles of peacekeeping and stops short of the full endorsement of the concept of "robust forces". [246] This is also reflected in the resistance of the C'34 to adopt the term "peace operations", instead of "peacekeeping", which had been proposed by the Brahimi-Report, and has repeatedly been raised in the report to the C'34, to better reflect "the complexity that has come to characterize the field".[247]

All in all, the Brahimi process did not lead to any changes of fundamental institutions, such as principles of international law or the UN Charter, as we observed that such wide ranging proposals had been excluded from the reform process from the beginning on, which reflects the mechanism of our intervening variable (cf. III, 3.5.). Furthermore the report did not lead to any explicit, collectively shared changes of the "Holy Trinity" of peacekeeping, but rather a change in its interpretation. This is reflected in reforms of the Secretariat, which were supported by a majority of Member States, and also a changed mandating practice of the SC, which by itself could be considered as a codification of norms. This reassessment of norms has arguably led to a greater credibility of UN forces facing the realities of post-Cold War challenges, pointing at an increasing legitimacy of UN peace operations. Nevertheless it remains questionable, if these changes suffice considering the dangerous, rapidly evolving tasks the peacekeepers face in ongoing missions. The authority of UN peace operations remains weak, as it continues to depend on the volatile political and operational support of Member States.

Conclusion

It seems evident that the Brahimi-Report is responsible for a new impetus, involving substantial restructuring and strengthening of the UN capacities to conduct peace operations. The Brahimi-Process succeeded with both, the formation of a dominant coalition of states in favor of reform and also an acceptance of change in the Secretariat. Recent practice however

[246] UN document, A/58/19, para. 36, 28 April 2004
[247] UN document A/59/608, para. 6, 15 December 2004,

points at volatile political support and the rapidly evolving tasks for UN peace operations makes the changes appear insufficient. However, putting the changes into perspective of the situation of the mid-1990s, we can conclude that the Brahimi process has instigated considerable progress both in operational capability and doctrine, and has been accompanied by a further increase of the number of UN peace operations. Despite the made reservations, one can assess that UN peace operations exhibit greater legitimacy and authority and the completed changes could be considered a "successful learning" that improved the organizational conception of its environment.

Assessment Organizational Learning in UN peace operations (1995- 2004)

In this chapter we have identified a crisis of UN peace operations following the external shock caused by the dramatic failure of UN missions to avert humanitarian disasters in Bosnia and Rwanda. We have observed unlearning processes in the Secretariat and an adjustment of expectations by the Member States, which created the possibility of learning and change. The actual learning, i.e. the change of cognitive structures, was seen to start in 1999 when two self-critical reports, regarding the mentioned policy failure, were issued and a massive resurgence of peace operations led to a momentum for change. The absorptive capacity of the organization was increasing and the information created by the new missions in 1999 was less ambiguous, as they reminded the organization of the scenery surrounding dramatic policy failure. The importance of the reemergence of these problems hints at a further important trigger of learning. Arguably, it required unlearning and the change of perceptual filters to raise awareness for the level of threat these problems posed for the Secretariat, but the resurgence of missions was also important to create further momentum for change.

These developments led to the establishment of an additional boundary spanning unit, the Brahimi-Panel, which engaged in research, revealing implicit knowledge in the organization, and tried to build consensus inside the organization, as well as at its boundaries to offer realistic reform recommendations. We have shown that the subsequent report of the panel has stimulated the work of the organization and its boundary spanning units for the past four years and has led to considerable organizational restructuring and the reassessment of the traditional principles of peacekeeping. These organizational changes have arguably let to a more sound conception of the organizational environment and can thus be considered as reflecting successful learning. Nevertheless the organization continues to operate in a rapidly evolving

environment, resources are again being overstretched and current mission involve considerable dangers of failure. On the other hand, we have also observed an increase of the effectiveness of the boundary spanning units and an increased absorptive capacity of the organization, which might point at an increased capability of the organization to learn. This is of course highly debatable, because the consensus on peace operations remains very hard to organize, as political and operational support continues to be volatile. Furthermore, the scientific and strategic ambiguity of the environment have certainly not decreased, as the UN has taken over missions involving even more complex tasks of transitional administration and local governance. Despite the increased capabilities of the Secretariat, learning thus remains very difficult.

Conclusion: Theoretical repercussions and policy relevance

"The approach is not remarkable and provides no extraordinary magic of interpretation, but it may not be entirely foolish."

J.G. March and J.P. Olsen[248]

We have highlighted throughout this paper that our approach of adapting concepts from the school of organizational learning to IOs is still in an explorative stage. Analogous to the quote of March and Olson we would therefore like to formulate a positive but cautious assessment of the utility OL approaches in the study of IOs, as further research is required. In this chapter we take a look at the theoretical repercussions of the case study and assess more generally the factors highlighted from the OL-perspective. Drawing conclusions from our case-study analysis, we demonstrate the explanatory power of the analytical concept of the IOs learning environment and of the main hypothesis regarding the influence of external shocks followed by crisis on organizational change. Secondly, we indicate further factors that surfaced during the case study and point at possible changes of the model. Lastly, we want to reassess on a more general notion the value of OL approaches in the study of IOs and point at its policy relevance.

1. Assessment of the learning environment concept and learning blockades between 1988- 1995 (Chapter VI)

In the first part of our case study we have observed that the introduced concept of a learning environment provides a useful tool to analyze organizational persistence, as we identified the very difficult and ambiguous learning environment of UN peace operations. The adherence to traditional peacekeeping concepts in the Secretariat, the ambiguity of signals about environmental change, and the lack of a new consensual concept and redundant resources emerged as major obstacles to reform efforts. As we have developed in chapter IV these internal factors are not taken into account by the mainstream IR approaches. The cognitive focus of our approach further allowed for an explanation, why the change in organizational structures in 1992- 93 could be considered as inadequate, as the resistance in the Secretariat to the new type of operations was continuing. The case-study analysis supported our notion that

[248] March and Olsen 1998: 958

unlearning needs to precede fundamental reform and that these processes can take a considerable amount of time.

Having highlighted the fundamental environmental changes during the first half of the 1990s and the failure of the UN to reform accordingly, we can observe that organizational change in IOs does not seem to be contingent on environmental developments and that change can not be seen as an automatic process. This highlights the importance of processes inside or at the boundaries of the organization, which are at the heart of organizational learning approaches.

2. Assessment of external shocks/crises as triggers of organizational learning and change (Chapter VII)

Following the proposed process tracing methodology, we have tried to determine the plausibility of our main hypothesis by analyzing the process as a stream of smaller events, which were assessed in the light of the proposed underlying mechanisms of learning in IOs. In the analysis we have found evidence that the external shock and the subsequent crisis of UN peace operations have led to unlearning processes and an increase of the receptiveness of the Secretariat. The external shock followed was thus not used as a direct inference for learning, but was rather identified to create the possibility of change, as was proposed in the model. The unlearning processes coupled with a massive resurgence of problem-issues, which resembled those related with policy failure in the mid-1990s, opened up the space for a reform attempt, which was in fact instigated by the Secretariat. It was observed that the establishment of the Brahimi panel, as an additional, more pragmatic boundary spanning unit, improved the information regarding environmental changes and implicit knowledge inside the organization was put forward in the search for a changed concept of UN peace operations. Furthermore, the work of the panel led to a greater effectiveness of the other boundary spanning units, allowing for the formation of a dominant coalition of states in support of reform. The pragmatic focus of the panel on smaller, more concrete reform steps points at the plausibility of our intervening variable of the addressed norm-level. Looking at the results of the Brahimi process, we have identified certain indications of learning, such as the restructuring and enlargement of the DPKO and a greater focus on a more robust mission set-up and conduct. However, the modifications of the cognitive structures seem to be relatively basic, as they involve a reinterpretation of existing norms rather than fundamentally new structures. Given the identified rigidity of the learning environment, we can nevertheless conclude that the

organizational changes involved more than simple adaptation of existing procedures, which are seen to take place on a constant, incremental basis.

In sum, we can observe broad support for the plausibility of the hypothesis that external shocks followed by crisis is a trigger of learning and change in international organizations, i.e. they make organizational change more likely. As we have developed, most of our underlying mechanism could be detected in the case-study analysis, while others remain to be adequately tested (see below). As we have pointed out this study should be seen only a first, preliminary test. Further research is required and additional case-studies are needed to account for the plausibility of this model of change in other IOs and their specific settings, as the external validity of our case-study is limited.

3. Issues for further research and possible modifications of the model

While generally offering support for the plausibility of our hypothesis, additional factors surfaced during the case study analysis. The issues of decision-making in the boundary spanning units, the importance of leadership and individual learning, and the increased pressure for reform caused by the sudden emergence of problem-issues deserve further attention. We will briefly address the three topics to point at possibilities for further research.

3.1. Decision-making processes in the boundary-spanning units

During our analysis we have only paid very limited attention to the actual decision-making processes in the boundary spanning units, as we were only interested in the clarity of their signals, and whether a dominant coalition in support of change could be identified. However we have also indicated that the functioning of these units is crucial for learning and change in IOs. It is therefore vital to achieve a better understanding of the factors that affect their discourses and decision-making practices, and lead to the formation of a dominant coalition of states. We have seen that the Brahimi reform attempt had only limited success to change the practices of the boundary spanning units. Recent peace operations shed doubt whether the Brahimi report will have a sustained impact on the Security Council mandating practice, as UN resources are again being overstretched (cf. VII, 4.2.). Future developments of learning models of IOs should therefore pay greater attention to these processes and further analyze the interactive relationship between the decision-making bodies and the Secretariat, which we have identified as pivotal in the learning process.

3.2. Importance of leadership and individual learning

During the case-study we have observed that the recommendations of the Brahimi panel were endorsed and further developed by the administrative leadership of the UN, which seemed to increase the internal acceptance and smooth the implementation process. As many observers pointed out, the relative success of the Brahimi process is closely related to the personality of Kofi Annan who himself was in charge of the DPKO during the dramatic events of 1994 and 1995. Annan's initiative was crucial for the issuance of the self-critical reports of 1999 and he decided to give the Brahimi recommendations the prominent forum of the UN Millennium Summit. As we pointed out in chapter III, we adopted a black box perspective concerning individual learning processes. For further research it seems desirable to open up this black box to account for the influence of internal leadership on the absorptive capacity of the organization, as leadership seems to be able to direct attention and inattention processes of the organization.

3.3. Problem pressure as a further learning trigger

As we observed in the case study, the sudden resurgence of UN peace operations in 1999 increased the momentum for change. According to the proposed model the sudden resurgence of UN peace operations was identified as a mixture of a change in the set-up of problem issues in the outer environment and an increase of boundary spanning activities. However, this does not seem to grasp its significance for the learning process, as it served as a further catalyst for change. Arguably, UN peace operations faced similar problems in the early 1990s, but they failed to trigger learning without the prior experience of an external shock. On the other hand, the presence of the external shock and the subsequent crisis failed to lead to learning, until the resurgence of the problem-issues. It is not possible to disentangle the two processes in this study. In further research the importance of a rapid (re)-emergence of problems, or problem pressure, as it might also be labeled, should be considered as a further triggering factor in the learning process of IOs. In this regard learning models might be able to draw insights from garbage can approaches, which stress the importance of windows of opportunity for change (Lipson 2004: 39).

4. Utility of OL approaches in the study of IOs and policy relevance

This first application of our learning model of change to explain the development of UN peace operations has drawn attention to a number of factors that are omitted by the mainstream approaches of international relations, but emerged as important to understand change.

Namely, our study has underlined the importance of internal cognitive structures, which had to be accounted for in the change process. They emerged as a decisive factor in the explanation of organizational persistence of UN peace operations during the early 1990s, when the Secretariat refused to revise its traditional concept of peacekeeping. The OL approach brought to light the importance of signals about environmental changes and their ambiguity, as we identified that the UN was faced with very vague information, and was lacking the experience and resources to adjust to these new challenges. In this regard we highlighted the importance of the interplay between decision-making bodies and the Secretariat, as effective communication and a consensus between the two were deemed essential for successful change. As was observed, the Brahimi panel did not create new knowledge, but made an effort to communicate and build a consensus around existing recommendations for change. Related to this observation, our OL approach has drawn attention to hidden or implicit knowledge, which can be found in the organization and can be used by the administrative leadership to conduct reform. The OL approach also emphasized the significance of the absorptive capacity of IOs, as it demonstrates that the organizations needs ample resources to process information and that understaffing can also hamper learning and reform. In fact, we identified understaffing as a major impediment to organizational change in UN peace operations during the early 1990s. Lastly, the support for our hypothesis has drawn attention to the effect of an external shock and crisis on the learning conditions of IOs, i.e. the likelihood of change.

Policy relevance

These factors stressed by the OL-perspective also have direct policy relevance, something IR-theory is desperately in need of, and could contribute to a more informed IO management. For example learning models could help to elucidate why some reform panels are more successful in triggering change than others. In fact, the UN has made an effort to learn from the success of the Brahimi-Report and the work of other reform panels, as it provided the recently

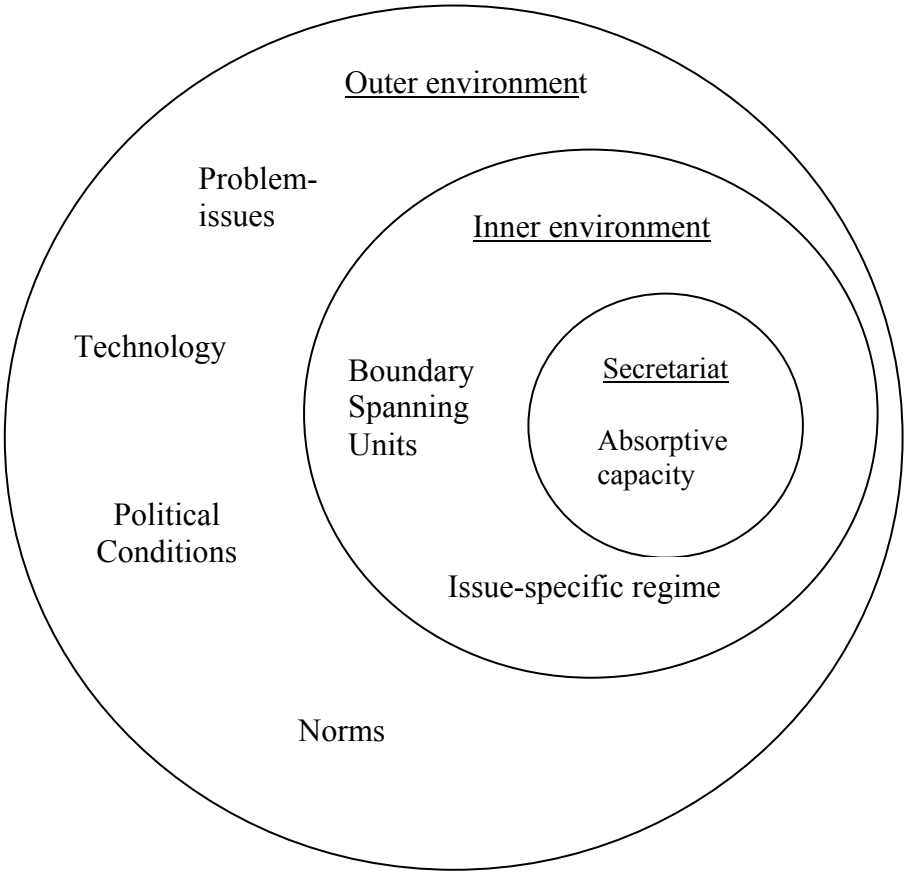
concluded High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change[249] with a number of papers addressing the "lessons" form prior reform efforts (cf. Malone 2004a, Durch 2004a, Luck 2002). While making similar observations to those addressed in this study, these papers lack a theoretical framework that could be provided by the OL-approach. Additionally, learning models could help the organization to realize how it can improve its internal learning environment, i.e. how it can enhance communication processes and its sensibility to outside signals. Lastly, our proposed model highlights, how crises can be used as a window of opportunity for reform in this very rigid learning environment. This inherent rigidity of the IO environment and the fact that learning cannot directly be controlled, limits the particular recommendations for action, but that does not lessen the added-value an OL approach can provide to our understanding of IOs.

This positive conclusion needs to be cautioned. Our study was only a first step and involved a preliminary study of one single organization. Many factors stressed by alternative approaches, such as the influence of great powers, the role of national interests in decision-making processes and the influence of epistemic communities could not be sufficiently studied and are very likely to influence the learning process beyond the scope we have determined. The point of this study was to introduce an OL-model as a useful concept to analyze change in IOs. We showed that the proposed learning model of change offered a plausible explanation of the Brahimi process in UN peace operations, and we believe to have succeeded with the demonstration that an OL approach to the study of IOs is not "entirely foolish" and offers valuable explanatory power as regards processes of change and persistence.

[249] Cf. http://www.un.org/secureworld/

Annex I

Map of the learning environment of international organizations

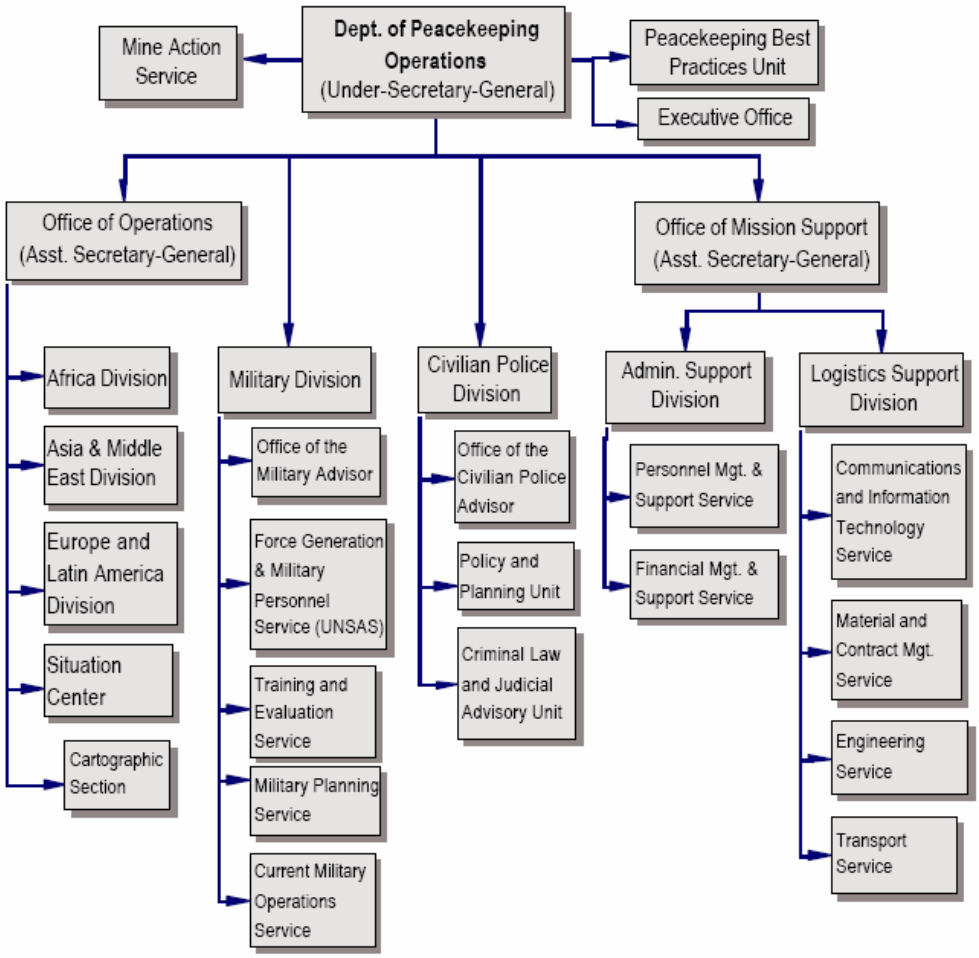


Scheme III: The learning environment of international organizations, compiled by the author

Annex II

UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations Organization Chart

source: http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko, accessed on 03 March 2005



Annex III

Interview Report and Questionnaire

Interview Report

To enrich the understanding of the organizational developement of UN peace operations and to widen the spectrum of data sources, the author conducted a number of personal interviews with selected personnel.

The interviews were based on a semi-standardized questionnaire. Depending on the reaction and response of the interviewed person, some questions were broadened or extended. With regard to the official function of the interviewees, some extra questions were added, which took into account the personal experience of the interviewee and the context of the current post.

All interviews were carried out by telephone. As the technical equipment was not available to record the interview, interview reconstructions are available form the author. The questionnaire was emailed in advance of each interview to allow for the preparation of the interview. A copy of the questionnaire is attached below.

Interviewees

Dr. William Durch, Senior Associate, Henry L. Stimson Center, Washington D.C.; Academic director of the United Nations Panel on Peace Operations (2000), date of the interview: 25 February 2005

Mr. Sebastian von Einsiedel, Political Affairs Officer, UN Executive Office of the Secretary General, date of the interview: 18 February 2005

Lieutenant Colonel Ekkehard Griep, Member of the German Foreign Office, former military advisor of the Assistant-Secretary General, UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (1995- 1998), date of the interview: 22 February 2005

Ms. Eiko Ikegaya, Political Affairs Officer, Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit, UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, date of the interview: 16 February 2005

Dr. Winrich Kühne, Director of the Centre for International Peace Operations, Berlin; Member of the former International Advisory Group of the Lessons Learned Unit of the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (1995-2003), date of the interview: 15 February 2005

Ms. Denise Wilman, Political Affairs Officer, Office of the Under-Secretary General UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, date of the interview: 28 February 2005

Research Project „Organizational Learning in International Organizations“
Rainer Breul
Faculty of Politics and Management
University of Constance

Questionnaire

(The following questionnaire forms the basis of a semi-standardized interview conducted via telephone and is being send to the interviewees in advance of the interview.)

1. What are in your opinion the main reasons for the emergence of the new generations of peacekeeping missions?

2. It is generally assumed that the success of the missions in the early 90s led to great optimism regarding the capability of UN peace missions. Do you agree? Were the DPKO and the Secretariat not realizing their limited operational capabilities? Why did or could the UN not react accordingly?

3. Why did the Agenda for Peace not succeed with enhancing the UN's capabilities for the new peacekeeping missions? What is the main difference between the Agenda for Peace and the Brahimi-Report?

4. In 1999 the SG issued reports on the failure of UN missions in Bosnia and Rwanda. Why, in your opinion, were the reports issued only half a decade after the atrocities? Who do you see as the main addressee of the report? What was the significance of these reports for the Brahimi process?

5. What would you identify as the main motives for setting up the Panel on UN Peace Operations in March 2000?

6. Where did the Panel take its information from? Was the DPKO involved in the research process?

7. Could you describe the work of the Brahimi-Panel? Whose interests were considered when the report was drafted?

8. Can the Brahimi-Report be seen as an attempt to "sell" existing knowledge to the member states in order to create a new consensus?

9. Could you describe the SG's strategy for implementing the recommendations of the Brahimi-report? Did he get support from the Member states?

10. What was the reaction of the DPKO to the initial recommendations?

11. The least implemented sector of the Brahimi-Report is largely viewed to lie in the sector of strategy and doctrine. Where do you see the reasons?

12. How would you judge the improvements of the DPKO in the following fields:

- change of management culture
- establishment of an institutional memory and knowledge transfer
- inter-agency coordination

13. The Brahimi-Report calls for improvements not only within the Secretariat, but also in the work of the Security Council. Have the member states and especially the P5 also "implemented" the Brahimi report? Did the events of 9/11 and the subsequent focus on terrorism slow down the process?

14. How did the cooperation between the DPKO and the Special Committee for Peacekeeping Operations change after Brahimi? Has there been a new impetus for the relationship between the Secretariat and the General Assembly?

15. Would you consider the Brahimi-process (Panel-report and the subsequent implementation process at headquarters and field-level) as a successful learning by the United Nations? [In other words: Is the UN now better equipped to conduct successful peace operations?]

Annex IV

Deutsche Zusammenfassung

Die vorliegende Arbeit untersucht Lern- und Wandel-Prozesse in Internationalen Organisationen. Hierzu wird ein Modell entwickelt, welches, basierend auf den Grundlagen der Theorie des Organisationslernens, die spezifischen Charakteristika von Internationalen Organisationen und ihrer Lernumwelt berücksichtigt. Da Modelle der Organisationstheorie allgemein und speziell Organisationslernen in den gängigen Theorien der internationalen Beziehungen (IB) kaum Berücksichtigung finden, versucht der Autor durch eine explorative Herangehensweise die Plausibilität des Theorietransfers zu erarbeiten. So wird das äußerst rigide und ambivalente Umfeld von Internationalen Organisationen anhand eines Konzepts einer inneren und äußeren Lernumwelt analysiert und somit die große Schwierigkeit von Veränderungen erklärt. Die Analyse streicht insbesondere die Bedeutung interner, kognitiver Strukturen sowie die Rolle von „boundary spanning units", organisatorische Einheiten, die Wissen und Signale aus der äußeren Lernumwelt in die Organisation transferieren, heraus. Weiterhin wird die Hypothese aufgestellt, dass externe Schocks, die den Misserfolg der operativen Tätigkeit von Internationale Organisationen verdeutlichen und zu einer Krise führen, Umlernprozesse erleichtern und Möglichkeiten für Veränderung von kognitiven Strukturen schaffen, die Reform und Wandel bewirken.

Das entwickelte Modell wird in einem zweiten Schritt in einer Fallstudie auf die Analyse von Persistenz und Wandel von VN Friedensmissionen im Zeitraum von 1988- 2004 angewandt. In der Periode von 1988- 1995 werden umfassende Umweltveränderungen (z.B.: veränderte Macht- und Interessen-Konstellationen, neue Problemstellungen und Normwandel) identifiziert, die jedoch nicht zu den erforderlichen Lernprozessen im VN-Sekretariat führten. Die Komplexität der Lernumwelt, rigide kognitive Strukturen, Mangel an redundanten Ressourcen, sowie das Fehlen einer „dominanten" Koalition von reformwilligen Mitgliedsstaaten, werden als Lernhindernisse identifiziert. Erst nach dem dramatischen Scheitern von VN Friedensmissionen in Bosnien (1994) und Ruanda (1995) und einer daraus resultierenden Krise von VN- Missionen (1995- 1999), kam es zu umfangreichen Reformen, die auf den Empfehlungen des sogenannten Brahimi- Berichts (2000) basierten. Die Untersuchung des in diesen Reformen resultierenden Prozesses bestätigt die Plausibilität des vorgestellten Modells, da viele der entwickelten Mechanismen beobachtet werden können.

Diese Arbeit veranschaulicht so ebenfalls die allgemeine Eignung von Konzepten des Organisationslernens in der Analyse von Persistenz und Wandel in Internationalen Organisationen und unterstreicht die Bedeutung interner Prozesse, die von den gängigen IB-Theorien ausgeblendet werden.

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All official UN documents are cited with their official document code and date of adoption in the text. The documents can be accessed through the online Official Document System of the United Nations (ODS), http://documents.un.org

Online sources

All online-sources are cited with their URL, as accessed by the author, in the text.

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