

## Executive Summary

*“There are many tasks which United Nations peacekeeping forces should not be asked to undertake and many places they should not go. But when the United Nations does send its forces to uphold the peace, they must be prepared to confront the lingering forces of war and violence, with the ability and determination to defeat them.”*

– Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, August 2000

In trying to meet many of the peacekeeping challenges thrust upon it in the mid-1990s, the United Nations experienced some dramatic failures. Determined not to repeat that experience as demand for peace operations surged again at the end of the decade, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan asked a high-level group of experts to assess the UN system’s shortcomings and to make frank and realistic recommendations for change. Issued in August 2000, the *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations* (known as the “Brahimi Report” after the Panel chair, UN Under-Secretary-General Lakhdar Brahimi) offered an in-depth critique of the conduct of UN operations and made specific recommendations for change. Only by making such changes, the Panel argued, would the United Nations be able to meet the critical 21<sup>st</sup> century peacekeeping and peacebuilding challenges presented by its member states.

Three years after this landmark study, the United Nations finds itself at a pivotal point. Rancorous debate about the UN’s global role has occupied New York, triggered first by the post-9/11 environment and spurred further by events in Iraq and Washington’s assertive use of force there. Nevertheless, the UN continues to run fact-finding missions, 13 peacekeeping operations and 12 peacebuilding and political missions in post-conflict societies, with new operations on the horizon. For UN peacekeeping operations alone, more than 90 countries were contributing over 40,000 police and military personnel in the fall of 2003. Because key recommendations of the Brahimi Report are now in practice, the United Nations is better positioned today to meet these demands for peace operations than at any time in its history.

In general, the United Nations has demonstrated clear progress in implementing a majority of reforms recommended by the Panel on UN Peace Operations. The Report’s more concrete and operational recommendations, implementable by the UN bureaucracy, fared better than those pitched at the level of doctrine or strategy or those addressed to the member states themselves. We summarize our study of the implementation of the Brahimi Report

recommendations here, organized by categories: Doctrine and Strategy, Capacity for Operations, and Rapid and Effective Deployment.

## **ISSUES OF DOCTRINE AND STRATEGY**

### **The Need for Preventive Action and a Peacebuilding Strategy**

The Secretary-General (S-G) and the Security Council both endorsed the Report's call for greater use of fact-finding missions to areas of tension. The Security Council has increased its own use of fact-finding visits and the S-G's use of these and related special political missions has grown, although funding and support for these missions varies. As urged by the Report, the S-G instructed the in-house Executive Committee on Peace and Security (ECPS) to craft a better-integrated UN peacebuilding strategy. The resulting November 2001 peacebuilding "Plan of Action" offered only general guidelines, however, and has lacked follow-up, demonstrating a need for a better internal driver of peacebuilding strategies.

### **The Need for Clear, Credible, and Achievable Mandates**

The Brahimi Report urged the UN Secretariat not to pull its punches when laying out requirements for an operation in a potentially dangerous environment, and to tell the Security Council when a possible operation exceeded its capacity. The Secretariat has begun to operate this way, evidenced by its declining to take on a military role in Afghanistan in 2001 while embracing more doable mandates for robust operations in Liberia and in unsettled parts of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DR Congo) in 2003. The Council promised, in a series of resolutions and presidential statements, to greatly increase its consultations with troop contributing countries when drafting mandates or weighing changes that could increase risks to troops in the field. While consultations have increased, the Council did not set up the standing subsidiary body recommended by the Panel for troop contributor consultations.

### **Requirements for Effective Peacekeeping in Complex Operations**

The Panel urged recognition that effective peacekeeping in complex operations requires the will to use force if necessary to maintain a secure environment in which peacebuilding efforts can go forward. The member states' Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations agreed that "UN peacekeepers...once deployed, must be capable of accomplishing the mission's mandate and of defending themselves and, where mandated, other mission components," but did not endorse the Report's call for "robust" forces and rules

of engagement. This latter element was first tested with the new mandates for UN peacekeeping missions in the DR Congo and Liberia in 2003, which meet the Report's criteria for robust operations. Both operations also allow peacekeepers to act, within their means, to halt violence against civilians within their areas of operation—authority that the Report argued is implicit in the principles of the UN Charter.

### **Requirements for Effective Peacebuilding in Complex Operations**

The Panel recognized the role that UN peacebuilding efforts play in consolidating a post-conflict peace. Peacekeepers protect peacebuilders, the substantive civilian members of a complex operation, who help create the conditions that enable peacekeepers to go home. Among the peacebuilding tools stressed by the Brahimi Report, quick impact projects (QIPs)—designed to generate early improvement in a local population's quality of life—are now a routine feature of first-year peacekeeping mission budgets, as urged. The recommendation to also fund disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) in those budgets has been partially met—funding to reintegrate demobilized fighters and help them find productive work has only recently been added to a mission budget (Liberia). Delays in voluntary funding for reintegration can increase the risk of crime and violence in the mission area, making assessed start-up funds an urgent priority for all operations with DDR responsibilities.

The Report argued that international civilian police could not function effectively without support from a criminal justice system and close attention to and training in human rights. It called for a “doctrinal shift” toward “rule of law teams” in complex peace operations that combined police, judicial, legal, and human rights experts. The SG denied the need for a doctrinal shift, but the ECPS sponsored an in-house Rule of Law Task Force to survey UN capabilities in this area. A new, two-person staff in the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) is tasked with implementing the task force recommendations and drafting a “rule of law framework” for peace operations. Despite SG support for the Panel's measures to increase the capacity of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva to plan the human rights components of peace operations and use advanced information technology to support the field investigations, all but a few staffing increases were rebuffed by member states.

### **The Challenge of Transitional Civil Administration**

By late 1999, the UN Secretariat had become a temporary trustee, in all but name, of Serbia's province of Kosovo and of East Timor (now Timor Leste).

The Brahimi Report argued that the Secretariat, which is wary of this role, nonetheless needed to prepare for it lest similar future assignments end badly. Leaders of the Kosovo and Timor missions stressed the need for interim legal tools for use by transitional administrations in failed states. The Report urged study of an interim criminal code for use in peace operations. A Secretariat panel reported that a code of criminal *procedure* could be valuable to future operations and responsibility for drafting such rules was deflected to an office with no funds or new staff to create it. The Rule of Law Program at the United States Institute of Peace has independently taken on the task of drafting a model criminal code and code of procedures, however, and was seeking outside comment as of late 2003.

### **Recommendations: Doctrine and Strategy**

Emphasizing the unimplemented elements of what the Brahimi Report termed a “doctrinal shift” in the UN’s approach to rule of law elements and support for peacebuilding, the United Nations and member states should:

- Review and assess the ability of the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) to backstop successfully the increased numbers of fact-finding missions and special political missions, and consider an outside management review for DPA comparable to that given DPKO in 2001.
- Include disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration funding for ex-combatants in the first-year mission budgets of all peace operations with DDR responsibilities and allow unspent funds to roll over into subsequent years for missions like the peacekeeping operation in the DRC (MONUC) whose programs are delayed by local politics.
- Analyze the current roadblocks to UN capacity to support restoration of governance, transitional administration, civilian police (with or without executive authority), and other rule of law components in field operations. Address how best to integrate UN capacity in these areas with the capacity and programs of regional organizations such as the European Union and the African Union.
- Address seriously the issue of a criminal code and code of procedures for transitional administrations to apply ad interim and for use in training prospective mission personnel.
- Create a reserve capacity to undertake transitional administration operations, expanding UN civilian recruitment rosters to include job descriptions unique to transitional administrations.

## **CAPACITY FOR ANTICIPATING, PLANNING, AND MANAGING OPERATIONS**

### **Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Management**

The United Nations has no single, co-located team dedicated to managing information, tracking multiple crisis and conflict trends, recommending preventive action based on those trends, or anticipating international UN requirements for either peacekeeping or peacebuilding. Repeated efforts to create such a capacity have been resisted by UN member states. The Panel recommended establishing an ECPS-based information and strategic analysis staff (EISAS) to tackle such tasks. Member states again opposed the measure, allowing only a small ECPS support secretariat. DPKO's Best Practices Unit and Situation Center, however, are evolving rapidly as part of a peace operations knowledge network, and DPA's Policy Planning Unit is developing support networks outside the UN system. Combined with the growing number of UN headquarters personnel with field experience, such offices may permit some of the Report's objectives to be met by widely dispersed people using a few common data libraries and joint reporting and analysis criteria. As recommended, an UN-wide Extranet is being developed to connect headquarters and UN missions worldwide with broadband communications. UN policies and procedures posted to the extranet will promote delegation of authority to missions and thus greater speed and efficiency in hiring, management, and procurement, plus rapid sharing of best practices.

### **Integrated Mission Task Forces**

What DPKO called mission task forces, pre-Brahimi, were *ad hoc* groups that met infrequently and gave little voice to other, non-DPKO UN elements expected to contribute people and expertise to new missions. The Report stressed the need for real joint planning for operations through "Integrated Mission Task Forces (IMTFs)," an attempt to push the UN, and the ECPS in particular, toward common decision-making. Since 2000, bodies called IMTFs have been created for UN missions (e.g., Afghanistan) and have improved horizontal discussion and planning. These IMTFs, however, have lacked decision authority and recourse to higher-level bodies for validation or appeal, serving more as brainstorming and drafting committees. The UN system still tends to resolve issues upward through a single chain of decision makers (e.g., from the DPKO Office of Operations to the head of DPKO to the Secretary-General), leaving other departments and agencies little say in the final decisions. Working mission leadership into the planning process effectively at an early stage has also proven difficult. Again, the tendency is to channel all decisions

through the designated leader rather than to delegate authority for solving pieces of the problem. These structural and cultural issues must be resolved if the UN is to plan and execute robust operations effectively.

### **Rebuilding the Secretariat**

The Brahimi Report recognized the need to revitalize and reorganize the understaffed UN offices that support peace operations. The Panel’s proposals to enlarge and restructure DPKO, seek emergency and sustained funding, and change its management culture were expanded upon by an independent management review conducted in the spring of 2001. Since then, DPKO has grown (191 new posts), military and civilian police planning and support have been separated and made organizationally coequal. As a result, the UN can do a far better job of supporting all aspects of peace operations, military and civilian, at both the political and operational levels, although DPKO remains short-staffed in the police/rule of law area and in planning for the civilian elements of peace operations.

The department has largely embraced “change management,” although full implementation of a new management culture may have to await staff turnover in key places. Meanwhile, however, field-headquarters interactions now benefit from being more two-way: field leaders periodically come to New York for consultation at UN headquarters and desk officers swap assignments with field managers to experience each other’s problems firsthand.

The UN Department of Political Affairs, the UN’s closest analog to a foreign affairs ministry, lacks its own sources of political reporting from the field (except where special political missions are established) and until recently has largely lacked contact with area experts outside the UN system (some recent initiatives have begun to redress this gap). Born a decade ago as an amalgamation of older units and duties, DPA needs an outside management review comparable to that given DPKO in 2001. In 2002, DPA agreed to transfer to DPKO the management of all complex peace operations—including those, like Afghanistan, which lack troops or police. In turn, DPKO agreed to focus on operations and leave high politics to DPA. This agreement is largely being implemented and has helped to ensure mutual support, for example, by drawing DPKO representatives into ongoing peace negotiations.

The Brahimi Report addressed just two offices within DPA. It recommended establishing a pilot Peacebuilding Unit—whose status remains unresolved three years later—and regularized funding for the overbooked Electoral Affairs Division, where staff has increased modestly but which still receives more requests for electoral assistance than it can handle.

It is important that the UN's newly developed support capabilities be sustained through fluctuations in the intensity of UN operations. Expert staff takes time to find, train, and familiarize, and sustaining that expertise is the organization's most cost-effective option in the long run. Even after its recent growth, the cost of headquarters operational support is just five percent of the total cost of UN peacekeeping, a very reasonable "overhead" charge that few corporations could match. It reflects a long-overdue process of change and renewal that is well worth preserving.

### **Recommendations: Capacity for Anticipating, Planning, and Managing Operations**

In this area, the United Nations and member states should:

- Reconsider the UN's pressing need for strategic information gathering and analysis in light of 9/11, the bombing of UN offices in Iraq, and other challenges facing field personnel; improving such capacity would promote both the safety and security of field personnel and effective mission planning and implementation.
- Fund fully Secretariat plans for creative use of advanced information technology, recognizing that UN spending in this area, as a fraction of total budget, lags far behind other international organizations such as the World Bank.
- Revise and if necessary relabel the IMTF concept to reflect an evolving, multi-tier planning process that both affirms the lead department concept and gives an effective voice to mission resource providers outside DPKO:
  - Create a *mission strategy group*, comprising the heads of DPA, DPKO, and Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), chaired by DPA and with the participation of the mission Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG), when appointed; enable this group to approve basic mission objectives for presentation to the Secretary-General and Security Council and also to function as the appeals board for issues unresolved by the IMTF.
  - Include in each IMTF the mission's technical assessment team; have IMTFs chaired by the mission's Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General (DSRSG), when appointed, with a deputy chair designated jointly by DPKO's Assistant Secretaries-General (ASGs) for Operations and for Mission Support; have IMTFs create the detailed concept of operations and coordinate the contributions of mission asset

providers, with disputes referred to the mission strategy group for resolution.

- Give DPKO and other Secretariat elements that support peace operations a stable funding base to retain skilled, experienced staff as operations come and go and as the total mission budget fluctuates:
  - Establish current Peacekeeping Support Account staffing levels as a “floor” that will not be breached unless Support Account funding exceeds ten percent of mission budgets for two consecutive years.
  - Maintain, otherwise, Peacekeeping Support Account staff levels at five percent of total peacekeeping mission budgets, calculated on a five-year moving average, with provision for emergency staffing in years when mission budgets increase substantially.
  - Consider moving the Peacekeeping Support Account (now about \$112 million/year) into the regular biennium budget, as recommended by the Brahimi Report, while moving peacekeeping operations (UNTSO and UNMOGIP) and special political missions that are now funded in the regular budget (at about \$118 million/year) into a broadened “peace operations mission budget.”
- Give the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights the people that it needs to improve the recruitment, selection, and training of human rights experts for complex peace operations and provide for their integration into mission planning and into rule of law teams.
- Support DPA’s acquisition of voluntary money and people for the pilot Peacebuilding Unit to analyze how and why peacebuilding measures succeed or fail; have the unit work closely with the DPKO Best Practices Unit; make the PBU a regular budget item in the 2006-2007 biennium budget if the pilot program is productive.
- Give DPA’s oversubscribed Electoral Assistance Division the support it needs to meet member states’ requests for election-related advice, including assessed operational funding akin to that given special political missions.

## **RAPID AND EFFECTIVE DEPLOYMENT**

### **Defining Deployment Benchmarks**

The Brahimi Report proposed the first rapid deployment benchmarks for peace operations, to aid peace negotiators, mission planners, and troop contributors alike. The SG and member states agreed to a UN definition of “rapid and effective deployment capabilities,” identifying it as deploying a traditional (e.g., border monitoring) operation within 30 days and deploying a

complex operation within 90 days of receiving the mandate to do so. For planning purposes, these missions were defined to have 5,000 and 10,000 troops, respectively, with corresponding numbers of police and other civilian personnel.

### **Advance Planning and Spending Authority**

The Brahimi Report recommended that mandates for new operations be held in draft until the necessary troops had been found to carry them out. The Council offered instead to create “planning mandates” that would let the S-G canvass states for troops, with full implementation deferred until the S-G received adequate commitments of troops. The \$50 million pre-mandate spending authority recommended by the Report was found to exist already but without clear implementing mechanisms, which were finally developed in the summer of 2003 for use in planning the new UN peacekeeping operation in Liberia.

### **Improving Mission Leadership**

The Brahimi Panel recommended measures to improve the recruitment, selection, training and guidance of mission leaders. The Secretary-General formed a Senior Appointments Group to establish a leadership profile, consolidate a roster of “eminent persons” available for rapid deployment, and identify senior UN personnel ready to take on field assignments. The Special Committee, however, insisted that political candidates for leadership posts be considered, roster or not, and failed to endorse the Report’s emphasis on managerial talent and experience as qualifications for mission leadership. The Panel also urged, and the S-G endorsed, advance assembly of mission leaders at the United Nations, which has taken place. The DPKO has established standard briefings for them at UN headquarters two to three days before deployment. Pre-mission training for senior leaders still lags; there continue to be relatively few women in top leadership positions in field missions; and it is unclear whether headquarters has improved its “strategic guidance” to mission leaders.

### **Recruiting and Deploying Capable Military Forces**

To support rapid deployment of UN operations, the Panel urged better use of DPKO’s UN Stand-by Arrangements System (UNSAS), the voluntary roster of member state forces that can be made available for peace operations. A reorganized UNSAS now includes four levels of commitment, including a new “Rapid Deployment Level” (RDL) for troop resources available within 30/90 days of a Security Council mandate, as specified in a detailed memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the country and the United Nations. DPKO also

seeks quarterly updates from the more than 75 member states that list capabilities in UNSAS.

Progress is slowly being made toward the Panel goal of adding “brigade-size forces, with the necessary enabling forces” to the Rapid Deployment Level. In addition to the primarily European Stand-by High Readiness Brigade (SHIRBRIG, on which the Report’s recommendation was based), the European Union plans to have substantial, rapidly deployable peacekeeping forces; the African Union aims to create five multinational brigades; and four South Asian states (Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, and India) have contributed forces to the UN’s “Ituri Brigade” in DR Congo—a force created in the field rather than in advance, but a step forward nonetheless.

In line with the Brahimi Report, DPKO has created a Military On-Call List to facilitate rapid deployment of the military headquarters staffs of new missions. Nine key officers (“Group I”) would be expected to arrive at UN headquarters within a week of call-up to aid mission planning. Group II personnel (the rest of the roster) would be expected to report to a mission staging area within two weeks of call-up. DPKO hopes that member states will name individuals to at least the Group I slots but for the most part states pledge “expertise,” not people, to the list.

To ensure that pledged forces meet UN requirements and the terms of MOUs, DPKO uses pre-deployment inspections, followed by in-mission inspections and operational assessments once forces deploy. When countries’ forces do not meet specifications, DPKO attempts to pair them with third-country equipment providers or may draw equipment from its new Strategic Deployment Stocks (see “Logistics” section below).

Finally, with input from troop contributors and regional organizations, DPKO has developed and published 16 “Standard Generic Training Modules” designed to help states configure their training programs to meet UN operational needs.

### **Recruiting and Deploying Capable Police and Other Criminal Justice Personnel**

The Panel recommended that the United Nations create on-call lists comparable to those for the military to support rapid deployment of civilian police and other elements of operations’ rule of law teams. The Report also urged member states to create national pools of police and other specialties ready for rapid deployment and engage in regional training of these personnel. Evidence is scant that member states have moved to create either national pools of candidates for international operations or, with the possible exception of the European Union, moved toward regional training partnerships. While a few

nations excel, many member states are still not providing qualified police candidates for operations, and bids to fill the police on-call list have been slow and relatively few. Overall, development of rapidly deployable rule of law teams remains in its infancy.

### **Recruiting and Deploying Capable Civilian Field Staff**

Measures to increase the availability of civilian personnel for field operations have moved ahead with some speed. Online posting of DPKO's human resources handbook gives field missions instant access to current procedures and facilitates delegation of hiring authority to the field, which tends to speed up hiring considerably. The Secretariat-wide "Galaxy Project," though needing further refinement, has put job applications online and attracted 20,000 applicants per month in its first three months of operation. A refined program could allow a half-dozen staff to manage a civilian on-call list of 10,000 names—unlike the military and police rosters, DPKO can contact individuals on the civilian roster quickly and directly. Reflecting the Panel's recommendation for a centralized source of pre-vetted civilian staff, DPKO is also setting up three civilian Rapid Deployment Teams of about 120 UN staff members each whose supervisors agree in advance to release them for temporary duty on mission assessment teams and to initiate and support a field operation.

The Panel emphasized improving civilian staff conditions and incentives. The 2001 DPKO management review noted training for civilian personnel as a major unmet need. Mission training funds have since tripled but remain just a fraction of the total cost of field operations. Training within DPKO has also been institutionalized for the first time, funded at about three percent of its budget. The system has begun to treat civilian employees, at headquarters and in the field, as assets to be groomed instead of temps to be exploited.

Finally, the UN Field Service, created in 1949 to provide technical and security support to peacekeeping, now constitutes just 13 percent of UN international civilian staff employed in peacekeeping but is still the UN's only full-time team of "first responders." By moving to homogenize its field personnel policies, DPKO risks losing a chance to rebuild the Field Service as a flexible, updated first response team for critical elements of future operations.

### **Logistics Support for Rapid Deployment**

To reduce the equipment bottlenecks that hampered rapid and effective deployment of past operations, the Report recommended additional equipment stocks and delegation of procurement authority to DPKO and to the field. The Secretariat exceeded the Panel's proposals, successfully creating ready-to-go Strategic Deployment Stocks to be maintained at a newly refurbished UN

Logistics Base in Brindisi, Italy, which have already been tapped for deployments. This \$142 million equipment stock is replenished from mission budgets on a revolving basis; the base is also maintained through peacekeeping mission funds (about \$22 million annually). The DPKO management review concluded that procurement authority should remain with the UN Department of Management, whose procurement division had adopted a number of improvements in systems and procedures. In 2001, nearly half of all peacekeeping procurement was done from the field, and DPKO has been working to increase the ability of field missions to implement and manage large contracts.

### **Promoting Fast and Effective Public Information in the Field**

When a large peacekeeping operation deploys into a war-torn country, it needs to explain its presence locally and globally, and to sell its “products,” from demobilization to free and fair elections. Radio has repeatedly proven to be an especially effective medium for doing so in low-literacy societies. Yet no unit within the UN was devoted to rapid and effective deployment of public information capabilities in peace operations and, three years after the Brahimi Report was published, that is largely still the case, despite two years of efforts by the Secretariat. In a relatively rare move, the General Assembly finally overruled the budget watchdog Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) in July 2002 to approve two posts within the Department of Public Information to plan and support the public information needs of peace operations globally. This result falls short of what is needed and reflects a myopic view, on the part of UN member states, of what public information is and what it can do for a peace operation in difficult situations.

### **Recommendations: Rapid & Effective Deployment**

To improve capacity for rapid, effective, and successful deployments, the UN and member states should:

- Improve the effectiveness of the UN Stand-by Arrangements System through increased member state participation at higher levels, including more accurate listings and greater availability of key enabling units required for effective deployments.
- Encourage and support further development of regional “brigade-sized forces” comparable to the multinational Stand-by High Readiness Brigade (SHIRBRIG) and MONUC’s largely South Asia-based “Ituri Brigade,” recognizing their potential for effectiveness, especially if such forces have the opportunity to train together in advance of deployment.

- Encourage developed states with overseas military training capacity to help regional organizations such as the African Union implement their plans to develop brigade-level forces capable of contributing to UN and regional peace operations.
- Increase the capacity of the Civilian Police Division, which remains too small to develop standards and procedures, plan operations and manage a force of 4,000-8,000 officers who are individually recruited, vetted, and hired.
- Expand the staff of the Criminal Law and Judicial Advisory Unit within the Civilian Police Division, to give DPKO the capacity that it needs to evaluate the operational rule of law requirements of missions, collaborate in the design of effective rule of law teams for complex operations, and also find, recruit, deploy, and manage the criminal justice personnel that a complex peace operation needs.
- Recognize the value of member states contributing more highly skilled, named individuals to on-call lists for the rapid deployment of police and other rule of law personnel for peace operations; replace “bidding for slots” on these on-call lists with real candidates with professional experience and familiarity with UN rules, procedures, and operational requirements.
- Build a responsibility center within the UN Secretariat for public information strategies and rapid deployment for peace operations; this capacity remains weak despite reorganization of the UN Department of Public Information.

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