**DAYSTAR UNIVERSITY**

**IRS 340A: PEACE MISSIONS AND PEACEKEEPING**

**UNITED NATIONS AND PEACEKEEPING**

**Introduction**

The Blue Helmets, as UN peacekeepers are commonly known, have come to represent UN presence worldwide. Since the inception of the UN, these soldiers of peace have been deployed in over 66 peace missions, with the magnitude of these PKOs expanding rapidly in the 1990s and at the onset of the 21st Century. From the time of its inception, the UN has been regularly called upon to deescalate rising tensions between foes and to prevent raging wars from causing widespread harm to human life and the peaceful interaction between societies and nations. Such UN presence in conflict hotspots was originally developed as a means of dealing with inter-state conflict, though this has dramatically changed due to the explosion of intra-state conflicts which required the UN to reinvent itself to suit these modern breaches to international peace and security. The traditional gave way to modern “multidimensional” peacekeeping that has also included non-military tasks, with a growing number of UN peacekeeping being composed of a range of components including military, civilian police, political, civil affairs, rule of law, human rights, humanitarian, reconstruction, public information and gender. Some of these operations do not have a military component but carry out their mandates alongside a regional or multinational peacekeeping force. This topic examines the evolution of UN peacekeeping, the operationalization of UN peacekeeping, the main components (actors and issues) of a peace mission and the organizational structure of a typical multidimensional mission.

**The Evolution of UN Peacekeeping**

The UN was established in 1945 with the lofty goal of “saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war.” Being a body of sovereign states willingly joining it and giving it the custodianship of international peace and security, the UN would document its mission in its Charter. These states agreed on the principle of collective security whereby they would bring the overwhelming force of the many over a belligerent state that was going the norms set in the attainment of international peace and security. While the UNSC was mandated to be the implementer of this mandate, there had been no forethought as to the future needs for peacekeeping, with the UN putting faith in the functioning of the Military Staff Committee and a standby force under Article 43. The failure of this mechanism in the wake of Cold War arms posturing and ideological divide stranded the UN in its maintenance of international peace and security. In the failure of the collective security system in the stalemated Security Council, the UN under the leadership of Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld, practically interpreted the provisions under Chapter VI and VII to institute peacekeeping as Chapter VI-a-half measures. Such a peacekeeping force would comprise mainly of a multinational force of lightly-armed blue-helmeted soldiers that would be sent to be juxtaposed between two warring states for the purposes of observing a ceasefire and enable these parties pursue diplomatic channels to end their conflict.

The lack of a legal backing and in the absence of a clear theoretical basis for peacekeeping was what would lead to consensus-building as to what principles peacekeeping would espouse and the definition of peacekeeping. As mission after mission was rolled out, it was agreed that these operations would be centred on the principles of neutrality/partiality, use of force only in self-defense and consent by the parties to a conflict. The initial phase of peacekeeping (known as traditional peacekeeping) would last most of the Cold War period and resulting in 18 PKOs. The changing nature of conflict and new perspectives on human security in the 1990s made the UN to redefine peacekeeping to incorporate other dimensions besides monitoring ceasefires and patrolling buffer zones. This new peacekeeping, would come to be known as Complex or Multidimensional peacekeeping. It entailed;

* Assist in implementing a comprehensive peace agreement;
* Monitor a ceasefire or cessation of hostilities to allow space for political negotiations and a peaceful settlement of disputes;
* Provide a secure environment encouraging a return to normal civilian life;
* Prevent the outbreak or spillover of conflict across borders;
* Lead states or territories through a transition to stable government based on democratic principles, good governance and economic development; and
* Administer a territory for a transitional period, thereby carrying out all the functions that are normally the responsibility of a government.

The shift from traditional to multidimensional peacekeeping was accelerated by the *Agenda for Peace,* an annual report of 1992 by the then UNSG Boutros Boutros-Ghali who underscored the importance of peacekeeping (alongside preventive diplomacy, peace enforcement and post-conflict reconstruction) as essential in meeting the new challenges of inter-state conflicts which had global dimensions. This post-traditional phase has witnessed more than 50 PKO which have come to be known as peace operations or peace support operations (PSO) or special political missions (SPM).

The Brahimi Report (2000) went further in redefining what peacekeeping should entail. According to this report PKOs are operations dispatched immediately after a conflict (regardless of whether the conflict is within a state or between states) that are based on the three core principles of peacekeeping though neutrality is replaced with impartiality which refers to a mission’s achievement of its mandate based on the principles of the UN Charter. Peacekeeping has now evolved to embrace elements of peacebuilding where concerted efforts are put in place after the successful ending of war by peacekeepers who subsequently seek to build destroyed institutional and social structures. This is to ensure that communities are returned to pre-conflict levels of interactions minus the conditions predisposing them to conflict. This involves resettlement of refugees, building of the key government ministries essential for provision of services such as education, health, trade, security and environmental conservation. Peacebuilding efforts further extend to reconciliation activities, building of democratic and electoral structures to ensure that governance is firmly rooted in these societies since it is argued by liberal peacebuilders that democracy fosters peace and development.

**Principles of UN Peacekeeping**

1. Consent
2. Impartiality
3. Non-use of force (see Lesson Two notes)

Besides these core principles, the Capstone Doctrine has expanded these to include other conditions deemed vital to peacekeeping. These are credibility, legitimacy and national and local ownership. The credibility of the mission hinges on it meeting the expectations of the affected nation. Legitimacy will also be determined by how impartial a force is, the conduct of the personnel to respect local culture. Ownership by the host government and people demonstrates their commitment to peace and thus will enable the mission to encounter minimal resistance.

**The Main Components of a UN Peacekeeping Mission**

A typical UN peace mission has various key players who facilitate its inception and ensure the successful completion of a mandate. The Secretariat under the leadership of the Secretary General at the UN headquarters in New York, the UNSC and UNGA, Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) and Police Contributing Countries (PCCs), donors (bilateral and multilateral), member countries of the UN, neighbouring countries to a conflict are some of the key players. Besides these are the UN Specialized agencies such as the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights (UNHCR), Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), World Food Programme (WFP), International Organization for Migration IOM, and World Health Organization (WHO) which partner NGOs such as *Medecins sans Frontieres,* OXFAM, World Vision, ICRC and Amnesty International to offer specialized attention to displaced persons and refugees.

The UN Charter gives the UNSC the power and responsibility to take collective action in the maintenance of international peace and security. It is through Security Council resolutions that peacekeeping missions are issued with *mandates-* the authority to perform certain tasks as cited in a UNSC resolution to contain a particular situation. This mandate will make reference to provisions of the Charter and might authorize the use of force under Chapter VII as a situation may demand. The General Assembly, can bring to the attention of the Security Council situations it considers threats to peace. Mandates are however eventually negotiated by the Council in response to analysis and recommendations provided in reports of the Secretary-General about the situation in the country who is authorized under Article 99 to alert the Council of such threats to international peace and security. A mandate so authorized by the Security Council will enable a mission to be set up and be deployed to the field for a specified period of time. The Security Council can renew the mandate of a particular mission or even revise such a mandate to include less or more tasks until the mission is withdrawn.

Troop and police contributing countries (known collectively as the C34) allow the UN to deploy personnel on the ground from traditionally neutral countries. As of February 2016, 124 countries were contributing 105,000 personnel in PKOs. Member states of the UN are also actively engaged in peacekeeping through the monitoring of progress brought to the General Assembly from Special Committees of the Assembly.

UN Specialized agencies play an important role in multidimensional peacekeeping by assisting the peacekeepers to implement a mandate that go beyond separating combatants to resettlement of displaced persons, accounting for lost relatives, providing aid relief, and other components of peacebuilding. Alongside NGOs, these agencies promote the peacekeeping element of humanitarian intervention and a Responsibility to Protect (R2P). The concern for the welfare of people in conflict hotspots could be traced to the formation of the UN and the subsequent Charter provisions that stressed the paramountcy of human life and affirmed the desire of the UN to promote the advancement of human progress. The institution of the UDHR in 1948 as well as the codification of the international humanitarian law (law of armed conflict) grounded the UN in its concern for the individual and away from national security as the sole determinant of international peace and security. This interest in human security would be rekindled in the 1990s as a result of the untold suffering faced by people in countries imploding due to ethnic and political conflict. Widespread poverty and the apparent failure of the state to provide basic needs warranted the UN and these specialized agencies to assume more responsibilities as peacekeeping did more than just keep combatants apart.

Peacekeeping requires a huge financial outlay for the purchase and transportation of military hardware, the payment of allowances to field staff, the purchase of essential supplies for the mission staff and for the displaced persons and for other operational expenses. Member states are the main source of funding though the World Bank has played a role in this.

The ownership of a mission by neighbouring countries to a conflict is also a major component of any UN peacekeeping. Their cooperation in allowing the transit of UN staff as well as housing refugees is useful in mitigating human suffering while at the same time enabling peacekeeping to build a solid coalition of peace and bring this force to bear on belligerents to embrace peace. These neighbouring countries also play a role in curtailing the inflow and outflow of weapons and militants to such hotspots and thus assist in quenching the flames of war.

**The Operationalization of UN Peacekeeping**

A conflict hotspot, once alerted to the UN by a member state or the Secretary General, the UNSC will authorize a technical reconnaissance mission to assess the conditions on the ground. This integrated assessment mission to the country or territory where the mission is to be established assesses the overall security, political, humanitarian, human rights and military conditions and the needs and potential impact of a UN mission. Once the Security Council has authorized a mission (by a majority vote of nine out of the fifteen without a veto), the DPKO will begin the resource mobilization, first, in selecting the top leadership of a mission, and second in establishing an ad hoc committee to solicit contributions from member countries. The budget will be approved by the General Assembly. Member states may volunteer troops, police, equipment, supplies or other support with these contributors being reimbursed from the eventual funding for the mission.

The absence of a standing force or fund kitty means that each mission has to procure this from member states. In the meantime, diplomatic efforts between top DPKO staff and countries where the forces will be deployed begin to secure consent, determine the size of the force to be deployed and agree on *Rules of Engagement* (that define the use of force, the operational area of the mission). Rules of Engagement (ROE) specify the guidelines for the use of force in protecting the mandate of a mission. ROE are primarily aimed at force protection and preventing an unprovoked use of force that could initiate a crisis. These rules of engagement are also included in the Status of Force Agreement (SOFA) that is an agreement between the host state and the Force Commander on the stationing of foreign troops in locations within a country and the right to bear arms. This consent is crucial to the entry of peacekeepers. Once this is agreed, the mission is deployed.

Deployment usually proceeds soon after taking into account the prevailing security and political conditions, with an advance team being sent to procure facilities with subsequent reinforcements following. Peacekeeping forces usually serve for a certain period of time before being replaced by other contingents.

The specific rules governing a mission’s operation will be contained in Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). These will be sets of instructions covering the various features of operation and administration. These will ensure the professionalism of the PKO with the personnel being accountable to the Force Commander and the Chief Administration Officer.

While in operation, the appraisal of the mission will be by the SRSG whose reporting to the UNSG will form the annual reporting to the UNSC. It is from these deliberations in the Council that a mandate may be reviewed, renewed or ended.

**The Organizational Structure of a UN Peace Mission**

The DPKO and the DPA play a key role in the establishment and organization of peacekeeping missions. The former is responsible for planning, managing, deploying, supporting and, on behalf of the Secretary-General, providing executive direction to all UN peacekeeping operations. It also performs similar functions in support of peace and security operations that are predominantly civilian such as the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). The DPA partners with the DPKO in conflict prevention, peacemaking and peacebuilding.

The Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) is the overall leader of a mission, responsible for reporting to the UNSC on progress, making political and diplomatic contacts with the stakeholders in ensuring compliance to Charter provisions for resolution of the conflict and ensure assistance to a mission is given.

The Force Commander is responsible for the military forces deployed. He is usually from the largest army contingent.

The Chief Administrative Officer manages the logistical, technical and staffing aspects of a mission.

Under these will be specialized staff engaged in

* Personnel and administration,
* Military intelligence,
* Operations,
* Logistics,
* planning,
* Communications,
* Training,
* Engineering and
* CIMIC (civil-military component.).

**New Developments in UN Peacekeeping**

The DPKO has been revamped with administrative and logistics under the Department of Field Support (DFS). The “Capstone Doctrine” (2008) introduced reviewed guidelines for peacekeeping operations, with new policies, SOPs and a policy for civil affairs.

In 2009, the “New Horizon Initiative” sought to redefine the policy as regards partnerships between peacekeepers and other stakeholders. This came to be known as the *Global Field Support Strategy.*

**Conclusion**

Peacekeeping has been the UN flagship project and since its inception, its size and scope has expanded tremendously. More resources by the UN are being channeled to stabilizing conflict-ravaged countries, re-establishing institutions of political and economic governance and meeting the social and human needs of people. To do this, the UN needs key players to initiate, establish and manage PKOs. Member countries, subsidiary organs and specialized agencies have collaborated with NGOs and IFIs to pool resources and establish the mechanism for peacekeeping. A case study of PKO in an upcoming lecture will reveal these elements as well as in identifying the successes of peacekeeping and the challenges faced.