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USI LATEST PUBLICATION DURING 2023-2021

Pub Code	Title of Book & Name of Author	Price(Rs)	Year
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OP-1/ 2023**	"The Ukrainian Conflict : Heavy Metal still Rocks the Charts" By Maj Gen Jagatbir Singh, VSM (Retd) & Maj Gen VK Singh, VSM (Retd)	250	2023
Adm- UNPO/ 2022	"Keeping the Peace –UN Peace Operations and their Effectiveness : An Assessment" by Maj Gen (Dr) AK Bardalai (Retd) M/s Pentagon Press	995	2022
Adm- UNPK/ 2022	"INDIA AND UN PEACEKEEPING : THROUGH THE PRISM OF TIME" Edited by Maj Gen PK Goswami, VSM (Retd) M/s KW Publishers Pvt Ltd	1880	2022
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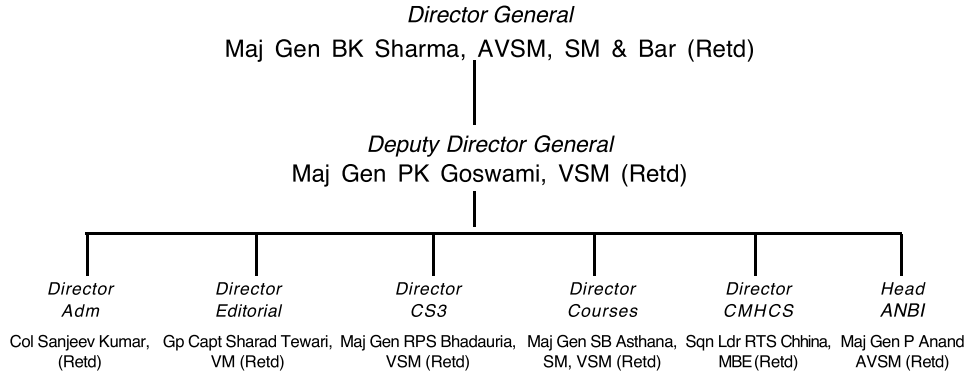
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1. 18% GST extra.
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Editor

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1. The USI conducts correspondence courses for DSSC – Army and Navy, DSTSC (Army) Entrance Examinations and Promotion Examinations Parts B and D.
2. The Courses have been remodelled to make it more interactive and the admission procedure has been simplified to make it user friendly.
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4. Schedule of Correspondence Courses 2022-23.

Courses	Commencement of Course	Date of Exam	Cost All Subjects	Cost Per Subject
(a) DSSC (Army)	3 rd Week of Nov 2022. Registration Open for 2023	Sep 2023	Rs 8000/-	Rs 3000/- for Tac B Rs 2000/- each for CA&MH Rs 1500/- for SMT Rs 1300/- for Tac A Rs 1200/- for Adm & ML
(b) DSSC (Navy)	1 st Week of Apr 2023	Jul 2023	–	Rs 3000/- for Paper-1
(c) Part B	2 nd Week of Dec 2022. Registration Open for 2023	Jun 2023 to Jul 2023	Rs 3000/-	Rs 1000/- each for Tac, CA & MH Rs 800/- each for Adm & ML
(d) Part D	1 st Week of Apr 2023. Registration Open for 2023	Oct 2023	Rs 4000/-	Rs 1500/- each for Tac, CA & MH Rs 1000/- each for Adm and ML

5. **Contact Programmes.** Three contact programmes for DSSC/DSTSC (Army)-2023 have been planned. Dates are : **19-24 Jun 2023, 03-08 Jul 2023** and **17-22 Jul 2023**. Separate test papers will be set for each programme. Fees – Rs 6000/- per contact programme and Rs 3000/- only for material of each CP.
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See USI website : www.usiofindia.org for details and form

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1. USI welcomes original researched articles pertaining to national security, defence matters and military history for publication in the USI Journal. Articles should preferably not exceed 2,500 words. Along with the article, the author should forward abstract of the article not exceeding ten per cent of the total words. These should be forwarded as a word document on e mail to the Editor, United Service Institution of India, on dde@usiofindia.org. In the email the author should state that "the article titled (Title of Article) has neither been previously published in print or online, nor has it been offered to any other agency for publication. The Editor reserves the right to make alterations.
2. It is mandatory that the author furnishes complete details of the book/journal referred to in the article as end notes. A guide to writing endnotes is given on the next page. Besides endnotes, if the author so desires, a bibliography may also be included, though it is not mandatory.
3. The article should be in Arial Font, size 12 and English (UK). Avoid use of symbols like %, & and so on unless unavoidable to explain a point. The date style should be 24 Jun 2020, except in the citations where it will be Jun 24, 2020. Abbreviations, if any, should be used in their expanded form the first time and indicated in brackets.
4. The full name and address of the author along with a brief Curriculum Vitae should be given. Serving officers are advised to follow the prevailing Services instructions for publications of their articles.
5. The author will receive a copy of the issue of the Journal in which his/her article appears along with three offprints. A suitable honorarium will also be paid after the article is published.

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1. Endnotes are notes added to the main body of a paper or an article, in which the author directs readers to sources referred to or to add extra comments of his or her own. Endnotes are placed at the end of the paper/article. A superscript number (1,2,3,4) at the end of the sentence signals the reader to look for the corresponding endnote at the end of the article. The endnotes should be numbered consecutively, starting from '1'. Citations should include the author's name, title of the book (in italics), publishing information (in parenthesis) and pages consulted, all separated by commas. Citations should be in the Chicago Manual of Style (CMS) format. A quick reference is available at:

https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-1.html.

Some examples are given below:-

¹ Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy : A Prime in the Social History of Pictorial Style*, (Oxford University Press, London, 1988), p. 45.

² Lina Bolzoni and Pietri Coral, *The Culture Memory*, (Bologna : Societa editrice Il Mulino, 1992), p. 45.

2. Use of Ibid., op. cit., and loc. cit.

Ibid. refers to the immediate preceding reference; op. cit. refers to the prior reference by the same author and loc. cit. is used instead of op. cit. when reference is made to a work previously cited and to the same page in that work. For example :-

⁴ R Polrer, *Learning Physics*, (Academic, New York, 1993), p.4.

⁵ Ibid, p. 9.

⁶ T Eliot, *Astrophysics*, (Springer, Berlin, 1989), p.141.

⁷ R Millan, *Art of Latin Grammar*, (Academic, New York, 1997), p.23.

⁸ Elliot, op cit., p148.

⁹ Elliot, loc, cit.

3. Where websites have been used to access information, the complete web address of the website should be cited, followed by the date the website was accessed by the author. e.g. Accessed Jun 24, 2020 from <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1947degana.html>.

Additions to the USI Library for the Quarter Ending Mar 2023

During this period a total of 34 new books have been added. Details of the new books are available on USI Website.

Research Projects

Members interested in undertaking research projects may submit research proposals to USI (CS3 / CMHCS). At present, ten Chairs of Excellence have been instituted in CS3; namely, Field Marshal KM Cariappa Chair, Admiral RD Katari Chair, Air Marshal Subroto Mukherjee Chair, Prof DS Kothari Chair, Ministry of External Affairs Chair, Flying Officer Amandeep Singh Gill Chair, General Bipin Rawat Chair, Lt Gen PS Bhagat Chair, Bhawanipur Education Society College (BESC) Chair, Assam Rifles Chair and three Chairs in CMHCS namely; Maharana Pratap Chair, Chhatrapati Shivaji Chair and USI-War Wounded Foundation Chair. Copies of the Rules for Award of Fellowship Grants and Conduct of Research are available on the USI Website.

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New USI Members

During the period Jan–Mar 2023, 15 registered as New Life Members; 08 Ordinary Members renewed membership and 09 registered as new Ordinary Members.

Course Members

During Jan-Mar 2023, 588 Officers registered for Course Membership.

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NOTE

The views expressed in the Journal are the opinions of the contributors and the Editor, and are not necessarily official views or those of the USI Council.

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**Captain Gurbachan Singh Salaria, PVC (posthumous) (1935–1961),
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India's highest wartime military decoration**


OBITUARY



“Death is certain for one who has been born, and rebirth is inevitable for one who has died. Therefore, you should not lament over the inevitable”

Bhagwadgita 2.27

We at the United Service Institution (USI) of India are deeply grieved by the unfortunate and untimely demise of Brigadier Narender Kumar, SM, VSM (Retd), elected Council Member of the USI of India, on 02 April 2023. He was earlier a Distinguished Fellow at the Centre for Strategic Studies and Simulation (CS3) at the USI. Our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family members.

May God rest his soul in eternal peace. 

Editorial

Over the years, the United Service Institution (USI) of India Journal has made a key contribution to enlightening readers on the ongoing geopolitical situation, national security, defence studies, and United Nations Peacekeeping. This 1st Quarter (Jan-Mar 2023) Journal is a special edition which commemorates the contribution of the United Nations in maintaining world peace, with highlights of India's contribution to United Nations Peacekeeping Operations.

The USI has played a stellar role in the furtherance of India's contribution to UN Peace Keeping. The Centre for UN Peacekeeping (CUNPK), which was established and nurtured at the USI, became not only a full-fledged unit of the Indian Army but also a regional node for excellence in peacekeeping. The USI is endowed with an experienced resource faculty, comprising India's former permanent representatives to the UN, diplomats who headed the UN division in the Ministry of External Affairs, Heads of the Missions/Force Commanders and Deputy Heads of the Missions/Deputy Force Commanders of UN Peacekeeping missions, Military Advisers to the Secretary-General and those who have held advisory appointments at the UN HQ at the policy-making level. Former practitioners of peacekeeping (both military and police forces) make USI's contribution to the field of peacekeeping creditable. Besides, USI is a founding member of the Challenges Forum and regularly collaborates with the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI), Effectiveness of Peacekeeping Network (EPON), and Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP) on different UN-related topics.

Our lead in organising international courses in collaboration with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) is one such initiative taken by the USI. Within India, the USI has partnered with the UN Women, the UN Resident Coordinator (UNRC), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA). To make it easier for the students of peacekeeping to refer to the scholarly contributions to peacekeeping, the proceedings of all physical and web-based peacekeeping events are being produced as Monographs both in print and digitised form.

This special USI Journal covers a few selected articles about the complex challenges faced by UN peacekeeping such as the protection of civilians, freedom of movement and ever-increasing crimes against peacekeepers, the effectiveness of UN peacekeeping in mandate implementation, the future of UN peace operations, and also highlighting India's contribution to UN peacekeeping from the inception of peacekeeping until its current contributions in the African Region.

The topics in this special issue range from India's first contribution to Korea to some of the complex ongoing peacekeeping missions in the African Region as well as opinions and views on the challenges that impact the performance of the peacekeeping missions. This edition carries articles by practitioners of UN peacekeeping, UN professionals and researchers, and academicians - both young and old - who have been part of either the planning process or policy formulation or implementing the mandate. Being the only institution in India that engages in the academic work of peacekeeping, articles related to peacekeeping get published in the journals of the USI from time to time. This however is the first special issue of USI on UN peacekeeping. There is 15 well-researched articles, a brief on Challenges Annual Forum 2022 and reviews of two recent USI publications on UN peacekeeping in this issue.

In its pursuit to excel in the academic field of UN peacekeeping, USI considers feedback and referral as the source of motivation. As always, the USI Journal will strive to maintain the standard of research and simple and pleasurable reading. The USI acknowledges the financial assistance received from the ICSSR for this journal's publication.

Happy Reading!

Gp Capt Sharad Tewari, VM (Retd)
Director Editorial

Challenges to UN Peacekeeping

Mr Asoke Mukerji, IFS (Retd)[®]

Abstract

Two major challenges facing UN Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKOs) on the ground today are implementing the mandate of the UN Security Council (UNSC) on Protection of Civilians (PoC), and responding to threats to Peacekeeping Operations (PKOs) by international terrorism. It is useful to place these two challenges in context to consider the most effective response by Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) and the UNSC working in an integrated manner, as envisaged in Article 44 of the UN Charter. The article concludes with a vision that drives India's push for 'reformed multilateralism'.

Protection of Civilians

Protection of Civilians (PoC) has become the main objective of the mandate of UN PKOs today. This requires proactive UN peacekeepers, trained to anticipate and mitigate actions by the warring parties inside the member-states of the UN where they are deployed. The application of this to UN PKOs has been evident across the board in recent years. However, in 2011, in the aftermath of the ill-fated UNSC resolution authorising military intervention in Libya¹ on the pretext of a responsibility to protect civilians in that country, the UNSC has been careful to endorse a 'multi-dimensional' approach to PKO mandates, prioritising PoC through national governance institutions. In order to appreciate how the PoC mandate has mushroomed into becoming a template for 10 out of the 12 UNPKOs active on the ground today, it is instructive to look at the case of the UNPKO in South Sudan (UNMISS).

In July 2011, the UNSC adopted resolution 1996 establishing the UNMISS PKO "to consolidate peace and security, and to help establish the conditions for development in the Republic of South

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Sudan”.² India was an elected member of the UNSC when this resolution was adopted. By the end of 2012, it was clear to the peacekeepers deployed in UNMISS that instead of consolidating peace and security, they were witnessing the eruption of a violent civil war inside South Sudan along tribal lines. The UNSC reviewed this situation in July 2012, and prioritised the PoC in the mandate for UNMISS, favouring a top-down approach that relied on the commitments of the Government of South Sudan and the decisions of the civilian leadership of UNMISS represented by the United Nations Security General’s Special Representative.³

On 09 April 2013, news came to the UN Headquarters from the UNMISS PKO deployed in South Sudan that 5 Indian UN peacekeepers along with two UNMISS national staff and five civilian staff contractors had been ambushed and killed while escorting a humanitarian convoy in Jonglei state. In his response, the UNSG called on the Government of South Sudan to bring the perpetrators of this crime to justice. ‘He recalls that the killing of peacekeepers is a war crime that falls under the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court’.⁴ The UNSC issued a Press Statement the same day condemning the attack and calling on the “Government of South Sudan to swiftly investigate the incident and bring the perpetrators to justice”.⁵

At the UNSC open debate on PKOs in June 2014, India called on the UNSC “to ensure a mandatory inclusion in all UNPKO mandates of legally binding provisions for prosecuting, penalising and neutralising any non-governmental armed groups and armed militias causing, or threatening to cause, harm to UNPKOs”.⁶ This has yet to be included in the mandate of UNPKOs. As President of the UNSC in August 2021, India issued a Statement that reiterated that attacks on peacekeepers ‘may constitute war crimes’. The Statement stopped short (due to lack of consensus within the UNSC members) of proposing an automatic investigation by the UN into such attacks with the objective of prosecuting and penalising the perpetrators of such crimes.⁷ On the ground, the PoC mandate of UNPKOs continues to be challenged by a structural constraint. This is the determined rejection by the permanent members of the UNSC of proposals by TCCs not represented in the Council, who have contributed troops to the PKO, to participate in decisions on the deployment mandate of the PKO. This stand of the UNSC is in contravention of Article 44

of the UN Charter which clearly provides for such participation by TCCs in UNSC decisions.

Two consequences of this refusal by the UNSC to uphold the provisions of the UN Charter are evident in South Sudan. The first was the UNSC being unable to take inputs from India as a major TCC, during the mandate negotiations of UNMISS during 2013-2015 into account while considering how to respond to spiralling violence across South Sudan, which made 25 per cent of its population internally displaced. African and Indian UN peacekeepers deployed in UNMISS knew of the traditional tribal local dispute resolution structures in these communities, which could have been identified by the UNSC in a 'ground-up' approach to prevent local disputes, about grazing rights, from fuelling the larger civil war and displacing thousands of civilians. The second was a mismatch between the mission mandate negotiated in New York by the UNSC and the ground realities in South Sudan, with skewed allocations of resources including financial and material resources for strengthening the PoC mandate.

The example of how the UNPKO responded to protecting civilians fleeing from the fighting in Melut in South Sudan in 2015 is instructive. Many of Melut's population of 49,000 people sought shelter in the UNMISS base. The area for protecting civilians from attacks had been demarcated by UNMISS peacekeepers, but apart from expanding the space in the base and erecting perimeter fencing, the PKO's requests for appropriate shelters to protect civilians from mortar attacks and shelling had not been responded to by the UN Secretariat, reportedly due to lack of funds. In the fighting for the surrounding oil rich areas, a section of the South Sudan People's Liberation Army (comprising of the Shilluk tribal community, commanded by Major General Johnson Olony) defected from the government forces and marched towards the oilfields of Palogue through Melut. UNMISS decided, to evacuate the humanitarian peacekeepers, responsible for feeding the civilians and giving them medical attention, leaving the 125 UNMISS troops from India to look after the security of CSB Melut as well as the thousands of sheltering civilians. Eight civilians died in the attacks, which were repulsed by the UNMISS troops.⁸ While India was not a participant in the UNSC discussions on South Sudan following this informal briefing, Resolution 2223 adopted by the UNSC on 28 May 2015 expressed 'appreciation for UNMISS's efforts to

support internally displaced persons seeking protection on its sites, while underlining the necessity to find sustainable solutions for the internally displaced population'.⁹

UNMISS is only one example of how the PoC mandates given routinely by the UNSC for UNPKOs today need to be conceptualised holistically, and implemented in a 'human-centric', proactive, and flexible manner, using a wider range of inputs from TCCs whose troops know the ground realities of the region better than many UNSC members in New York.

Threat to PKOs from International Terrorism

The first stirring of international terrorist groups targeting UNPKOs came as a warning shot to UN member-states in New York in 2013. The 'Arab Spring' that brought this phenomenon to UNPKOs had begun in Tunisia in December 2010, and after impacting Libya and Egypt, it crossed into West Asia and parts of the Gulf. Syria was a particular focus due to its unique fault lines from the breakup of the Ottoman Empire at the end of the First World War. The unrest in the Arab world proved fertile ground for spawning new violent extremist groups that gravitated towards the umbrella of Al-Qaida, and expanded their footprint from West Asia to Afghanistan and Central Asia.

On 06 March 2013, the UNSG issued a statement condemning the kidnapping of 21 Filipino UN peacekeepers of United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) by 'armed elements', and demanded their unconditional release. Due to the back-channel efforts by the UN, these UN peacekeepers were released on 9 March 2013. The UNSC in a press statement issued on 27 March 2013, after a briefing by the UN Secretariat, "underscored the increased risk the situation poses to United Nations personnel on the ground, as highlighted in particular by the detention of the 21 UNDOF military personnel by armed elements of the Syrian opposition, the firing directed at United Nations personnel and facilities, and the carjacking of United Nations vehicles".¹⁰

On 07 May 2013, four UN peacekeepers of UNDOF were kidnapped by 'armed elements', which were released on 12 May 2013 with "the assistance of Qatar" according to the UNSG.¹¹ The UN Security Council in a Press Statement issued by its President (the UK) admitted that the kidnapping had been conducted by

armed elements of the Syrian opposition',¹² but did not propose any measures to counter this terrorist act.

The UNGA resolution on Syria on 15 May 2013 provided India with an opportunity to highlight the gestating terrorist dimension of the threat. In its explanation of vote, India said:

“Violence has assumed a serious sectarian nature, and terrorist groups, including al Qaida, have entrenched themselves...We are particularly concerned that UN peacekeepers (in the UNDOF PKO) have been repeatedly targeted by rebel groups and taken hostage, including on two occasions in the recent past. This is completely unacceptable. It is imperative that the sanctity of United Nations peacekeepers be respected by all sides. A clear signal must be sent by the UN that such acts will not be tolerated and will attract the full weight of the international community against the perpetrators”.¹³

The UNGA resolution against Syria had been sponsored by Qatar, with the strong backing of France, the United States, and many Arab League member-states. It sought to endorse a political transition in Syria in favour of a national coalition displacing the Government of President Bashar al-Assad, while calling for humanitarian assistance to the victims of the conflict. Syria stated that “the Ambassador of the Coalition in Qatar [...] had given instructions to the Brigade of Martyrs of Yarmouk to kidnap UNDOF peacekeepers”. Russia pointed out that the “conflict in Syria was a serious internal conflict, with the Government fighting terrorist groups, including Al-Qaida”. The view of Syria on external instigation of terrorism against the UNPKO was opposed by Saudi Arabia and France. In reply, Syria posed the question, “The regimes of Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey persisted in funding *jihadi* and transnational terrorist organisations, [...] Special Representative Lakhdar Brahimi had already referred to the presence of 40,000 terrorists who had shed blood in Syria, including members of Al-Qaida. How could Qatar have such influence as to secure the release of UN peacekeepers kidnapped by rebels in the Golan if not for its involvement with rebel groups”?¹⁴ The resolution was adopted with 107 in favour to 12 against, with 59 abstentions (including countries like Brazil and India).

Due to the low profile adopted by the UN Secretariat, and the inability of the UNSC to label the ‘armed elements’ as terrorists,

these terrorist groups were emboldened to repeat their tactic of kidnapping UN peacekeepers in UNDOF for ransom again. On 28 August 2014, a group of 45 Fijian troops and 40 Filipino troops in the UNDOF PKO were held hostage by 'armed elements'. The Filipino troops were 'extricated to safety' while the Fijian troops were released on 11 September 2014. This time, the UNSC declared that this kidnapping had been conducted by 'Security Council-designated terrorist groups and by members of non-state armed groups'. In an indication of UNSC policy on terrorism against UNPKOs, the Security Council President (the UK) 'called upon countries with influence to strongly convey to the armed members of the opposition in the UNDOF area of operation to immediately release the peacekeepers'.¹⁵ On 30 August 2014, the UNSC reiterated its "strong condemnation of the ongoing detention of 44 Fijian peacekeepers from position 27, as well as the surrounding of position 68, where Security Council-designated terrorist groups and non-state armed actors continue to trap 40 Filipino peacekeepers. The members demanded the immediate and unconditional release of these peacekeepers, as well as their safe passage".¹⁶ In another press statement issued on 03 September 2014, the UNSC President (the United States) 'called upon countries with influence to strongly convey to those responsible to immediately release the peacekeepers'.¹⁷

There was no mention of the Security Council using counter-terrorism measures adopted by it under Resolution 1267 for terrorists and terrorist entities listed in its Sanctions Lists for Al-Qaida, creating a dangerous ambivalence that catalysed terrorist attacks against UNPKOs elsewhere, particularly in United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). According to the UN, as many as 163 UN troops in MINUSMA have been killed by "malicious acts"¹⁸ (a euphemism for terrorism) since the PKO was established in April 2013 with a 'robust' mandate, making it one of the most dangerous PKOs active today for UN peacekeeping troops.

At the UNGA review of the annual report submitted by the UNSC in 2014, India underlined the importance of effective action to be taken by the UNSC to counter terrorism. It said:

"Specific examples in this case are of attacks in Golan Heights and Mali. Unless effectively deterred, such threats will only

increase in number and scope. In the case of UNDOF, it has been alleged that the foreign terrorist fighters who attacked UN peacekeepers belong to the Al Nusra Front, which is proscribed by the Security Council as a terrorist group. The Report does not give any information on the Security Council's steps to use its authority to investigate, prosecute, and penalise the perpetrators of such terrorist acts. A clear obligation for all member states to act against foreign terrorist fighters who attack UN peacekeepers should become an integral part of the peacekeeping mandates approved by the Council'.¹⁹

Honouring fallen UN Peacekeepers

The brunt of the costs of implementing UNSC mandates for PKOs is borne by individual UN peacekeepers. Every year, the TCCs to UN PKOs participate in the bitter-sweet function on the "International Day of UN Peacekeepers"²⁰ to commemorate UN peacekeepers have made the supreme sacrifice in defending the principles of the UN Charter. The UNGA had adopted a resolution in December 2002 to commemorate 29 May every year as this day of commemoration. The date marked the anniversary of the first deployment of UN military observers to the Middle East to form the United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation (UNTSO) to monitor the Armistice Agreement between Israel and its Arab neighbours.

In 1988, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to UN Peacekeeping. In the citation for this award, it was stated that "UN forces represent the manifest will of the community of nations to achieve peace through negotiations, and the forces have, by their presence, made a decisive contribution towards the initiation of actual peace negotiations".²¹

The Dag Hammarskjold Medal, named after the second UNSG who is widely considered to have been the most effective UNSG till now and was killed under mysterious circumstances while on an official visit to Congo in September 1961, was instituted in 2000 by the then UNSG Kofi Annan. Since 2014, the Captain Mbaye Diagne Medal is also awarded on the International Day of UN Peacekeepers, for those who lost their lives during service with a peacekeeping operation under the operational control and authority of the United Nations. Captain Mbaye Diagne saved

hundreds of lives in 1994, before he was killed while serving as a UN peacekeeper in Rwanda.

The poignancy of these medal ceremonies on the occasion prompted TCCs led by India, to propose the construction of a permanent memorial wall in memory of UN peacekeepers since 1948 who have given their lives while deployed to maintain international peace and security.

In his address to the Leaders' Summit on UN Peacekeeping on 28 September 2015, India's Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi said:

"I would like to pay homage to the peacekeepers who have laid down their lives in defending the highest ideals of the United Nations. It would be most fitting if the proposed memorial wall to the fallen peacekeepers is created quickly. India stands ready to contribute, including financially, to this objective".²²

The proposal for constructing a permanent memorial wall to fallen UN peacekeepers was approved by the Special Committee, who's Report was unanimously adopted by the UNGA in 2016.

The operative paragraph of the Special Committee's Report reads:

"In this regard, the Special Committee recommends the establishment, through voluntary contributions, of a memorial wall at the UN Peacekeepers Memorial at Headquarters and requests that due consideration be given to the modalities involved, including the recording of the names of those who have made the supreme sacrifice".²³

The total number of Indian troops who have given their lives while serving under the UN flag is the highest among all UN member-states, standing at 177 out of 4245 casualties between 1948-2022.²⁴ The vast majority of the 281 deaths in the MINUSMA PKO in Mali so far are due to terrorist attacks.

Conclusion

Challenges to UNPKOs from structural shortfalls in implementing the PoC mandate as well as the threat to UNPKOs deployed in volatile regions from international terrorist groups require a more

effective UNSC, which oversees UN PKOs. This can be achieved by implementing the mandate given by world leaders in 2005 to reform the UNSC to make it 'more broadly representative, efficient and transparent, and thus, to further enhance its effectiveness and the legitimacy and implementation of its decisions'.²⁵ It is this vision that drives India's push for 'reformed multilateralism'.

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Key Factors that Influence the Effectiveness of UN Peacekeeping Operations

Mr Cedric de Coning®

Abstract

Looking back over the past 75 years of UN peacekeeping, the most enduring question has been whether peacekeeping is effective? The article goes a step further and asks what factors influence the effectiveness of peace operations? Historically, most peacekeeping operations have been successful. However, peacekeeping is currently suffering from a significant trust deficit. One significant factor that differentiates the contemporary peacekeeping operations with a stabilisation mandate from the historic record is the absence of a viable political or peace process. The article identifies five factors that influence the effectiveness of peace operations. The aim is to generate a guiding framework for effectiveness that can help future decision makers avoid the stabilisation dilemma and the perverse effects it generates. The five factors are: ripeness for resolution, viable political project, coherent and accountable political and material support, principled but adaptive mandating and leadership, and avoiding harm.

Introduction

Looking back over the past 75 years of UN peacekeeping, the most enduring question is whether peace operations work? In this article, I go a step further and ask what factors influence the effectiveness of peace operations?

Howard finds that, since the end of the Cold War, two-thirds, or 11 out of 16 UN peacekeeping operations, successfully ended

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and withdrew.¹ Despite this historic record, peacekeeping is currently experiencing a significant trust deficit, largely because the multidimensional stabilisation operations in Central African Republic (CAR), Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Mali are not meeting the expectations raised by their mandates when it comes to protecting civilians, helping host states to counter insurgents, and to end conflicts. At least, partly as a result of the perception that these missions are not achieving their mandates, and under financial pressure, the UN Security Council (UNSC) has not deployed any new UN peacekeeping operations (UNPKOs) since 2014.

This may be a temporary period of contraction and moderation for peacekeeping operations (PKOs)², but it does signal a tension between the overall evidence that UN peacekeeping works, and the perception that contemporary multidimensional UN peacekeeping operations are problematic. This article will offer recommendations about what can be done to guide and improve the effectiveness of UNPKOs in future.

Key Factors that Influence Effectiveness of Peacekeeping Operations

The article identifies five key factors that influence the effectiveness of PKOs. These factors can be used as a framework for effectiveness that can guide future decision-making regarding when - and when not to - deploy UNPKOs, and what kinds of mandated tasks UNPKOs can realistically be expected to achieve, provided they have sufficient political and material support.

Ripeness

There are a few widely agreed upon prerequisites for effective conflict resolution. The first is that the parties to the conflict must have arrived at a point where they have recognised the need to seek a negotiated solution and where they themselves choose to enter a cease-fire or peace process. This implies that they have reached what Zartman has termed a mutually hurting stalemate.³ This is a point in the conflict where neither party can achieve victory over the other(s) through violence or other coercive means, and the positions they are in are untenable.

The ripeness argument resonates with what is a widely agreed principle in conflict resolution, namely, that peace needs to emerge

from, and be sustained by, the people engaged in and affected by conflict. Peace cannot be imposed. The implication for peacekeeping is a validation of the principle of consent as a prerequisite for the deployment of a PKOs.

What options does the UN have when a conflict is not yet ripe for peacekeeping? If there is a need to use force to protect civilians outside a peace process, for example in cases of a gross violation of human rights, war crimes or genocide, then the UNSC needs to authorise a coalition of the willing or a regional organisation that is willing and able to perform such a role. All the high-level strategic reviews of UN peacekeeping, including the Brahimi panel (2000) and the High-level Independent Panel of Experts on Peace Operations (HIPPO) (2015), found that UN peacekeeping is not the right tool for peace enforcement.⁴ The advice to the UNSC has been clear and consistent; UNPKOs should not - not even as a last resort - be deployed for peace enforcement.

The point is not that the UNSC should shirk its responsibility, but rather that it has many potential options when faced with a compelling need to authorise an enforcement operation.⁵ It should not turn to peacekeeping because it is politically or financially convenient without taking ripeness and other factors into consideration.

A Viable Political Project

Both the Brahimi report (deploy only when there is a peace to keep) and the HIPPO report (the primacy of politics) emphasised that UNPKOs can only be effective when there is a viable political process that they can support and protect. This implies a cease-fire agreement, a peace agreement, or a peace process that the major parties to the conflict have committed themselves to, or a clear political roadmap towards such a peace process that is realistically achievable. A viable political project should, thus, be a prerequisite for the deployment and continuation of a UNPKOs.⁶

UNPKOs are effective in certain contexts but perform poorly in others, and one of the key factors that influence its effectiveness is whether there is a viable political project in place. If not, then the consistent advice to the Council from the various expert commissions, it has commissioned over the years is that it should look beyond peacekeeping to the other tools at its disposal.

Perhaps the Security Council should be more creative and invest more efforts into developing new instruments. After all, peacekeeping itself was a new innovation 75 years ago.

Coherent and Accountable Political and Material Support

It is necessary that a UNPKOs has the consent of the parties and that there is a viable political project to support and protect, but that is not sufficient. The effectiveness of peace operations is closely linked to the extent they enjoy coherent political support from the widest possible set of stakeholders.

Achieving and sustaining support for the mandate, role, and actions of UNPKOs in a continuously evolving local, regional, and international context does not happen automatically. Coherent political support is, thus, something that the pen holder(s) and other members of the Security Council, the UN Secretary-General, and international, regional, and national stakeholders need to continuously work on to sustain and enhance. Whilst the mission leadership has a role to play in this process, the high-level diplomatic investment needed to sustain and enhance such coherent political support must be driven by the Security Council, Secretary-General and other international and regional partners, and the parties to the conflict.

If international and regional support can be thought of at a vertical scale, then a horizontal level of support, a UNPKOs needs to invest in achieving and sustaining is the support of the people in the country or region where they operate. This implies support for the peace process, or political project, that an operation has been mandated to support and protect, and for the role of the UNPKOs in that process. UNPKOs are still too state centric. They need to become more people-centred, which implies that they need to engage closely with, and make themselves accountable to, the people affected by the conflict.⁷

Another type of support that a UNPKOs needs to build and sustain is the partnerships necessary to generate system-wide comprehensive momentum in support of the peace process. A PKO is just one actor among many actors working towards supporting a peace process, and its impact is limited to a few peace, security, governance, and social domains. There are many other actors, nationally, locally, and internationally that need to be

coordinated and integrated to ensure accountable coherent support across the wider political, security, social, economic, justice, environment, and other dimensions necessary to sustaining peace.

Lastly, a PKO needs to have sufficient material resources to enable it to achieve its mandate. Unfortunately, it is rare that UNPKOs receive adequate and appropriate material resources. It seems as if the diplomatic and bureaucratic processes that generate peacekeeping finances and resources are designed to provide UNPKOs with the minimum resources they need to remain operational, rather than with adequate resources to achieve the mandates they have been tasked with. Raising expectations that UNPKOs will, for example protect civilians, and then not providing those missions with the human and material resources and political backing to do so is immoral and irresponsible.

The consistent gap between the capabilities that expert planners determined are necessary for operations to be effective, and the size of operations authorised by the UNSC and the financial resources approved by the 5th Committee of the UNGA, further help to explain the limited effectiveness of these operations.

Principled but Adaptive Mandating and Leadership

For the sustained legitimacy and credibility of specific UNPKOs, the UNSC needs to be guided by the principles of peacekeeping consent, impartiality, and the non-use of force – when it considers when and where to deploy a PKO, and what kind of mandated task to authorise.

While the principles remain constant, how they are applied in each specific context requires that those that lead and command PKOs employ an iterative adaptive mission management approach that is based on the feedback generated by a proactive experiential learning and performance assessment process.⁸

Consent implies that the UN is requested to support the implementation of a cease-fire or peace agreement by the parties to those agreements, or that the UN obtains the consent of the parties to the conflict for a peace operation. The consent of the host state is necessary but not sufficient on its own. When consent is obtained from only one party to a conflict – which is the case in the contemporary operations in CAR, the DRC and Mali – it undermines both the consent and impartiality principles, which

makes the use of force more likely as other parties are likely to feel marginalised and excluded.

When it is not possible or feasible to obtain consent from the parties to the conflict then it implies that such a conflict is not ripe for a peacekeeping operation. In such context the UN Security Council needs to look to the other instruments at its disposal discussed earlier.

These three principles, applied together, have been critical for the effectiveness and resilience of UN peacekeeping over the past 75 years.⁹ Those operations that have been successful have all been based on these principles. Peacekeeping's greatest failures – the UN mission in the Congo (ONUC) in the 1960s, and Somalia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Rwanda in the 1990s – have all been associated with mandates and context where these principles have been eroded or misapplied.

The mandates of the contemporary 'stabilisation' operations in CAR, DRC and Mali have all significantly departed from the principles of peacekeeping. This gap between what the peacekeeping instrument is intended to do, and how it has been applied in practice in these three contexts, helps to explain the ineffectiveness of these operations. Leaving aside the high number of peacekeepers deaths in these operations, especially in Mali, the result has been a significant loss of credibility for the UN, and especially the UNSC, as well as a loss of credibility in the utility of peacekeeping as a conflict management and conflict resolution instrument. The reputational damage that has resulted from this gap has contributed to the overall decline in trust in UN peacekeeping as an effective instrument, and this has contributed to no new PKOs being authorised since 2014.

Avoiding Harm

A PKO is deployed to generate certain intended effects. However, when you try to influence a complex social system, one will always also generate unintended effects. Aoi, de Coning and Thakur argue that peacekeeping operations need to anticipate that they will generate unintended effects, some of which will have perverse consequences that can cause harm to those the missions are meant to protect and serve, and to the credibility and legitimacy of these operations.¹⁰

One of the most obvious examples has been the sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) by peacekeepers of the very people they have been mandated to protect. SEA is now no longer seen as something that a UNPKO has no leverage over, and the UN Secretariat and PKOs now take a range of actions to anticipate, prevent and manage SEA. Not all unintended consequences can be foreseen and anticipated as clearly as SEA, but operations can anticipate that their actions will generate unintended consequences and they can proactively monitor for such consequences and respond to them.

Avoiding harm should be the fifth principle that guide UNPKOs because it is critically important for the moral, legal and functional credibility and legitimacy of peace operations, and, thus, a crucial factor that influence, the effectiveness of UNPKOs.

Conclusion

Looking back over the past 75 years of UN peacekeeping, the question this article wanted to contribute to is what factors influence the effectiveness of peace operations? Historically, most PKOs have been successful; however, the utility of peacekeeping is currently under pressure, largely because the contemporary large multidimensional PKOs in CAR, DRC and Mali are suffering from a significant loss of trust.

One significant factor that differentiates the contemporary UNPKOs in CAR, DRC, and Mali from the historic record is the absence of a viable political or peace process. Without such a process in place, peace operations cannot be realistically expected to end the conflict, in these countries, on their own. Peace cannot be imposed.

The article identified five key factors that influence the effectiveness of PKOs. These factors can be used as a framework for effectiveness that can guide future decision-making regarding when - and when not to - deploy UNPKOs, and what kinds of mandated tasks UNPKOs can realistically be expected to achieve, provided they have sufficient political and material support. Taken together, these five key factors all confirm the moral, legal, and functional coherence of the principles of peacekeeping. These principles have been tested, they have adapted to various forms and eras of peace operations, and they have proven to be resilient

and relevant over the entire 75 years history of UN peacekeeping. Staying true to the principles and using these five factors of effectiveness when deciding where and when to deploy UNPKOs, and what kind of mandates to give them, will help the UNSC when it needs to make choices regarding which of the instruments at its disposal will be more likely to be effective in a given context.

Endnotes

¹ These 16 missions are , Namibia, El Salvador, Cambodia, Mozambique, Eastern Slavonia/Croatia, Guatemala, Timor Leste, Burundi, Sierra Leone, Cote d'Ivoire, and Liberia. Howard (2019) judge that the following missions have failed: Somalia in 1993; Angola in 1993; Rwanda in 1994; Bosnia (Srebrenica) in 1995; and Haiti in 2017. Since then, the hybrid African Union (AU) – UN mission in Darfur has also been withdrawn with mixed results, bringing the total to 17.

² de Coning, 2021.

³ Zartman, 2001.

⁴ The Brahimi report is available at: https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/a_55_305_e_brahimi_report.pdf and the report of the HIPPO panel is available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/report-high-level-independent-panel-peace-operations>.

⁵ Karlsrud, 2018.

⁶ See Day, Gorur, Holt and Hunt (2020) for case studies and a tool for assessing the political strategy of the missions in CAR, Darfur, DRC, Mali and South Sudan.

⁷ de Coning, Karlsrud & Troost, 2015.

⁸ In this regard, the implementation of the Comprehensive Planning and Performance Assessment System (CPAS) in UN peacekeeping operations represents a positive development. See Forti, 2022 and de Coning, 2020.

⁹ de Coning & Peter, 2019.

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Accountability for Serious Crimes against United Nations Peacekeepers – Key Policy and Operational Aspects

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Abstract

Accountability for crimes committed against United Nations peacekeepers remains a serious challenge. While a clear policy and legal framework is in place, impunity remains largely the norm. At the same time, significant progress was made in the past five years thanks to a new momentum from Member States and the Secretariat of the United Nations. Continued engagement at the political, operational and technical levels is required to ensure the investigation, prosecution and adjudication of these cases by countries hosting United Nations peacekeeping operations, in line with Security Council resolution 2589.

Introduction

On the evening of 25 May 2015, two young military peacekeepers from Bangladesh assigned to the United Nations Organisation Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), were driving their vehicle toward the Mission's base in Bamako. While the city's situation remained tense then, most of the attacks against MINUSMA had occurred in the northern part of Mali. Suddenly, an attacker fired at the vehicle at close range while another assailant kept watch. The driver managed to return the vehicle to the MINUSMA base, where both victims received first aid. Sadly, one of the peacekeepers

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died and the other suffered serious injuries as a result of this terrorist attack.

Unfortunately, this incident is not unique. Between 1948 and 05 February 2023, 1060 personnel serving in United Nations peacekeeping operations have been killed and several thousand injured as a result of malicious acts.¹ This includes 323 killed since 2013. Very few of those responsible for such crimes have been brought to justice. This unacceptable impunity remains largely the rule. Beyond the blatant injustice to the victims and their families, the United Nations has recognised that the lack of response to such crimes encourages hostile elements “to attack peacekeepers, meaning that there is a direct link between the failure to implement operations to hold attackers to account and fatalities”.² As such, impunity over crimes against peacekeepers constitutes a driver of conflict and instability in the countries where missions are deployed. While there is a clear legal basis under national and international law to investigate and prosecute crimes against United Nations peacekeepers, only limited political attention has been given to this issue in past decades. The problem tends to be exacerbated in host countries in which national institutions have been weakened by active or recent conflict.³

Legal and Policy Basis

Fundamentally, the basis for the prosecution of perpetrators of crimes against United Nations peacekeepers is the national legal framework of the country hosting the mission. As such, national law enforcement, prosecutorial and judicial institutions hold primary responsibility for seeking justice, as reflected in the status-of-forces and status-of-mission agreements signed between the United Nations and host state upon establishment of the peacekeeping operation.⁴ Of note, under the United Nations model status-of-force agreement, the government of the host country “[...] shall ensure the prosecution of persons subject to its criminal jurisdiction who are accused of acts in relation to the United Nations peacekeeping operation or its members which, if committed in relation to the forces of the government, would have rendered such acts liable to prosecution”.⁵ This legal and policy framework is informed by:⁶

- the reports of the Secretary-General on the scope of legal protection under the Convention on the Safety of

United Nations and associated personnel and on the prosecution of crimes against peacekeepers;

- the annual resolutions of the General Assembly on “Safety and security of humanitarian personnel and protection of United Nations personnel”;
- the relevant recommendations of the General Assembly’s Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations on safety and security of United Nations peacekeepers and the legal protection framework, and the General Assembly resolutions endorsing such recommendations; and
- relevant resolutions and Presidential Statements of the Security Council.

It should particularly be noted that under the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and associated personnel, State parties have committed to submit such cases without undue delay to their competent authorities for the purpose of prosecution in accordance with the law of the concerned State, except in cases of extradition.⁷ However, very few of the countries hosting or having hosted United Nations peacekeeping operations are parties to this instrument.⁸

Declaration of Shared Commitments on Peacekeeping Operations

On 28 March 2018, the Secretary-General of the United Nations launched his ‘Action for Peacekeeping (A4P)’ initiative in response to the increased political and operational challenges faced by peacekeeping operations. This resulted in the Declaration of Shared Commitments on UN Peacekeeping Operations launched on 16 August 2018; the Declaration constitutes a set of mutually agreed principles and commitments between Member States and the United Nations Secretariat to ensure that peacekeeping operations ‘are fit for the future’.⁹ Under paragraph 11 of the Declaration, Member States condemned “[...] in the strongest terms all acts of violence against UN personnel, as well as any attempts to commit such acts, which may constitute war crimes” and “[...]to take all appropriate measures to bring to justice perpetrators of criminal acts against UN personnel”.¹⁰ More than 150 Member States have endorsed principles, including almost all currently hosting peacekeeping operations.¹¹

In March 2021, the Secretary-General launched the ‘Action for Peacekeeping+ (A4P+)’ initiative with a view to focuses on key priorities that are designed to be catalytic and enhance the missions’ impact.¹² One of the seven priorities under this agenda is accountability to peacekeepers, with one result aimed at the prevention, investigation, and prosecution of crimes against peacekeepers. This objective is informed by two key strategic and measurable deliverables in this regard and three indicators for the period 2021-2023.¹³

Security Council Resolution 2589

On 18 August 2021, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2589 on strengthening accountability for crimes committed against peacekeepers. This landmark document, adopted by the Council under the presidency of India, was the first resolution of this body dedicated to this issue. Sponsored by 84 Member States, and unanimously adopted by the Council, the resolution calls for a renewed focus on measures to bring to justice the perpetrators of acts of violence against United Nations personnel serving in peacekeeping operations.

In this document, the Council specifically called on “Member States hosting, or having hosted United Nations peacekeeping operations, to take all appropriate measures, in accordance with their national law and international law, as applicable, to bring to justice perpetrators of the killing of, and all acts of violence against United Nations personnel, including, but not limited to, their detention and abduction”.¹⁴ The Council also recognised “[...] the need to enhance support to Member States hosting United Nations peacekeeping operations, as appropriate, for the implementation of effective and efficient investigation and prosecution measures, including through technical and logistical support, to address impunity and ensure accountability for such acts”.¹⁵ It also called for the establishment of a comprehensive online database of cases related to the killing of, and all acts of violence against, United Nations personnel serving in peacekeeping operations, as well as for enhancing the partnership between the United Nations and regional as well as subregional organisations, to provide capacity building assistance to host States in this regard.

Operational Aspects

While the above-mentioned legal and policy framework makes it abundantly clear that accountability for these crimes is a legal and moral obligation for the international community, there are several significant constraints on the achievement of this objective. There is no detailed information available at this stage on progress made in the investigation, prosecution and, adjudication of such cases, except specifically in instances of fatalities resulting from malicious acts in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Mali since January 2013. Those three missions account for more than 80 per cent of all such fatalities across peacekeeping operations in the past 10 years.

In terms of convictions by national courts, overall results in these three countries since 2013 can be summarised as follows: six individuals convicted in the Central African Republic in January and February 2020 in relation to the killing of 12 peacekeepers; nine individuals convicted in March 2021 in Mali for the killing of one peacekeeper and another individual in January 2023 in relation to the killing of three peacekeepers; and 50 individuals convicted in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in relation to the killing of two United Nations experts.¹⁶ Overall, convictions have been secured in only 15 cases of fatalities resulting from malicious acts, since January 2013, in the three countries (i.e. approximately 6 per cent of the 271 fatalities for this period¹⁷). Unfortunately, impunity remains the norm. At the same time, significant progress has been made since 2019 in the form of increases in the number of alleged perpetrators identified and detained in the three countries in question and in the percentage of cases with confirmed national investigations.¹⁸ The number of convictions is, therefore, also expected to increase significantly in the future.

While the data beyond that on fatalities as a result of malicious acts since 2013 in these three missions is currently lacking, the Secretariat is undertaking a phased comprehensive assessment in this regard as part of the establishment of the comprehensive online database mandated under Security Council Resolution 2589. The ultimate objective is to retain detailed information on all cases related to the killing of, and all acts of violence against, United Nations personnel who served in peacekeeping operations since the inception of such missions in 1948.

Key Challenges

There are significant political and operational challenges to ensuring accountability for the killing of, and other serious crimes against, peacekeepers. The first challenge has always been the lack of political focus on this issue by the United Nations and Member States. As discussed above, this has changed remarkably in recent years but maintaining the momentum remains a challenge in the midst of several other strategic and operational priorities. In some circumstances, it may also be difficult to bring perpetrators to justice given internal political dynamics and possible conflict of interests in certain contexts.

Secondly, such crimes are often committed in areas where the authority of the State may be limited and national law enforcement personnel may be absent. For example, many attacks against peacekeepers in Mali where 52 per cent of all peacekeeping fatalities as a result of malicious acts have occurred since 2013¹⁹ took place in the northern region of Kidal, where national law enforcement agencies are not present. Attacks also regularly occur against supply convoys in remote conflict-affected areas of the country, where the presence of State institutions is severely constrained and illegal armed groups are active. There are similar dynamics in place in other contexts, notably the eastern regions of the Democratic Republic of the Congo where such attacks typically occur. The absence or limited presence of law enforcement, prosecutorial, and judicial institutions - or their limited capacities - often create serious challenges for the security of witnesses as well as for the collection and preservation of evidence. The execution of arrest warrants in areas that are not fully in control of the State also proves difficult, if not impossible.

Thirdly, individuals are often not apprehended due to the nature of the attacks and the limited availability, or delays in the collection, of physical evidence. For example, most attacks against peacekeepers in Mali have involved the use of improvised explosive devices against convoys or indirect fire from mortars or missiles against military bases. In these circumstances, arresting suspects or securing material evidence has proven challenging. The situation is exacerbated in some contexts, such as in Mali, by the number of attacks carried out within a relatively limited period of time.

Fourthly, the capacity of State institutions is often limited due to the lack of adequate resources or training for the investigation and prosecution of complex criminal cases. This includes specific technical areas such as: investigation planning; interviewing techniques for victims, witnesses, and suspects; the methodology for gathering and safeguarding evidence; the use of forensic tools; the preparation of evidence for prosecution; and protection programmes for victims and witnesses.²⁰ From a material perspective, support to national authorities is often required for infrastructure, including buildings, information and communications systems, vehicles, office equipment, forensic equipment and materials, and other equipment required for the investigation and prosecution of crimes.²¹ Missions are also often called upon to provide direct logistical support, including for the transportation of law enforcement personnel, prosecutors, and judges to the field and related security support.²²

Fifthly, the rotation of mission personnel, who should otherwise be available to testify as victims or witnesses, and their subsequent availability once they are repatriated can also be problematic. More than 90 per cent of all victims of fatalities as a result of malicious acts since January 2013 have been military and police personnel deployed as part of national contingents which are subject to regular rotations. From a practical point of view, it may be difficult for contingent members to testify once they have left the host country. Furthermore, in some instances, there may be legal impediments for them to testify, given their national status or the need for them to have their privilege and immunities waived for the time of their service as United Nations personnel.

Initiatives from Member States

As noted above, there has been an increase in interest from Member States since 2018 on the issue of accountability for crimes against peacekeepers, as demonstrated by the fact that more than 150 Member States endorsed a specific commitment on this issue under the 2018 Declaration of Shared Commitments on UN Peacekeeping Operations. This political commitment was reinforced through the adoption of Security Council Resolution 2589, which was co-sponsored in 2021 by 84 Member States, and earlier through Security Council Resolution 2518.²³ This issue has also been considered by the Special Committee on Peacekeeping

Operations of the General Assembly as part of the annual briefings of the Secretariat, and in its annual reports since 2018.

In December 2022, more than 40 Member States launched the Group of Friends to Promote Accountability for Crimes against Peacekeepers. This mechanism, which is co-chaired by Bangladesh, Egypt, France, India, Nepal, and Morocco, is expected to serve as a key mechanism for promoting accountability and facilitating capacity-building and technical assistance to host State authorities. The Group of Friends is expected to actively engage and share information with the Secretary-General, and serve as an informal platform at the United Nations for exchanging information, sharing best practices, supporting initiatives, and mobilising resources directed at facilitating accountability for crimes committed against peacekeepers. The Department of Peace Operations serves as the Secretariat of the Group.

Initiatives of the United Nations Secretariat

Since 2018, the Department of Peace Operations has taken a lead role within the Secretariat in addressing the issue of accountability for crimes against peacekeepers. Starting in June 2018, specific guidance has been provided to missions that are most at risk. Extensive consultations have also taken place with Member States in New York, including representatives of host countries, key troop and police contributing countries, and potential donors, in order to generate political, operational, and technical support with a view to bringing perpetrators of such acts to justice. Specific standard operating procedures, endorsed by the Principals of all six key United Nations entities involved in these issues, were adopted in December 2020.²⁴ Planning documents of the Department of Peace Operations have further emphasised the issue²⁵, despite the lack of specifically approved resources for this purpose at United Nations Headquarters.

A Working Group on Accountability for Serious Crimes against Peacekeepers was also established by the Department of Peace Operations in 2019. In addition to this Department, the Working Group comprises the Department of Operational Support, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), the United Nations Organization Stabilisation Mission

in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Office of Legal Affairs (OLA), and the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS). The mechanism has played a central role in the exchange of information and the coordination of activities on this issue between these stakeholders, including in respect of policy and operational developments. Given the number of fatalities occurring in the past 10 years in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Mali, the activities of the Working Group have been largely focused on developments in these three countries. The importance of the mechanism has been generally well-recognised. In its 2021 report, the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations of the General Assembly specifically encouraged “[...] cooperation between the working group on accountability for serious crimes against peacekeepers and Member States in order to drive progress on combating impunity” and “[...] requested the working group to provide regular briefings to the Committee to update it on the investigations and prosecutions of the perpetrators of crimes against peacekeepers”.²⁶

The Office of Information and Communication Technology (OICT) and the Department of Peace Operations also initiated, in 2022, the development of a comprehensive online database on accountability for crimes against peacekeepers, as mandated under Security Council Resolution 2589. This was done in partnership with the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, OLA, OHCHR, MINUSCA, MINUSMA, MONUSCO, and UNDSS.

The online database consists of a mechanism to import approved malicious act records from an existing database and functionalities, and allow authorised United Nations users to add new cases, or add and edit information. The database will provide a centralised and secure platform to serve as a key tool that enables the recording and tracking of progress of cases. Its associated reporting functionality will allow for the consistent and transparent application of the requirements set forth under Security Council Resolution 2589 and ensures that this critical information is kept in a single, secure location. Its limited views will be accessible to Member States. This important tool is expected to be formally launched in 2023.

MINUSCA, MINUSMA and MONUSCO

MINUSCA²⁷ has provided significant assistance to the authorities of the Central African Republic for the investigation and prosecution of cases. This was done by prioritising a limited number of cases for support, including through technical and logistical assistance. Mission-specific standard operating procedures on support for investigations and prosecutions, and the collection and management of evidence, were issued in June 2021.

MINUSMA²⁸ also prioritised a limited number of cases for support to Malian authorities. The focus of this support has been on a national specialised judicial unit dedicated to counter-terrorism and organised crime.²⁹ Additionally, Mission issued internal standard operating procedures on evidence collection and management, and established an internal working group to coordinate Mission activities.

In Mali, achieving criminal accountability for the large number of crimes committed against peacekeepers remains a major challenge. This is mainly due to the nature of the attacks concerned, especially through landmines, which render the identification of the perpetrators a difficult task. A number of actions have already been taken in this regard by MINUSMA such as issuing and ensuring the effective implementation of the mission's standard operating procedures for the collection, analysis, management and transfer of evidence and/or information; improving the length, quality, and procedures for the disclosure of the information provided to the concerned authorities; and, enhancing the promptness and availability of the United Nations' response to requests for assistance on investigations from authorities.

MONUSCO³⁰ prioritised cases through its support to Congolese military justice authorities, who have primary jurisdiction in instances of attack against peacekeepers. Technical and logistical assistance was provided to Congolese stakeholders, and specific guidance and training was given to Mission personnel in the context of detention operations.

The Way Forward

On 24 March 2021, a Malian court convicted nine individuals for the attacks against the two Bangladeshi peacekeepers in Bamako

in 2015. MINUSMA provided technical and logistical assistance to Malian authorities as part of their efforts to bring these perpetrators to justice. This case illustrates that it is possible to address impunity, even in such challenging circumstances.

The key priorities on the way forward were clearly articulated by the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations in a statement delivered at the official launch of the Group of Friends to Promote Accountability for Crimes Against Peacekeepers in December 2022.³¹

First and foremost, it is critical for countries hosting such operations to bring the perpetrators of these crimes to justice in accordance with their international obligations. It should be recalled that this responsibility is outlined in status-of-force or status-of-mission agreements, in addition to other instruments.

Secondly, the international community's support is indispensable to achieving success. This can take the form of political support as well as assistance to host countries through the provision of technical and material assistance, based on national plans and priorities. Missions have an important support role in this regard, within their mandated responsibilities, but support from other Member States is essential. This includes the deployment of specialised personnel who can assist national authorities in the investigation and prosecution of these cases, or in the provision of transport, communication, or forensic equipment to facilitate those processes. Such initiatives should be considered in particular by troop and police contributing countries as part of their deployments to peacekeeping operations. The establishment of stand-by teams of investigation and prosecution experts capable of providing prompt support to a host country, bilaterally or through the concerned peacekeeping operation, should be considered. In addition, future status-of-force or status-of-mission agreements should include the possibility of the deployment of such experts, including as part of joint investigations conducted with the host country.

Thirdly, Member States' advocacy at United Nations Headquarters is essential. The Group of Friends to Promote Accountability for Crimes against Peacekeepers will have a critical role in this regard. The Group of Friends could serve as a key mechanism for promoting accountability and facilitating capacity-

building and technical assistance to host state authorities. In accordance with its terms of reference, the Group can actively engage and share information with the Secretariat and serve as an informal platform at the United Nations for exchanging information, sharing best practices, supporting initiatives, and mobilising resources directed at facilitating accountability for crimes committed against peacekeepers. Furthermore, the Security Council should consider the possibility of demanding that host States provide regular report for its attention on the status of the investigation, prosecution, and adjudication of such cases.

Finally, it is critical for concerned missions to have sustained programmatic funding and human resources to assist national authorities in the investigation and prosecution of crimes against peacekeepers.

Endnotes

¹ Based on official records of the United Nations. Fatalities include 959 military, 60 civilians and 41 police personnel. See: *NOTICAS Peacekeeper Fatality Dashboard* at: <https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrIjoiMjc3NmU3NTEtNTQyZC00ZTI0LTlmNzMtNDFiNzM3NzliZmRiliwidCI6IjBmOWUzNWRiLTU0NGYtNGY2MC1iZGNjLTVlYTQxNmU2ZGM3MCIsImMiOiJh9&pageName=ReportSection>.

² Lieutenant General (Retired) Carlos Alberto dos Santos Cruz, *Improving Security of United Nations Peacekeepers: We need to change the way we are doing business* (New York: United Nations, 2017), 21.

³ United Nations, *Standard Operating Procedures: Prevention, investigation and prosecution of serious crimes committed against United Nations personnel in peacekeeping operations and special political missions* (New York: United Nations, 2020), Ref. DPO 2020.18, paragraph 8. These procedures also cover important preventive measures that are beyond the remit of this paper i.e. measures that seek to reduce the risk of serious crimes against United Nations personnel by addressing identified risk factors. Missions are encouraged within their mandates and capacities “to help improve socio-economic conditions in regions where such crimes are likely to occur by building on the initiatives, expertise and commitment of community members and local authorities” (paragraph 24). This done with a view to “a) reducing opportunities to commit such crimes; b) increasing likelihood of being apprehended; and c) minimizing benefits that may be associated with attacks against United Nations personnel. overall aim” (paragraph 28).

⁴ *Idem*, paragraph 16.

⁵ United Nations, *Report of the Secretary-General: Model status-of-forces agreement for peace-keeping operations* (New York, United Nations, 1990), A/45/594, paragraph 45. It should also be noted that the country of jurisdiction of the victim may have a jurisdiction over the case, as well as other national and international justice mechanisms.

⁶ United Nations, *Standard Operating Procedures: Prevention, investigation and prosecution of serious crimes committed against United Nations personnel in peacekeeping operations and special political missions*, paragraph 18.

⁷ United Nations, *Convention on the Safety of United Nations and associated personnel* (New York, United Nations, 9 December 1994, paragraph 14.

⁸ Among countries currently hosting peacekeeping operations, only three out of 12 were parties to this instrument as of 20 January 2023.

⁹ See: <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/action-for-peacekeeping-a4p>.

¹⁰ United Nations, *Declaration of Shared Commitment on UN Peacekeeping Operations* (New York, United Nations, 2018).

¹¹ List available at: <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/action-for-peacekeeping-a4p>.

¹² See: <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/action-peacekeeping>

¹³ Those deliverables for the period 2021-2023 are the implementation of: 1) Security Council resolution 2589; and 2) the Standard Operating Procedures: Prevention, investigation and prosecution of serious crimes committed against United Nations personnel in peacekeeping operations and special political missions. The indicators are: 1) # of cases of crimes against peacekeepers investigated by authorities of host states out of total # of cases of crimes against peacekeepers reported, in line with national and international criminal justice and human rights standards; 2) # of alleged perpetrators of crimes against peacekeepers detained, in line with national and international criminal justice and human rights standards, out of total # of alleged perpetrators of crimes against peacekeepers identified; and 3) # of alleged perpetrators of crimes against peacekeepers convicted in line with national and international criminal justice and human rights standards out of the total # of individual cases of alleged perpetrators of crimes against peacekeepers brought before the courts of the host state. See: United Nations, *Action for Peacekeeping+ Plan* (New York, United Nations, 2021) and United Nations, *Action for Peacekeeping + - Overview for November 2021 to April 2022* (New York, United Nations, 2022), 2.

¹⁴ United Nations Security Council, *Resolution 2589 (2021)* (New York, United Nations, 18 August 2021), paragraph 2.

¹⁵ Idem, paragraph 3.

¹⁶ United Nations, *Action for Peacekeeping + - Overview for November 2021 to April 2022* (New York, United Nations, 2022), 2. Of note, in some instances, individuals were sentenced to death however in all cases a national moratorium on the death penalty was in place. On this specific issue, the general principle is that “the UN will neither establish nor directly participate in any tribunal that allows for capital punishment”. See: United Nations, *Guidance Note of the Secretary-General: UN Approach to Rule of Law* (New York, United Nations, April 2008), page 2. Assistance

¹⁷ As of 9 February 2023.

¹⁸ Idem.

¹⁹ 169 out of 324 fatalities as a result of malicious acts across all peacekeeping operations, as of 5 February 2023. See: *NOTICAS Peacekeeper Fatality Dashboard* at: <https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrIjoiMjc3NmU3NTEtNTQyZC00ZTI0LTlmNzMtNDZiZmRiliwidCI6IjBmOWUzNWwzLTU0NGYtNGY2MC1iZGNjLTVIYTQxNmU2ZGM3MCIslmMiOjh9&pageName=ReportSection>.

²⁰ United Nations, *Standard Operating Procedures: Prevention, investigation and prosecution of serious crimes committed against United Nations personnel in peacekeeping operations and special political missions*, paragraph 38.

²¹ Idem.

²² Idem.

²³ United Nations Security Council, *Resolution 2518 (2020)* (New York, United Nations, 30 March 2020). Under paragraph 3 of this resolution the Security Council called “on all Member States hosting peacekeeping operations to promptly investigate and effectively prosecute those responsible for attacks on United Nations personnel”.

²⁴ United Nations, *Standard Operating Procedures: Prevention, investigation and prosecution of serious crimes committed against United Nations personnel in peacekeeping operations and special political missions*.

²⁵ For example, see: United Nations, *Proposed programme budget for 2023, Part II Political affairs, Section 5, Peacekeeping operations Programme 4, Peacekeeping operations* (New York, United Nations, 14 April 2022). Under paragraph 5.55 of this document, the Secretariat has committed to “...support the implementation of Security Council resolution 2589 (2021) through enhanced support to host countries for the investigation and prosecution of cases, including through enhanced implementation of standard operating procedures and development of a comprehensive online database to monitor cases related to the killing of, and all acts of violence

against, United Nations personnel serving in peacekeeping operations, and will undertake political advocacy, establish a group of friends and develop public information initiatives". The performance measure in this regard is the number of "confirmed investigative measures in MINUSCA, MINUSMA and MONUSCO as of October of each year (cumulative)" (Idem, paragraph 5.56).

²⁶ United Nations General Assembly, *Report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations 2021 substantive session (New York, 15 February–12 March 2021)* (New York, United Nations, 2021), paragraph 165.

²⁷ 51 fatalities as a result of malicious acts between 1 January 2013 and 5 February 2023 (15.8% of such cases across all peacekeeping operations for this period).

²⁸ 169 fatalities as a result of malicious acts between 1 January 2013 and 5 January 2023 (52.3% of such cases across all peacekeeping operations for this period).

²⁹ This specialized investigation and prosecution cell was created in 2013 and has been operational since 2017, with support from MINUSMA and UNODC. This Unit has exclusive national jurisdiction on terrorism, transnational organized crime, and since 2019, international crimes including war crimes and crimes against humanity - it has thus the competence to investigate on crimes committed against peacekeepers. Support is provided through capacity-building and technical assistance to improve the skills of its magistrates and investigators in undertaking and leading investigations and conducting crime scene management. Investigating and prosecuting prioritized emblematic cases, including those committed against peacekeepers, is currently being addressed through the implementation of the newly adopted criminal policy and prosecution strategy for serious crimes, which was developed by the Malian Ministry of Justice and Human Rights with MINUSMA support. Source: Consultations between the Chief of the Justice and Corrections Section of MINUSMA and the author in January 2023.

³⁰ 50 fatalities as a result of malicious acts between 1 January 2013 and 27 January 2023 (15.5% of such cases across all peacekeeping operations for this period).

³¹ See: <https://media.un.org/en/asset/k16/k16o9mon3l>.

The Birth of South Sudan

Lieutenant General Jasbir Lidder (Retd)¹@

Abstract

This article records the success of United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) in implementing the Comprehensive Peace agreement (CPA) between Khartoum and Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/SPLA), leading to the birth of South Sudan on 09 July 2011 - a unique benchmark by any UN peace operation.

The contents are based on political developments and personal observations as Deputy Special Representative of Secretary General (Political) from 2010-2011, primarily based at Juba. UNMIS mandate operationalisation was achieved through a collaborative effort. Creating a safe and secure environment and political convergence through partnered mediation enabled credible conduct of 2010 elections and 2011 South Sudan referendum. It has been gratifying to recall my association in Sudan in the entire UNMIS cycle - from initial deployment as Force Commander to successful liquidation as head of the mission. Team building and integrated approach stand highlighted as major leadership attributes. Importantly, warm relationships with the host nation proved pivotal in resolution of tricky issues. The situation in Sudan has not stabilised - as sensitive issues of Abyei, 1/1/56 border, oil sharing and ethnic violence persist. Additionally, issues of Nile Dam and internal conflict

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in Ethiopia have aggravated ongoing tensions. These require synergised effort by the UN and international community for meaningful conflict resolution in the region.

Introduction

I was fortunate to be part of Sudan's peace process, resulting in the birth of South Sudan on 09 Jul 2011 wearing multiple hats (*turbans*). In the first tenure as Force Commander (FC) from Jan 2006 to April 2008 in the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS), we succeeded in maintaining the ceasefire and redeploy major forces mandated in the Comprehensive Peace agreement (CPA).¹ Post military retirement, I got selected as, Deputy Special Representative of Secretary General-Political (DSRSG-P) and was deployed at Juba, effective Jan 2010 – the new turf of political ambiguities. This article records the support – and, at many places, the leads of our political contribution for peace and development in Sudan. UNMIS was established in 2006 through UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1590 (2005);² to support the implementation of CPA signed at Nairobi in Jan 2005 by the Vice President Ali Osman Mohamed Taha representing the Government of Sudan (GoS) and Dr John Garang of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/SPLA).

The historic agreement ended decades of civil war fought over identity and resources. Both parties, while recognising the right of the people of South Sudan to secede, had sought to make unity attractive. There was an unwritten impression that Taha and Garang were committed to make space for a New Sudan with an autonomous South. Tragically, Garang died in a helicopter crash within three weeks of signing the CPA and Salva Kiir took over his responsibility.³ Post Garang, the promotion of inclusiveness and national sovereignty got diluted – with calls for separation gaining momentum.

The CPA Politics

The CPA was mediated by the Inter Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), a regional organisation of which Sudan is a member. The CPA incorporated several previous negotiations and agreements termed as protocols. The Machakos protocol (July 2002) covered the broad principles of government and governance.⁴

Multiple agreements signed at Naivasha – on Security (September 2003), Wealth-sharing (January 2004), Power-sharing (May 2004), Resolution of the Abyei conflict (May 2004), and Resolution of the conflict in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile states (May 2004) formed other components.

The CPA provided a time table for the South Sudan referendum. It provisioned a new national constitution and outlined measures for sharing power, distributing wealth, and providing security in the country during a six-year interim period. During the period, South Sudan was to govern affairs in their region and participate equitably in the national government. Post interim period, the South had the right to vote in an internationally monitored referendum - either to confirm Sudan's unity or vote for secession.

UNMIS was tasked to provide guidance and technical assistance for the national consensus, state and provincial elections, and the referendum in coordination with the Government of National Unity (GNU), relevant UN offices, and international players. A collaborative effort was necessary to create secure environment and promote political dialogue for generating coherent conflict management strategies. The political process proceeded on schedule – though with frequent disagreements on policy-making CPA clauses. Disturbingly, five issues remained critical for resolution – 1/1/56 Border, Abyei, wealth sharing, popular consultations in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile states, and ethnic conflict.

The 200 kilometre international boundary between North and South follows the broad demarcation done by the British on 01 Jan 1956 – referred to as, Line 1/1/56. Since the demarcation was driven by administrative, land ownership and grazing conveniences, it was imprecise and stood unmarked. Notwithstanding, the alignment had been broadly accepted by both sides over the years - allowing unregulated movement. However, in the absence of any authenticated map, eight areas stood disputed, the major being Abyei.⁵

Abyei's dispute centred around the coveted Heglig oil field and residency rights of Ngok Dinka, the pastoralist tribal group with strong ethnic and cultural ties to the Dinka of South Sudan and Misseriya, a northern nomadic Arab tribe which seasonally

traversed Abyei for cattle grazing. The CPA had accorded special administrative status to Abyei based on the definition of the Abyei areas by the Abyei Border Commission- with specified oil sharing.⁶

A referendum was to be conducted in Abyei in 2011, concurrent with the South Sudan referendum, allowing residents of Abyei to choose between Sudan or South Sudan. Both Dinka and Misseriya tribes claimed residency for voting. The Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) occupied Abyei through an armed intervention in May 2011, adding altogether a different angle to the conflict. Since the matter remained unresolved devoid referendum, the UN deployed a separate mission for Abyei - United Nations Interim Security Force in Abyei (UNISFA).⁷

Sudan is rich in oil – an economic boon but the curse for conflict. While South Sudan holds majority of the oil reserves, the North has the pipelines and processing facilities along with the port at Red Sea for export. Ethnicity plays a critical role in oil ownership - leading to frequent clashes for physical control and/or preferential allocation. Post South's independence in July 2011, the oil production got interrupted by violence. Though production resumed, major differences remain on royalty and transit issues.

An area of demographic instability comprises two states - Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile - both located north of line 1/1/56. Their populations were heavily involved in the civil war – and though they had no right to decide on separation like the South - the CPA demanded 'popular consultations' on sharing of political power and wealth. This did not happen in earnest.

South Sudan has been mired in resource driven ethnic competition, often getting violent on cattle rustling. Ethnicity has been a dominant factor in the profile and power construct of the SPLA with many tribes having fought against each other in the civil war for the common objective of South's independence. The Dinka, Nuer, and Shilluk form the majority and are located in the oil-rich areas adjacent to Line 1/1/56. President Salva Kirr belongs to the Dinka tribe while the Vice President Riek Machar Tenyis a Nuer.

Sudan Elections 2010

General elections were organised in Sudan in April 2010 to elect the president and national assembly as well as the president and

legislative assembly of South Sudan. A year earlier in March 2009, President Omar al-Bashir had been indicted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for atrocity crimes in Darfur.⁸ This created international diplomatic and political impasse – but fortunately did not derail the CPA nor dissuade al-Bashir from contesting. UNMIS continued to interact with President Bashir – as also with Ahmed Haroun (also indicted) the governor of Southern Kordofan, on mandate driven political and humanitarian activity.

I flew indicted governor Ahmed Haroun to Abyei in 2010 to build bridges with the Misseriya leadership – an act which came under scrutiny, in parts, of the international community and media. Notwithstanding, our conflict-prevention diplomacy helped to reinforce UNMIS impartiality as also its reach out to multiple voices. There are no red lines in political dialogue - and we should not hesitate to mediate with groups not signatory to the peace agreements.

The elections were a political test. UNMIS used its good offices to work with all concerned in assisting the Sudanese to establish an environment whereby the elections are acceptable to the people of the Sudan. We interacted with known political figures in an effort to make them participate and revive their political relevance. During my meetings, the main opposition parties (including the SPLM) appeared convinced to nominate Sadiq al-Mahdi of National Umma Party (prime minister twice before) as their joint candidate.⁹ Ironically, they decided to withdraw from the contest fearing National Congress Party (NCP) rigging.

UNMIS Electoral Division (EAD) worked with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to coordinate support to the National Elections Commission (NEC). This included material, training, logistics, and public information. Warm relations with the NEC Chairman Abel Alier Kwai, along with joint planning and coordination, helped to conduct the elections smoothly. It was ensured that while some heavy lifting may have been done by the UN, the NEC retained ownership and national face of the process.

The NCP won 73 per cent of the seats in the national assembly, while the SPLM won 22 per cent, with others going to smaller opposition parties. Bashir stood and won the elections by 94 per cent votes, which reinforced his claim as a democratically popular leader. Salva Kiir was elected as President of the

South. The SPLM won 160 out of 170 seats in the legislative assembly of South Sudan, making them an effective political force.¹⁰

The elections evoked widespread international attention. UNMIS provided security and logistical support to observers from the Arab League, African Union (AU), European Union (EU), Japan and Carter Centre through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The logistics stretched our capacity to its limit - especially in helicopters and medical support. The overall verdict was that though there were procedural infirmities, the credibility and the election results could not be disputed.

An unfortunate development during the election period was rebellion by General George Athor Dengin Jonglei - after losing his gubernatorial contest as an independent candidate. Athor was a towering figure of SPLA struggle and popular in Bor. We developed contact with the renegade general through satellite phone and made a sincere effort for reconciliation. I met President Salva Kirr frequently on the issue - who appeared amenable to a ceasefire. President Kirr even allowed me to brief the SPLA security body in rare diplomatic gesture to enable amnesty to General Athor. Sadly, the matter got addressed militarily after my departure.¹¹

The Referendum

As stated before, an internationally monitored referendum was to be organised jointly by the Government of Sudan (GoS) and SPLM at the end of interim period for the people of South Sudan - to vote for the unity or secession. Southern Sudan Referendum Commission (SSRC) became the nodal agency for organising and conducting the referendum. The SSRC was chaired by Prof Mohamed I. Khalil with Chan Reec Madut as his deputy and had 10 members representing the military and foreign service.

UNMIS coordinated with the SSRC on the lines of our support for the April 2010 elections. The overall authority rested with Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General (SRSG) Mr Haile Menkerios, while the ground implementation was led by me. The team comprised UNDP Country Representative Mr Claudio Caldarone, the Regional Coordinator David Gressly and UN Country Team resident coordinator Lise Grande - UN professionals of caliber.

Drawing lessons from 2010, it was decided to merge the UN election machinery - comprising EAD and UNDP - into one team termed The UN Integrated Referendum and Electoral Division (UNIRED). UNIRED was a maiden initiative with streamlined reporting and operational structure. It worked closely with the SSRC at both government and county level on the entire spectrum of referendum activity.

There was uncertainty and at times scepticism if the South would be allowed to secede by the North. During the run-up, the political climate appeared conducive. President Omar al-Bashir stated just months prior to the voting that the southern region had a right to choose to secede and that unity could not be forced by power. He had also stated at times that Khartoum would respect outcome of the vote and support the South.¹² Many international pundits felt that though secession was South's legal right, it may not resolve their real issues. There were also fears that a violent South could unsteady the entire region.

Referendum polling took place from 09 to 15 January 2011. It was an emotional delight witnessing a sea of drum beating 'South Sudan Oyee' humanity. Many had walked miles to be at the polling stations aspiring to be part of their independence history. Most had spent nights in the open to be a part of the process.

The referendum witnessed a wide cross-section of domestic and international monitoring. The Carter Centre comprising of three members - President Jimmy Carter, ex UNSG Kofi Anan and former Tanzanian Prime Minister Joseph Warionba - played a major role. US Senator John Kerry and Actor George Clooney also visited Sudan during the referendum period. Besides, nearly all international and regional organisations deployed international observers - AU, EU and League of Arab States being the forerunners.

In response to a request from the parties, the UN Secretary General too deployed a 'Referenda Panel' (both for the South and Abyei) to monitor credibility of the process and ensure that the results are accepted by all stakeholders. The panel comprised three senior officials - former Tanzania President Benjamin Mkapa, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Portugal António Monteiro, and former Chairman of the Election Commission of Nepal, Bhojraj Pokharel.¹³ Though the panel worked independent of UNMIS, we interacted periodically for political conformity.

On 07 February 2011, SSRC published the final results. A landslide majority of 98.83 per cent voted in favour of independence, with well over the requirement of 60 per cent turnout.¹⁴ Nevertheless, the Abyei referendum did not take place for reason of residency identification as mentioned before.

Farewell Sudan

The 09 July 2011 South Sudan independence parade was impressive and emotional, with John Garang's memories dominating the domestic sentiment. The end of the CPA Interim Period brought UNMIS to a close and a new mission - United Nations Mission for South Sudan (UNMISS) got mandated at Juba the same day. However, the situation in Sudan did not stabilise. The Abyei conflict, an unmarked 1/1/56 border, blurred oil sharing protocols, inadequate reforms in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile states and ethnic competition in the South and Darfur continue to pose challenges for sustainable peace.

I moved to Khartoum on 10 July to head the UNMIS Liquidation Mission mandated through Security Council resolution 1997 and written request of Republic of Sudan effective 11 July 2011 with a deadline for completion by 15 December 2011.¹⁵ The liquidation was uniquely different from other UN endeavours - being conducted amidst continuing conflict. Accordingly, the composition of the Liquidation Team was a typical from past liquidations in that it was headed by senior substantive leadership (self) and a Liquidation FC as part of UNMIS force was in place.

The liquidation effort was wrought with challenges – notably conflict-ridden environment and ambiguous understanding of UN's role. While Khartoum was accommodative on retrieval and relocation of UN assets, many on the ground felt that these were now their property. With committed GoS support, and an excellent support team led by Clark Toes, majority of equipment got transferred to missions in Darfur, Abyei, and the South. A part of the inventory was shifted to UN Regional Logistics Base at Entebbe. The immovable infrastructure created by UNMIS was gifted to Khartoum with green signatures. Additionally, many movable assets like vehicles and generating sets were donated to local authorities.

UNMIS digitised and uploaded required records in the Total Records and Information Management system (TRIM) and shipped

important hard copies to United Nations Archives and Records Management Section in New York (UN ARMS). Hard copies belonging to the offices of the chief of staff and the SRSG were shredded to mitigate the risk of confidential and vital records being compromised. In the opinion Office of the Internal Oversight Service (OIOS), UNMIS had performed satisfactorily in management of the archiving and records management process.¹⁶

UNMIS Liquidation Mission cleared all pending customs - and reconciled payment to the Sudan police as rentals for the premises occupied by UNMIS – a case which had assumed embarrassing legal proportions. The timely-effective liquidation left an amenable impression in Sudan and a range of best practices in UN peacekeeping.

Reflecting, it is gratifying to recall achievements of the UN in Sudan. On a personal level, my association with UNMIS had been through the entire mission cycle - from initial deployment to successful liquidation. It was also a great coincidence that the Independence Day of 09 July happened to be my birthday, which rightly earns extra celebration.



Monitoring the Referendum Polling at Juba

Endnotes

¹ CPA 2005

² UNMISS Closes as South Sudan Becomes World's Newest Country, United Nations Peacekeeping UNMIS -2005-2011

³ Julie Flint, John Garang: Authoritative Sudanese Leader and Former Rebel Commander with a Vision of Secular, Democratic Sudan, The Guardian, 3 Aug 2005 <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2005/aug/03/guardianobituaries.sudan>

⁴ The Machakos Protocol, United Nations Peacemaker, 20 July 2002 https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/SD_020710_MachakosProtocol.pdf

⁵ James Gatdet Dak, Sudan's 1956 North-South Border Map is Non-Existent – Committee, Sudan Tribune, 28 June 2008 <https://sudantribune.com/article27670/>

⁶ <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/sudan-protocol-resolution-abyei-conflict>

⁷ UNISFA

⁸ <https://www.icj.org/icc-judgment-in-al-bashir-case-a-victory-for-international-justice/>

⁹ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/8481715.stm>

¹⁰ <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/sudan/politics-2010.htm>

¹¹ Gen Athor Rebellion

¹² <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jan/04/bashir-south-sudan-independence-vote>

¹³ <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/sudan-un-panel-southern-referendum-expression-peoples-will>

¹⁴ <https://sudantribune.com/article37480/>

¹⁵ <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/706748?ln=en>

¹⁶ https://2009-2017-usun.state.gov/sites/default/files/organization_pdf/199085.pdf

Future of UN Peace Operations: From An Indian Perspective

Colonel (Dr) KK Sharma (Retd)[®]

Abstract

India has been a strong votary of UN Peace Operations since the 1950s. The fact that India contributed over 2,55,000 peacekeepers to as many as 49 UN missions, and 178 of the peacekeepers laid down their lives for the sake of international peace, is testimony towards our commitment. For an emerging complex future, marred with acrimonious discussions in the UN Security Council, the world needs new tools and restructured UN systems to be the real voice of 193 nations. Transnational non-state actors, crime syndicates, and misuse of multi-media have posed additional challenges. The UN has to leverage the good office role of the Secretary-General towards preventive diplomacy. India believes that peace can only prevail if the primacy of political settlement is reinforced with positive engagements on the ground.

India has a comprehensive futuristic approach to international peace and security, which has been articulated time and again in the UN forums. It includes harmonising local and national choices with international priorities. Dialogue and cooperation, mutual respect, and commitment to the time-tested international laws are the cornerstones of India's commitment. The article attempts an interpretation of the UN and expert literature from India's perspective. Starting with the emerging scenarios of international conflicts, the article lays down the challenges and a background, leading to the discussion on the future shape of the UN Peace Operations. International UN Peace and Security

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with an Indian perspective is discussed in the last section, collating the challenges and reflections on the future perspective.

“The success of UN peacekeeping ultimately depends not on the weapons that the soldiers carry, but on the moral forces that decisions of the UN Security Council command” – Indian Prime Minister’s address at the Leaders’ Summit on Peacekeeping in New York (Sep 2015)

Introduction

The ongoing conflicts in various places show that modern intra-state strifes are transnational with many non-state actors becoming an integral part of the narrative. During the African independence movement, colonial powers used mercenaries to influence the civil wars. Mercenaries also assisted the local leaders who were friendly to the colonising nation.¹ The trends in the future appear to be heading in the same direction with an added preponderance of technology, cyber threats, climate crises, and hapless civilians being the main target. Scholars have written about the future global architectures which may involve a diversification of actors influencing policies, conflict scenarios, and UN Peace Operations (UNPOs).² After studying the past 70 years of UNPOs, Cassin and Zyla rightly concluded that the peace operations approach needs to be truly localised and contextualised that is expansive, representative and non-directive, ultimately necessitating the UN and other liberal actors to adopt higher risk tolerance and relinquish exclusive control over conflict-response and peace.³ The UN is a collective conscious of the world, but a few articulate think tanks have always managed to influence its decision-making and policy parameters. Unless the UN Security Council (UNSC), and other world bodies, reform and become inclusive of the world of today, these privileged think tanks, close to the UN, will continue to drive the policies of the world bodies, much in favour of the affluent North at the cost of suffering South.

India has always been committed to promoting responsible, international law-abiding and inclusive solutions to international peace and security. Our first Prime Minister (PM), Mr Jawaharlal Nehru, was emphatic on this while recommending India’s participation in International Commission in Vietnam-Cambodia-

Laos in August 1954, when he said, We cannot shed the responsibilities that go with being a great country.⁴ India's approach repeatedly articulated by the government through the Permanent Mission of India (PMI) in New York, has been to exhort the UNSC to initiate steps for new opportunities for progress. The global security landscape is changing rapidly as traditional security challenges face added terrorism-related threats and insouciant expansionist designs of some member states. Solutions to the emerging challenges to international security require a pragmatic and effective platform for collaboration to ensure sustainable peace.⁵

Mr Narendra Modi, the current PM, addressed the Leaders' Summit in New York on 28 September 2015 and spoke about India's contributions to UN Peacekeeping. He reminded the members that the foundations of the UN were laid by the brave soldiers on the battlefields of the Second World War. 2.5 million soldiers of the Indian Army participated with the allies by 1945 and more than 24,000 lost their lives and nearly half of that went missing.⁶

Over 2,55,000 Indian troops have participated in UN missions in 49 of the 71 UNPO still December 2022. 178 Indian peacekeepers made the supreme sacrifice while serving in the UN missions from 1948 to 31 December 2022.⁷ India was also the first country to contribute a Female Formed Police Unit to UNPO in Liberia, which was applauded by all for the changes it brought to the war-torn country. India showed its full support to the UN Secretary General's revised action for peacekeeping plus (A2P+) and New Agenda for Peace. Summit of the Future being held in September 2024 will be relevant and India looks forward to its reforms-oriented results.⁸

This article is based on scholarly reviews and interpretations from India's perspective. It builds upon India's perception of the UNPOs, UN structures, and issues affecting current capabilities as related to peace operations. The discussion starts from the emerging scenarios of international conflicts and lays down the challenges and background leading to the discussion on the future shape of the UNPOs.

Emerging Scenarios of International Conflicts

The world witnessed a surge in conflicts in the early 1990s, with

agradual decline after 1995. However, the trend reversed into more deadly conflicts from 2005 to 2015 with civil wars moving from four to eleven.⁹ This has been attributed to weak state institutions, economic or social exclusion of selected populations, and sudden changes or refusal to accept popular mandates by the political leadership. In future, the states under conflict are likely to be subjected to more lethal, highly localised disruptive technologies. Competition for resources will result in political discords, unexpected upheavals, increased poverty, and communal or ethnic polarisation. Increased migration to the urban centres is a sure recipe for civil strifes beyond the capacities of many states; especially in the Global South. The UN, in its reflection on future wars, also expects new areas of conflict in stable states, even when decades-old conflicts are partially or fully resolved. There is a likelihood of cyber wars in virtual space without firing a single bullet.¹⁰

Race for the Natural Resources. Natural resources have always been a defining constant in international engagements. West Asia became an arena for ever-lasting conflicts due to the global hunger for crude oil. Africa has been witnessing the 'goldrush' for ages as many colonial powers divided the continent depending on their need for raw materials and availability of minerals. Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Angola, Liberia, and the Central African Republic remain in the vortex of conflicts due to their mineral riches. Proxy forces present complex challenges to the UN missions which are typically deployed to manage conflicts within national boundaries. Outside states have been investing in many African countries, laying railroads to transport minerals to the seaports; thus investing in even the existing corrupt governments. Many trading outposts are being converted into naval refuelling bases or permanent military bases to locate 'wolf warriors'. These powers will defend their investments against domestic or outside interference, thus, leading to bloody conflicts in the future.

Organised Crime and Non-State Actors. Organised crime directly drives violent conflicts for their use and brings misery to the local population. It also undermines state authority, thus, corroding its capacity for the basic delivery of governing tools. Even states and their leaders, indulge in a similar concept, encouraging regime-friendly transnational organised groups. Governments may actively participate in illicit trafficking, fueling resentment amongst

populations that are negatively affected by such exploitation.¹¹ India has been articulating its concerns regarding non-state actors at the highest levels. On 19 September 2000, then India's External Affairs Minister (EAM), Mr Jaswant Singh, addressed the issue in the 55th Session of the UN General Assembly. 'Illicit transfer, manufacture and circulation of small arms, particularly by States to non-State actors and terrorist groups, and their intrinsic linkage with terrorism and narco-trafficking are matters of very deep concern to the world community. When this is combined with religious fanaticism and military adventurism, a threat is posed to global civilised norms, which we strive for'.¹²

Effect of Climate Change. The UNSC discussed the impact of climate change on the conflicts, which appears to be an attempt to bring climate and international security together. India has been an active participant in the Paris Accord and Conference of the Parties (COP)15 discussions and has committed to the reduction of fossil fuels, greenhouse gases and increased afforestation. However, India does not endorse the linking of climate change to the conflicts and 'securitisation' of the issue. Many countries feel that any such linkages may lead to coercive measures in response to challenges posed by climate change. India had repeatedly argued that the scientific evidence linking climate change to security concerns is not clear and that climate issues are better addressed under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Evidence shows that climate change impacts host communities towards their development and sustenance; not necessarily resulting in an armed conflict. India has been articulating its environmental concerns in the UN for a long. Mr Rajiv Gandhi, the then Indian PM had cautioned the UN General Assembly on 19 Oct 1987, 'We have learned to our benefit that development that conserves the environment conserves also the fruits of development. There is thus no fundamental dichotomy between conservation and growth'.¹³ Climate-related impacts such as reduced rainfall, droughts and desertification of farmland, as well as hazards such as flooding can pose a challenge to the host nation regarding its development and food safety; requiring a different kind of global response.

Migrations Risks. The world witnessed mass migration from West Asia and North Africa to Europe in the wake of devastating wars in Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen, Libya, and other hotspots.

The USA has been witnessing a huge inflow of undocumented refugees from the Latin America. India has suffered illegal migrations on its eastern borders since the 1970s. All these people are generally economic migrants but can turn out to be potentially destabilising forces in otherwise stable states. Climate crises can also lead to population displacement and migration internally or outside its borders.¹⁴ Experts view it as governance vacuums which are likely to be exploited by many transnational or local armed and criminal groups. Florian Krampe has a valid argument that UNPOs in such countries will face additional resource constraints as happened in South Sudan during the floods.¹⁵ Climate change can best be considered a conflict threat multiplier. The added threat is due to the migrating population bringing their belief system and if not fully absorbed in the host country, radical beliefs can prove to be a potential threat; as is being witnessed in many European nations.

Geo-Strategic Tensions. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres mentioned five, 'horsemen' that threaten our common future - geostrategic tensions, the climate crisis, growing global mistrust, what he calls the dark side of the digital world, and the COVID-19-like pandemics.¹⁶ Mistrust between the US-led West and Russia-China is likely to accentuate gridlocks in the UNSC and reversal of the *détente* of 1990. Moving from a unilateral world to a multilateral dispensation is the need of the hour and has been repeatedly urged by India. During its UNSC presidency of December 2022, India laid adequate emphasis on the same. Permanent Representative of India to the UN, Ruchira Kamboj sponsored a discussion on two high-level signature events, chaired by the EAM of India - 'Reformed Multilateralism and Counter-Terrorism'.¹⁷

Future Shape of the UNPOs

The accepted definition of peace refers not only to '*an absence of war*' but also to include the well-being of the local people. This positive dimension of peace is a continuum from inter or intra-state conflict to developing a positive public perception through fundamental freedoms and development. Therefore, any measure of peace has to take the 'well-being' of the local population into account.¹⁸ The UN moved away from military-oriented second-generation missions into developmental multi-dimensional

operations, only to be questioned later. Despite the changes, 12 UNPOs of 2023 continue to represent all generations. Peace and development can not come within a year or two as Adam Day recommended that the future UNPOs are going to be a longer haul than today, especially if these are multi-dimensional operations with dozens of tasks.¹⁹

The future of UNPOs will also be determined by the UN's approach to the emerging multipolar world, where multilateralism and the UN's normative framework may not be the default approach of its permanent members (P5).²⁰ UNPOs, by and large, enjoy a high degree of support from the UNSC but are subjected to geopolitical friction and rivalry as the UNSC witnessed during Ukraine conflict discussions. There are both schools of thought, pessimistic and optimistic, on the success and viability of UNPOs. Out of 71 UNPOs since 1947, all but 12 have closed down. 7 missions have closed down or downsized since 2012 and currently, the UN has 12 UNPOs, out of which 7 belong to the last Century and may have ceased to have much relevance.

Large multi-dimensional missions were considered a panacea due to their all-in-it-together approach. But these too have come under increased criticism by the experts, not for their lack of commitment and achievements, due to the UN financial stress. A multi-dimensional peace operation is mandated for a range of tasks. Most of these are state functions with structured governing bodies and too tall a task for the adhoc UN missions. A strategic thinker and excellent researcher on Peace Operations, Cedric Conin discussed the future of UNPOs through the lens of complexity theory. Conin analysed the future UNPOs because of the COVID-19 pandemic and the fall-out of the Trump presidency. The author believed that in the 'medium-term peacekeeping will go through a phase of uncertainty and turbulence due to geopolitical power shifts', while in the longer term 'the UNPKOs need to adapt to a new multipolar global order'.²¹

Preventive Diplomacy for Future Conflicts. Milante et al. (2020. P.2)²² prepared a data set of predictions of future conflicts considering the possible trend lines of conflicts between 2020-2030. A total of 56 wars were recorded in 2020, the highest number since 1945.²³ Based on the current trends, with no additional conflict prevention steps, three more countries are likely to be at

war and nine more at high risk of war by 2030 as compared to 2020. This would mean over 0.6 million conflict-related fatalities between 2020 and 2030. It appears that the authors did not predict or account for the Ukraine war in the trends. Researchers also analysed international efforts to prevent conflicts, where a 25 per cent increase in the effectiveness of conflict prevention may result in 10 more countries at peace by 2030, 0.1 million fewer fatalities, and savings of over \$3.1 trillion. Similarly, a 50 per cent improvement would result in 17 additional countries at peace by 2030, 0.2 million fewer deaths, and some \$6.6 trillion in savings. The most positive scenario with a 75 per cent improvement in prevention may result in 23 more countries at peace by 2030, resulting in nearly 0.3 million lives saved over the next decade, and \$9.8 trillion in savings. Besides the loss of lives, countries also suffer economically. Regressions on economic growth from 1989 to 2015 show that annual growth in war-affected countries is reduced by 4.8 per cent.

A cornerstone of managing conflicts, preventive deployment has been discussed in all forums after the Ukraine war, as there was a one-year window to take preventive steps to avoid the catastrophe. The UN has to move from a culture of 'reaction' to one of 'prevention'. Looking back at the history of the UN, it is evident that the use of the Secretary General's good office and diplomatic negotiations were successfully practised during the cold war period. Investment in prevention and preventive diplomacy is a must in future to reduce conflicts. Our first PM, Mr Jawaharlal Nehru, narrated an anecdote, from the League of Nations, while addressing the 15th Session of the UN General Assembly on 03 October 1960. 'Sitting here in this Assembly chamber, an old memory comes back to me. In the fateful summer of 1938, I was a visitor at a meeting of the League of Nations in Geneva. Hitler was advancing then and holding out threats of war. There was a mobilisation in many parts of Europe and the tramp of armoured men was heard, but even so, the League of Nations appeared to be unconcerned with the shadow of war and discussed all manner of topics, but not the most vital subject of the day'.²⁴ Looks like the scenario was again playing out in the Ukrainian case from 2020 to 2021.

Future Peacekeeping missions urgently need reformed and redesigned UNSC and Peacekeeping UN Structures. India has

been stressing this in every forum. The UNDPO has undertaken gradual reforms, especially after the Brahimi Report of 2000. The missions too have evolved from limited conflict-containment operations of Cyprus or Golan Heights to extensive, multidimensional missions of Congo or South Sudan. The financial constraint-related drawdown of the UN Mission from DRC allows for assessing how the POC guidance can be strengthened.²⁵ However, evolving complexities due to changing strategic and conflict areas necessitate a further transformation of the DPKO and UN structures.

India's Approach to International Peace and Security

India was among the charter members who signed the Declaration by the UN at Washington on 01 January 1942. As a founding member of the UN, India strongly supports the purposes and principles of the UN and has made significant contributions to implementing the goals of the Charter. India is committed to promoting responsible and inclusive solutions to international peace and security. India's worldview is anchored in our ethos of '*VasudhaivaKutumbakam*', the world is one family. India's multilateral approach has been influenced and guided by multiple strategies, interests, and values, and has transformed significantly through the decades.

A comprehensive assessment of India's multilateral engagements shows that "India has developed and played in tune with a distinct multilateralism that combines norms of sovereignty and quest for global justice and fairness".²⁶ The concept of the UN's centrality in matters of global peace and security prevails in the Indian establishment without any significant shift even after seven decades.²⁷ However, India has been raising its concerns about the composition and processes of the UNSC ever since its independence. On 26 November 2012, Mr Hardeep Singh Puri, the Permanent Representative in Permanent Mission of India stated on the working methods of the UNSC, 'over the years, there has been growing realisation that the Council's composition, rooted in the situation obtaining in 1945, as well as its Working Methods, are both divorced from the contemporary reality of international relations.'²⁸

India served on the UNSC as a two-year term elected member on eight occasions so far - in 1950, 1967, 1972, 1977, 1984,

1991, 2011, and the last in 2021.²⁹ India engaged UNSC members during its August 2021 and December 2022 Presidencies of the Council. PM chaired the UNSC high-level open debate on 'Enhancing Maritime Security: A Case For International Cooperation' on 09 Aug 2021.³⁰ A discussion on technology and peacekeeping in the UNSC was chaired by the EAM. One of the important outcomes during the August 2021 presidency was the adoption of a UNSC Resolution 2589 (2021) on 'Protecting the Protectors'. India also contributed US\$ 1.6 million to the UN to develop a situational awareness software platform, 'UNITE AWARE' for assisting UN Peacekeeping Missions. During India's second term of presidency in December 2022, two issues were brought into the discussions – international terrorism and multilateralism.³¹

Dr S Jaishankar, India's EAM, while addressing the general debate in the 77th Session of the UN General Assembly laid out India's approach to multilateralism; 'We believe that multipolarity, rebalancing, fair globalisation, and reformed multilateralism cannot be kept in abeyance. The call for reformed multilateralism, with reforms of the UNSC at its core, enjoys considerable support among UN members. Most nations also realise that the current architecture is outdated, obsolete, and ineffective. These nations also perceive it as unfair, which has deprived the global South and other continents of a voice in the powerful UN forums responsible to deliberate on their future. The minister asserted that India is prepared to take up greater responsibilities in the UN body as also other multilateral institutions.'³²

Conclusion

India has been consistently proposing a comprehensive futuristic approach to international peace and security. It calls for harmonising local and national choices; and international priorities. India's vision of international peace and security is guided by dialogue and cooperation, mutual respect, and commitment to international law. The most important instrument for international peace and security is, and will remain in future - the UN Security Council. This Council presents the most important geostrategic challenge to the future of peace due to its internal frosty relations. Syria and then Ukraine had divided the UNSC, a replay of Korea (the 1950s), the Suez Canal (1950s), and Congo (1960s). The world body has witnessed these differences - the US and China

over Taiwan, Russia-USA over Ukraine and frequent disagreements between the US and France over peacekeeping in the Sahel and Lebanon.³³

Sustaining peace requires brokering political consensus on sensitive issues that affect the distribution of power within a state. To strengthen the ability of UNPOs, engagement at the political level is the need of the future. At the operational level, UN missions need to strengthen and leverage the good office role of the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General. Peace can only prevail if the primacy of political settlement is reinforced with positive engagements on the ground.

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Experiences of a Force Commander in UN Peacekeeping Operations in Africa

Lieutenant General Rajender Singh (Retd)[®]

Abstract

Commanding a multinational Force comprising of troops of many countries, each with different professional standards and ethos, by itself, poses a big challenge. In addition, doing peacekeeping in Africa poses a lot of other problems which are not always easy to surmount. Despite these, most of the peacekeeping troops generally do a good job of maintaining peace. The performance of Indian Offices and men, however, is truly outstanding and they are not only liked for their professionalism but also for their initiative and innovation. In this article the author narrates a number of instances where the peacekeepers were able to do a very good job in difficult and intricate situations. He talks of need for adopting a strategy to prevent any escalation of conflict by effective utilisation of Diplomacy and Deterrence through effective Peacekeeping manoeuvres. In this article the author also highlights the importance of keeping regular communications with the parties, establishing credibility of the UN Mission by fair and just actions and helping the population by launching a major Humanitarian campaign wherever possible.

General

As a founder member of the United Nations (UN), India has been a firm supporter for the purposes and principles of the

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United Nations and has made significant contributions to the furtherance and implementation of these noble aims as well as to the evolution and functioning of its various specialised programmes. India is today one of the largest military contributors to UN Peacekeeping Operations. Known for their professionalism, compassion, equanimity and forbearance, Indian troops have proved popular and effective everywhere. India first deployed its troops in UN peacekeeping operations in 1950 with the deployment of 60 Field Ambulance to Korea as part of the coalition forces. Since then, India has participated in more than 49 UN missions out of the total of 71 UN missions¹ launched, across the globe, till date with more than 234,000 troops participating. Till date, 178² Indian peacekeepers have made the supreme sacrifice whilst serving in UN peacekeeping operations. India has so far provided 16 Force Commanders in various UN Missions and 2 Military Advisors in UN HQ. It started with Lieutenant Gen KS Thimayya being appointed the Chairman of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission (NNRC) in Korea and has continued till date. The dedication, commitment, and devotion to peacekeeping have made the Indian soldier the most sought after peacekeeper by the UN.

My Experiences in Angola as a Regional Commander

My experiences with UN date back to 1995, when I was sent to Angola as Regional Commander of the UN Peacekeeping Mission of UN Angola Verification Mission III (UNAVEM III). For someone who never had a chance to venture out to Africa, this was a most unique experience. Despite the fact that there was a ceasefire between the rebels and the government forces, the level of tension had continued to persist and both parties, the Government and União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA) were unwilling to trust the other. The UN appointed me as the Commander of the central region and I had a challenging task ahead since the rebel headquarters was based in my region. Though the level of presence of Indian diaspora in Angola was not much, one thing that struck me was the fact that Angolans had tremendous amount of good feelings towards India, and almost everyone knew about Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi. When the Indian troops arrived, the newspapers next day hailed their arrival by proclaiming that peacekeeping troops have arrived from the 'Land of Mahatma Gandhi'. Such an

image and goodwill were to be an important factor which facilitated my task tremendously.

On reaching Angola, I was indeed struck with awe and admiration of the natural beauty and richness of resources of the country. Infact, Angola would have been one of the richest countries of the world given its natural resources like diamonds, minerals oil etc. On arrival, however, what I saw was a war torn country with massive destruction of infrastructure, completely brutalised society, and people living in abject poverty. It was difficult to fathom that a country with such rich resources and simple, hardy, and intelligent people can reach such a state all due to the greed of their leaders.

My stay in Angola for next one year was quite eventful and full of ups and downs as far as managing security situation is concerned. But despite the problems, we were able to successfully surmount most of these and were finally able to convince the UNITA rebels, under Jonas Savimbi, to start giving up arms and join the rehabilitation camps (Quartering Areas as they were called) to facilitate peace process. This came about after a lot of cajoling and convincing by international community. US played a major role and Ms Mandaline Albright the US Ambassador to UN was sent to talk to Jonas Savimbi as he was refusing to meet the Special Representative of Secretary General for a long time. Though for some reasons, he had been quite considerate to me and had infact met me a number of times, a privelege he accorded to no one else. Accordingly, I was asked by the Force Commander to accompany Ms Mandaline Albright to meet the UNITA Supremo Jonas Savimbi. Luckily these talks went well and he did agree, though very reluctantly, to start the demobilising process. By the time I completed my tenure and returned to India, the demobilising process had started in right earnest which later led to stabilising of the situation to a very large degree.

My Stint as Force Commander in Ethiopia & Eritrea

My moments of actualisation and understanding of the various contours and dimensions of the polity and economics of the region came about only during my tenure as the Force Commander of UN Peacekeeping Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE). During this time, I was able to interact not only with the top echelons of the two governments but also got an insight into the detailed

functioning of the Security Council in New York and also the African Union which was based in Addis Ababa. With the UN mission spread over a large area in Eritrea and Ethiopia, one also got an insight into the living conditions of the civil population there.

Bringing peace between these two war-torn countries was not a joke and a lot of diplomatic manoeuvring had to be undertaken to make these two countries to soften their hard line stance. Both the Special Representatives of the UN Secretary General and I had to work extremely hard to maintain peace in the environment. In this scenario, being an Indian certainly did help. In both, Ethiopia as well as Eritrea, there was a tremendous amount of goodwill for India and most of the political leaders as also important members of the civil society had good words to say about Indians. They often remembered their Indian teachers/professors with tremendous amount of nostalgia. Even Prime Minister of Ethiopia and many ministers and senior Army Generals in both countries also used to talk similarly of their teachers in schools and instructors in the military academy which was established by the Indian Army.

Operational Challenges

The two year war had ended with wanton destruction at both ends. It also left behind a deep hatred, fuelled by extensive mistrust between the two parties. Peacekeeping operations in such an environment were, therefore, fraught with operational challenges. By the time I arrived as Force Commander in mid-2004, the operational situation in the mission's Area of Responsibility (AOR) had stabilised to a large extent. Though there were no large scale military/operational undertakings by either side, the situation could not be described exactly as peaceful. Years of intense hatred between the parties had led to breeding of an intense mistrust, which was further exacerbated by a lingering suspicion of UNMEE's covert leanings towards the other party.

Ethiopia's refusal to implement the Boundry Commission verdict, the ensuing stalemate, and gradual erosion in Eritrea's confidence in the international community's and UNMEE's abilities to break the stalemate, led to reignition of punitive hostilities. This, in turn, resulted in a gradual degeneration of the military situation. The number of violent incidents increased as both sides undertook regular military forays into each other's territories. But we still

managed to keep peace and prevent any major escalation of conflict by effective utilisation of diplomacy and deterrence through Peacekeeping manoeuvres. I had troops and officers from 43 countries, each with different professional standards and ethos. It is a normal belief that that the officers and troops belonging to developed countries (US, Europe, Canada etc) are much more professional vis-à-vis African and West Asian countries. This is not always true. I found many African and West Asian troops to be highly effective in conduct of operations. One instance comes to my mind which clearly highlights the resilience and professionalism of African and other third world countries.

Badme, a village near the border which was under Ethiopian control, was the main bone of contention between Ethiopia and Eritrea, and the two countries were often confronting and threatening each other on this. In Apr-May 2005, Eritrea not satisfied with the progress of the Peace Process carried out a major reshuffle in the army hierarchy and posted one of the most volatile commanders as the local Army Commander in charge of the Eastern Region. That commander called the senior UN Military Observer (Lt Col from a western country) and expressed serious concern and told him that since Ethiopian Army is carrying out offensive manoeuvres and is not listening, he is going to launch a major strike with two divisions next day. Hearing this, the senior military observer rushed straight back to Badme and packed his bag and fled towards Addis Ababa. He took along with him four more members of his detachment. However four remaining members (two from Africa, one from Malaysia and one from Bangladesh) refused to flee and conveyed these developments to me in the Force HQ. Hearing this, I mobilised the nearest post of Jordanian Battalion to occupy the defensive positions. The Eritrean local Army Commander was contacted again by the balance of military observer detachment, accompanied by the UN Western Sector Commander (Jordanian Battalion Commander) who told him that any offensive action by him will be countered by UN troops and he will be responsible for any consequences therein. Next day, some of Eritrean troops did move towards Badme but turned back on seeing the UN deployment, thus, averting any major incident. But these were most tension filled moments as the UN strength we were able to muster was only about one Company strength (with 6 Armed Vehicles), facing nearly two Brigades of

Eritrean troops. It was only the determination shown by Observers and the Jordanian troops that carried the day. Later I had to sack all the military observers who had fled the scene and repatriated them back to their countries for disciplinary action.

Another incident which highlights the courage and initiative of young officers, which come to my mind, was of an Indian Battalion Lieutenant who was heading a platoon post with two armed vehicles. In a similar threat, a local Brigade Commander of Eritrea was dissuaded from doing anything adventurous by this Lieutenant who on seeing the Ethiopian and Eritrean troops confronting each other had rushed in between. His bold move prevented the situation from turning worst and a major conflict situation was avoided which could have happened between the two sides.

The biggest challenge to peace, however, came about around Nov-Dec 2005. One fine day, I got a message from our Ethiopian Office that the Prime Minister of Ethiopia wanted to meet me. I along, with Special Representative, rushed to Addis Ababa next day and met Mr Males Zanavi, the PM of Ethiopia, with his Army Chief in attendance. He told us that he had got intimation that Eritrea is silently mustering up troops close to the border and in view of this, he is soon going to order mobilisation of his Armed Forces. I tried to reason with him that the information that Eritrea is amassing troops is not correct and he should take no precipitative action. He refused to believe me and said, General, "You do not know the President of Eritrea and I know him inside out since he is my cousin and we had fought together against the Communist regime. His mind works in a different way". I, however, requested him to give me 15 days and I will prove to him that there is no cause for alarm. He said OK, "if you are not able to convince us, we will mobilise".

Next 15 days were the busiest we had in my total tenure. I straight away rushed back to Eritrea and met their Defence Minister and the Army Chief. I frankly told them of the apprehensions of Ethiopian PM and requested them neither to issue any provocative statements, nor to allow any movements of Eritrean Forces. To instil mutual confidence Border Meetings were organised in all three sectors. I held press conference of the world press and

briefed them about the total harmony and peace in the area. We also took them to various locations to show that Eritrean Forces were still located in depth areas. In addition, I took the Ethiopian Chief of Intelligence to visit with me to all the posts on the border. In fact, I took him in UN Executive Jet to show him around. He sat with me and heard briefings of all local UN commanders. He was allowed to ask the questions and see for himself the situation on the ground. But the biggest Confidence Building Measure (CBM) was that I was able to organise a Military Coordination Commission meeting in Nairobi in which military delegations of both countries met and were able to clarify apprehensions. With these efforts, we were able to convince the Government of Ethiopia that their apprehensions were not valid. Their Defence Minister, thereafter, met me and told me that the PM has conveyed that their plan for mobilisation of forces has been shelved for the time being and they would continue to keep a strict watch on Eritrean Forces activities and reserve their right to respond appropriately. I knew that though the Ethiopian hierarchy are, in fact, now convinced, but they would refuse to admit that they were wrong in their assessment.

Humanitarian Challenges

In the initial stages of establishment of the Mission, the humanitarian situation was grim. Drought and prolonged war had adversely affected the economics of both the countries. The problem was even more acute in case of the population staying within or close to the zones of conflict. In order to effectively overcome the humanitarian challenges, we launched a well-coordinated and sustained program called 'Winning Hearts'. Under this program, the UN Forces synergised its military operations with developmental projects to win the hearts of the people. A well-coordinated and sustained effort was worked out at providing assistance in consultation with the local civil administration of the two countries. The greatest emphasis was laid on basic needs such as food, water, medical, and veterinary aid. Assistance was also rendered towards building of infrastructure like construction of check-dams, bridges, digging of wells, reconstruction of school buildings etc. This program was spearheaded by our contingent, in which Indian contingent played a major role, duly supported by other contingents like Jordan, Bangladesh, Kenya, Italy etc. All

contingents used their own resources and the funds provided by their governments for this purpose. I employed the engineering efforts of the UN Mission for construction of check dams, wells, roads etc.

Conclusion

In hindsight, it can now be observed that the strategy delivered handsome gains as the deliverance of succour and aid to the war ravaged millions resulted in a firm establishment of the credibility of UNMEE, this, in turn garnered the confidence and good will of the common man. This feeling of goodwill stood UNMEE in extremely good stead during the turbulent phase commencing Oct 2005, when even in spite of large scale restrictions by the Eritrean Government, the local population stood firm in support of UNMEE and the peacekeepers and no feeling of antipathy was felt. The winning hearts policy has, therefore, assisted in large measure in the success of the Mission. What I felt bad was that I could not fully instil confidence in the minds of leaders of both countries. However, I can derive satisfaction that we in UN Mission were able to convince the two sides of futility of armed conflict. The situation remained peaceful thereafter till last year. A major breakthrough, however, took place only last year when a new government was elected and took office in Addis Ababa. Almost the first thing this government did was to announce acceptance of the Boundary Commission Award, which was the biggest sticking point. Thereafter, the PM of Ethiopia visited the capital of Eritrea and was given a rousing welcome. Many agreements were signed and an era of a lasting peace seems to have finally descended on the region. I hope it stays this way!!



The author taking over as Force Commander



Receiving UN Secretary General on his visit to Eritrea

Endnotes

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The Importance of Practical Wisdom for 21st Century Peace Operations

Ms Emily Paddon Rhoads[®]

Abstract

Peacekeepers engaged in contemporary armed conflict regularly confront ethical dilemmas and practical trade-offs. This article investigates the relevance of virtue ethics and, specifically, the virtue of practical wisdom in addressing these challenges and strengthening peace operations for the 21st Century. While virtue ethics has been applied to decision-making in several professional fields, including law and business, it has not received a great deal of attention within international relations, and specifically, in the field of peacekeeping. And yet, with its emphasis on context-sensitive judgment and social practices grounded in the moral qualities of the actor facing an ethical dilemma, virtue ethics arguably offers an important perspective to complement and conceptualise existing approaches to navigating the ethical dilemmas in contemporary conflict.

Introduction

Contemporary peacekeeping is hard. Over the past two decades, operating environments have become increasingly complex with the fragmentation and proliferation of armed groups, including those designated as terrorist organisations. In many contexts, peacekeeping missions are deployed with ambitious protection mandates in the absence of political frameworks, clear political

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roles, or support from host and member states. Local and global expectations of peacekeepers continually outstrip their resources. With these challenges, there has been a shift that appears to be little recognised in the literature and even, at times, in the practice of peacekeeping. It is a shift from ethical decisions being made primarily at the overarching institutional level to their landing squarely with individuals in the field. Peacekeepers today regularly confront moral dilemmas and practical trade-offs, particularly when it comes to the protection of civilians (PoC). Many of these dilemmas implicate deeper conflicts of values (for example, sovereignty and human rights; consent and impartiality).

A spectrum of approaches has emerged to address these tensions and encourage United Nations (UN) staff to 'do the right thing' with an emphasis on creating new doctrine, norms, institutional processes, and accountability measures.¹ Good judgment, however, often comes down to the question 'who decides' i.e., the blue helmet or civilian official who must interpret the mandate and operate within it. In short, it is about character. This fact is not lost on the UN. The High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) identifies the 'quality of leadership as one of the most crucial factors in the success or failure of UN peace operations'.² The Dos Santos Cruz report highlights the importance of the peacekeeper 'mindset',³ and the Secretary-General himself has under scored the importance of 'clarity of mind' and individual judgment.⁴

This article argues for the relevance of virtue ethics to contemporary UN missions. While virtue ethics has been applied to a number of professional fields, including law and business,⁵ it has not received a great deal of attention from scholars of international organisations and international practices, and specifically in the area of peacekeeping.⁶ And yet, with its emphasis on context-sensitive judgment and social practices grounded in the moral qualities of the actor, virtue ethics offers an important perspective to complement existing approaches to navigating the ethical dilemmas that peacekeeping and protection invariably entail.

The last decade has seen increased collaboration between philosophers and psychologists studying virtue and character. This budding area of research offers insights for peacekeeping.⁷ For the purposes of this short article, focuses on the virtue ethics

tradition in political philosophy and, specifically, on practical wisdom, what Aristotle considered to be the 'maestro virtue', and the virtue which researchers recognise as critical to ethical expertise and then consider the role of institutions in cultivating character and the exercise of practical wisdom, and finally identify four priority areas for peace operations.

Why Virtue?

Virtue and virtuosity share a common etymological root – the Latin *virtut* – which designates the excellences necessary to perform a valuable practice well. Virtue ethics is one of the three main approaches in contemporary moral philosophy. Unlike deontology, which judges action with reference to moral rules, or consequentialism which appraises the moral worth of behaviour by its consequences, virtue ethics emphasises the moral character of individuals and appraises action based on what is good.

Virtue ethics as a field of study is wide and diverse. Nonetheless, contemporary virtue scholars all locate themselves in some way relative to Aristotle. According to Aristotle, something is good when it does its function well. The function of humans— what distinguishes us from other beings is our ability to reason.⁸ Consequently, the purpose of human life (what Aristotle referred to as the *telos*) is action in accordance with reason. Aristotle developed an ethics from this, specifying the virtues or character traits a person needs to develop to flourish. Over time, philosophers have added, and subtracted, from his list to focus on different character traits. Today, most regard honesty, courage, compassion, integrity, kindness, self-control, practical wisdom, gratitude, humility, and fortitude as core virtues.

Why Practical Wisdom?

How do we know what's 'good' and then how do we act on it, particularly when our choices may be circumscribed by external authority? For Aristotle, one virtue practical wisdom or *phronesis* stood out as the 'maestro virtue' without which none of the other virtues can be realized. Practical wisdom involves the knowledge and understanding of how to act in the right way.⁹ It is essential because context matters. The right amount of any of virtues is context dependent – what Martha Nussbaum referred to as the priority of the particular.¹⁰ As Kenneth Sharpe and Barry Schwartz

explain, “Is caution a strength? Yes, ‘look before you leap’. But change the context, and ‘she who hesitates is lost’.¹¹ As such, what is needed is the *wisdom* to know when and how to be cautious and, similarly, when and how to take risks while avoiding recklessness.

Practical wisdom comes about through sensitivity to context and the ability to perceive the morally salient features of a situation, including the moral outlooks of the other individuals or groups involved. It is a complex human characteristic or trait that includes the following components:¹²

- Perceptiveness and sensitivity to particularity; the ability to discern context and nuance.
- Prosocial skills of empathy and compassion; the capacity to understand what someone else is thinking and feeling. This requires good listening and the attendant traits of openness, humility, detachment, and patience that being a good listener entail. It also requires imagination.
- Self-awareness, including of one’s own emotional responses and blind spots, and the skill and will to undertake the self-reflection necessary to learn from experience and others.
- The ability to deliberate well with others, frame problems, and recognise and interpret the perspectives of others.

The complex, ambiguous and uncertain contexts in which peacekeepers are deployed make practical wisdom and related virtues more necessary. Peacekeepers regularly, must balance competing goods. Reflection, deliberation, emotional mindfulness, and know-how are critical to making difficult choices about when and how to act.

A Role for Institutions and Implications for Peace Operations

Character and practical wisdom cannot, in a sense, be taught. They require experience, acquired through practice and processes of socialisation, as well as education that encourage certain traits and discourage others.¹³ Institutions play a critical role in cultivating character and the development of flexible and open mindsets. As political scientist Maxwell Cameron explains, “Institutions influence the quality of our character and thus whether we perform our roles and offices well and achieve high standards of excellence in

our conduct not just the direction of our behaviour. But bad institutions can crush agency and destroy practical wisdom. They can do this by demoralising agents and corrupting their motivations, by crippling their capacity for judgment and deliberation, and by limiting their scope of action to pursue the aims intrinsic to their activities".¹⁴

A growing body of work integrates insights from virtue ethics with those in cognitive sciences and organisation theory for institutional design that encourages more ethical decision making.¹⁵ Four areas are particularly relevant to contemporary and future UN peace operations.

First, is the importance of dedicated resources for sustained pre-deployment and in-mission training of all peacekeeping personnel as well as 'hands on' learning opportunities that approximate practice as much as possible? Rather than textbook learning, a virtue approach underscores the value of simulations that encourage improvisation and creativity ('thinking on the spot') as well as trial and error.¹⁶ The space for trial and error is critical as it helps practitioners overcome their fear of making mistakes. As Kenneth Sharpe explains, through the creation of a safe space to 'get it wrong' participants learn 'to practice courage, the habit of facing their fears and working through them'.¹⁷ This is of particular importance with PoC, given the need to avoid making mistakes in practice given the very real stakes. Furthermore, simulations and experiential modules should be accompanied by opportunities to immediately reflect individually and collectively. The practice of group debriefing is important in that it encourages practitioners to develop the social skills and habits needed to reflect and deliberate together. Recent innovations in training should be built upon and further strengthened through more intensive and consistent induction and context specific training, including tabletop exercises and simulations on crisis management, protection of civilians, and real-world ethical dilemmas.

Second, and related, is the value of ongoing managed learning through practice. Learning extends from training to practice and includes the space for discretion, strengthening deliberative processes, and commitment to developing contextual knowledge. Virtue ethics does not provide simple guidelines on how to resolve difficult situations. Two 'virtuous people', for example, may disagree

on what should be done in a particular instance. However, what it does to is emphasise the need for individuals and organisations to reflect and deliberate more intentionally, openly, and honestly about their purpose, and to provide reasoning in context for actions taken. Rather than evaluate action based solely on abstract rules or guidelines that are removed from the world of everyday experience, reflective questioning asks: “What were the agents trying to do, and were they trying to do it in the right way and for the right reasons? Did they deliberate well so that they could grasp the full meaning of the situation? Did they have the right experience, knowledge, and motivation for the task? Were they guided by a concern for the right ends?”¹⁸ Prioritising a continuum of learning and knowledge accumulation also underscores the importance of practical issues such as hiring practices and the type and duration of contracts. Short-term deployment and a roster of frequently rotating experts can undercut the development of skill through practice as well as valuable context-specific knowledge.

Third, is an emphasis on motivational messaging and role models. Too often, the messaging about peacekeeping both internal and external to the UN—is negative, overshadowing and downplaying, the very real, and empirically substantiated, positive contributions and impacts of peacekeeping on violence mitigation. Communicating the value of peacekeeping is critical as it informs professional identities and has the power to shape individual motivations. Further, plenty of studies show that moral role models can significantly improve behaviour both through in-person interaction as well as through storytelling and narrative.¹⁹ Who inspires peacekeepers and how? What examples of good peacekeeping and protection practice can be harvested and shared widely with staff at all levels? Not everyone has to agree on who is a role model for discussion of exemplars to be fruitful. Indeed, given the multitude of world views and moral positions that make up peacekeeping, consensus would seem unlikely. Rather, discussion, debate, and storytelling offer a point of departure, a platform that challenges people to articulate their moral positions and motivations.

Finally, a safe and supportive institutional environment is critical to continued learning and sound decision-making. The hardship

environments in which peacekeepers operate, the nature of their roles, and the ethical dilemmas that peacekeeping staff encounter in the field can be emotionally taxing and, in some cases, traumatic for individuals with negative implications for their well-being and mental health. Studies reveal higher rates of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) as well as other mental health issues amongst people who have been deployed to UN peace operations relative to the general population.²⁰ Furthermore, a recent report by the International Peace Institute found that despite new UN initiatives to strengthen mental health support and awareness,²¹ the system of care offered to UN personnel in the field needs 'to be revamped and to be brought up to the level of hardship they face'.²² Without adequate institutional support and care, staff may be reluctant to take calculated risk, act courageously, and learn from practice.

Conclusion

The expansive goals of contemporary peace operations and the increasing complexity of operating environments have given rise to new challenges and ethical dilemmas. While the creation of new doctrine, norms, institutional processes, and accountability measures are essential to address these challenges, this article has argued for greater attention to the role of individual judgement and the importance of inculcating practical wisdom amongst staff at all levels of peace operations.

Endnotes

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Preventing an Afghanistan Redux in Somalia

Dr Ali Ahmed[®]

Abstract

The article argues that an effective peace intervention results from a balance between the three sides of the peace triangle formed by peacekeeping (security), peacebuilding (development), and peacemaking (political settlement). It examines the situation in Somalia to highlight that in case peacemaking is neglected, it is likely that Somalia may fall to the al Shabaab on the draw down and departure of the African Union peace enforcement force. It, therefore, recommends a political prong of strategy to complement the military prong to address the challenge al Shabaab poses in Somalia.

Introduction

An earlier article in this journal had made the case that for returning peace to a conflict afflicted area, a modicum of balance is desirable between the three sides of the peace triangle – peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding.¹ During the lifecycle of any peace intervention, the centre of gravity, at a particular point in time and conflict circumstance will shift between the three sides. However, the three must be so poised that together they can contain and roll back a conflict. Operational Art in a peace operation lies in leveraging the three sides in a manner that the resulting balances mid-wife success. Somalia suggests itself as a case study for application of this hypothesis.

Somalia has been site of peace enforcement for some 15 years now. In the mid to late 2000s, the de-facto control of Somalia by the Islamic Courts was wrested away from it by intervention of Ethiopia to install a transitional federal government that had been

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formed in 2004 with the support of the regional organisation, the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD).² Meanwhile the Islamic Courts's administration mutated, with its militant youth wing forming the al Shabaab. In 2007, Ethiopian intervention was substituted by an African Union (AU) peace enforcement operation, African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).³ Over the 2010s, the AMISOM progressively wrested control of territory from the al Shabaab even as the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) was installed in Mogadishu and Federal Member States (FMS) were formed. In 2013, the United Nations' (UN) Political Office in Somalia was transformed into a special political mission, the UN Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), to assist with statebuilding and peacebuilding.⁴ The al Shabaab's association with the al Qaeda initially, and later the Islamic State (IS) in the 2010s, led to its figuring on the UN terror entity sanctions' list since 2010.⁵ This effectively placed it out of bounds for a peacemaking outreach. Thus, while peace enforcement and peacebuilding proceeded, peacemaking was not in evidence. The imbalance between the three sides of the peace triangle visualised in relation to Somalia, continues till today.

Somalia today has a follow-on mission to the AMISOM, the AU Transitional Mission in Somalia (ATMIS), in place since April 2022. Assessing that instability has reduced considerably and security sector reform initiatives were in hand to upgrade the Somali National Army (SNA) and police, in 2021, the ATMIS is expected to draw down and depart within 30 months. The ATMIS is to assist the SNA regain government control through joint operations and capacity building, even as it draws down while the SNA gains strength and confidence.⁶ Despite considerable progress with both state building and peacebuilding by UNSOM, the situation does not lend confidence to the assumption that the SNA will hold up on departure of foreign forces. In other words, with peacemaking absent, peacebuilding and peace enforcement has not been well served.

A scenario as obtained on the departure of the US and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) forces from Afghanistan stares Somalia in the face. There is scope for the international community and the regional bodies to reappraise the three sides of the peace triangle in the two fraternal missions in place, ATMIS and UNSOM. While ATMIS is assisting with provision of security,

UNSOM, integrated with the rest of the UN family of Agencies, Funds and Programs (AFP) and in league with allied actors, concentrates on statebuilding and peacebuilding. Missing in the menu is peacemaking. In light of the recent precedence in Afghanistan, this deficit might yet sabotage not only the long-standing peace intervention but Somalia itself. Consequently, the question explored here is whether an Afghanistanlike future can be escaped by Somalia, and, if so, how?

Background

Somalia has been in an unsettled situation since the end of the Cold War. During the Cold War, it was stable only in its first decade under democratic government. In the sixties, the first democratic turn-over of government in post-colonial Africa was witnessed in Somalia. However, as typical for the era, Siad Barre installed himself in power in a military coup, whereupon Cold War dynamics took over. The two superpowers switched clients in the Horn of Africa, with the US supporting Somalia against Soviet and Cuba-backed Ethiopia. In late seventies, a war broke out over Oromia in Ethiopia, an area occupied by Somali ethnic groups. Within Somalia, Siad Barre also asserted his authority with ruthless suppression in Somaliland, the erstwhile British colonial possession that in 1960 had merged with the Italy-colonised Somali territory to forge Somalia. The end of the Cold War pried loose the US umbrella over Siad Barre.

The Somali state dissolved in famine. The story thereafter is more familiar, with India deploying a brigade under UN Chapter VII auspices as part of an upgraded peacekeeping operation, UN Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II). The preceding operation, UNOSOM I, had a mandate to widen humanitarian access. Met with anarchy, the international community temporarily deployed a US-led peace enforcement operation, Unified Task Force (UNITAF).⁷ It was to contain the clan violence, which it succeeded in doing by enforcing an elitist peace by deterring the warlords through a display of military might. The hand over from UNITAF to UNSOM II saw warlords back in action, targeting, in one infamous incident Pakistani peacekeepers. American forces, outside the UN framework, went after the warlord responsible, Farah Aideed, who incidentally had been Somali ambassador in Delhi for three years. The Black Hawk incident resulted. Withdrawal of Americans soon thereafter scuttled the UNSOM II.⁸

Somalia fell out of the international radar, with the international community fatigued by international humanitarian intervention post contemporary instances in Bosnia and Rwanda. A lesson from the American-led 'global war on terror' was on the dangers of persistence of ungoverned spaces. The FGS that initially functioned out of Baidoa and moved to Mogadishu, when the security situation was stabilised by AMISOM. Since 2012, when the FGS was finally enplaced formally, it has had two iterations of elections. Its most recent election, in 2022, returned the first president, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, to power.

President Mohamud has set the SNA to undertake operations in conjunction with ATMIS and the clan militias against al Shabaab.⁹ The idea is to soften the al Shabaab and create conditions for talks from a position of strength for the FGS. The idea of using clan militia is reminiscent of the Iraqi awakening in which Iraqi Sunnis were used to wrap up the al Qaeda in the Sunni Triangle in 2007-08. However, it is predictable that as an insurgent group with demonstrated resilience against the AMISOM over past 15 years, the al Shabaab will melt away only to re-emerge elsewhere and by night.¹⁰ It is amply clear that a solely military approach will not suffice.¹¹ Consequently, President Muhamud's intention to follow through with talks 'at the right time' is a promising opportunity.¹² It gives peacemaking to make a debut, with international community support.

Desirability

Whether to talk to the Taliban was a perennial question through the 2010s.¹³ Consensus had it that military operations needed complementing with a talks outreach, even as peacebuilding by provincial reconstruction teams proceeded alongside. In the event, talks did come about in Doha. The anticipated upgrade of the Afghan National Security Forces was slow in coming as a result, the Taliban were less eager at the talks table awaiting the departure of the foreign forces. The fears were confirmed in their take-over of Kabul last year.¹⁴ Given such a possibility in Somalia, it is only desirable that every effort be made to avoid an Afghanistan redux.

There is a perspective is that talking to terrorists is not a strategic move. Terrorists will take advantage of talks for gaining legitimacy. This will make them get ahead of the government in the stakes for peoples' hearts and minds, especially since the FGS is hampered by allegations of corruption, clanism, incapacity,

and association with external powers. Terrorist entities are strategic players and might, through talks, take power they have been denied militarily. Regional states, as Uganda and Kenya that have borne the brunt of al Shabaa out-of-area terror attacks, would be unwilling to treat it as a legitimate interlocutor.

The constraint is that the ATMIS is slated to depart in the middle term. Under financial pressure, the European Union - that largely funded it so far - is downsizing the budget. The prominent regional state, Ethiopia, has been beset with internal security issues. Initially, when AMISOM was being inducted, a move to plant a hybrid, or UN peace operation instead, had been struck down. It is uncertain if the international community would reappraise this decision. The feeling of 'community' among the international community has been considerably strained in wake of the Ukraine War. There is a recession looming and the prospects of funding another giant UN mission are not appetising. This inability to up the ante militarily implies that a 'politics first' approach must compensate.

The lesson from the Afghanistan experience is, thus, not against talks as much as to use talks productively. Both antagonists were loath to share power in Afghanistan, making talks infructuous. In Somalia, the al Shabaab is a nationalist outfit. Somalis are nationalist and - unlike in most places in Africa - are relatively homogenous as an ethnic group inhabiting a defined space. As with the Taliban, it is not only religious extremism that drives it, though Wahabbi influence has impinged on the Sufistic culture in Somalia.

Somalia provides a timely opportunity to test the UN's freshly minted motto, 'primacy of politics'¹⁵, intended to get to peace through peaceful means. For long, other actors have tried to address their respective troubles in Somalia. Europe, contending with a migration influx from Africa, funded the AMISOM. The AMISOM, among others from as far away as Senegal, comprised troops from neighbouring countries seeking to tackle terrorism at its origin. However, alleged human rights violations and collateral damage by peacekeepers has partially alienated Somalis.¹⁶ The US, fearing homeland terror from its Somali diaspora immigrants, intervenes militarily through its Africa Command base, while at times causing civilian casualties.¹⁷ Somalis have thus been subject to pursuit of aims of others on their land and at their cost. The

UN's shift to people-centric peacekeeping makes it inescapable that peacemaking must proceed apace to rescue people from the cycle of violence.

Feasibility

The UN has a policy guiding political approaches to armed groups. There is no proscription on such outreach intended to end violence. Any such outreach would have to ascertain if the al Shabaab wants to travel away from terror tag. Continuing humanitarian and peacebuilding support can act as incentive, particularly as Somalia faces its fourth year of drought. For now, the areas it controls have restricted humanitarian access. The possibility of exiting the terror list – as was the case with elements of the Taliban – is another carrot to influence the al Shabaab. The reputational risk from a rebuff or the talks going awry, in an egregious terror incident would have to be factored. The FGS will require forging a consensus and a joint front with the FMS on talks.

There are multiple forums that can act as lead: the UN, the regional organisation, and the FGS itself. If the FGS wishes to be in the lead then capacity building support for both parties and logistics facilitation might be necessary. The regional organisations – both AU and the IGAD – are well experienced though financing might yet be required. External actors – such as from the Nordic or Gulf states – could lend a hand. The multiple special envoys for the Horn of Africa would require a coordination forum. The UN is better positioned to play a supportive as against a protagonist role. Its mission in the country for the last ten years indicates its political capacity, while the UN Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS) that supported the AMISOM, and now supports the ATMIS and elements of SNA, can help with the logistics – particularly with helicopter support to access al Shabaab areas.

Taking cue from the Doha talks with the Taliban, the talks would require first ending the violence – an issue not taken up at Doha and which resulted in continuing violence even as talks proceeded. This is especially important in Somalia to urgently open up the humanitarian space. Besides, the instrumental use of violence by both sides tends to influence the negotiations negatively. The table then becomes yet another battlefield. With violence at ebb, talks could dwell on a road map on the progressive co-option of the al Shabaab. Usually, an agreement spells out a transition period of power sharing followed by an election. The

ongoing Constitution review and the reform in election system, away from being clan-based to 'one person one vote', can see al Shabaab participation. The national reconciliation program underway could, post conflict, also cover al Shabaab controlled areas.¹⁸

The period of transition might require overseeing. Since the AU mission may be too closely associated with neighbouring countries, it may require substitution. Political momentum in the talks could perk up Troop Contributing Countries' willingness to contribute blue berets and boots on ground in a monitoring and protective role respectively. A lean mission with a civilian component, including civil affairs and human rights officers with a pronounced national staff complement, can be foreseen. A clear timeline culminating with the next elections or as agreed in a comprehensive peace agreement can serve as focus for an exit strategy and handover to the UN Country Team.

A Role for India?

India is in the midst of taking up its destined role as a leading state. It has been a member for over last two years of the UN Security Council (UNSC). It has recently taken over chair of the G-20. India has to seize opportunities to supplant UNSC declinist veto-holding pen holders, Britain and France. Envisaging a greater role for itself as a security provider, in the ocean that bears its name, is a first step.

Its strategic moves in the Indo-Pacific theatre have not been at the cost of the western Indian Ocean. It has been a player in anti-piracy operations off Somalia since inception of the joint naval operations. Managing security along Indian Ocean Rim in proximity of the Horn of Africa to South West Asia - and the scene of conflict in Yemen - is significant. The strategic weight of the region is seen in the setting up of bases in close proximity to each other by the US and China. The risk of instability multiplying, such as in the increased presence of Islamists southwards along the African coast in Mozambique, must be acknowledged.

Since India is now a pragmatic power, balancing China in Africa will not be far from its concerns. Africa is a site for power competition where India cannot find herself India missing-in-action. In taking a proactive role, India would only be returning to its historical role as an important rimland naval power, evidenced by

communities originating in Horn of Africa resident across the Deccan and the Malabar Coast. India must step up to complete a task left unfinished when, in 1995, its navy evacuated troops of the UNOSOM II.

India lending a hand as a 'friend of the mediation', through appointing a special envoy would enable herself to push for consensus in the UNSC on a light footprint mission to arrive at and help implement any agreement reached. It can lead with boots on the ground. It could contribute to the humanitarian Somalia Trust Fund or bilaterally increase humanitarian support.

Conclusion

Peace operations cannot be done in a political vacuum. In Somalia, absence of a political prong of strategy to tackle the al Shabaab has resulted in the insurgency persisting. Current-day dire humanitarian straits compel a political outreach to the al Shabaab. By all means, care must be taken not to empower terrorist affiliates but this apprehension can be mitigated by enlightened design of the mediation or facilitation, taking on board the lessons of the peace process in Afghanistan. The terror tag to groups must be amenable to revision now that international terror has subsided considerably. An outreach can, in a first step, influence the group to distance itself from terror. The FGS is already contemplating a political solution. Once the regional organisations have bought into this line of action, the UN could lend a hand by including the remit in its next resolution on UNSOM. This will pave way for UNSOM to acquire political teeth and to transform into a short-duration, light-footprint peacekeeping mission overseeing induction of al Shabaab into the Somali national mainstream. The Somalia case study validates the hypothesis that all three sides of the peace triangle need ministrations in varying degrees during the lifecycle of a peace intervention, failing which, peace is liable to prove elusive. Peacemaking must be added to the peace repertoire Somalia to complete the peace triangle.

Endnotes

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⁵ Al Shabaab figures on the sanctions list available at <https://www.un.org/french/sc/committees/consolidated.htm#alqaedaent>

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Liberating Our Hostage Battalions: Improving Freedom of Movement in Peacekeeping

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Abstract

Freedom of movement has long been a key tenet of United Nations (UN) Peacekeeping Operations and is specifically referenced in seven current mandates. However, most missions experience limitations on their freedom of movement, leading to failures in vital mandate requirements to protect civilians, monitor human rights abuses, and create conditions conducive to the distribution of humanitarian assistance. This article uses the example of South Sudan to highlight the problems with freedom of movement in modern peacekeeping and discuss how these issues can and should be addressed. The methodology combines an analysis of data from the literature with examples from the author's own experiences, while serving in the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), to show that constraints on freedom of movement take three main forms: interference by host nation forces, poor road conditions, and the "checkpoint economy." He contends that these constraints on freedom of movement represent a lack of political will and fiscal oversight by senior mission leadership and the donor nations – not a lack of ability or enthusiasm by individual peacekeeping battalions. If we are to succeed in enforcing our mandates, we must

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improve the freedom of movement for our peacekeepers by putting into action what has been written up in so many official reports since the turn of the century : stop acceding to physical and administrative obstruction by local armed political actors, stop wilfully funding the ‘checkpoint economies’, and start making meaningful improvements to transportation infrastructure.

Introduction

The 2021 USI monograph UN Peace Operations: Hostage Taking of Peacekeepers highlighted the issues that can arise when groups of peacekeepers are taken hostage by armed actors inside the very countries where they are working:

“Peacekeepers are supposed to be the enablers and get deployed in the conflict zone to help bring peace and save human lives. So, what happens when the enablers themselves become the victims [...] Peacekeepers will be denied their freedom and will not be able to deliver in implementing the mandate... and, thereby, would impact the effectiveness of the mission”.¹

That monograph references historical cases in Bosnia, Syria, and Angola – with their account of the latter example in 1991 markedly similar to what frequently occurs in South Sudan today – ‘observers were denied freedom of movement and could not report on activity by the [combatants]’.²

But what about when whole battalions are held hostage by their organisations own policies and, thus, prevented from carrying out their mandated responsibilities? Sadly, this happens daily in many of our largest missions – and while not every instance results in human tragedy on a scale of Srebrenica³ or Kibeho⁴, many still do. In 2020, UNMISS failed to conduct aerial reconnaissance or deploy peacekeepers to prevent the Jonglei massacres, in which hundreds of civilians were killed, thousands displaced, and many villages were burnt.⁵ The year prior, similar failures allowed combatants loyal to Major General James Ochan Puotto rape and murder with impunity in Maiwut County.⁶

Indeed, every time that UN peacekeepers have their freedom of movement infringed upon, the most vulnerable amongst the

local populations suffer, as noted by the former UNMISS Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) David Shearer, in reference to one incident in 2019:

“For six days, we waited for an SOI [government clearance] so that the force protection could accompany the World Food Program convoy to Kapoeta[...]People were waiting for the food. They couldn’t get the food because they [peacekeepers] couldn’t get clearance on the ground”.⁷

Three Constraints on Freedom of Movement

Restrictions on freedom of movement imposed by host nation’s political and military forces like the one described by Shearer are routinely reported to the UN Security Council – for example, in the most recent report from UNMISS (dated 07 December 2022), there were 23 such violations reported, with 69 per cent of those violations being committed by government forces.⁸

But interference by government forces is just one of the three significant and documented elements that negatively impact freedom of movement. Equally problematic are road conditions and the hundreds of check points where cash payments extorted from UN agencies and humanitarian organisations are used to fund the same armed actors who block the UN’s access to areas where human rights are being violated and where violence and famine threaten the lives of local people.

None of these problems are insoluble. In fact, the UN’s peacekeeping battalions and their supporting units are already well-suited to dealing with them – only if the highest echelons of mission leadership empower them to do so.

Interference by Host Nation Actors

The issue of host nation political and military forces interfering with freedom of movement is well-documented, with the Report of the Independent Strategic Review of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan stating that these violations “are the single most important factor limiting the mission’s ability to carry out its mandated activities”.⁹ But notably, the report gave no recommendations for solving the problem beyond “sustained and joint dialogue”.¹⁰ Other reports note that the mission’s internal policy of requesting clearances from host nation forces prior to moving

by air can delay deployments¹¹ – but this happens on the ground as well. In South Sudan, we were frequently told that if we did not receive these clearances in advance to enter an area, the government ‘could not guarantee our safety’¹² – but our patrols were quite capable of ensuring their own safety in principle. In practice, they were rarely allowed to do so because they were frequently prevented from passing checkpoints consisting of nothing more than a pair of soldiers with small arms and a rope across the road.

Freedom of movement vis-à-vis political and military interference by host-nation actors can be re-established in two ways: through mission-level policies to exercise that freedom using all means at their disposal, or by operational initiative at the battalion level as exhibited by NORDBAT 2 in Bosnia¹³ and INDBATT 2 in South Sudan.¹⁴ In both cases, bold and deliberate action by military leaders at the battalion level saved civilian lives – despite the fact that those actions defied orders from higher echelons.

In Bosnia, it was observed that NORDBAT 2 maintained freedom of movement and operational initiative in a mission where many other units failed to do so. This was because their commander, Colonel Ulf Henricsson, was willing to disregard orders if it meant saving civilian lives on the ground; and similar operational initiative was displayed by INDBATT 2 in South Sudan in response to crisis. During the outbreak of violence in 2016, Indian peacekeepers saved hundreds of lives by opening their gates to fleeing civilians and firing on their armed pursuers. Like their NORDBAT 2 predecessors, the bold actions of INDBATT 2 were contrary to orders from their distant headquarters¹⁵, but as AK Bardalai wrote, ‘since defiance of orders resulted in a positive outcome, no question was asked’.¹⁶

It is clear from these examples that individual battalions and their leaders from many countries are both ready and willing to do the right thing when faced with threats to the mandate – but it is not fair to put the burden for doing so upon their shoulders alone, and it is unfortunate that peacekeepers who do take action to enforce their mandates are still painted as “Trigger-Happy[...] and Disobedient”.¹⁷

The Unpaved Roads to Hell

Even if all battalions were both unconstrained by host-nation forces and their own mission's policies, many would still find their ability to move freely in support of their mandate to be inhibited by another well-known issue – road conditions.

'Paving the Road to Hell'¹⁸ is the title of a much-cited critique of UN peacekeeping¹⁹– but in today's multidimensional missions in Africa, the roads to the places where too many civilians perish in hellish conditions remain unpaved. Indeed, the Santos Cruz report in 2017 stated both the problem and solution quite clearly:

“Road conditions are related to ambushes, logistics, PoC, development, state authority, and UNsecurity...[the] UN should orient all the agencies and government supported NGOs to apply at least 20 per cent of the budget in infrastructure independent of the nature of the organisation.”

The report further recommended that missions “use Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) and United Nations Country Team (UNCT) funds and coordination to improve road infrastructure”.²⁰

Of course, there are those who might observe that UN missions in South Sudan, Central African Republic, and Democratic Republic of Congo already put a significant amount of their budgets into repairing roads – but, unfortunately, it is done in the most wasteful and ineffective manner imaginable. In UNMISS, for example, each dry season sees seven engineering units spend months scraping over 3,000 kilometres of dirt roads into a passable condition – roads which are then predictably washed out by the annual monsoons within a matter of weeks.

Moreover, the management of QIPs is ineffectual in this regard. The UN's own guidebook for QIP's gives the construction of a road using local workers as its exemplar project,²¹ and although UNMISS has spent over 7.5 million USD on these projects,²² not a single QIP, listed on UNMISS's interactive map of these projects has been related to road construction.²³

The Illegal Checkpoint Economies

The final major obstacle to freedom of movement is the 'checkpoint economy', which is present not only in South Sudan, but in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Central African Republic as

well.²⁴ This endemic interference by armed actors – many of them affiliated with the host nation’s military and police forces – represents a significant transfer of wealth from donor governments to the same armed actors who seek to interfere with UN agencies carrying out their mandate. In addition to directly funding violence, this transfer of wealth deprives the people most in need of humanitarian aid of the resources that they need to survive.

In South Sudan, the scale of the problem is enormous. There are roadblocks approximately every 23 kilometre along the rivers and roads, and 49 percent of these checkpoints illegally extort money at gunpoint from humanitarian aid convoys; cash payments which make up 50 percent of the total cost of transporting humanitarian aid.²⁵ Government forces (police and military) operate 81 percent of these checkpoints,²⁶ hindering not only humanitarian aid but peacekeepers as well. UN patrols are routinely stopped to have their papers checked, and often blocked from proceeding if the government wishes to halt their movement. Indeed, it is not uncommon for UN peacekeepers to be parked alongside the road with their officer locked in fruitless negotiations for passage, watching civilian vehicles pay to pass into the same area where they are being told that it is ‘too dangerous’ for them to go.

The literature calls these payments ‘taxes’²⁷ – but legal taxes are levied by state decree. South Sudan’s Republican Order No. 29/2017, signed by President Salva Kiir on 09 November 2017, specifically prohibits the hindrance of humanitarian convoys, stating, ‘all roadblocks should be removed from the roads,’ and that “[a]nybody who intentionally obstructs the delivery of Humanitarian Aid or imposes taxes on Humanitarian Convoys shall be held accountable”.²⁸ Thus, these checkpoint payments – and, indeed, the roadblocks themselves are illegal; an institutionalised form of highway robbery which takes place in plain sight.

Action for Peacekeeping

While the problems are well-documented, those of us who have worn the blue helmets cannot help but observe that while senior leaders have commissioned many reports and held many conferences, they have so far seem to always stop short of taking real action. Improving freedom of movement for UN peacekeepers, and the humanitarian agencies they support, requires three lines of effort, which are mutually supporting.

First, missions must make it clear to host nation political and military forces that they will tolerate no further obstructions to their patrols; no longer will company-sized groups of armoured vehicles loaded with professional soldiers be held back by a frayed rope hanging across a road, manned by six men sharing three assault rifles.²⁹ Senior political and military leaders must empower their tactical commanders to do exactly what is stated in their mandates – to use all necessary means to ensure their own freedom of movement and that of other UN agencies and humanitarian organisations in order to carry out the remainder of their explicitly mandated priority tasks. Moreover, they must take steps to comply precisely with the administrative requirements agreed to in their Status of Forces Agreements regarding visas and in-country movement of peacekeepers and their equipment and cease to entertain the accumulated detritus of unnecessary permissions and approvals that has been allowed to accrete over the years.

Second, the international community must push back on attempts to normalise the corrupt behaviour of host nation's armed actors by dignifying their routine roadblock extortion as 'taxes'. Instead, these demands for payment by men holding weapons should be called what it is: armed robbery. When it is stated in this way – and when the quantities of aid budgets lost to these depredations is considered – it becomes clear that such actions represent a condition not conducive to the delivery of humanitarian assistance, and a direct challenge to mission mandates.

Third, even if host nation actors cease interfering with the movements of UN peacekeepers, many areas will remain inaccessible for much of the year due to lack of infrastructure. Thus, we must stop merely rehabilitating dirt roads and start building sealed roads.

The UN's equipment tables for generic construction engineer units require them to arrive with the necessary equipment to do this,³⁰ and data on the construction of cold-sealed asphalt roads indicates that they could be constructed at a rate of about one kilometre per day by a 14-person team.³¹ Given the substantial construction engineering capacity in UNMISS this suggests that during a single dry season, sealed roads could be fully extended between several key locations – Juba to Torit, Wau to Tonj, etc. Roads could also be surfaced using concrete segmented blocks – this process is slower but would lend itself well to leveraging

local labour³² (funded by a QIP) to lay the concrete pavers, while the UN battalions provided the engineering expertise and the security. At the same time, an assessment of locations where bridges are required to ensure access to known conflict hot-spots must be done – and their construction made a mission priority.

Conclusion

There can be no question that restrictions on the freedom of movement of UN peacekeepers directly results in the preventable death of thousands of civilians every year, and the displacement of many more. These limitations are not in dispute, and have been repeatedly noted by academics, civilian oversight agencies, and the UN's own reports.

What this article has sought to make clear is that the blame does not lie at the feet of the battalions or of individual peacekeepers as some reports suggest. I have personally observed Mongolian and Rwandan officers and troops asserting their freedom of movement in the face of armed opposition and saving lives by doing so – without resorting to gunfire. I have also watched armoured columns halted by a piece of string, and seen the horrific consequences when patrols are ordered by senior leaders to return to the safety of their bases and abandon civilian population centres to the depredations of tribal militias.

There is no need to seek battalions with the 'capacity and willingness' to assert themselves.³³ What we need is mission leaders who will give their military components orders to move freely in support of the mandate, even in the face of local opposition – leaders willing to employ their engineering resources and QIP budgets to make roads passable, and who will ensure that host nation actors understand that the 'checkpoint economies' must give way to the rule of law.

In short, the recommendations of experts like General Santos Cruz must be implemented, and the strong language in our Security Council resolutions backed up by similarly resolute actions on the ground. Only then will our battalions truly be free to exercise their full potential to help countries torn by conflict create conditions for lasting peace.

Endnotes

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United Nations Peacekeeping Missions, India and the Protection of Civilians Mandate

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Abstract

India had participated in 30 United Nations (UN) missions. UN peacekeeping/peace-enforcement missions are multinational operations in which the big powers who are permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) call the shots. After 2008, the protection of civilians (POC) has become primary task of all the UN missions. Impartiality and not neutrality are now the main watchword of UN missions. This requires mainly political and diplomatic approaches. In addition, stable peacebuilding in conflict prone areas requires a political approach. This political dimension is missing in most of the cases in the recent peace-enforcement missions. As regards the construction of a political approach to ensure robust and stable peacebuilding, the permanent members of the UN play the crucial role and India is yet to get a permanent seat in the UNSC. In the post-Cold War era, India due to its rapid economic progress is emerging as a 'mini' superpower. New Delhi is unwilling anymore to call the shots on behalf of the big five till she gets a permanent seat at the UN

Introduction

In recent times, instead of interstate conflicts between national armies, we are witnessing intrastate conflicts conducted by paramilitaries and militias. Smuggling, organized crime, cybercrimes, pandemics and both natural as well as manmade

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disasters have become an essential feature of these new types of conflicts. As a result, civilians are becoming the principal victims of conflict, displacement and natural disasters. In the last three decades, civilians have accounted for 90 percent of the casualties compared to 10 percent of the total casualties during the previous two decades. This is more the case when the state institutions have collapsed as a result of endemic and long-duration civil wars such as in Somalia, South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). For the United Nations (UN) forces, intervention in these conflicts, keeping peace in war zones, makes the protection of the civilians (POC) the principal task of peace enforcement efforts. Instead of merely maintaining the armistices between the regular soldiers, as in previous peacekeeping operations, current peacebuilding/peace-enforcement missions involve humanitarian tasks (providing food and medical supplies to the civilians, monitoring human rights violation), protection of the safe areas, building roads, policing, escort of relief convoys, demobilization of the armed irregulars of the warlords (some supported by the host government and others by the neighbouring polities), promotion of national reconciliation and restoration of effective public institutions. A UN force personnel in addition to be a fighter has to be a diplomat, policeman/policewoman, administrator and a social worker.

Legality of the UN forces is also questioned when the host country does not want them or the civilians in conflict prone zones are threatened, either by the host government or the non-government militias. In the latter case, the UN peace-enforcers have to intervene even though, theoretically, they have to remain neutral. The POC mandate means that the UN mission has the right to protect the civilians of a country even when the host government does not support the UN's presence. This differentiates peacekeeping (UN mission is supported by the host government and only regular armies are involved) from peace-enforcement. This, in turn, raises important issues regarding legality and ethicality as the host country's sovereignty is breached.

The Changing Face of Indian and UNPKOs

India has consistently been one of the top troop contributing countries. Historically, India's primary motivation^{1,2,3} for such sustained involvement in UN peacekeeping has been to support

and maintain the UN as the most important multilateral institution in the world. This is in line with India's long-standing ideological commitment during the Cold War to avoiding alignment with either ideological bloc, focusing, instead on developing more equitable international institutions. India has seen participation in UN peacekeeping missions as both furthering the authority of the UN as an organisation, and of bolstering India's reputation and influence on the world stage.^{4,5} Particularly since the end of the Cold War, this desire for recognition has been especially focused on the goal of influence within the UN Security Council (UNSC), with the stated goal of a permanent seat on the council. India has perceived robust participation in UN peacekeeping missions as being a significant method towards influencing UNSC policy more generally, and particularly strengthening India's case for a permanent UNSC seat.^{6,7,8,9} While achieving further political influence within the UN seems to be the main reason behind India's firm peacekeeping participation, its military strategic mindset is less receptive to conducting robust operations against armed groups in recent missions. At least, that is the main criticism levied against Indian and other South Asian troops in UN documents and in interactions with UN political administrators.

India's peacekeeping mission in Korea in 1950 was simple, as the task was to keep the two regular armies apart. The first peace-enforcement operation by the Indian contingent was in Congo in 1961. The new type of peace-enforcement operation for the Indian forces which involved protection of the civilians as the primary task became clear during participation in United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) II during August 1994. On 22 August 1994, seven Indian soldiers were killed in an ambush sprung by the militia. Things could have been worse but for the sage advice of Lieutenant General Satish Nambiar. He advised General Bipin Joshi, India's then Chief of the Army Staff who had been ordered to prepare a brigade sized force for deployment in Somalia that the force must have 'muscular' capacity. So, the Indian contingent had a troop of tanks, a battery of heavy mortars and some attack helicopters. The presence of these heavy weapons deterred the local militia. The attack helicopters came into assistance in extricating elements of Pakistani contingent which was attacked by the irregulars.

India's UN peacekeepers played a positive role when UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) was deployed in South Sudan in 2012. The UN mission was to assist the just independent country of South Sudan's transition to peace and economic recovery. The government of South Sudan soon turned against the UN mission. Thus, not only the UN force became interventionist, but also a party to the conflict, rather than an agent of neutral diplomacy. However, the peacekeepers provided medical services including veterinary support, and engineering services which immensely aided the local communities.¹⁰

The UNMISS took over from the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) on 8 July 2011, one day before South Sudan became independent. On 15 December 2013, fighting broke out between two factions of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM). The intrastate conflict soon spread to different parts of the country. When the civil war started in 2013, the Government of South Sudan complained that the UNMISS is supporting the opposition forces. The intrastate conflict proved destructive to the country creating a humanitarian crisis. By March 2021, more than 1.6 million South Sudanese were displaced and 2.2 million sought refuge in the neighbouring countries. UNMISS had to adapt its task, from creating new public institutions, to feed and provide protection to the displaced persons. At one time, UNMISS had to cater for more than 200,000 people in the POC sites in its compounds. During the two peace agreements signed in 2015 and 2019, UNMISS had the additional responsibility of supporting the Cease-fire Transitional Supporting Arrangement Mechanism (CTSAM), and the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (JMEC), for the implementation of these agreements.

The point is that the Government of South Sudan turned against the UNMISS. The Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) had fought for 20 years against the Government of Sudan before independence. After South Sudan became an independent country, SPLA became the national army. During the civil war in South Sudan, SPLA was fighting breakaway factions like Sudan People Liberation Movement-In-Opposition (SPLM-IO). The SPLA had Armoured Fighting Vehicles (AFVs), artillery and attack helicopters. Proper implementation of POC task by UNMISS might have resulted in a war with SPLA. The UNMISS was not militarily prepared for such a war. Further, such a conflict would have

resulted in greater civilian casualties.¹¹ Now the issue is whether it is ethically correct that in pursuit of the POC mandate for saving comparatively 'few,' as the UNMISS's action might result in a broader war which would have caused dangers to the majority of the civilians of South Sudan? There also growing concerns about peacekeepers being targeted, whether by armed groups or by civilians, who can vent their frustrations on them. Recalling an incident in the Bentiu Protection of Civilian (PoC) site, a former sector commander noted how the civil affairs head of office for the sector headquarters had come under attack when seeking to pass on condolences linked to a civilian death in the PoC site.

To a great extent, the scenario has been similarly challenging in the case of United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO) in the DRC. During the Second Congo War (1998-1999), between Rwanda and Uganda versus DRC, Angola and Zimbabwe, a number of armed militias emerged in eastern DRC. In 2013, there were about 70 armed insurgent groups operating in eastern DRC. Their objectives were diverse: from protection of various ethnic communities to establishment of an Islamic state in Uganda. These armed insurgent groups often fought against each other and the Congolese Armed Forces (FARDC). Some of these irregulars received support from the neighbouring countries. By all means, the situation was messy.

Extensive and intensive internecine fighting in eastern DRC proved destructive to Congo's civilians and society. Widespread and systematic looting, sexual violence, forced labour, kidnapping, and forced recruitment of child soldiers were common. Rape was used as a weapon of war. Besides illegal exploitation of natural resources, the insurgent groups resorted to taxation of businesses, markets, and households. According to one count, by 2017, between 1 to 6 million people had died and the number of internally displaced persons came to about 3.8 million.

According to UN's POC mandate, MONUC/MONUSCO cannot look away even when the FARDC crossed the red line. MONUSCO was authorized to use force in support of its POC mandate. How far such a posture is legal and ethical because questions are raised whether the UN mission can be proactive and interventionist? After all, the UN mission should not use force beyond self-defence.

And a UN mission remains in a country only at the request of the host state. In July 2010, the Congolese Government demanded that the UN mission should leave as the security situation had improved. But the UNSC (led by the big five) did not agree and MONUC renamed as MONUSCO remained. Its objectives were to stabilize eastern DRC and provide protection to the civilians. In 2012, MONUSCO protected the civilians from the M23 rebel group which was created by Rwanda. At the behest of the UNSC, in March 2013, the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) was formed. FIB was authorized to carry out limited offensive with or without the FARDC against the indigenous and foreign sponsored rebel militias in eastern DRC. This is a clear-cut example of highly active type of peace-enforcement. By 2014, it was clear that such types of military interventions was not very effective due to lack of political cooperation between the UNSC and the DRC Government. One could conclude that the FIB type of model for peace-enforcement was effective for implementing the POC in the short run but in the long run what is required is political solutions through diplomatic channels.¹²

The changing nature of UN missions, which with time is becoming 'gun heavy' is clear in the case of United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) after 2006. This contingent had Main Battle Tanks, artillery and also 15 ships (five frigates and 10 fast patrol boats). The situation was messy because the Lebanese Army did not fight the Hezbollah as they considered the latter as 'resistance fighters'. UNIFIL had to take care of 500,000 Palestinian refugees housed in 12 camps. They lived in sub-human conditions without any citizenship rights and engaged in smuggling and gun running out of desperation.¹³

Strength and Limitations of Indian UN Peacekeeping/Peace-Enforcement Operations

One positive thing about Indian UN peace-enforcement missions is deployment of women. In 2007, India became the first country to deploy an all women contingent. Women peacekeepers are essential for protection of women and children in the conflict-ridden areas.¹⁴

To a great extent, India's extensive counter insurgency (COIN) operations in different parts of the subcontinent have influenced India's peacekeeping and peace-enforcement operations with the UN. While peacekeeping involves use of minimum force, peace-

enforcement require a more robust application of necessary force. India's COIN doctrine is characterised by use of minimal force. Lieutenant General IS Singha, who was the Chief Logistics Officer in the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea and later the Force Commander and Head of Mission of the UN Disengagement Force at Golan Heights (UNDOF established in May 1974) rightly noted: "It took great amount of effort to shed the defensive mind set and make the peacekeepers move tactically and be in a position to fire back instantaneously".¹⁵ In this case both the rebel and government militias, took away UN vehicles and the Syrian Government's bombing resulted in death of the civilians. Many over cautious commanders did not even issue ammunition to their troops to prevent accidental fire. Later, the UNDOF took a more proactive stance.

India's COIN operations are distinguished by full scale support for the military by the political establishment. This political support had been missing in many UN peace-enforcement missions where the Indian troops had been involved. So, in many cases involving peace-enforcement tasks in various African countries, the Indian doctrine of minimal support without full scale political backing by the host country had led to serious troubles. Nor the big powers who calls the shots provide full support to the UN mandate. As Lieutenant General Satish Nambiar [once head of United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in Yugoslavia] perceptively observes: "Regional players, as also the major powers, pursue their own agenda that in many cases do not necessarily complement the mission mandate".¹⁶

Further, effective implementation of the POC mandate against the wishes of the host country requires heavy weapons and soldiers in large numbers along with unity of command and interoperability of weapon, command and transportation systems. UN peacekeepers are generally limited in size, and unity of command, and shared doctrine are generally absent in such multinational missions. The implementation of the POC mandate operates at three levels: protection through dialogue, physical protection and finally generation of an enabling environment. The first and the third layers are most effective. It is too much to ask from the UN peacekeepers/peace-enforcers to do the three tasks simultaneously. The UN missions need to be fitted with a full-scale diplomatic corps while executing the POC mandate.

India lacks special training establishments, where specialised training thoroughly and intensively could be given to the potential peace-enforcers.¹⁷ This is especially important because now peacebuilding requires disarming, demobilizing and reintegrating the personnel from insurgent militias and ensuring socio-economic recovery of the country in question. A Centre for United Nations Peacekeeping was set up in September 2000 at Delhi for training the peacekeepers. This centre is supported by the Ministries of External Affairs, and Defence, and Army Headquarters. Personnel from other countries also participate in the training courses run by this centre. This is a step in the right direction but much more needs to be done.

Conclusion

In the preceding half century, India had participated in 30 UN missions. While in 1994, India deployed 6,000 peacekeepers worldwide, in 2006, the numbers jumped to 9,909.¹⁸ Till date, 178 Indian soldiers have sacrificed their lives for UN peacekeeping/peace-enforcement missions, the highest fatality suffered by any country among 'blue helmets'. UN peacekeeping/peace-enforcement missions are multinational operations in which the big powers, who are permanent members of the UNSC, call the shots. In the post-Cold War era, India due to its rapid economic progress is emerging as a 'mini' superpower. New Delhi is unwilling anymore to call the shots on behalf of the big five till she gets a permanent seat at the UN.

After 2008, POC has become primary task of all the UN missions. Impartiality, and not neutrality, is now the main watchword of UN missions. This requires mainly political and diplomatic approaches. In addition, stable peacebuilding in conflict prone areas requires a political approach. This political dimension is missing in most of the cases in the recent peace-enforcement missions. As regards the construction of a political approach to ensure robust and stable peacebuilding, the permanent members of the UN play the crucial role and India is yet to get a permanent seat in the UNSC. Further, in Indian COIN operations only lightly armed foot soldiers are deployed. However, for peace-enforcement operations when several heavily armed non-state actors (as several cases in Africa) are involved, India's forces in UN are at a loss.

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India's Contribution in the UN Peacekeeping Mission in Korea: Role of 60 Parachute (Para) Field Ambulance

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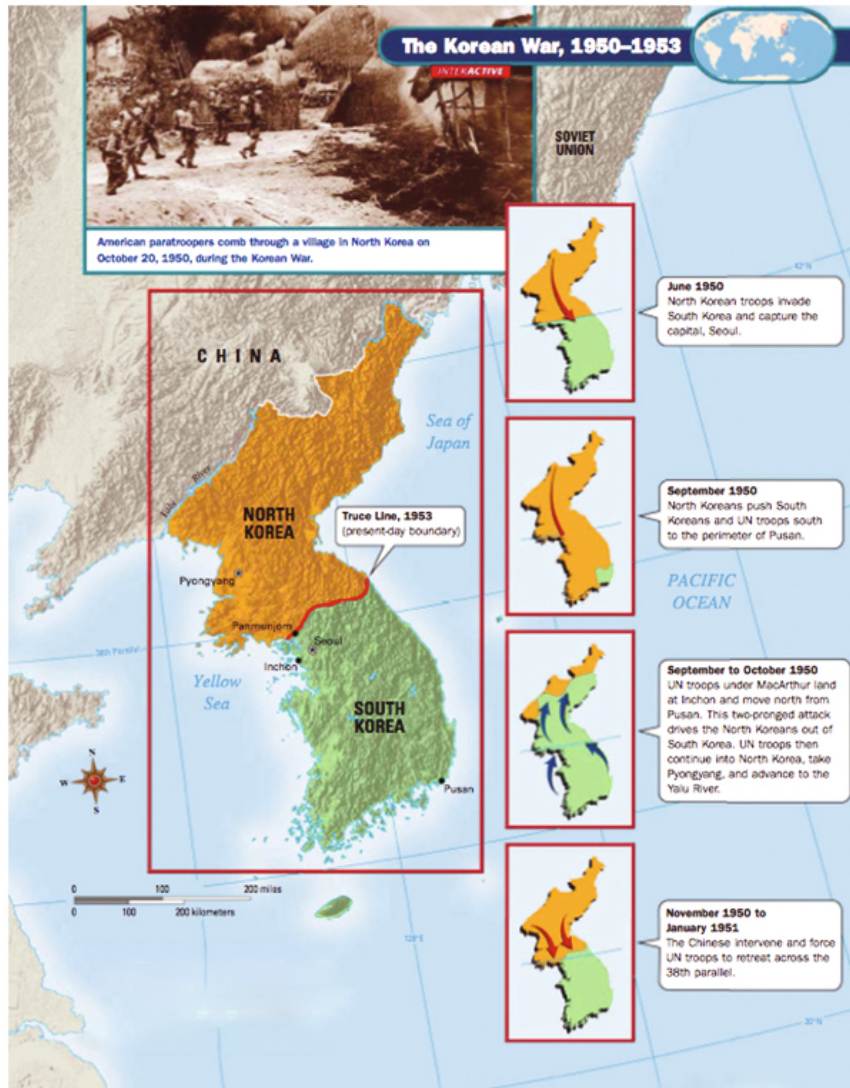
Abstract

The history of UN peacekeeping with armed contingents began with United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) in Gaza in 1956. But the history of India's participation in peacekeeping predates UNEF. Generally not spoken much, India contributed three different elements to Korea: 60 Para Field Ambulance in 1950; the Chairman of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission (NNRC) in 1952; and the Indian Custodian Force (a brigade-size force) in 1953. In the service of humanity, the contribution of the 60 Para Field Ambulance was par excellence and needs a special mention. The unit received several commendations from the UN and other countries, and a number of gallantry awards from India. Being a review-based article, it uses many anecdotes and incidents from various recorded notes and veterans' own narrations.

Introduction

Our proud history of UN peacekeeping dates back to India's first UN peacekeeping mission to Korea. When the Korean War started in June 1950, India was not prepared to get involved but supported the UN Security Council Resolutions of 25 and 27 June 1950 in naming North Korea as the aggressor. Although India did not want to send combat units to Korea, it still wanted to be an active player in promoting peace in the region. India

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worked behind the scenes at the UN HQ as well as in Beijing and Korea to bring sanity into the upcoming war. As Robert Barnes noted that the US State Department sent and received more correspondence to New Delhi than to any other diplomatic outpost during the Korean War. The author has written¹ about the personal role of the then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru to find a compromise solution during different phases of the conflict. The United States remained the dominant voice at the UN throughout the Korean War though at certain times India was able to play a constraining role. This impact was felt most notably during the

crisis following Chinese intervention in November 1950 and with the passage of the Indian resolution in the autumn of 1952 that ultimately brought the conflict to an end. Sardar KM Panikkar, Indian Ambassador in Beijing, played a crucial role in conveying the views of Chinese Government to the UN through the Indian mission as China was then not a member of the UN.

India was initially reluctant on the UN coalition force as it firmly wished for negotiations and believed that a peaceful settlement should have been attempted.² However, under provisions of the Security Council Resolution of 07 July 1950, India agreed to despatch a field ambulance with an attached surgical unit to Korea as a part of the coalition force. The unit chosen for this assignment was 60 Para Field Ambulance, which was raised in August 1942. The unit had combat experience in Burma during the World War II and Jammu and Kashmir operations of 1948-49. This was independent India's first overseas mission.

60 Parachute Field Ambulance

60 Para Field Ambulance was the first Indian unit to take part in the UN Multinational Force (MNF) under General Macarthur. The unit under the command of Lieutenant Colonel AG Rangaraj, with a total strength of 346, consisting of 17 officers and 329 other ranks (ORs) including lady medical officers and nursing officers, set its feet on Korean soil at Pusan on 20 November 1950³.



**Lieutenant Colonel AG Rangaraj, MVC
(Source: Book – For the Honour of India:
A History of Indian Peacekeeping, USI)**

Early Days

From the very outset, the Field Ambulance was split in two parts and remained so till the end of the war. One component was assigned the task to attend to sick and wounded UN fighting force in the battlefield; while the other component was tasked to provide medical assistance to the local Korean hospitals in the rear area.⁴ The main component of the 60 Para Field Ambulance, under Lieutenant Colonel AG Rangaraj, was assigned to 27 Commonwealth Brigade, with whom they remained attached throughout the campaign, and served the Commonwealth troops in the battle zone.

The unit landed in Pusan, which was the only enclave at that time under the UN force as rest of the country had been captured by the North Korean troops. After reorganisation in two groups, the main component joined its assigned 27 Commonwealth Brigade. The remainder of the unit, under Major NB Banerjee, was deployed at the South Korean field hospitals, in the strategic town of Taegu, to manage a 40 bedded hospital for British patients. A surgical team of the unit was attached to a Korean Military Hospital, to operate on patients and train the Korean surgeons, anaesthetists, and nursing assistants.

The main group serving with the Commonwealth Brigade advanced with the rest of the MNF, capturing most of the lost territories. The Brigade with the Para Field Ambulance reached Pyongyang, on 29 November 1950, after braving chilly winds and stormy winter. This was the stage when Chinese forces entered the battle on behalf of the North Korean forces and by early December 1950, the combined Chinese-North Korean forces launched an offensive. Consequently, all the MNF were ordered to withdraw from Pyongyang area to Seoul, on their own, with no additional transport provided. The MNF fell back to Seoul, a city which was captured and recaptured four times during the war.⁵ 60 Para Field Ambulance was also ordered to withdraw to Seoul after leaving their medical equipment in Pyongyang.

The Bucket Brigade

An interesting story revolves around the evacuation orders as Chinese forces overwhelmed the UN forces in the northern parts of Korea. 60 Para Field Ambulance had no transport, but the unit was unwilling to abandon its medical equipment and supplies. They found an unused train with its engine and a few bogies. Unit

formed a human chain with buckets from the river to fill the boilers of the steam engine, thus, earning the nickname 'The Bucket Brigade'. The Indian paratroopers also managed as much firewood as was possible and some coal from the yard. On 05 December 1950, two soldiers of the unit with previous railway experience, along with a Korean driver rode this small train with all its equipment, stores, and vehicles at the nick of time to cross the Han River Bridge to Seoul; barely hours before it was demolished by the Communist forces.⁶ Colonel Rangaraj later said, "We would have been of little use without [our equipment] and could not afford to lose it as soon as we arrived".⁷ It would indeed be difficult to imagine a better example of improvisation. Further improvisation was yet needed to survive the cold; men had to keep a routine of spot running and jumping to avoid being frozen to death as there were no arrangements for heating. Finally, wind proof winter clothing was procured from the American Forces and issued to Indian troops.

On 01 January 1951, the enemy pressure increased and 27 Commonwealth Brigade was tasked to provide cover for the withdrawal of XI Corps. To conform to this operational plan, a section of Advance Dressing Station (ADS) of 60 Para Field Ambulance had to be operationalised and closed three times, at three different places, within a span of three days. Besides this, the withdrawal entailed a fair number of casualties. Since rearward evacuation was not feasible, the casualties had to be treated, held and carried along with the ADS, wherever it moved.⁸ On 04 January 1951, finally, the casualties could be evacuated to US Army clearing station at Suwoh. During this Operation, Lieutenant Colonel AG Rangaraj, the Commanding Officer of 60 Para Field Ambulance, showed amazing power of endurance and utter disregard for personal safety. He personally rendered medical aid to the casualties and saved many lives, even in the face of enemy shelling and firing. His personal courage, determination, devotion to duty, and selflessness became a source of inspiration to the rest of the team. For these, and other acts of gallantry, Lieutenant Colonel AG Rangaraj was awarded the Mahavir Chakra.⁹

Operation Tomahawk

In March 1951, the UN Command carried out an airborne assault (*Operation Tomahawk*), against communist positions north-west of Seoul (along with 60 Para Field Ambulance). A surgical team

under Lieutenant Colonel AG Rangaraj parachuted and landed in the rice fields near Munsan, together with some 4000 troops of the US 187 Battalion, the Airborne Regiment. The aim of this specific military operation was to disrupt the enemy's lines of communication, throw them in disarray, and subsequently neutralise and decimate them with the ground link up which was expected on 25 March 1951. However, the link up never came as planned and on the contrary, resistance increased. There was no alternative but to dig trenches to hold the casualties along with stretcher cases.

Para Filed Ambulance again improvised with some retrieved parachutes to ward off the chilly winds and snow of Purunli. The desperately awaited, and much delayed, link up force finally arrived on 27 March evening. During this operation, the team treated over 400 casualties and performed many lifesaving surgeries.¹⁰ The men worked relentlessly, some thriving only on biscuits and tea.¹¹ General Matthew Ridgeway, the Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces and the Commander-in-Chief of the US Forces in the Far East, commended the unit for the splendid job it performed in providing medical cover in the front lines.¹² Lieutenant General Richard Gale, the Commander of the MNF, had later mentioned, '*I was immensely struck by their [...] efficiency. That small unit, adapted for an airborne role, carried out 103 operations, which is quite outstanding. More than fifty of those operated owed their lives to these men*'. There were several occasions when the Indian unit functioned as a combat unit rather than as a medical outfit.

Other Operational Activities

On 31 March 1951, the Unit was again in action with 27 Commonwealth Brigade in securing Kancua line. On 03 April the enemy launched a full scale offensive resulting in heavy casualties. Two sections of ADS were joined to cope up with an average of 115 casualties per day. On 30 April, the Main Dressing Station (MDS) moved to Yong-Pong. By this time, the detachment at Taegu opened a dispensary for civilian patients and had an average footfall of 200-300 per day. In July 1951, 1 Commonwealth Division was formed and the 27 Commonwealth Brigade with 60 Para Field Ambulance came under its command. At this time, peace negotiations also began at Kaesong.

On 11 August 1951, the US Army cited 60 Para Field Ambulance for 'Meritorious Unit Commendation' award for its

splendid work in Korea. In the second week of September 1951, *Operation Commando* was launched, a limited attack designed to complement diplomatic pressure by first weakening Chinese forces' offensive potential and then dominating routes across the 38th Parallel. During this operation, the unit treated a total of 348 casualties in six days fighting. Captain Ashok Banerjee saved many lives despite casualty clearing post in Marvag San being often under fire. On 06 October 1951, he provided medical treatment as well as evacuated more than 150 casualties in a single day. Captain Banerjee was awarded the Vir Chakra for his outstanding performance and bravery in this operation.¹³

On 04 November 1951, a numerically superior enemy attacked and overran forward positions. One Regimental Aid Post (RAP) had to be reinforced with one Medical Officer and stretcher-bearer squads from 60 Para Field Ambulance. Casualties were evacuated from RAP to ADS under heavy enemy shelling. The attack lasted till evening of 05 November and there were 101 casualties. It followed with yet another heavy attack on 17 November 1951 in which Allied Forces suffered heavy casualties and Indian medical teams treated and held casualties in the frontlines before they were evacuated to the rear. For their performance beyond the call of duty in these operations and display of bravery, Naik Nag Sen Singh and Lance Naik Budh Singh of the unit were awarded the Vir Chakra.¹⁴ By the end of December 1951, the forward elements of 60 Para Field Ambulance withdrew to rest and recoup but the elements at Taegu continued to work untiringly treating casualties of the UN multinational force and civilians.

On 17 March 1952, Lady Edwina Mountbatten accompanied by Major General AJH Castles, the Division Commander, visited the MDS. The meritorious record of service of 60 Para Field Ambulance impressed Lady Mountbatten and she conveyed her feelings in a cablegram to the then Prime Minister of India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

The period from June 1952 onward was difficult for the unit due to adverse weather conditions, continued attacks, and indiscriminate firing by enemy, resulting in a lot of casualties. The MDS came under heavy shelling on 13 September 1952, when more than 70 shells landed on it and six personnel suffered injuries. Despite these adversities, the unit performed exceptionally and it was rewarded. Naik Umrao Singh, who risked his life on several

occasions to evacuate casualties during the period December 1950 to 1952, was awarded the Vir Chakra.¹⁵

Responsibility at Taegu

While the main component of the unit was constantly on the move, providing medical treatment to casualties and, saving lives under heavy shelling, the remainder unit along with a surgical section was deployed in a static role at Taegu under Major NB Banerjee. They established a 40 bedded base hospital for British patients and provided a surgical team to a Korean Military Hospital, and were also tasked to run the Taegu civil hospital.

Personnel of the sub-unit worked round the clock to gear up the dilapidated civil hospital, opened a dispensary for civilian patients, and treated on an average 200-300 patients per day. Even when the main component of 60 Para Field Ambulance had withdrawn for rest and recoup, the sub-unit at Taegu continued providing medical treatment to casualties of the UN multinational force and local civilians for two years.

Joining the Custodian Force

After two years of stalemate, brinkmanship, and intensive negotiations, an Armistice Agreement was signed by the Commander-in-Chief of the UN Command, the Korean People's Army, and the Chinese People's Volunteers, on 27 July 1953 at Panmunjom, a small village on the 38th Parallel.¹⁶ The war had resulted in the capture of a large number of prisoners, many of whom refused repatriation to their own countries. For this purpose, the UN set up a Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission (NNRC). With signing of the Armistice, 60 Para Field Ambulance's association with the Commonwealth Division came to an end. However, it continued in Korea for yet another challenging role. On 23 August 1953, the unit joined the Custodian Forces at the Demobilisation Zone and opened treatment wings in North and South Camps, only to face new problems. Most of the Prisoners of War (POWs) suffered psychologically due to indoctrination, and mass hysteria was rampant. Officers and men were also engaged in guard and escort duties in POW Camps.

Return to India

On 09 February 1954, the glorious chapter in the history of 60 Para Field Ambulance in Korea finally came to a close. Among

the 20,000 men from 16 countries that made up the Commonwealth Division in Korea, one small unit of the Indian Army viz. 60 Para Field Ambulance carved out a unique name for itself in the military archives of UN Peacekeeping Operations. The unit treated about 195,000 cases, performed 2,324 field surgeries¹⁷, attended to more than 1800 battle casualties and some 9000 sick and injured during its eventful tenure of three years. That was in addition to treating civilian casualties, and Chinese and North Korean POWs. This would earn them several nicknames including Maroon Angels, Airborne Angels, Cherry Troopers. They served and endured in the far-off lands to bring cheer and hope to the victims of violence, with their unstinted devotion to duty amidst toil, sweat and blood.

60 Para Field Ambulance also earned numerous commendations from the UN Command military authorities including the US Bronze Star¹⁸, a Unit Citation from General Douglas MacArthur¹⁹ and the 'Chungmu' Distinguished Service Medal from Government of South Korea.²⁰ Britain's Minister for War paid a tribute to the Unit and its Commanding Officer in the 'House of Commons'.²¹ Unit personnel also received a number of Indian gallantry awards - Two Mahavir Chakras including one for Colonel Rangaraj, One Bar to Vir Chakra, six Vir Chakras, and 20 plus Mentions-in-Despatches.²² However, they were not permitted to accept the UN medal for Korea, presumably as it was deemed to be a 'foreign award'. Instead, Indian service with the Multinational Force was marked by the clasp 'Overseas Korea 1950-53' to the General Service Medal 1947.²³ On their return, the then Indian President, Dr Rajendra Prasad travelled to Agra on 10 March 1955, to present the Presidential Trophy to the Unit for their exemplary actions.

Conclusion

As an 'original' founder-member, India never hesitated to respond to the calls of the UN. India's deepening engagement with the UN is based on its steadfast commitment to multilateralism and dialogue as the key for achieving shared goals and addressing common challenges. Till date, India has taken part in 49 out of 72 UN Peacekeeping Missions with a total contribution exceeding 2,55,000 troops and a significant number of police personnel²⁴, various experts including electoral officials and the UN volunteers (UNV). But, India's longstanding service to UN has come at a tremendous cost. 178²⁵ Indian Peacekeepers have made the

supremme sacrifice while serving with the UN. In fact, India has lost more peacekeepers than any other member state.

While writing about the Commonwealth's record of two years' service in Korea, the weekly journal of the Indian Armed Forces noted: *There is not a Commonwealth unit that has not helped in some way, but one stands out above the rest for its great humanitarian work – the 60th Indian Field Ambulance. They have given skilled medical attention to thousands, trained hundreds of doctors and specialists for the Korean Army and civil hospitals, fed and sheltered countless weary, half-starved refugees on their long trek to freedom from Communist oppression.*²⁶ Many of the jawans of this unit did longer tours of duty in Korea than most other personnel, and never even took leave of absence. Their initiative, discipline, efficiency and commitment to duty in handling any situation that came their way was noteworthy.

Over the years, the peace operations landscape has evolved dramatically and sustaining peace has arguably become more dangerous as the conflicts became more intra-state. On the other hand, the UN continues to grapple with the gap in the policies and implementations of its core mandates. There is no doubt that due to prevailing geo-politics and its impact on international relations, UN and regional collective endeavour in peacekeeping will continue to face the challenges. But India and Indian peacekeepers never had any doubt about what to do then and do not have any doubt now. Indian medical units have worked in many UN Peacekeeping Missions as full-fledged units, starting with United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), United Nations Operation in Somalia II (UNOSOM-II), United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL). The medical units continue to render yeoman service in United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO), where India has fielded two level III hospitals.

The 60 Para Field Hospital (earlier known as 60 Para Field Ambulance) was again in news in Feb 2023, when it was airlifted to Turkey for humanitarian assistance in the aftermath of the devastating earthquake, under 'Operation Dost'. It established hospital in Iskenderun in Turkey and started functioning with medical, surgical and emergency wards, X-Ray lab and medical store on 09 Feb 2023.



A commemorative postage stamp on the 50th anniversary of the 60 Parachute Field Ambulance issued on 10 Aug 1992 (Source - <https://istampgallery.com/60-para-field-ambulance/>)



A 500 won (KRW) stamp issued by the Korean Government in 1951, to honour India's participation in the Korean War (Source - <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:1951korea-india-sheet500won.jpg>)



Author at Demilitarisation Zone (DMZ)



**Author with damaged railway engine, presumably used by
60 Para Field Ambulance**

Endnotes

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Blue Helmets and White Tanks: On the Frontlines with India's UN Peacekeepers

Mr Alan Doss[@]

Abstract

UN peacekeeping is something of a military paradox. Peacekeepers are soldiers deployed to prevent and not pursue war. They are allowed to use their weapons for defensive purposes, and, even then, only in extreme circumstances when they are in imminent danger. They do not launch offensives against enemies or seek to capture foreign territory. Above all, they are expected to protect civilians rather than subjugate adversaries.

This paradox was summed up succinctly back in 2008 by General (then Brigadier) Bipin Rawat. He remarked to a journalist visiting the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) that you don't go to war in tanks painted white. General Rawat, who then headed the Indian contingent of United Nations Observer Mission in Congo (MONUC)¹ based in the DRC's North Kivu province, was referring to the fact that vehicles (of all descriptions) used in UN peacekeeping operations are always painted white with large black UN letters, which, of course, makes them easy targets for armed opponents. His larger point was that UN peacekeeping missions are not mandated or structured to act as expeditionary forces.

General Rawat was the commander of UN forces in North Kivu, a deeply troubled and violent province in the eastern Congo. Much of the violence emanated from clashes between ethnic groups competing for political power and economic

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resources, but amplified by cross-border tensions, and incursions by armed groups from neighbouring countries, notably Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi.²

Despite numerous peace agreements and the deployment of thousands of UN peacekeepers, the violence continued, displacing a million local people. The Indian brigade was charged with assisting the authorities to maintain the peace and protecting civilians in North Kivu, a province with ten million inhabitants, roughly half the size of California — but with few serviceable roads, inhospitable weather, and arduous terrain.

Communal violence, constant rainfall, and rundown infrastructure were not the only challenges facing the Indian and other contingents operating in North Kivu. They also had to contend with the failings of the national security forces, which UN peacekeepers were tasked with assisting and training. Those forces were poorly led, inadequately trained, barely equipped, and not always fed. They often preyed on local populations with looting and worse. Many of the soldiers were former members of militias and rebel groups that had gone through a form of demobilisation, disarmament and reintegration (DDR) and were then recruited into the national army — the *Forces armées de la république démocratique du Congo* / Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo (FARDC)³ — without any screening. This was a recipe for incompetence and indiscipline.

UN peacekeeping missions are always deployed at the request of the national government concerned.⁴ They can help but cannot replace the government at national or local levels. UN peacekeepers can propose but they cannot impose. So, the UN could not enforce a programme of security reform of the kind that was sorely needed to redress the woeful state of the Congolese military and police service.

These constraints were dramatically displayed in North Kivu, where the Indian peacekeepers were deployed. In 2007, a rebellion of Congolese soldiers of Tutsi extraction broke out. The rebellion euphemistically called itself the National Congress for the Defense of the People.⁵ Although it categorically denied doing so, the Rwanda Government provided cross-border support to these rebels, who formed a buffer between Rwanda and the remnants of the Hutu army and militias, which committed the 1995 genocide

against the Tutsi community in Rwanda and then sought refuge in the Congo, creating recurring tensions and persistent mistrust between the two countries.⁶

The CNDP gained ground taking control over swaths of the province. The FARDC did not prepare defensive positions and launched ill-prepared offensives despite the advice and admonitions of General Rawat and the MONUC Force Commander, Lieutenant General Babacar Gaye of Senegal. As a result, the CNDP made incremental gains and even threatened Goma, the capital city of the province.

MONUC faced an invidious predicament. Without UN intervention, the CNDP was likely to over-run the province. However, the North Kivu brigade was not mandated or equipped to undertake a broad offensive against the CNDP. Moreover, UN forces had been dispersed around the province in an effort to stay closer to the population and to prevent attacks on civilians, a complex task given the rugged terrain and the large area of operations.

As the then Special Representative of the Secretary General and head of the UN Mission, I had the unenviable but unavoidable job of explaining these constraints to the President of the DRC, Joseph Kabila and his senior defence and security officials. I told them that the UN could not substitute for the national army although, it could and would, robustly act to protect civilians under immediate threat and support the FARDC if the ceasefire we had negotiated was breached.

My message was not well received. At one meeting, the Minister of Defence recalled peevishly that Indian units assigned to an earlier UN peacekeeping mission,⁷ fielded just after the Congo's independence in 1960 (at the request of the iconic Congolese Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba), had acted to end the secession of the mineral rich Katanga province. He expected us to do the same in North Kivu and end the CNDP offensive.

Despite the mandate and capacity constraints, the North Brigade, and associated, units moved to prevent the CNDP from attacking civilians and the seizure of strategic locations. This involved kinetic action, including the use of the brigade's highly effective attack helicopters. However, the increasing tempo of the

violence put the brigade and General Rawat in a tenuous position. Obviously, I was not privy to his communications with New Delhi but clearly there was growing concern at home that the Indian contingent was being drawn into protracted hostilities.

To make matters worse, as the situation deteriorated, the government began publicly criticising the UN Mission and the North Kivu brigade for not dealing with the CNDP threat while blithely ignoring the shortcomings of its own forces. An ill-advised farewell for a departing Indian officer attended by some CNDP officers stationed in the area added fuel to the fire. Toasts and gifts were exchanged (and recorded). This, it was claimed, was proof that Indian units were in league with the CNDP even though that same officer, some months earlier, had led a fire fight that stopped CNDP units from taking over a town close to Goma.

This and other disinformation were used by FARDC commanders (and politicians) to obfuscate their own mistakes and incite local people against UN forces. On several occasions, civilians blocked roads to UN units that were moving to support FARDC positions under threat from the CNDP. Sometimes the crowds became violent and several Indian soldiers were seriously injured; fortunately, they did not retaliate, which would have further inflamed the situation. Nevertheless, these incidents had a detrimental but understandable impact on morale and raised questions about the rationale for the presence of UN forces.

Unwisely, the DRC Government escalated its negative commentary on the Indian contingent. In response, the Indian Government indicated that it would not stay where it was not wanted. This response, although reasonable, created great concern for me and the senior UN leadership in New York. Without the Indian units and its air capabilities, the mission could not sustain an effective presence in North Kivu. I took the threat seriously as I knew what happened to United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL)⁸ in Sierra Leone when India had pulled out its contingent following a severe crisis that precipitated a collapse of confidence in the mission.

Matters came to head in late 2008 when the CNDP attacked the strategically located town of Rutshuru. Indian troops were stationed near the town to back-up the FARDC. To our consternation, however, as soon as the CNDP began its attack,

the FARDC fled firing on Indian units which attempted to keep them in place. After a counter attack by militias aligned with the FARDC, the CNDP moved into the village of Kiwanja close to where an Indian company was based, and began killing young men who they claimed were from the militia or government sympathisers.

At the time of the Kiwanja assault, the Indian company had been on full alert for several days and nights. It had already rescued NGO workers, staff of religious organisations, and some journalists. As the security situation worsened, several thousand people fled to the company base (which also guarded a helicopter landing site) in search of protection. The company focused on the protection of the Internally Displaced People (IDPs) against the threat of the CNDP, which was trying to disperse them.

This was a difficult operational call, which illustrates the acute challenges that peacekeeping forces sometimes face in fulfilling their mandate to protect civilians. MONUC and the Indian brigade were harshly criticised by human rights groups for not stopping the killings. But if the company commander had intervened, would that have halted the killings which were done house to house? Or would this have simply allowed the CNDP greater room to intimidate and harm the IDPs sheltering at the base? It is hard to judge whether more or fewer lives would have been lost if the company had been sent into the village, leaving the IDPs exposed to the CNDP.

With their capture of Rutshuru, the CNDP was in a much stronger position and began to move in the direction of Goma. Needless to say, for the government and the UN, a CNDP takeover of Goma would have been unacceptable. Together with Alain Leroy, the UN Under-Secretary General in charge of peacekeeping operations at UN headquarters, who had flown in from New York, General Rawat planned a multilayer defence of Goma, which we approved.

Again, I am not sure to what extent General Rawat had consulted New Delhi about the defence plan but his resoluteness was reassuring to all in Goma, civilians and military alike. As it turned out, MONUC's defence plan was not put to test. I believe (but cannot prove) that faced with the UN's determination to defend Goma, Rwanda and the CNDP leadership decided to pursue a

diplomatic approach, as urged by some of Rwanda's foremost development partners in the international community. In the event, regional diplomacy, backed by the UN, took over. An emergency meeting of the International Conference on the Great Lakes was convened in Nairobi to deescalate the crisis, which threatened to embroil the DRC and Rwanda in an armed confrontation.

A few weeks later, the leadership of the CNDP imploded. Subsequently, a joint exercise of the FARDC and Rwandan forces was launched to root out the *Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda*/Democratic Forces for Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) units operating close to the DRC-Rwanda border. In March 2009, the CNDP signed a formal agreement with the DRC Government to integrate its forces into the FARDC, while the government recognized the CNDP as a political party, opening the way for it to compete in national elections.

After some personal diplomacy, I was able to persuade the DRC Government to over-ride a letter that it had sent to the Indian Government making unfounded allegations about the Indian contingent. Later, when the Secretary General Ban Ki Moon visited the then DRC, General Rawat hosted a dinner at the contingent's base in Goma where amends were made by the DRC Foreign Minister, who previously had voiced some intemperate remarks about the Indian forces. He subsequently "lauded the contribution of the Indian contingent in the UN Peacekeeping Forces (MONUC)".⁹

Sadly, the Kivu crisis abated but did not disappear. Two years later, elements of the CNDP reconstituted themselves as M23¹⁰ and attacked Goma before being eventually repulsed by government forces backed up by MONUC and the North Kivu brigade. That event, in turn, led to the creation of an 'intervention brigade' within MONUC with troops from the region. It was designed to provide stronger force to counter armed groups menacing civilians, including groups with ties to or originating in neighbouring countries,

The intervention brigade enjoyed some initial success in its kinetic operations. However, it has not solved the underlying problems. Last year M23 was once again on the move, attacking government forces, provoking yet another humanitarian crisis in the Kivu provinces and a fresh rupture in DRC-Rwanda diplomatic

relations. The East African Community, of which the DRC is now a member, has recently agreed to field a new force to help counter the many threats posed by a multitude of armed groups (the M23 is only one of them) operating in North Kivu and neighbouring provinces.¹¹

The steadfastness of General Rawat during the Kivu crisis was admirable. He was calm in the face of adversity, ever thoughtful but tough minded when needed. He was among the very best of the many military commanders I worked with during my decade in peacekeeping. His untimely passing in a tragic accident is a great loss.

But General Rawat's comment about the 'blue helmets and white tanks' remains a vital caution for all peacekeeping operations (under UN auspices or otherwise). UN peacekeepers are not fielded for the purpose of waging war. They can provide temporary aid and create some space and time for political and diplomatic dialogue to take roots, which hopefully leads to peaceful solutions. What they cannot do, however, is substitute for a state's own security forces or replace the national political will that is indispensable to achieve lasting peace.

Endnotes

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² Alan Doss, *A Peacekeeper in Africa: Learning from UN Interventions in Other People's Wars*, Lynne Reiner Publishers, USA, 2020

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India and Capability Building of UN Peace Operations

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Abstract

India has been in the lead in troop participation in some of the most difficult peace operations. Despite its contribution and the supreme sacrifices made, India and many other countries, who are the major contributors, have not received their rightful place in the United Nations (UN). On the other hand, important policy decisions are always made by the permanent members of the Security Council and a few other influential nations. Earlier, India was among only a few Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) whose participation in peacekeeping was considered crucial for the success of the mission. With the increase in the number of TCCs from the Global South participating in UN peace operations, India seems to have lost its leverage. Therefore, the question that arises is what else can be or should be done by India beyond troops' participation, to get recognition for its decades-long contribution to UN peace operations.¹

Introduction

Angry over the United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO)'s failure to stem violence in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the local population attacked the UN compound on 25 July 2022, resulting in the death of three UN peacekeepers, at least five civilians, and some 50 wounded. According to media reports, the local population in the troubled eastern region of DRC was mad over MONUSCO's failure to protect the civilians who suffer the most amidst the rebel armed groups' turf war. The protest

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coincides with the resurgence of the M23 group which was targeted by the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) in 2013.² Russo calls it the crisis of confidence and crisis of legitimacy of the UN among the local population.³ Dayal reported this as a crisis of consent by the local population.⁴ UN peace operations in DRC, South Sudan, Mali, and the Central African Republic are a few of the current missions that have been under the radar for the plight of the local population and their perception of the peacekeeping missions as failing in its duty. This story, however, is not new. UN peacekeeping has been often criticised for its failure in several past missions. The UN had undertaken several studies seeking to reform the way peacekeeping is conducted to make it more effective. The Report of the Panel (commonly known as Brahimi Report) and Report of the Independent High-Level Panel on Peace Operations are the landmark reports of the past few decades.⁵ Amongst others, both these reports recommended rigorous reforms of UN peacekeeping. There can be several reasons why peace operations either succeed or fail.⁶ These are known to the Secretary-General, the senior officials of the secretariat, and the member states. The organisational constraints of the UN that paralyse the Security Council in taking a crucial decision, on either preventing a conflict or finding the appropriate tool for halting and preventing to spread the conflict, also hinder peacekeeping reform.⁷

With 193 members, the UN is the world's largest multinational and multi-polar organisation. In the tug of war between multipolarity and multi-nationality, because of the way the UN Charter was formulated, multipolarity comes out as the winner. As for peacekeeping, the decision taken by the Permanent Five (P5) members that rule the multipolarity organ generally is not always the best. The mandate is decided following the traditional Pen Holder system of the Security Council and the budget allocation falls short directly impacting the mission.⁸ Besides, those who make policy decisions and can make a difference, rarely participate in difficult peacekeeping operations. Currently, out of 12 peace operations, the most dangerous and complex missions are in Africa and TCCs that participate in these missions are from the Global South.⁹ Therefore, the recommendations for reform, unless in the interest of the powerful nations, will be consigned to the UN archive.

However, despite the lack of consensus among the P5 members, there has been some progress in making peacekeeping

more effective. For example, mandates are now stronger, and the peacekeepers are also better equipped and well-trained. There is also a move to engage the TCCs as part of the consultation process while the missions are on their way. But, the peacekeeping missions not being able to come up to the expected standard seems to be the common view of everyone. Hence, the question arises, what else can be done to enhance the peacekeeping missions' ability to return peace to the conflict zone and reduce unnecessary bloodshed. The answer is to build the capacity and capability of peacekeeping for better performance.

Capacity and Capability Building

Capacity and capability, even though distinct, are interrelated and confusing. According to Fishel, "capacity is a capability that is sustained over time; a capability is a function of equipment, personnel, support, information, and doctrine."¹⁰ It is however, difficult to state which comes first. For example, International Peace Institute (IPI) white paper submitted that capacity building and training partnerships can produce institutional capabilities.¹¹ The basic difference, therefore, is that capacity is measurable in terms of volume and quantity and is explained in terms of how much is available or how much is required. On the other hand, the capability is somewhat abstract working towards the competence of the organisation. When seen in the context of the performance of the military, the number of soldiers, equipment, and supporting infrastructure etc, fall in the category of capacity. Accordingly, how a military outfit can contribute towards enhanced performance will be the capability. To avoid confusion, this article uses both capacity and capability interchangeably.

Armed forces need the adequate capability to achieve their objectives. Even though defined differently, there are three elements common in their definitions. These are *wherewithal, the means to overcome temporal and physical challenges, and performance standard*. What comprises capability also varies from one organisation to another. The components as depicted by the US and Columbian Army seem more practical to apply in the context of capability development of peace operations. These are doctrine, organisation, training, material and equipment, leadership, personnel, and facilities.¹² Following such an explanation, the strength of the peacekeepers, the standard of their training and

equipment, and the available budget to support the mission can be used to assess the capacity of the mission. Lack of adequate strength and budget are the often-cited reasons to explain mission's failure to deliver on the field. As explained earlier, there can be several causes for failures. Factors like the mandate, absence of a comprehensive peace agreement, failure of the leaders at strategic and operational levels, absence of workable policies, etc. are also equally responsible for UN peacekeeping's failure to contribute effectively. Therefore, it would be logical to conclude that despite having good capacity, a peace operation may not have the capability to deliver because of organisational constraints. At the same time, building the mission's capability within the limited capacity is still possible. Building the capability of the peacekeeping mission is a shared responsibility between the UN HQs and the TCCs. TCCs shifting the onus on the HQs, however, is the current trend. Even then, despite the challenges of the organisations, the major TCCs can contribute to the capacity building of the peacekeeping mission. For example, it is not only the Secretary-General who is obliged to take the initiative to make peace to prevent a conflict. It is the moral duty of the member states to put their best foot forward and contribute towards resolving the conflict. If conflict resolution is not possible, the member states can at least join hands to prevent a conflict from arising and stop the spread of an ongoing conflict. In the following sections, how three components of capability building out of many, – leadership at the strategic level, the role of the TCCs in mandate formulation, and doctrinal development can act as enablers towards capability building of UN peace operations would be discussed.

Capability Building at Strategic and Operational Levels

At the apex level, outside the security council's constraints, the Secretary-General's personality and the initiative that he or she takes can make a difference in the trajectory of a potential conflict or end the ongoing conflict. This is better understood in the context of the Agenda for Peace in 1992, which was introduced by Boutros BoutrosGhali in 1992. He underlined the need to use peace-making to remove the source of danger that could produce conflict, engage in peacekeeping to resolve issues that have led to the conflict, and stand by to assist in peacebuilding in different contexts.¹³ And in the largest sense, to address the deepest causes of conflict. It is the art of maintaining a balance between three arms of the

concept of the Agenda for Peace – peace-making, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding. Since these three elements are not sequential, they work in tandem in the conflict zone with weight from one arm shifting to another depending on the situation. UN peace operation in Cambodia is an example of maintaining a good balance of this triangle. Peace-making was done by the French, peacekeeping was done by the peacekeepers, and most of the peacebuilding activities were undertaken by Japan, Australia, and France. Therefore, the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) is often quoted as a successful mission.

However, the same cannot be stated for most contemporary peace operations. In the present day, drawing examples from the Ukraine conflict, I have alluded in one of my earlier articles to what could have been done (including the use of preventive diplomacy) to prevent Russia from invading Ukraine and what still can be done to end the conflict.¹⁴ The idea of ‘Preventive Diplomacy’ was first articulated by Dag Hammarskjold in the 1960s and it was officially introduced to the UN as part of the Agenda for Peace in 1992.¹⁵ Besides the Secretary-General, it was, and still is, possible for the other world leaders (who are friends of Russia and Ukraine) to act as enablers for building the capability of the UN and help bring an end to the conflict. This way, being unable to do anything other than adopting a near-unanimous resolution of the General Assembly that condemned Russia for invading Ukraine, the UN would not have been castigated because of the paralysis in the Security Council.¹⁶

In war, there is loss of life and destruction. But to a few, other than economic benefit, it is also an opportunity to take the lead to help return peace even if the real motive may only be in the national interest. There was one year time for the UN (Secretary-General) and the world leaders, when Russia dropped paratroopers near the Ukraine border on 21 February 2021 and until the actual invasion on 24 February 2022, to initiate preventive diplomacy and may even consider preventive deployment to prevent the conflict.¹⁷ Intriguingly, that window was lost. The world kept talking about the invasion much before the actual invasion. A few European leaders tried but, after all, Russia looks at Europe with suspicion. As for non-European nations, Prime Minister Modi told President Putin during the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit at Samarkand, in September 2022, that this is not

the era of war but democracy, dialogue, and diplomacy. While such a public position was widely applauded, it could have made much difference had it been done earlier or followed more vigorously. As the Ukraine war seems to be heading for a stalemate, if there is a quest for a larger geo-political role, this is an opportunity for India to be more relevant and find better acceptability at the international level. For example, President Erdogan was the lead negotiator with the UN Secretary-General to persuade Russia to agree to unblock Ukrainian ports to allow grain export.¹⁸ While Turkey may have leverage that is strategically more important to Russia, India's special bond with Russia is something that could have been well exploited.

The list of the elements that can contribute to the capacity or capability building of UN peacekeeping is not exhaustive. In the short term and at the operational level, the TCCs from Global South, like India, can think of enhancing the contribution of the enabling units like engineering construction units, hospitals, air assets, demining teams etc. and share intelligence. These assets can make an effective contribution towards peacebuilding as well. Even though the combat engineers generally don't undertake humanitarian demining other than operational demining, the TCCs can always encourage their national NGOs who are already working in this field. What's important is that the TCCs can identify such assets, encourage them, and support their cases in UN HQs. Regarding intelligence sharing, gone are the days when the word 'intelligence' was considered taboo. However, for intelligence sharing, the contributing countries will have to build their national capability first. Besides, even non-substantive elements like the mandate and doctrinal development are a few areas, where there is a good scope for the TCCs' contribution to enable the UN peace operations to deliver.

The Mandate and Setting the Stage for Capability Building

Mandate formulation continues to remain in the domain of the P5 members. The mandate always suits the political and strategic interests of the P5. This, however, can change by raising the collective voice of the TCCs (other than the P5) when they are part of the Security Council and forcefully argue their case. For this, the national representatives of the TCCs must be well-informed, and convinced, about the need for their peacekeepers.

To cite an example, one can refer to the structure of United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) post-2006 war. One of the mandated tasks of UNIFIL is to, " Assist the Lebanese armed forces in taking steps towards the establishment of the area as South of Litani River free of unauthorised arms other than those of the Government of Lebanon and UNIFIL".¹⁹ It implies that it is the responsibility of the Lebanese Armed Forces to disarm the unauthorised groups and UNIFIL is only in the assistance role. But how does UNIFIL assist unless it is well-equipped and well-armed? A correct interpretation of this task and close consultation between the diplomats and the respective military of the three European TCCs probably would have led to the decision of the Security Council to allow France, Italy, and Spain to be armed with heavy armaments which are rare in the UN. What follows from here is the need for frequent and closer bilateral interactions amongst the uniformed peacekeepers, including former peacekeepers with experience, and the diplomats of the TCCs of the developing world to deliberate subjects of common interests, in addition to the meetings of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping (C-34). Inputs from such interactions between the uniformed peacekeepers and diplomats at multiple levels would strengthen the hands of our permanent representatives at the UN when they flag the case of the TCCs of the Global South. Essentially, it is about the diplomats and the uniformed peacekeepers talking and listening to each other so that our collective voice is heard by the Security Council.

Doctrinal Development

UN has issued policies and guidelines on possibly all kinds of subjects. There are, however, gaps in most of the peacekeeping-related policies. There are ambiguities that impact the outcome of the peace operations. The policies are periodically revised. Member states also participate in their revision or updation. How it is related to capability building is best understood with help of a recent example of the initiative of western nations. Effectiveness of Peace Operation Network (EPON), coordinated by the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI) besides assessing the effectiveness of peace operations, undertakes theme-based studies and research on peacekeeping. Their two recent studies were based on Climate

Change and the Protection of Civilians and were presented to the UN during EPON Week from 10 to 12 May 2022.²⁰ The quality of research by known academicians from different parts of the world was good. The studies were presented to the UN Secretariat for it to take forward. This is called capability building of UN peace operations based on a regional-specific narrative.

Sadly, such initiatives are rare in the case of most TCCs that contribute the most to peace operations. In general, other than the western nations, the culture of intellectual contribution is generally lacking in the case of most TCCs. India is a case in point. To illustrate, for not being able to fully help in return of peace (even though the reasons for such shortcomings are beyond the control of the UN), the peacekeeping mission becomes the first victim of such failure and the target of the media. Besides, since the capable developed member states rarely participate in difficult peace operations, peacekeepers from the Global South are the fall guys. But how the peacekeepers put their lives in the line of fire rarely comes out in the open. For example, during the Israel-Lebanon war of July 2006, only Indian and Ghanaian peacekeepers ventured out to pick up the injured civilians amidst the Israeli shelling of South Lebanon. Likewise, in DRC, in October 2006, Indian peacekeepers launched a heliborne operation and apprehended the Chief of Staff of the militia group Mai Mai.²¹ In South Sudan, when an internal communal clash broke out in Malakal on 18 February 2014, Indian peacekeepers, disregarding their safety, positioned themselves between the armed groups and explained to them that there are better ways to reach an agreement using means other than violence.²² There are many such untold stories of the bravery of Indian peacekeepers. What, however, gets picked up is what the UN could not do. For example, the inaction of the Indian peacekeepers during the Kiwanja massacre in DRC in 2008 was highlighted in the media. Other reports, though, have clarified that in addition to logistical technical constraints, there were only 6000 peacekeepers in North Kivu who were to cover a huge area of roughly one peacekeeper every 60 sq. km. Apart, from having to rely on information from the hostile government forces, the peacekeepers were already tied down to protect a few humanitarian workers.²³ But lack of correct input makes it difficult to provide a counterargument to such bad press and in public debates. Therefore, it will do good for the image of Indian peacekeepers by encouraging academicians and

scholars to bring to the notice of the public the tales of the bravery of Indian peacekeepers in the conflict zones. Besides, it will help to inject the idea of intellectual contribution to UN peacekeeping among Indian academicians.

However, the Security Council resolution on protecting the protectors is a positive development as it was introduced when India held the post of President of the Security Council. One of the reasons for peacekeepers shying away from using force to discharge their moral obligation is the fear of retaliation and the impunity enjoyed by the perpetrators of violence against peacekeepers. This is discouraging and demotivating. Since 1948, more than one thousand peacekeepers (1091) were killed and more than three thousand (3037) have been injured. Out of these, around a third of fatal casualties (310) and seriously injured (1021) is from 2013 until now. On 18 August 2021, the Security Council adopted resolution 2589.²⁴ This resolution called upon the member states hosting or having hosted UN peacekeeping operations to take all appropriate measures, by their national law and international law, as applicable, to bring to justice the perpetrators of the killing of, and all acts of violence against UN personnel. In notable developments, a Malian court convicted nine individuals (in March 2021) for attacks committed against United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) in 2015. In Lebanon, the court convicted one for kidnapping and killing two Irish peacekeepers that took place as early as April 1980. Overall, there has been substantive progress in investigation and prosecution measures. Even though impunity still prevails, such development is encouraging. Implementation of such a policy entirely depends on the consent and commitment of the host state. Therefore, in care of those host states which are not very supportive of the deployment of peacekeeping for whatever reason may be, translating the commitment into actionable deeds will be full of challenges.

Conclusion

The need to develop the capability of UN peace operations has been the focus of most academic discussions in peacekeeping reforms. Training, capable peacekeepers, adequate strength, advanced technology, and administrative support, the role of UN leadership and the developed nations not participating in complex peace operations generally are the main themes and sub-themes

of such discussions. Capability building is a shared responsibility, and it is time for major troop contributors to peacekeeping like India to invest more in areas other than the troops' contribution. Engaging in peacekeeping training with other TCCs from the Global South is one such platform that can be effectively utilised for the member states to come together. For example, to bridge the gap in the standard of training among the peacekeeping contingents in the complex peace operations in the African region, the Triangular Partnership Project was launched in 2015.²⁵ Besides India, Indonesia, Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and now Bhutan are the other TCCs of the Global South that contribute to some of the most difficult peace operations in Africa. The model of the Triangular Partnership Project can be used as a gateway by these TCCs to launch a similar project. Even if it is not supported by the UN, the exchange of peacekeepers in peacekeeping training would in turn help to align the TCCs' thoughts in creating a stronger collective voice of the Global South. When the diplomats and military agree to talk to each other and cooperate, intellectual contributions like research in peacekeeping, raising the collective voice of the Global South demanding their legitimate right in policy changes too can contribute towards the capability building of peacekeeping beyond troops' contribution. A large percentage of the contribution of uniformed peacekeepers to the increasingly dangerous conflict zones is a leverage of the TCCs from the Global South which many western nations lack. Skilful leveraging of such collective power, even if sometimes questioning the very need for such peace operations, would help them attain their rightful place at the strategic level besides making a meaningful difference to the capability building of UN peace operations. There is already potential in TCC like India. All that is required is to ask, engage, and cooperate to make a difference.

Endnotes

¹ In this article, UN peacekeeping and UN Peace Operations are used interchangeably

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UN Peacekeeping Operations in the Democratic Republic of Congo – A Success or Failure?

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Abstract

UN Peacekeeping Operations in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) have been ongoing for over two decades. The UN Security Council has calibrated the mandate of the peacekeeping mission in the DRC from time to time and armed the mission with Force Intervention Brigade to undertake robust peacekeeping and enforce peace. In spite of this, civilians continue to be targeted by the armed groups. A potent armed group M23, which had been defeated in 2013, is back in action. It exercises control over large areas in North Kivu Province of the DRC. Other armed groups such as Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) continue to target the civilians and peacekeepers. The country is witnessing protests against the peacekeepers for their inaction. There are mixed opinions about the performance of the peacekeeping mission. The article takes a dispassionate view on the performance of the mission and reasons for the shortcomings.

Introduction

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) continues to be affected by violence, insecurity and instability in spite of UN Peacekeepers being deployed in the DRC since 1999 initially as United Nations Organisation Mission in the Democratic Republic

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of the Congo (MONUC) and later with effect from 01 July 2010 as United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). MONUSCO, in spite of its progressive drawdown is one of the largest peacekeeping missions operating in any country.

Despite the fact that MONUSCO has large strength of uniformed peacekeepers and heavy financial outlay, there is no peace and stability in the Eastern region of the DRC. There are more than 100 armed groups active in the country. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA) has reported that the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the DRC has increased to almost 6 million. Ongoing violence and conflict are responsible for about 96.5 percent displacement.¹ The violence and conflict in Eastern DRC is also a main reason for about 27 million Congolese suffering from food insecurity.

Present Situation in the DRC

Tutsi-led armed group, Mouvement du 23 mars (M23) whose name stands for the 'March 23 Movement', has re-emerged from dormancy in the later part of 2021. Its leadership accuses the DRC Government of ignoring the promises to integrate its fighters into the national army. Since late 2021, the group has seized swathes of territory in North Kivu province prompting hundreds of thousands to flee their homes. Despite international efforts to defuse the conflict, M23 forces have continued advance towards Goma, the provincial capital of North Kivu. It now threatens to encircle Goma, the city that borders Rwandan border. The Security Council vide UN Security Council Resolution 2098 (2013) created its first-ever 'offensive' combat force intended to carry out targeted operations to 'neutralise and disarm' the notorious M23 armed group, as well as other Congolese rebels and foreign armed groups in strife-ridden Eastern DRC.²

The military component of MONUSCO has been attempting to neutralise / disarm the armed groups by adopting a deterrent posture and use of force. Due to the inherent constraints, the stated goals of the Mission have not been achieved. The Mission has fallen short of expectations with respect to protection of civilians and assisting in the extension of state's authority. Bigger sized armed groups, such as the M23), and the Democratic Forces for

the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), have neither been defeated nor their capacity and numbers reduced significantly. These continue to be a potent threat to the State as well to the civilian population. Out of frustration and supported by the spoilers to peace, some elements of the local population are protesting against the Mission and resorting to violence. Anti-UN protests in July/August 22 in the Eastern region of the DRC resulted in 36 people, including 4 peacekeepers, being killed and 170 wounded. Protesters were demanding United Nations peacekeepers to leave the DRC.³ There is a deep-seated crisis of trust, consent, legitimacy, and credibility against MONUSCO.

Though the Congolese Government has consented for MONUSCO to operate freely, there are major challenges in this regard. The national army, part of the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC) is part of the problem. Both MONUSCO and the FARDC have failed to build legitimacy and consent among the ordinary people. Authorisation of the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) to MONUSCO raised expectations with the civilians and the local authorities. The Mission has fallen short of expectations, and therefore, its credibility seriously affected.

MONUSCO as Chapter VII mission is equipped with a robust mandate to protect the civilians under threat of violence. The Mission is also mandated to undertake stabilisation tasks. The host government expects the Mission to support the state, and use force in defence of state authority. Military actions by the peacekeepers challenge both the principles of impartiality and the limited use of force. Consequently, both the spoilers to peace and also, at times, the state authorities use this to incite the local population against the peacekeepers and discredit the Mission.

MONUSCO's relationship with the government has had its ups and down. Best results have been achieved when there is primacy of politics and when the state authorities, neighbouring countries, and the Mission have worked in harmony. Case in point is the defeat of M23 in 2013 when the International community, African Union (AU), Southern African Development Community (SADC), DRC Government, the FARDC and MONUSCO put their hands together resulting in the defeat of M23 and its remnants had to flee the DRC.

Again now, the M23 is active in the Eastern region of the DRC. History seems to be repeating. The underlying causes of the conflict remain unresolved. There are dire consequences for the civilians. Pursuing military actions alone is not the answer to a long standing problem. Since its independence from Belgium in 1960, Congo has seen several international forces deployed on its territory in the context of peacekeeping operations but nothing much seems to have changed in the Eastern DRC for the common man on the ground. Peace remains elusive and he continues to suffer.

Mixed Performance of UN Peacekeeping in the DRC

MONUC/MONUSCO have been tasked by the Security Council to protect civilians from violence, facilitate humanitarian access, and disarm, demobilise, and reintegrate former combatants back into society. Over the years the Security Council has periodically altered the mandate of the Mission, including by creating a 'Force Intervention Brigade (FIB)', the first of its kind for a UN peacekeeping mission, which is required to carry out targeted offensive operations to neutralise and disarm the armed groups in Eastern Congo. Despite a robust mandate as given to the FIB and also the brigade having superior weapons compared to the armed groups, the Mission has not fully delivered on its mandate. This is evident from the figures mentioned in the introductory paragraphs of this article.

MONUSCO's effectiveness in protection has varied widely. At times very effective and on other occasions a failure. There are documented examples of both successes and failures. Whenever MONUC/MONUSCO has made a concerted and integrated efforts to protect civilians and deter violence, it has made a real difference. There is also evidence of failure on part of the Mission to act proactively and robustly in situations when there were reports of emerging threats to the civilians. The Mission, though armed with a robust mandate and the tool to execute the same in terms of FIB, has failed to provide sustainable peace. It has emerged that while robust peacekeeping is necessary, it is only a first aid and that does not heal wounds unless the basic issues that are responsible for the conflict are addressed. Effective implementation of a protection strategy cannot be separated from the active engagement with the host government in reforming its

security institutions to support appropriate disarmament and reconciliation strategies. The military component can try to disarm the armed groups forcefully, but it will continue to be a futile exercise if the larger political issues are not addressed.

Reasons for Peacekeepers Inability to Deliver the Mandate

The UN peacekeeping Mission's mandate has been revised over the years to increase the Mission's capacity to use force, and other means, to protect civilians. Efforts have been made by various actors to build peace in the DRC. Some civil societies too are actively involved at the grassroots level to transform the situation. Unfortunately, despite these efforts the culture of violence and brutality remains high. It is worth examining as to why peace continues to remain elusive. Reasons which explain why the DRC has failed to achieve peace despite concerted efforts made by the UN and other actors are discussed below:

- **Large Size of the Country.** The territory of the DRC is about the size of Western Europe. By area, the DRC is the second-largest country in Africa and the 11th largest in the world. It has a population of around 108 million. Vast sections of the country (the eastern provinces in particular) remain politically and logistically disconnected from its capital at Kinshasa and, therefore, the government. Further, the lack of road and rail infrastructure makes it worse. This situation has made a significant portion of the population feel disenfranchised and marginalised. With a ready supply of arms from dubious mineral trading entities and external actors with questionable interests, disaffected groups have been quick to carve their destinies parallel to those of the DRC state. This has created a situation in the DRC where mineral-rich areas of the east are infested with militias and thus, difficult to neutralise.
- **Natural Resources.** The DRC is blessed with a whole range of minerals but cursed by the people who handle these. Coltan is indispensable to the manufacture of all modern technological devices. It is used to make heat-resistant capacitors for laptops, cellphones, and other high-end electronic devices. Approximately 80 per cent of the world's supply of Coltan is found in the DRC.⁴

Gold, cobalt, cassiterite and high-grade copper reserves are present in equally significant numbers. Cobalt is one of the key metals to produce electric vehicles. Bulk of the trade in these minerals is by illegal means. Most of the armed groups' activity is centered on and around the mining sites. There is lack of infrastructure and also support to the peacekeepers from the host authorities, and others, to prevent illegal activity. Many entities that benefit a great deal from the mineral wealth of the DRC do not extend any importance to the related socio-political issues. Several mining companies domiciled in western nations fund military operation in exchange for lucrative contracts in the east of the DRC.⁵

- **Involvement of Neighbours.** DRC's peace process has been characterised by the involvement of external actors who have played critical role in the peace initiatives taken by the international community. Some of these actors have participated in the peace processes mainly to guard their own national interests rather than for seriously bringing peace to the DRC. Their interests are mainly based on the need to ensure that the DRC does not provide rear bases for rebel groups to strike at them. The presence of armed groups such as *the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR)* in the North and South Kivu provinces gives Rwanda and *the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF)* and *the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)* gives Uganda a reason/excuse to intervene in the DRC. Operating from north-eastern Congo, the ADF has, in the past, received funding, supplies, and training from the Government of Sudan, as well as from sympathetic Hutu groups.⁶ M23, the armed group that once again poses a serious renewed threat to humanitarian relief is actively supported by Rwandan Defence Forces.⁷
- **Interpretation of Peacekeeping Mandate.** There are varied interpretations of the Mission's mandate, and what peacekeepers should do or not do, by the host authorities, local population, Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs), and other agencies operating in the country. There is also a lack of strategic communications strategy to

counter misunderstandings, and to sell the mandate and explain its limitations to the Congolese people, and even internally to the different components of the Mission, to get their wholehearted support. TCCs feel that they should be consulted at the UN Security Council's level in mandate formulation as they best know the situation as it exists on the ground.

- **Lack of Focus Areas by the Host Government.** Due to lack of finances and for other reasons, the Congolese Government has not focused on education, creating jobs, and enhancing livelihoods. It has also not focused on the Security Sector Reforms (SSR), disarmament and integration of the former elements of the armed groups and human rights. The issue of settling the refugees and internally displaced persons has also been neglected. Not addressing these issues and lack of focus poses a major risk to the peace initiatives undertaken by the UN agencies.
- **Justice System.** Most of the perpetrators of crimes against the civilians have not been brought to justice due to under-funding, inability to reach remote areas, and questionable integrity of judicial officials. The victims and their communities feel let down and live in constant fear. In order to transit to sustainable peace, the justice and correction systems have to be put in place on priority basis.
- **National Ownership.** Where the Mission's and government interests converge, there have been good results. And when it doesn't happen, especially when the Congolese Government chooses its own path there are serious challenges for the Mission's Senior Leadership. This has been particularly true in the areas of human rights, operations by the national army, and in SSR. The security forces in the DRC, historically have been employed to secure the interests of few elites and those in power as against those of the larger population. The UN peacekeepers can only assist the government but the ownership has to be that of the national authorities. After all, the primary responsibility to protect its civilians is that of the host government.

- **Bottom-up Approach to Resolving Local Issues.** There has also to be a bottom-up approach for resolving ethnic conflicts for lasting peace to be achieved, in addition to the top-down approach. This requires considerable effort and patience. In the DRC, only a few components of MONUSCO and non-governmental organisations have adopted bottom-up approach to peacemaking and peacebuilding in fragile flashpoints. There has been no attempt to resolve land disputes, reconstruct local institutions for the peaceful resolution of conflict, and also to promote reconciliation within divided villages or communities.

Recommendations

Over the years, the civilian population's expectations from MONUSCO to protect them and the Congolese territory have increased. Some elements in the government and the FARDC expect that MONUSCO should provide the FARDC unconditional support, especially for operations against the armed groups, which it cannot as it impinges on the legitimacy and impartiality of the UN peacekeeping. Despite the challenges, constraints, and the limitations enumerated above, MONUSCO can contribute more meaningfully. Some recommendations in this regard are below:

- There exists great amount of mutual suspicion between various ethnic groups/communities that is so deep rooted that it frequently results in violence. The Mission needs to promote and facilitate political and inter-community dialogue to dispel the existing suspicions and fears and promote trust and confidence between saner elements of the warring communities. The Civil Affairs Section of MONUSCO, in partnership with the host authorities, should work towards confidence building between the warring communities, particularly those in the remote areas.
- The issues of illegal mining and exploitation of natural resources need to be tackled in a sustainable way. The interim report of the Group of Experts on the DRC has made several useful and practical recommendations to prevent flow of funds to the armed groups from illegal exploitation of natural resources. These recommendations

need to be implemented by the DRC government, UN Security Council (UNSC) and the member states. Illegal plunder of the wealth of the DRC clearly threatens international peace and security. The UNSC should rise above the interests of its individual member states and put in place deterrent measures against the countries whose companies or nationals engage in pillaging in the DRC.

- Efforts must be made to resolve land disputes, and to reconstruct grassroots institutions for the peaceful resolution of conflict. Reconciliation must be encouraged within divided villages or communities. International and Congolese authorities can easily do so/ support these initiatives with the resources at hand.
- The DRC's political leadership and the elite have to be encouraged to evolve a political framework that would bring in long term peace and stability to the country and also be at peace its neighbours. UN and the regional organisations need to ensure buy-in of this by the national authorities. The Senior Mission Leadership could facilitate this and should use their good offices at the time of crisis and political tensions and encourage political compromises and demand of political commitments. The UN Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region needs to be more proactive on issues that have regional and international ramifications. The Mission needs to facilitate and obtain support from international actors for meaningful of a national process to be in place.
- Expectations from MONUC/MONUSCO have been very high. If these are not met it leads to the loss of Mission's legitimacy, impartiality, and credibility. This was evident from the events that followed national elections in 2011 and the ongoing protests. A strategic communication policy and methodology both at the political and operational levels need to be put in place so that expectations can be managed.
- The UNSC, since 2019, has been highlighting the need to progressively transfer MONUSCO's tasks to the Government of the DRC and other relevant stakeholders

based on certain conditions to be met, such as the consolidation of state authority and reduction of threat posed by armed groups etc. Towards this end, MONUSCO and the Government of the DRC should jointly, and periodically, carry out reviews as regards the issues that challenge peace and security and evolve a phased and comprehensive exit strategy.

- Violent protests against MONUSCO/targeting of peacekeepers in the DRC from time to time are an indicator of the fact that consent and goodwill of the people for the Mission is as important as that of the state. Building consent at multiple levels is necessary for the enduring success of UN peace operations. It is also the key to finding lasting political solutions to internal conflicts. Mission should build consensus and consent around its bases and areas of its presence with the local communities and win hearts and minds of the people by undertaking quick impact and goodwill earning projects.

Contributions of MONUC/MONUSCO

The UN peacekeeping operations in the DRC have spanned over nearly 23 years. These have witnessed three presidential elections and numerous political and security crises involving national and regional actors and non-state armed groups. The Mission has reinvented itself, tried to adapt to changing conflict dynamics, and had to calibrate its posture due to demands from the Security Council, the Congolese government and regional states, as well as in response to recent funding cuts. Notwithstanding, the criticism it has faced from time to time, it has made great contributions in the DRC. These are enumerated below:

- UN peacekeeping missions in the DRC have strategically contributed towards the reunification of the country.
- MONUC/MONUSCO had a strategic impact in preventing a recurrence of a major conflict with its neighbours.
- The Mission has generated useful inputs for informed deliberations and decisions on the DRC over the years by the UN, AU, EU, ICGRL, SADC, World Bank, IMF, donors, and private sector investors. MONUC/MONUSCO

information collection has come handy in prosecutions by the International Criminal Court (ICC) to meet the ends of justice.

- Finally, the presence of UN peacekeeping mission has enabled the international and national actors and the private sector to provide services and stimulate the local economy.

Conclusion

With the current strength of 17918 personnel, MONUSCO is one of the largest multidimensional peacekeeping operations across the world.⁸ While MONUC, later MONUSCO, has been provided with significant resources, the Mission has also been given an extraordinarily ambitious mandate. It is difficult to objectively assess the performance of the Mission as it operates in extremely challenging circumstances, some of which are beyond its control. The current security situation does demonstrate that the DRC Government is yet not in a position to take over from MONUSCO and effectively protect its civilians. The dilemma is that a sudden and full exit would create a security vacuum detrimental to the DRC and the region. On the other hand, an extended stay of MONUSCO is also not desirable as it is delaying the implementation of effective security strategies and peacebuilding mechanisms by the government who has the primary responsibility to protect its civilians and mineral wealth. Some have suggested a transition from UN peacekeeping forces to African Union-led peace operations as a way forward. This will have its own challenges and ramifications. Ultimately it is the national government that has to shoulder the responsibility. The Congolese themselves have to reflect on their problems and find solutions.

UN peacekeeping mission in the DRC has been criticised for a wide range of issues, failure to act when civilians are under threat, human rights abuses by peacekeepers, and taking too much time to react. Repeated protests by the locals and targeting of peacekeepers also highlights the fact that all is not well with peacekeeping. The DRC situation offers the international community an opportunity to recalibrate and innovate its peacekeeping model. Peacekeeping should be seen to be effective only when it meets people's needs, local expectations and satisfaction.

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Peace-Planet Nexus: The Fifth Pillar of Sustainable Development

Mr Parth Bhatt[@] and Ms Aislinn[#]

Abstract

In 2000, in the Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations popularly known as the Brahimi Report, the watershed report for peacekeeping reform, underlined the need for immediate relief to establish sustainable peace. Later, in 2015, in Agenda 2030, the General Assembly conceptualised five essential pillars of sustainable peace - People, Planet, Prosperity, Partnerships, and Peace. While substantial progress has been made on four pillars, the pillar of the 'Planet' i.e. Climate, biodiversity, natural resources, etc. seems slightly disconnected. This article examines the importance of 'Planet' pillar in peacekeeping and how it can contribute to the overall peace process.

Introduction

On 25 September 2015, 193 member states of the UN and the Civil Society Actors unanimously adopted the General Assembly (GA) Resolution 70/1, commonly known as the 'Agenda 2030'.¹ The resolution identified five pillars of sustainability; People, Planet, Prosperity, Partnerships, and Peace. It was established that for any of these pillars to sustain, coherent development is

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required among all the other pillars. The Agenda 2030 also states, "We are determined to foster peaceful, just, and inclusive societies which are free from fear and violence. There can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development".¹

While connections between four of the pillars are instituted successfully, the efforts to ascertain an interconnection between international peace & security and climate change don't seem to gain traction. Recently, during the 8926 meeting of the UN Security Council, Niger and Ireland proposed a draft resolution requesting the Secretary-General to integrate climate related security risks as a central component of the comprehensive conflict prevention strategies of the UN. The objective behind the same was to decrease the risk of conflict relapse due to climate change. However, these efforts failed after the draft resolution secured 12 votes in favour, 1 abstention from China, and 2 votes against from India and Russia.² This decision was irrespective of an open debate session during 8923rd meeting of the Security Council where nearly 60 speakers showed connections between climate vulnerable people and countries, and their susceptibility to terrorist recruitment and violence. Although The Simpsons might not have predicted this issue rolling into becoming a larger snowball, the spillover effects are of grave concern.

A Case in Action

One of the emerging climate change fuelled threats to peace and security is the Lake Chad conflict. Lake Chad is a large sink lake in Central Africa, which is bordered by Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and Nigeria. The basin of the lake is becoming one of the worst humanitarian disasters in history since World War-II. About 30 million people are dependent on the lake for their day-to-day activities and it is estimated that more than 17 million are affected by the crisis.^{3,4} Some of the features of this crisis are widespread violence, forced displacement, and the consequences of environmental degradation and has pushed 7 million people into food insecurity and 800,000 children are believed to be suffering from acute malnutrition despite the fact that several international donors pledged US\$ 672 million in 2018.^{3,5,6} Meanwhile, attacks and suicide bombings by extremist group Boko Haram have made many people and farmers leave their homes and land involuntarily, further worsening the food insecurity and jeopardising livelihoods.³

The four countries that border Lake Chad share the common political dynamics of military rule, influence of oil exploration in policies, and relegation at national level. In past five decades, the lake has shrunk by over 90 per cent, while the population has increased at a rapid pace.³ The combined effects of climate change and the ongoing conflict have greatly undermined the resilience of the communities, including the ability of the people to adapt to and mitigate the threats projected by climate change, or even secure their livelihoods. Apart from the armed conflicts by extremist groups, the dwindling resources also have the potency to fuel inter-group and intra-group conflicts, reducing their resiliency further. The increased vulnerability of these communities to social and economic risks, and uncertain livelihoods, makes them more likely to be recruited by non-state armed opposition groups. These trends further hinder any efforts or future interventions by the international community or the UN to address armed conflicts, climate change, or unsustainable peace. And, this is just one of the climate change related security threats, with many more in the Sahel, West Africa, and the Horn of Africa.

Spillover to Subsequent Arenas

As conflicts push Earth beyond its' capacity to regenerate resources and ecological services, some Global North countries will speed up looking towards the outer space. Though the current international legal regimes and mechanisms are, somewhat, maintaining peace in the space presently, their fragility and loopholes will be exposed soon after the first country is successful in extracting resources from space. As with energy and resource exploration, similarly will come militarisation of space. Simultaneously, some relatively less rich nations will try to infiltrate weaker countries, and this is already happening. Germany and several other European countries are already expanding their gas drive in Africa post the Russia-Ukraine War.⁷ And, while these states are funding their own requirements by taking resources from African nations, they're not ready to fund the 'basic' domestic needs of the very same countries they're extracting this gas from, because these states say that they don't want to support fossil fuel industry outside their country as they're busy promoting it within their country. The result, millions of women die in Africa alone due to indoor air pollution, and things like 'clean cooking' remain on the agenda list forever, but not an achieved goal.^{8, 9}

While the richest nations are making efforts to dominate the outer space, and the relatively lesser monied nations increase their activity in Global South countries, the developing and underdeveloped states will become more vulnerable to unrest and conflicts. During the Asia-Africa Ministerial Level Dialogue at the Sustainable Energy for All Forum 2022 in Rwanda, African leaders said, “For transitioning to sustainable energy, we need to transition to energy first”. The further discussions at the conference clearly showed that they’re losing their faith and trust in the international community, and are fed up of the long list of unfulfilled promises made to them. Energy is one of the prerequisites without which people can’t progress and nations can’t develop.

Armed conflicts have been disrupting lives of people since decades, while climate change has started to endanger communities, both economically and socially. The stunted development of many Global South countries further limit economic and social development, which weakens institutions and makes communities lesser resilient to climate change and falling in the grip of armed conflicts. Western nations extracting resources from these countries, while ignoring their domestic needs and development, adds up to the whole problem. In past few years, loss and damage due to climate change related disasters, such as super cyclones during the Covid-19 pandemic, have caused damage equivalent to as much as a whopping 50 per cent of some of the affected country’s GDP, dismantling and paralysing government and institutions, and forcing people to flee to other countries, often developed, as refugees.¹⁰ We’ve already witnessed the problem of overburdening of civic amenities due to refugee migration, which eventually resulted in 1971 Indo-Pak Bangladesh Liberation War. And, as many Global North countries have ratified the Geneva Conventions, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and some other conventions, they’re bound to provide refuge to these people. In countries with low population, such as European countries, huge inflow of refugees can cause huge demographic changes and overstrain the already shrinking resources, especially after the Russia-Ukraine War. At the end, a loop is formed where each problem exacerbates another problem, and so on, while interconnections between issues, such as climate and conflict, are denied and findings and strategies

like Disarming, Demobilising, Reintegrating and the Brahimi Report are reduced to just a text sounding like Beethoven's Seventh Melody.

Systems Thinking and Strategic Intervention

With thorough strategic planning and systems thinking, several entry points, leverage points, and drivers can be identified within a loop, and can act as a force multiplier in efforts to curb the crisis. Some of them can be:

- **Youth.** With strength of about 2 billion, young people around the world account for a major chunk of population, especially in conflict affected and war-torn countries. Sensitising them in a correct manner and harnessing their energies in efforts to make peace can have an exponential effect. The UN Security Council Resolution (SCR) 2250 was the first major document which recognised the role of youth in international peace and security.¹¹ Some of the most remarkable inventions, such as a device which harnesses the power of moving pedestrians, and vehicles, and converts it into electricity was invented by Jeremiah Thoronka, a youth who was brought up by a single mother in a slum during the Sierra Leone civil war. As a child, he witnessed his village falling in wrath of darkness as soon as the sun went below the horizon. He also saw children facing difficulties in continuing education and developing respiratory diseases because of smoke from firewood, while the forests dwindled which intensified the frequency and impact of climate and natural disasters. Today, Jeremiah's devices are providing free and clean electricity to 150 households with 1,500 people, and 15 schools with more than 9,000 students.¹² Similarly, there are many more such bright young minds at places they're least expected to be, and doing wonders with scarce resources. Leveraging them can have a great impact on their communities, making them more resilient to relapsing into conflict and climate change induced risks.
- **Women.** Women are disproportionately affected by wars and conflicts. During times of unrest, men of the family are recruited by militias and armed groups, often leaving behind many single women headed households. Additionally, atrocities against women are often used by warring parties

as projection of power, and they're subjected to Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV).¹³ Therefore, women should be seen as a critical actor at all the peace negotiations and discussion tables. This will increase the efficiency of mechanisms and make sure that needs of all conflict affected people are taken into account, while helping better understanding the underlying conditions which resulted in the conflict. Moreover, women in military, police, or civilian roles in a peacekeeping mission have a high chance of being seen as a role model by women of the host country, encouraging them to recognise their rights and pursue non-traditional careers. Also, women peacekeepers can better interact with women and children in conflict affected communities, especially in orthodox settings where women of a household are barred from interacting with men. Research after adoption of SCR 1325 (Women, Peace, and Security Agenda), during operations in Liberia, Timor-Leste, Kosovo, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), etc, concluded that women peacekeepers don't face the same cultural restrictions as male peacekeepers.

The 'Female Engagement Teams' also succeeded in their operations in Afghanistan.¹⁴ At the community level, women are trying to bring a change to improvise their neighborhoods. One of them is Sister Alphonsine Ciza, a nun in DRC, who convinced her superiors to support her in pursuing mechanical engineering, and later raised US\$ 297,000 over the years. She used this money to build a hydropower plant in her town, which provides clean energy to a convent, a church, two schools, and a clinic for free. She also empowered other members from her community, who now assist her in running the plant.¹⁵ 2014 was a historic year for SCR 1325 when Major General Kristin Lund of Norwegian Armed Forces was appointed as the first female Force Commander of a UN Peacekeeping Mission.¹⁴ However, there's still a long way to integrate women as drivers of change and entry and leverage points in peacekeeping missions. The gap in data and analysis related to participation of women in national security institutions, social norms and stereotypes flaming gender inequality within the security sector, and lack of understanding of UN policy on gender

equality in peacekeeping, and SCR 1325, among member states remain some of the biggest hurdles.

- **Active Interventions.** Some months ago, entire Twitter witnessed the heated discussion between the Executive-Director of World Food Programme (WFP), David Beasley, and Business Magnate Elon Musk, where the former asked Elon to donate US\$ 6 billion to WFP. The plan tweeted by WFP showed that the money will be used to feed 42 million people for 365 days.¹⁶ Though it might sound an excellent strategy to some people, it would not solve global hunger, but only avert it by a year. In order to make communities self-sustaining and empower them to reduce their tendency to fall into conflicts, the focus of interventions has to shift from passive to active. Entrepreneurship can be one of the avenues for integrating people and providing income and employment to people with limited access to the labour markets. One of the examples can be Uzuri, a brainchild of two Rwandan college students, which has till date provided employment to over a thousand people, most of which are women in villages. At first, people are given training for different operations and then they're employed by the organisation. Uzuri produces footwear and accessories, majority of which is made of waste collected from landfills, and aims to promote Africa as 'House of Sustainable Fashion of the Globe'.¹⁷ Such low-cost and high social-environmental impact entrepreneurship ventures can do a great job in providing people with employment, while enhancing their skills and promoting indigenous culture and art around the world, which will further strengthen their soft power.
- **Community Engagement.** While making decisions which determine the fate of people of a community, it is essential to make its members a part of the entire process, and let them have their say. All the concerned stakeholders of a conflict, especially residents of the communities which experience the unrest, should be included in the negotiations in form of Track-II or Track 1.5 dialogues. This will ensure just and ethical representation, of those who're affected the most by empowering their voices. It will also facilitate trust building and make it easier to implement the plans.

- **Strong Institutions.** Institutions are one of the most critical leverage points in any society. They create and uphold rights, govern resources, manage conflicts, grow businesses, and provide services. Transparent, inclusive, and strong institutions are a necessity for peace in societies, and representation and inclusion of all people. Strengthening institutions would require establishment of a proper feedback mechanism, backed by targets and indicators, formulation of programmes and policies to achieve them, instruments to deal with risks and uncertainties, and systems for monitoring and evaluation. It would also require involving citizens, wherever possible, as it will increase transparency and ensure more issues faced by a wider section of society reach the policy formulation table. Simultaneously, policy coherence can be enhanced across the system, both vertically and horizontally.
- **Religion.** It is a fact that majority of global population identifies themselves with a religion. Hence, faith and traditions can be a powerful entry point in situations threatening peace and security. Religious leaders, who're respected and followed by their communities, can play the role of mediator within the community, as they have respect from all the parties. One such example can be of Imam Ashafa and Pastor James Wuye, whose mediation between their communities in Kaduna state (Nigeria) resulted in successful development and implementation of local peace process.¹⁸ Religious teachers also play a major role in molding the perspectives of a society. Teachers in Uzbekistan and Indonesia have already endorsed religious peacebuilding training. They have integrated a traditional peacekeeping text with a religious lens relevant to their particular cultural context. Religious actors also played a major role during tensions in Bosnia-Herzegovina. They used powerful and evocative ideas and included them in inter-religious settings. They also used existing religious institutions to support efforts for peacebuilding, and worked together with non-religious peacebuilding practitioners, and transformed the conflict landscape in a way that would've not been possible without mobilising the religious dimension. Post war, these religious leaders kept working for human rights in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Some of their efforts include bringing previously excluded women, youth, and minorities into peace process,

rebuilding inter-ethnic trust, and protecting and managing cultural heritage sites which were at the center of the conflict.¹⁹ The potential of religious engagement in peacebuilding can be understood by analysing the impact of pre-existent social roles on religious actor's capacity for peacebuilding, and how an opportunity is created by conflict for them to assume new roles, building upon the roles they already had.

- **Comprehensive Policymaking.** A two front adaptation-mitigation approach is in need, while long term solutions are in discussions to mitigate the issues related to international peace and security. Immediate actions are required to stop the suffering and damage taking place currently. This can be achieved by using a combination of both soft and hard power authorising use of force only as a last resort to control the situation. The first step towards mitigation can be setting a floor for discussions and negotiations, where both elected representatives and extremist groups should think of a long term solution against short sustained quick fixes which only last till the completion of their electoral cycles.

Conclusion

Sustainable development is like a Rubik's cube which can only be solved by focusing on all sides (in this case, the 5 Pillars) together but solving the sides one by one. The untapped potential of various non-conventional actors, and entry and leverage points, should be realised and harnessed in order to make peacekeeping operations truly multidimensional. Supporting special groups, such as youth and women, through active interventions can have several economic, social, and environmental benefits, breaking the loop between uncertain livelihoods, conflict, and climate change and making communities resilient while reducing their tendency to lapse into conflict. This will also help in engaging communities and strengthening of institutions. Meanwhile, religious actors could be involved in the peace process whenever viable and applicable. Therefore, all these critical components and actors should be strategically incorporated in the current peacekeeping mechanisms to ensure a sustainable and long lasting peace which facilitates the process of making communities resilient and the planet healthier.

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The Future of Peace Operations (A brief on Challenges Annual Forum – 2022)

Major General PK Goswami, (Retd)[®] and
Colonel (Dr) KK Sharma, (Retd)[#]

Introduction

UN Secretary-General's report '*Our Common Agenda*'¹ called to develop a 'New Agenda for Peace' (NAP) and stressed the need for a 'new effort to agree on more collective security responses and a meaningful set of steps to address the complex challenges the international community faces today'. The Common Agenda includes 12 commitments made during the Declaration on the Commemoration of the UN 75th anniversary. The UN engaged many think tanks, international NGOs, member states, and academicians to provide inputs for the NAP. The NAP is likely to renew the UN efforts to agree on more effective collective security responses, investing in prevention and peacebuilding, and a meaningful set of steps to manage emerging risks, especially in the wake of the Ukrainian conflict.

Challenges Annual Forum for the year 2022 (CAF-22), was **co-hosted by the USI of India with Challenges Forum** on 06 and 07 October 2022 in the premises of USI of India, New Delhi. The Forum is a global partnership of more than 50 peace operations organisations and departments in 24 countries, representing government agencies, peacekeeping training centres, think tanks, and research institutions from all around the world. Members come from the major troop, police, and financial contributing countries, and include the permanent five members of the UNSC. Challenges Forum International Secretariat is hosted by FBA – the Swedish Agency for Peace, Security and Development – on behalf of the Challenges Forum Partnership².

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CAF-22 in New Delhi provided a platform for over 145 partners, policymakers, practitioners, and scholars from 26 different countries around the world. These representatives included civilians, military and police practitioners and collectively generated thoughts and reflections on the future of peace operations. The focus of deliberations was on the NAP initiative and the *Summit of the Future* scheduled to take place in 2024. Hence, this report outlines current trends within global peace and security, as well as the Challenges Forum's partnerships collective, and suggested, inputs to the NAP.³

The report lists the major events, brief discussions, and gives out the key takeaways of the CAF-22.

Proceedings Day 1 (06 October 2022)

The Opening Session. The session was coordinated by Maj Gen PK Goswami, (Retd), Deputy Director General, USI of India; he set the agenda for the session with his welcome remarks. The eminent speakers included Maj Gen BK Sharma, (Retd), Director General (DG), the USI of India and Ms Pernilla Rydén, Director, Challenges Forum International Secretariat (CFIS). The DG USI of India welcomed all delegates to the premises and wished for fruitful discussions. The Director CFIS explained the objectives and sequence of events for the CAF-22. The session was chaired by Mr Per Olsson Fridh, the Chairperson of the Challenges Forum Partner Meeting and Director of the Folke Bernadotte Academy; former Minister for International Development Cooperation in Sweden.

The Inaugural Address. The address was given by Shri Sanjay Verma, Secretary (West), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. In his brief talk, he emphasised the emerging role of the UN, the need to include Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) in the consultations on deployments and the mismatch in mandate and resources.

"It is important that peacekeeping missions are given a clear and realistic mandate, which is also matched equally by the provision of adequate resources [...] Consulting TCCs while reviewing mandates should become a norm".⁴

- Shri Sanjay Verma, Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India

Keynote Address. In her talk delivered online, Ms Comfort Ero, the ‘President and CEO of the International Crisis Group on Current Global Trends affecting Peace Operations’ addressed the issues of future global security risks and peace opportunities. She spoke about the emerging challenges and requirement of capacity building of the UN and Regional organisations to meet these challenges.

High-level Panel. The panel of eminent speakers deliberated upon the key issues of future peace operations and regional peace and security arrangements. The panel covered future multilateral peace operations and their linkages to regional peace and security arrangements. Most of the panel members agreed that partnerships with regional organisations and sub-organisations could be the future of peace operations. The eminent panellists included Mr Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Under Secretary-General for Peace Operations, United Nations; Ms Elizabeth Spehar, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support, Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, United Nations; and Ms Cynthia Chigwenya, African Youth Ambassador for Peace for Southern Africa, African Union. The discussions were moderated by Mr Ahmed Abdel Latif, Director General, Cairo International Centre for Conflict Resolution, Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding (CCCPA).

“We need to adapt our mindsets to these very flexible, volatile, and unpredictable environments in which we operate in peacekeeping. We need to do this collectively together with our troop and police-contributing countries”⁵

- Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, United Nations

As existing multidimensional peace operations are transitioning out and closing, future peace operations are likely to be smaller in size with “a more limited, but realistic, set of goals”. However, the extent of complex protection challenges in conflict-affected areas indicates that a price will be paid for decreasing the footprint of UN peace operations – the brunt of which will likely be borne by civilians. Challenges Forum participants expressed concern that deploying UN peace operations with a lighter footprint will negatively impact the extent of protection work, especially in terms of the physical protection of civilians.

Working Group Discussions

The participants of the Challenges Annual Forum discussed the Future of Peace Operations through three sub-themes: the Place for Preventive Deployment in Diplomacy, the Protection of Civilians, and Protecting the Protectors.

Place for Preventive Deployments in Diplomacy. The working group was chaired by Ambassador Vijay Thakur Singh (Retd), the Director General, of the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA), New Delhi. Other speakers and moderators included Maj Gen (Dr) AK Bardalai (Retd), with a field perspective provided by Judy Hylton, former Senior Adviser to UN Truce Supervision Organisation (UNTSO). Dr Richard Gowen co-authored the ignite paper along with Maj Gen (Dr) AK Bardalai (Retd). The discussions involved a period of great power rivalry and where observer missions are expected to again become more prominent. How can future observer missions help prevent the escalation of a conflict? What should they look like, and how can they best be complemented by diplomatic efforts resolving larger political processes?

The discussions centred on the UN Secretary-General's report on *Our Common Agenda* which noted that investments in prevention and preparedness pay for themselves many times over in the human and financial costs that are spared.⁶ As we engage in the future of peace operations the option of launching UN operations to prevent, rather than react to, the conflict remains important. Many peace operations, including UN Special Political Missions, could contribute to conflict prevention in different ways. Recently, there is a renewed interest in what so-called "one-dimensional missions" – observer operations that are solely or primarily military, without the broad multi-dimensional mandates that have characterised many larger post-Cold War operations – may offer in terms of prevention⁷. "One-dimensional missions" could become more prominent in the years ahead as they are less expensive and less intrusive compared to multi-dimensional operations, and perhaps more importantly, are easier to negotiate in a divided UNSC. The Challenges Forum partnership assessed that in certain contexts, preventive deployments should become one of the instruments in international peace and security as part of a spectrum of peace operations.

Protection of Civilians. After 1999, the Protection of Civilians (PoC) has become the primary mandate of most UN peace operations. The working group session was chaired online by Cassandra Stuart Clark, Senior Advisor, U.S. Department of State. Dr Lotte Vermeij, Senior Expert on Sexual Violence in Conflict and UN Peace Operations, Norwegian Refugee Council had fielded the ignite paper written jointly with Col (Dr) KK Sharma, (Retd). The field perspective to the discussions was provided by Mr Mike Dzakuma, Senior Civil Affairs Officer, UN Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS).

The discussions deliberated upon the possibilities of future peace operations with a lighter footprint. Such operational settings require a different approach to the concept of PoC. PoC remains the core objective of the UN as it is key to both the credibility and legitimacy of the organisation. However, implementing PoC mandates is facing growing challenges. Significant progress at the normative level as well as increased attention in the UNSC has however not resulted in better PoC on the ground. Many reports suggest increased violence against civilians in 2021.⁸ Peacekeepers are often deployed in areas where there may be no peace to keep, whilst simultaneously lacking sufficient means to carry out their protection tasks. Extensive PoC mandates have led to unrealistic expectations. As a result, confidence in UN peace operations has decreased, demonstrated by recent violent protests against the UN missions in the Central African Republic, DR Congo, Mali, and South Sudan.⁹ Challenges remain in translating early warning into early action due to a lack of resources or the right mindset to respond and restrictions imposed by the host government that hamper the freedom of movement of UN peace operations. While a proactive, robust mindset and freedom of movement are some of the key requirements for UN peace operations to be able to protect civilians, reviews need to be undertaken on how scarce resources can be best utilised in today's mission settings.

Protection of Peacekeepers. The working group session was chaired by Mr Babu Rahman, Senior Principal Research Analyst, Multilateral Research Group, UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). The ignite and discussion paper was prepared by Dr Sara Lindberg Bromley, Researcher, Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University. The field

perspective for the discussions came from Lt Col Will Meddings, former commander of the Long-Range Reconnaissance Group, UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA).

With 4280 fatalities of peacekeepers since 1948¹⁰ (1111 due to malicious intent), TCCs have been vocal about keeping their peacekeepers safe and secure whilst implementing their mandates. Mr Stephane Jean, a judicial officer at the Justice and Corrections Service (JCS) of the Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions (OROLSI) stated that both these entities with the active support of the UN Department of Peace Operations (UNDPO) have worked inside the Department towards operationalising the UN Resolution 2589. As Stephane observed that the JCS, OROLSI, and UNDPO, coordinate strategic and operational support on mandate delivery, strengthening Member States' support, leveraging partnerships, and setting policy priorities in these areas. It supports the work of UNPOs and special political missions as well as other UN entities, to implement the rule of law aspects of their respective mandates.

Attack patterns against peacekeepers need to be analysed by the operational leadership and design better operational responses. This data can be used to improve local perceptions of peacekeepers while improving their safety and security. The participants felt that increased attacks on peacekeepers in field missions are alarming and directly affect their ability to engage with and protect local communities. Deliberate and targeted acts of violence against peace operations have come into focus recently. In addition to improving access to training and equipment, added efforts to track and understand patterns and drivers of attacks also contribute to the safety and security of peace operations and improve the overall mission performance and mandate implementation.¹¹ A more nuanced understanding of both drivers and patterns of attacks on peace operations matters for devising appropriate operational responses and relies on systematically collected and detailed data. As the UN moves towards more data-driven approaches, continued efforts can unlock important insights to inform better operational judgement and decision-making of mission leadership at all levels.

Day 2 (07 October 2022):

Mis- and Dis-information's Impact on Missions. A spotlight presentation was given by Bintou Keita, Special Representative of the Secretary-General in the MONUSCO. The speaker narrated attacks on the peacekeepers in eastern Congo, which were traced back to the disinformation on social media. With the help of video clips of the attacks, the speaker was able to explain how peace operations and their mission leadership can better contain mis- and dis-information risks and better leverage opportunities for strategic communications as part of a whole-of-mission approach. A spotlight presentation from the field was followed by an armchair discussion with questions from the audience.

Mr Francesca Mold, Chief of Strategic Communications, UN Department of Peace Operations spoke about several converging global 'shocks' that are raising the risks for new conflicts as well as exacerbating and re-shaping the existing ones. A global economic decline has contributed to a lack of supply of commodities and subsequent growing inequalities among countries and people. In addition, the effects of climate change, including shifting weather patterns, drought and environmental degradation, have led to unprecedented climate risks for a large number of civilians, including the displacement of populations.¹² These developments result in inequalities and increased risks in many of the most vulnerable countries and conflict-ridden areas of the world. Mis- and disinformation forms a growing threat to peacekeeping. It negatively affects the safety and security of peace operations, as well as their ability to implement mandates effectively. The UNSC has introduced language on mis- and dis-information into the mandates of the four largest peace operations between 2019 and 2022. Challenges in this aspect come for peace operations and mission leadership to better contain mis- and dis-information risks and leverage opportunities for strategic communications as part of a whole-of-mission approach.

Future Perspectives: Towards a New Agenda for Peace. This was an important session, with many eminent participants. The session was moderated by Mr Per Olsson Fridh, Chair, of the Challenges Forum Partner Meeting and Director General of the Folke Bernadotte Academy; former Minister for International Development Cooperation in Sweden. The participants included

Mr Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Under Secretary-General for Peace Operations, UN; Ms Cynthia Chigwenya, African Youth Ambassador for Peace for Southern Africa, African Union; Mr Kano Takehiro, Director General, International Peace Cooperation Headquarters, Cabinet Office, Japan; and Lt. Gen Jasbir Singh Lidder (Retd), Former Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Force Commander of the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS).

The focus of presentations and discussions by the panel evolved around CAF-22 collective reflections and outcomes and its contribution to the UN Secretary General's NAP and the Summit of the Future in 2024. The UN Strategy for the Digital Transformation of Peacekeeping is a great start but more training and accompanying human, financial and technological resources are needed to better understand and monitor media landscapes. UN peace operations also need to get better at storytelling and use strategic communications more effectively to counter hostilities.

*“The New Agenda for Peace should not be constructed on the idea that we are going to introduce all kinds of new and shiny tools, new institutions, and new processes. I think we roughly have the tools we need, and we need to build on that”.*¹³

- Elizabeth Spehar, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support, Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, UN

Today the world is facing a growing number of armed conflicts. A total of 56 wars were recorded in 2020, the highest number since 1945. The level of violence and the distribution of risks differ by a region where roughly half of the recorded conflicts are currently located on the African continent.¹⁴ The very nature of conflict is also transforming. There are trends of more protracted intra-state and regional conflicts (involving transnational networks), a multitude of new actors (including private military contractors), rapidly evolving weapons technologies and disruptive digital technologies as well as the use of mis- and dis-information. These developments make it increasingly difficult for international peace operations to understand and address the complex and underlying drivers of conflict.

Plenary: Discussing Key Takeaways with Experts. Leading experts and policymakers reflected on the key working group conclusions and discussed the next steps. The participants included Dr Emily Paddon Rhoads, Associate Professor, Swarthmore College; Dr Yvan Ilunga, Assistant Professor of Political Science and International Relations, Salve Regina University; Ms Flaminia Minelli, Chief Policy, Evaluation and Training Division, UNPOs; Lt Gen Chander Prakash (Retd), former Force Commander, MONUC; with Mr Dawit Yohannes, Senior Researcher, Institute for Security Studies South Africa as a moderator. The key takeaways discussed and collated are given in the table.

CAF22 Key Takeaways¹⁵

- ▶ **Recommitment to UN principles, norms, and values:** In a world of growing polarisation with critical converging threats to international stability, the 'New Agenda for Peace' is vital to re-energise multilateral peace and security and to obligate Member States to uphold the UN Charter.
- ▶ **The primacy of politics:** Sustainable political solutions addressing underlying causes of conflict should continue to be at the core of peace operations. In supporting host states, field missions should be careful not to unintentionally impede incentives for national peace processes.
- ▶ **Flexible and well-resourced peace operations:** More creative and adaptable mandates will allow fit-for-purpose field missions with the operational freedom and flexibility to effectively adjust to fast-evolving threats, needs and contexts. Mandates need to be matched with adequate resources - a severe lack of funds and equipment are directly affecting the performance and credibility of peace operations.
- ▶ **Digital transformation:** Strategic foresight through timely, integrated data and digital technologies will significantly improve the performance as well as the safety and security of peace operations.
- ▶ **Containment of mis- and dis-information:** Better and more skills, tools, and resources are needed to understand digital social media landscapes to avoid growing threats to peace operations. Field missions need to become better in containing mis- and disinformation, and leverage opportunities for strategic communications through storytelling based on everyday efforts of peace operations

► **Partnerships:** Regional organisations and security arrangements play important roles in the maintenance of peace and security. The UN must continue developing effective ways to engage with regional organisations, including on questions of capabilities, financing, but also norms and principles. Given the cross-border nature of many conflicts, regional mandates for peace operations should be considered when needed. UN engagement with *ad hoc* regional security arrangements needs to be based on clear common political objectives.

Official Closing. The closing of the CAF-22 was done by Lt Gen M Fernandez, Director General, Directorate of Staff Duties, Indian Army; Maj Gen BK Sharma, (Retd), Director General, USI of India; and Ms Pernilla Rydén, Director, Challenges Forum International Secretariat (CFIS). The speakers reflected upon the deliberations of the two days and spoke about the shape of UN operations to come. Much has been done over the past years to promote and maintain international peace and security, including through the *Action for Peacekeeping (A4P)*¹⁶ agenda and the reform of the UN Peace and Security Pillar. In many cases, the UN has been resilient in dealing with emerging peace and security challenges and has managed to maintain a minimum degree of cooperation and operational resilience even in challenging contexts, including in Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and Mali. However, the declining number of UN peacekeepers deployed to conflict areas over the past decade (there has been no new UN peacekeeping mission since 2014) is not seen by the Challenges Forum partnership to match the current trends in conflict. Instead, it rather indicates that there will be a larger need for multilateral international peace operations in the near to medium future.

*“There are no shortcuts to international peace and security, peace can only be achieved on the ground, working together with affected countries and their people. It is therefore essential to put the population first and to apply a people-centred approach to peace operations”.*¹⁷

- Ms Pernilla Rydén, Director of the Challenges Forum International Secretariat

Conclusion

The CAF-22 generated useful insights and concrete takeaways on the future of peace operations and the NAP. Throughout the two-day event, partners demonstrated a willingness and positive attitude to make the discussions lively and useful. The deliberations were in multilateral spirits and towards enhancing international peace and security. In an increasingly divided world, with a multitude of volatile risks, it will be key for future peace operations to have the capacity to adapt quickly and flexibly to new environments. Innovative out-of-the-box thinking is crucial to ensure that future peace operations can both prevent and respond to fast-moving situations where possible – and based on clear political objectives – together with regional security arrangements.

Various speakers during the discussions pointed to the fact that the issue of the future of UNPOs will remain high on the agenda in the run-up to the NAP and the Summit of the Future in 2024. The USI of India and the Challenges Forum partnership considered the reflections and takeaways as useful inputs and pointers for future events and strategic consultations when finalising the NAP. This was further deliberated upon in the follow-up Partners Meeting till a formal note for submission to the UNDPO was arrived at.

*“We should take action and see that we are able to re-imagine, and re-look the entire concept of UN Peacekeeping, in a world that is mired with political uncertainties”.*¹⁸

– Maj Gen BK Sharma (Retd) Director General, USI of India

Endnotes

¹ <https://www.un.org/en/content/common-agenda-report/>

² Partnership of Global Actors; <https://challengesforum.org/partners/>

³ Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, New Agenda for Peace, United Nations, <https://dppa.un.org/en/new-agenda-for-peace>.

⁴ https://challengesforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/CAF22_report.pdf (p.11)

⁵ *Ibid.* p.9

⁶ Our Common Agenda-Report of The Secretary-General, United Nations, 2021, <https://www.un.org/en/common-agenda>

⁷ Alexandra Novosseloff, A Comparative Study of Older One-Dimensional UN Peace Operations: Is the Future of UN Peacekeeping Its Past? (EPON/FES, 2022).

⁸ Ninety Per Cent of War-Time Casualties Are Civilians, Speakers Stress, Pressing Security Council to Fulfil Responsibility, Protect Innocent People in Conflicts, United Nations, <https://press.un.org/en/2022/sc14904.doc.htm>

⁹ Sengenya, C. Why We're Protesting Against UN Peacekeepers in Congo. The New Humanitarian 2022, <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news-feature/2022/08/18/DRC-MONUSCO-protests-peacekeeping>

¹⁰ UN Peacekeeping.Total Number of Fatalities. <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/fatalities>

¹¹ Protecting the Protectors, Challenges Forum, <https://www.challengesforum.org/paper/background-paper-protecting-the-protectors/>

¹² Warner, K., Hamza, M., Oliver-Smith, A., Renaud, F. and Julca, A., 2010.Climate change, environmental degradation and migration. *Natural Hazards*, 55(3), pp.689-715.

¹³ https://challengesforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/CAF22_report.pdf (p.3)

¹⁴ Strand, H. and Hegre, H., 2021. Trends in Armed Conflict, 1946–2020. *Conflict Trends*, 3, p.4.

¹⁵ From CAF22 Summary Notes

¹⁶ Action for Peacekeeping (A4P), United Nations Peacekeeping, <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/action-for-peacekeeping-a4p>

¹⁷ https://challengesforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/CAF22_report.pdf (p. 15).

¹⁸ https://challengesforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/CAF22_report.pdf (p. 5)

Book Reviews

India, and UN Peacekeeping: Through the Prism of Time. Edited by Major General PK Goswami, (KW Publishers Pvt Ltd, 05 October 2022), Pages: 522, Price:1425/-, ISBN-10 : 9394915109.

Since its inception, the United Nations has undertaken a total of 71 Peacekeeping Operations. Besides participation by troops, more than dozens of Indians have held high positions including Head of the Mission, Force Commander, Deputy Head of the Mission, Deputy Force Commander, and other senior-level appointments in some of the most complex peace operations. When it comes to intellectual contributions to peace operations, one is generally compelled to fall back on western literature, which finds more credibility in the academic circle across the world. The western literature on UN peace operations by some of the acclaimed academicians and scholars whose domain expertise comes from their years of research in the academic field. In India, the USI of India is the lead agency for all kinds of UN peace operations-related activities and can be called the unofficial holder of a collection of written works and takeaways from various discussions and engagements in peace operations. Those who contribute to USI either by their participation in discussions or periodical writing for journals are the practitioners some of whom have years of field experience. Besides, a few practitioners have been able to blend their expertise with academic research resulting in the recognition of USI for its resources at the international level. This is what sets apart the USI of India publications from other journals on UN peacekeeping.

The archive of the USI includes personal perspectives of some renowned Indian practitioners from the time of the initial days when India first participated in Korea as part of the Custodian force and until the latest contribution as late as 2022. *India and UN Peacekeeping: Through the Prism of Time* is a collection of the selected works by UN policy makers, Indian practitioners and diplomats who would have held important assignments in the Government of India as well as a few acclaimed academicians from across the world. *India and UN Peacekeeping: Through Prism of Time* is not just picking up contributions from the archive and then compiling them to produce a book. It is about putting together some of the important historical facts about Indian peacekeeping, and articulation on UN policy issues as well as making available the dynamics and challenges of contemporary UN peacekeeping

by statesmen, academicians, and practitioners. For that matter, even though India's earliest contribution to peacekeeping dates to 1960, learning in peacekeeping began from its participation in the custodian force during the Korean War even though it was not classical UN peacekeeping. But it laid out the road map for India's future participation in peacekeeping under the UN banner. To that end, the first two articles of the book – "*The Custodian Force in Korea*" and "*Peace-Making and War-Making in the Twentieth Century*" by Maj Gen Thorat the Head of the Indian Custodian Force in Korea and Mr KM Panikkar respectively, the Indian diplomat in 1956 assume importance. The first-hand account described in "*When Tshombe led the UN troops*", by Wing Commander Situ Mullick, the Press officer with the Indian Brigade of the Indian peacekeeping force that was part of the UN forces against the Katanga secessionist force in Congo brought out interesting information about the secessionist leader himself helping the UN force in its operations against the Katangese rebels. After neutralising the white mercenaries led by the Katanga force in January 1960, the Indian force was poised to take the battle right up to the Rhodesia (present-day Zimbabwe) border. What however came as a surprise is that Tshombe, the secessionist leader not only made a peace drive but also personally led the UN force through the rebel villages up to the border. His action made sure that the villagers did not fire at the UN troops and the UN troops did not have to retaliate. The history of this peacekeeping mission probably would have been slightly different if it was not for Tshombe. An account like this where the adversary leader or can also be called the enemy commander personally leads the UN force is not likely to be available in any UN chronicle. These three articles dig deep into the history of Indian participation and bring out facts that are generally not known to the public. Similarly, excerpts of talks delivered by senior officials of the UN like the Under Secretary General and author of the famous Brahimi Report (which is still referred to as the watershed study for the reform of UN peace operations) – "*The Role of United Nations in the Maintenance of International Peace and Security*" and "*Analysis of the Recommendations of the Brahimi Panel Report*," are only a few others that need mention.

From the time of its inception until now, the character of the UN peace operations has changed. What however has not changed

are the challenges and the basic idea of addressing these challenges to make peacekeeping more effective. In *“Global Flux and Dilemmas in UN Peacekeeping”*, Gen Sanderson the Force Commander of UNTAC highlighted the importance of the necessity to adhere to the UN Charter, the ambiguous definition of self-defence and the constraints of using force to implement the mandate. He reported that UNTACT had to defend an essential element of the mandate – the electoral process. In that context use of force against the rebels might compromise the strategic aim of the mission. He observed that the benefit of complying with an agreement must exceed the consequences of non-complying. Gen Sanderson raised a very relevant question about the use of force. He was of the opinion that when the mandate draws the authority from a charter to defend the sovereignty of states, and promote human rights, authorising the use of force against any party will be acting against the charter. Some of the shortcomings of peacekeeping which plagued even UNTACT like the complexity of command and control and lack of coordination between strategic and operational levels and within the mission continue to contribute towards the success or failure of peacekeeping. The need for politics to take the driver’s seat is one of the main or the first recommendations for peacekeeping reform.

In her address – *“The Challenges of Peacekeeping and Peace Support into the 21st Century 2015 – A Perspective”*, during the Challenges Forum meeting at USI of India, New Delhi in 2000, Annika Hilding-Norberg spelt out one of the key objectives of the projects that were undertaken with partners in the Challenges Forum as: “To encourage and facilitate increased co-operation and coordination between influential organisations and agencies from a wider variety of nations and cultures”. Even after two decades, this objective is the reality. For example, this was the idea of the annual event of Challenges Forum 2022 which was held in New Delhi in collaboration with USI of India.

One of the main challenges of some of the current peacekeeping missions in the African Region is the death of innocent civilians and the threat to the peacekeepers. The onus to protect its citizens and peacekeepers is that of the host state. This can happen only if there is a presence of democratic governance and a stable security sector. To this end, the General Assembly adopted the Global Framework for security sector reform

in the form of Agenda 2030 and 17 Sustainable Development Goals in 2015. When peacekeeping missions operate in an intra-state conflict environment, Security Sector Reform (SSR) must be part of the broader agenda of the mission. SSR-related activities must be aimed at improving the governance and the security sector. Attempts to reform the security sector by focusing only on modernizing the government military and police force with expensive equipment and training unless it includes civil society will be only temporary. More importantly, when the host states are involved in crimes against their citizens and the peacekeepers and are not amicable to support UN peace operations as seen in Mali, DRC, and South Sudan. This aspect was brought out by Amb Mukerji and Gen Chander Prakash in *“India and UN Peace Operations: Security Sector Reforms”* and continues to resonate across all peace operations.

It was a challenging task for the editor to be able to go through dozens of such works and then carefully select and compile them to make the edited book worth its content. The compilation of the articles in the edited volume of the book is listed chronologically. It begins with India’s first foray into peacekeeping as part of the Custodian Force and ends with some contemporary ideas and thoughts about the future challenges of UN peacekeeping in the context of the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. Students of peacekeeping and those who are inclined to research UN peacekeeping will now find the important information in one single place i.e. *India and UN Peacekeeping: Through the Prism of Time* edited by Maj Gen PK Goswami. The edited volume on UN peacekeeping has been able to achieve the objectives that were intended.

Maj Gen (Dr) AK Bardalai, (Retd)

Keeping the Peace - UN Peace Operations and their Effectiveness: An Assessment. Edited by Major General (Dr) AK Bardalai, Retd. (Pentagon Press LLP, 206, Peacock Lane, Shahpur Jat, New Delhi - 110049, Oct 2022); Pages 272; Price Rs 995/-; ISBN-978-93-90095-66-7

The book was released on 06 Oct 2022, at the USI of India by Per Olsson Fridh, Chair, Challenges Forum Partner Meeting, Director General of the Folke Bernadotte Academy and former Minister for International Development Cooperation in Sweden. The occasion was a seminar co-hosted by USI of India, New Delhi with

Challenges Forum, Sweden. The seminar theme 'Future of peacekeeping' was appropriate to the book. Authored by Maj Gen (Dr) AK Bardalai, the book reflects the author's ability to painstakingly scan all the critical events, which he had experienced first hand, while on the post as a Deputy Head of Mission and Deputy Force Commander in the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). It also brings in a larger landscape of various UN Peace Operations (UNPOs), deliberating on these from the perspective of their success or failure.

This book looks at the elusive topic of establishing an assessment criterion for the UNPOs. After creating a design and scale the author applies it to assess the performance of UNIFIL. The book in a lucid and easy-to-understand language develops a conceptual framework for the evaluation of UNPOs, assesses an existing mission and provides a validated scale. The scale can be used by future researchers or the UN Headquarters to assess the performance of any other UNPO. The author juxtaposed various research outcomes with his interpretations before developing an assessment criterion. He has a wonderful ability to put together events from the UN Headquarters, Mission and Force Headquarters' operational and tactical perspectives, thereby devolving a unique clarity to the entire picture.

The author in his book uses a conceptual framework for the evaluation and thus anchors the entire study in a priori literature and existing theoretical models. The scholarly works of each chapter are based on other UNPOs, specifically in the areas of inter-state conflicts. The author builds up the conceptual framework for the identification of criteria for the evaluation. In the research process development of a new scale or instrument of enquiry needs strict validity through an identified conceptual or theoretical model. In this case, the author used a case method approach and applied the identified variables to the UNIFIL. Modern research has been supporting a mixed method approach; thus Maj Gen (Dr) AK Bardalai has used the both quantitative and qualitative treatment on the scale, highlighting his research ability with data. The mixed approach provides empirical as well as perceptual study and offers a more robust treatment of the subject and wider acceptability of the results. The unique nature, location and complexities of UNIFIL make this mission a fit case on the criterion to assess a peace operation's outcomes.

The author has used UNIFIL as a case study because even though it is a traditional UNPO, the mission is unique in several ways. The mission is deployed in a geopolitically sensitive area and has witnessed the recurrence of violence and major conflicts between Israel and Lebanon. If a new inter-state conflict was to occur in this region again, the scope of the violence is likely to expand beyond the geographic region of the Middle East. UNIFIL is the only traditional peacekeeping mission where peacekeepers and formed units from a few European nations have participated. These peacekeepers are equipped with advanced weapons and equipment including main battle tanks and artillery guns, which are rare in a traditional peace operation mandated under Chapter VI of the UN Charter. Despite the prevailing security situation of the region and the delicate bilateral relationship between Israel and Lebanon, there has not been any major conflict between Israel and Lebanon for close to three decades, after the deployment of the UNIFIL-II after the war in 2006. These complexities make UNIFIL an exclusive case to develop and test a reliable set of criteria to assess a peace operation's outcomes.

The book is deftly organised into six chapters, providing a gradual backdrop and build-up to the final assessment. Chapters 1 and 2 introduce a reader to the emerging concepts of UNPOs, the causes for failure and their relevance. Besides the concepts, the author takes a reader through a well-discussed question as to why the UN missions fail. Ambiguity in the principles of UNPOs, mandate, latest debates on the protection of civilians, peace agreement, local stakeholders, leadership and UN budgetary controls form other parts of initial discussions. All these issues have an extremely important place in any UNPO and thus the author sets the stage for a clear understanding of the functional levels at the UN HQ and Mission areas.

Chapter 3 of the book explores a conceptual framework for assessing traditional UNPO. It goes through the existing evaluation practices and development evaluation criteria. UN missions are highly complex with many international and local stakeholders. In some of the missions, as many as 120 countries may be participating, and a large number of civilian staff, UN volunteers, and non-government organisations will also have some stakes in a mission's success. The main stakeholders will always be the local population and the host country's governing structures. The

chapter, therefore, looks at the UN performance evaluation discussing the evaluation design in a mixed-method approach. Mission effectiveness has been studied by many researchers and the same is different from different stakeholders' perspectives. The Chapter provides a peep into the effectiveness areas, thus setting the framework for evaluation. Innumerable factors can influence the effectiveness of a UNPO. The chapter provides an appropriate scale and design for the evaluation process.

In Chapter 4, the author discusses the UNIFIL mission, its challenges and the complexity of the mission. The mission has a substantial number of Western peacekeepers on the ground, but it also hosts a large number of non-Western boots on the ground from the global South. For any UNPO, local legitimacy and credibility are defining parameters to enable peacekeepers to help the UN in keeping the peace. Chapter 5 of the book is devoted to an assessment of UNIFIL through primary and secondary data. The author collated the primary data through a painstaking perception survey across the globe which also included the UN, non-UN, Western and Indian respondents, who had worked or were still working on that mission. Secondary data was operational data and activities of the mission available from open sources, interviews, responses to open-ended questionnaires, the UN data and many local newspaper reports.

The criteria identified through various studies, inputs of experts and iterations have been applied to the UNIFIL. The author has assiduously applied each criterion to identify important organisational and conflict-specific variables, with a direct influence on peace operations. The author further traces the indicators to assess the success or failure and applies these to the outcome of any traditional UNPO, in this case, UNIFIL. The use of qualitative and quantitative data at the operational level has been successfully made to carry out an objective assessment of this mission, thereby validating the scale of assessment. The data and arguments presented in the book are convincing, well-cited, and accurate, and are mostly brought to the current levels. The book has appropriate readability for those who are generally aware of the UNPOs. This is a well-documented book for research scholars interested in global conflict resolution, the functioning of the UN HQ as related to the UNPO and the complexities of a mission due to the local actors.

The final Chapter of the book gives a reader an overall assessment and recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness of UNPOs. The book is timely as with the Russia-Ukraine war and continuing dead-locks in the UN Security Council, many researchers and policymakers have again started questioning the utility of large-scale UNPOs. UNIFIL is a lighter mission with a combination of military observers and armed contingents, thus providing an alternative discussion point. Evaluating ongoing 12 UNPOs, especially those with multi-dimensional character, requires objective criteria and variables. The book provides a validated instrument and thus has implications for practitioners and academicians. The novelty of the book is that Maj Gen (Dr) AK Bardalai has provided a validated criterion for evaluations of the success or failures of any UNPOs. Applicability in all scenarios with appropriate selection of the samples and stakeholders for wide-ranging responses. Use by researchers in future evaluations of UNPOs and reframing UN security council mandates to target vulnerable areas.

Maj Gen (Dr) AK Bardalai concludes that UNIFIL has been successful in preventing bloodshed since the 2006 war and has contributed effectively towards the maintenance of peace and tranquillity in the geopolitically sensitive region of the Middle East. With his astute blending of personal experiences, he has applied his wide-ranging UN and UNPO knowledge to the research design and tested it on the UNIFIL mission to substantiate the assessment scale. The book has implications for both practitioners and academicians to apply the criterion and further develop it for multi-dimensional peace operations. This is a book that will be added to the larger UN-related literature, with a wide-ranging application on the ground.

Colonel (Dr) KK Sharma (Retd)

USI LATEST PUBLICATION DURING 2021-2020

Pub Code	Title of Book & Name of Author	Price(Rs)	Year
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OUR ACTIVITIES

Library and Reading Room

The library holds over 68,000 books, and journals, including some books of 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, on an astonishing variety of subjects. While the principal emphasis is on strategy and defence, there are a large number of works on different vistas of Indian life. There are memoirs, biographies, recollections, diaries, journals, manuscripts for scholars and researchers. The reading room is air-conditioned, spacious and well stocked in terms of current reading material. Library was automated in 2002.

Correspondence Courses

The Institution runs regular correspondence courses for officers of the Armed Forces to assist them in preparing for promotion examinations, and for the entrance examinations to the Defence Services Staff College and Technical Staff College. Over the years, this has been a significant and well-received activity.

USI Journal

The *USI Journal* is the oldest surviving defence journal in the country and in Asia, having first appeared in 1871. In an era when there is a feeling that free expression of views by Defence personnel is not looked upon kindly by the establishment, the Journal in fact provides just such a forum, without regard to seniority and length of service in the Armed Forces, subject of course, to propriety and quality of the written work.

Centre for Strategic Studies and Simulation

The Erstwhile Centre for Research and its resources have been merged into the new Centre named as USI Centre for Strategic Studies and Simulation (USI-CS3) wef 01 January 2005. The Centre aims at conducting detailed and comprehensive enquiry, research and analyses of national and international security related issues, and gaming and simulation of strategic scenarios, to evolve options for wider discussion and consideration.

USI Centre for UN Peacekeeping (CUNPK)

The Centre was established in 2000 and functioned with USI till Aug 2014, when it moved out of USI premises and was delinked from USI. Its aims were organising workshops, seminars and training capsules for peacekeepers, observers and staff officers – both

Indian and foreign. It also oversaw the practical training of Indian contingents. It functioned under a Board of Management headed by the Vice Chief of the Army Staff and worked in close coordination with the Service Headquarters and the Ministries of External Affairs and Defence. In August 2014, CUNPK moved out to the accommodation allotted by the Army HQ.

Centre for Military History and Conflict Studies (CMHCS)

The USI-Centre for Military History and Conflict Studies (USI-CMHCS) was established in December 2000 at the behest of the three Service Headquarters for encouraging an objective study of all facets of Indian military history with a special emphasis on the history of the Indian Armed Forces. It focuses on diverse aspects of the history of Indian military evolution, policies and practices-strategic, tactical, logistical, organisational, socio-economic, as well as the field of contemporary conflict studies in the broader sense.

Gold Medal Essay Competition

Every year the Institution organises a gold medal essay competition open to all officers. These essays, the first one of which was introduced in 1871, constitute a barometer of opinion on matters that affect national security in general and the defence forces in particular.

USI-War Wounded Foundation Joint Essay Competition

This essay competition was instituted in 2021 after signing of the MoU between USI and the War Wounded Foundation. The competition is open to all across the globe and must be on the subject of issues relating to the experiences and/or rehabilitation of war disabled personnel of the Armed Forces of India.

Lt Gen SL Menezes Memorial Essay Competition

This has been instituted from 2015 on a subject related to Armed Forces Historical Research. The Essay Competition is open to all across the globe.

Lectures, Discussions and Seminars

A series of lectures, discussions and seminars on service matters, international affairs, and topics of general interest to the Services, are organised for the benefit of local members in Delhi.

MacGregor Medal

This medal is awarded to Armed Forces personnel for valuable reconnaissance and adventure activity they may have undertaken.

MEMBERSHIP

The following are eligible to become members of the Institution :

- Officers of the Armed Forces
- Class I Gazetted Officers of Group 'A' Central Services.
- Any category mentioned above will be eligible even though retired or released from the Service.
- Cadets from the NDA and Cadets from the Service Academies and Midshipmen.

For further particulars, please write to Director General, USI of India, Rao Tula Ram Marg, (Opposite Signals Enclave) Post Bag No. 8, Vasant Vihar PO, New Delhi – 110 057

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