



## PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

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Traditionally, peacekeeping has been defined as a process where a group of lightly armed military personnel stood *between* two parties in a conflict who had agreed to a ceasefire. The conventional tenets guiding the process are impartiality, minimum use of force and acquiring the consent of involved parties. However, the nature and scope of conflict has changed since peacekeeping was first conceived. Whereas in the past, conflicts were mostly seen between two states (inter-state), today many conflicts happen between two or more groups in the same state (intra-state). At the same time, there has been increased hostility and targeting of civilians, and all involved parties are not following commonly accepted international conventions for conflict.

Nowadays, contemporary peace operations encompass a wide array of activities including peace making, and rebuilding.

### PEACE KEEPING

**Peacekeeping refers to traditional types of peace operations.** It is a process where a group of lightly armed military personnel stand *between* two parties in a conflict who have agreed to a ceasefire, in order to keep the peace. It must fulfil several requirements:

- **Consensual operation:** Peacekeeping takes place after a ceasefire and implies the request or agreement of involved parties to an external intervention
- **International conflict:** Peacekeeping only takes place in a conflict between two or more states with a defined battlefield
- **Respect for accepted laws** of armed conflict by combatants
- **Impartiality and minimum use of force:** UN troops observe from the ground and report impartially on adherence to the ceasefire, troop withdrawal or other elements of the peace agreement.

Peacekeeping creates time and breathing space for diplomatic efforts to address the underlying causes of conflict. It is a diplomatic rather than a military solution. This operation type is considered as being first generation.

### A NEW GENERATION OF PEACE OPERATION

Initially intended to deal with dispute between two countries, modern conflicts are a complex mix: their roots may be essentially internal, but they are complicated by cross-border involvement, either by states or by economic interests and other non-state actors. As a result, the structure of peacekeeping missions has also changed.

#### 1. Expanding purposes: Peace making, peace building or peace enforcement

Among the tasks discharged by peacekeeping operations over the years are:

- Maintenance of ceasefires and separation of forces;
- Preventative deployment; protection of humanitarian operations; and,
- Implementation of a comprehensive peace settlement.

Increasingly, UN peacekeeping operations are multidimensional, including military, civilian police, political, civil affairs, rule of law and elections monitoring, human rights, humanitarian, reconstruction, public information and gender affairs. We are now more often talking about peacemaking or peacebuilding, and even peace enforcement.

**Peacemaking** addresses conflicts in progress, attempting to bring them to a halt, using the tools of diplomacy and mediation.

**Peacebuilding** is a term of more recent origin that defines UN activities to establish the foundations of peace and provide the tools for building on those foundations. Peacebuilding includes, but is not limited to, reintegrating former combatants into civilian society, security sector reform, strengthening the rule of law, improving respect for human rights, providing technical assistance for democratic development and promoting conflict resolution and reconciliation techniques.

The resolutions creating the peace operation refer themselves more and more to Chapter VII of the UN Charter (coercive actions), but the mission can be a mixture of coercive actions and not coercive; the recourse to a coercive device has for a durable peace as an objective, based on the national reconciliation, internal democratisation and the protection of any humanitarian assistance. When the mission includes coercive actions, we can talk about **peace enforcement**.

## **2. New characteristics:**

- The mission can be deployed without consent of all parties to the conflict and can be constituted by both military and civil officers.
- The Official Military Peacekeepers cooperate more and more with the humanitarian agencies.
- Non-governmental organisations work in the field.
- The tasks are multiple, complex and have a long term presence.
- They have the following roles:
  - o Maintenance of peace
  - o Peace Consolidation
  - o Peace Imposition
  - o Reconstruction
  - o Intervention and humanitarian support

## **3. The development of regional peacekeeping forces and coalitions of the willing**

Over the past decade peace operations have taken on a new face. Indeed, the lack of essential equipment, hardware and personnel has been a major limiting factor for many peace operations, especially during the 1990s.

Today, even if the role of the UN remains central (peace operations continue to generally be created by a mandate of the Security Council), the UN tends to increase its cooperation with regional actors such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), the European Union, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the African Union, the Economic Community of the States of Africa of the West (CEDEAO), the Community of Independent States (CEI), or the Organization of the American States (OEA).

Thus, nowadays, many of the UN operations do not have a military component but carry out their mandates alongside a non-UN regional or multinational peacekeeping force.