

Introduction

“Without renewed commitment on the part of member states, significant institutional change and increased financial support, the United Nations will not be capable of executing the critical peacekeeping and peacebuilding tasks that the member states assign to it in coming months and years. 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.”

This challenge to strengthen and revitalize UN peace operations was laid before the international community in August 2000 with the release of the *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations* (the “Brahimi Report”), a landmark document that recommended sweeping changes in the way that UN peacekeeping and associated post-conflict peacebuilding are conceived, planned, and executed.¹ The Report identified serious shortcomings in the UN’s ability to “confront the lingering forces of war and violence,” and helped launch an ongoing effort for institutional change within the United Nations that continues today.

Tackling such change and solving operational problems—from planning new missions to recruiting capable forces, deploying them rapidly and sustaining them in the field—are vital for the successful conduct of peace operations, a tool of international security policy that is likely to see heavy use for the indefinite future. Tracking and publicizing such change are also important if interested user communities are to keep abreast of the tools that they have at their disposal. The *Future of Peace Operations* project at the Henry L. Stimson Center undertook to track the recommendations of the Brahimi Report, identify which have been implemented so far and how well, assess what that means for UN peace operations capacity, and recommend next steps. This study assesses reforms through the summer of 2003, with emphasis on the official UN implementation record, supplemented by interviews with practitioners conducted by the project.

¹ UN General Assembly and Security Council, *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations*, A/55/305-S/2000/809, 21 August 2000. In this paper, “Brahimi Report,” “the Report” (capitalized), “the Brahimi Panel,” and “the Panel” are terms used interchangeably simply for relief from constant repetition.

Sidebar 1:

Defining Peace Operations (from the Brahimi Report)

United Nations peace operations entail three principal activities: *conflict prevention* and *peacemaking*; *peacekeeping*; and *peacebuilding*. Long-term conflict prevention addresses the structural sources of conflict in order to build a solid foundation for peace. Where those foundations are crumbling, conflict prevention attempts to reinforce them, usually in the form of a diplomatic initiative. Such preventive action is, by definition, a low-profile activity; when successful, it may even go unnoticed altogether.

Peacemaking addresses conflicts in progress, attempting to bring them to a halt, using the tools of diplomacy and mediation. Peacemakers may be envoys of governments, groups of states, regional organizations or the United Nations, or they may be unofficial and non-governmental groups, as was the case, for example, in the negotiations leading up to a peace accord for Mozambique. Peacemaking may even be the work of a prominent personality, working independently.

Peacekeeping is a 50-year plus enterprise that has evolved rapidly in the past decade from a traditional, primarily military model of observing ceasefires and force separations after inter-state wars to one that incorporates a complex model of many elements, military and civilian, working together to build peace in the dangerous aftermath of civil wars.

Peacebuilding is a term of more recent origin that, as used in the present report, defines activities undertaken on the far side of conflict to reassemble the foundations of peace and provide the tools for building on those foundations something that is more than just the absence of war. Thus, peacebuilding includes but is not limited to reintegrating former combatants into civilian society, strengthening the rule of law (for example, through training and restructuring of local police, and judicial and penal reform); improving respect for human rights through the monitoring, education and investigation of past and existing abuses; providing technical assistance for democratic development (including electoral assistance and support for free media); and promoting conflict resolution and reconciliation techniques.

Source: A/55/305-S/2000/809, paras 10-14.

1.1 ORIGINS OF THE BRAHIMI REPORT

The Brahimi Report was commissioned because UN peace operations, and peacekeeping in particular, were in crisis. In the 1990s, the United Nations had taken on dozens of peacekeeping missions, including complex operations with elements of peace enforcement.³ Although, by the mid-1990s, UN peacekeeping had experienced both successes and failures, the failures were better remembered, including the inability of on-site UN peacekeepers to prevent either the 1994 genocide in Rwanda or the 1995 massacres in Srebrenica, Bosnia-Herzegovina. Frustrated by these failures, UN members largely turned away from the organization for running major peacekeeping initiatives. Between 1995 and 1999, the UN launched just one robust operation, in eastern Croatia, and took on one police monitoring mission, in Bosnia. Ironically, both were successful, the Croatia operation from its inception and the Bosnia police mission toward its end. Other new UN peacekeeping deployments in the latter 1990s were small military observer missions (in Georgia, Tajikistan, Liberia, and Sierra Leone) or political missions.

As the number of troops deployed in UN peacekeeping declined through the latter 1990s, the UN General Assembly ordered an end to the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) use of “gratis military personnel,”² who had helped the UN cope with the rapid growth in peacekeeping operations between 1992 and 1995. During that period, member states loaned more than 130 military officers to DPKO with expertise in mission planning, logistics, and other operational specialties, free of charge to the UN. Developed states, however, provided 85 percent of these officers to a department already heavily Western in staff makeup, being largely exempt from the geographic diversity requirements of other Secretariat offices.³ By late February 1999, the departure of all the gratis officers left much of DPKO’s operational support capacity and institutional memory for military and logistical planning severely depleted—only four months before UN peacekeeping experienced another bout of explosive growth.

³ For a full list of all past and current UN peace operations, see the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations website: www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/.

² UN General Assembly, A/RES/51/243, 15 September 1997.

³ UN General Assembly, *Gratis personnel provided by Governments and other entities, Report of the Secretary-General*, A/C.5/53/54, 26 February 1999.

Sidebar 2:

Complex Operations and the UN Charter

Unlike traditional peacekeeping, which uses military units and observers to implement cease-fires and force separations between states, complex operations usually address civil wars that are stalemated on the battlefield or terminated by outside political or military pressure—in short, wars that are unfinished from a local perspective. Such operations attempt in most cases to implement peace accords designed to divert those conflicts, and the agendas that drove them, from military to political channels.

Complex operations may be authorized in whole or in part under Chapter VII (Articles 39-51) of the UN Charter, which both affirms the right of UN member states to individual and collective self-defense (Art. 51) and gives the Security Council authority to define threats to the peace (Art. 39), apply sanctions (Art. 41), and “take such action by air, sea, or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security” (Art. 42). Although Article 2(7) of the Charter stipulates that “Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state. . .,” it also states that “this principle shall not prejudice the application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII.”

Most peacekeeping operations from 1948 to 1991 were established without reference to Chapter VII but all of the complex operations begun since 1999 function in whole or in part under Chapter VII. Even traditional peacekeeping, which can involve the use of force in self-defense, goes beyond the mediation/conciliation measures contemplated in the Charter’s Chapter VI (“Pacific Settlement of Disputes”). Thus, peacekeeping, the guiding principles and practices of which evolved one mission and one mandate at a time, became known as a “chapter six-and-a-half” measure—consistent with but not actually defined by the Charter.

Events began to escalate in June 1999, as, in rapid succession, the United Nations was called on to: administer Kosovo under the protection of NATO ground forces; to replace Australian-led forces in East Timor and provide a temporary government for that emerging nation; to replace Nigerian-led regional forces in Sierra Leone implementing a deeply flawed peace accord; and to oversee a shaky cease-fire in the regional war that had engulfed the vast Democratic Republic of Congo. Two-thirds of troops and police in UN

operations would be deployed to these four new missions by April 2000, as the total number of troops, police, and civilian personnel in UN operations more than tripled. In July 2000, the Security Council mandated a further new mission with 4,300 troops to help verify a ceasefire and support a force separation agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea.

In short, after a four-year lull, the world community turned back to the UN for several path-breaking operations. As the new mandates mounted, old failures were once again highlighted. In late 1999, the Secretary-General released two very sobering reports assessing how the UN had dealt with the genocide in Rwanda and the massacres at Srebrenica.⁴ These reports reopened some old wounds and, together with the operational difficulties faced by the freshly launched peace operations and an overstretched DPKO, suggested a potentially terminal crisis for UN peace operations.

The Secretary-General decided that piecemeal solutions to peacekeeping's problems would no longer suffice. In March 2000, he appointed the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations.⁵

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE REPORT

The challenge to the Panel was clear: to identify and assess the weaknesses of the United Nations' best known tool for stabilizing recent zones of conflict, and to offer practical recommendations to remedy those weaknesses. The Secretary-General promised to implement what the Panel recommended, to the extent of his power to do so. UN Under-Secretary-General Lakhdar Brahimi ably chaired the Panel and its report informally bears his name. The Executive Office of the Secretary-General pulled together its research and writing staff.⁶

⁴ UN General Assembly, *Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to General Assembly resolution 53/55, entitled "The fall of Srebrenica,"* A/54/549, 15 November 1999; and UN Security Council, *Letter dated 15 December 1999 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council, enclosing the Report of the Independent Inquiry into the actions of the United Nations during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda,* S/1999/1257, 15 December 1999.

⁵ Panel members included: Mr. J. Brian Atwood, Amb. Colin Granderson, Dame Ann Hercus, Mr. Richard Monk, Gen. (ret.) Klaus Naumann, Ms. Hisako Shimura, Amb. Vladimir Shustov, Gen. Philip Sibanda, and Dr. Cornelio Sommaruga.

⁶ Three were based in New York and two in Washington, at the Henry L. Stimson Center. One Stimson Center staff member (William Durch) served as staff director in New York, working with UN Political Officer Salman Ahmed and Mr. Brahimi's personal assistant, Clare Kane, who pulled together all three Panel sessions and stitched together each of several drafts of the Report. The two Washington-based Stimson staff members, Caroline Earle and Edward Palmisano, contributed, respectively, to the Report's sections on information technology issues and legal issues related to transitional administration.

The Panel worked under a tight schedule, pressed to research and complete its findings in time for the fall Millennium Summit, the special year 2000 General Assembly session slated for September with heads of state and governments. With four months to research, analyze and produce the report, the Panel worked quickly to tap into the best thinking and experience on the subject. Although its terms of reference also encompassed conflict prevention, peacemaking, and peacebuilding (see *sidebar 1* for detailed definitions of each), the Panel focused on peacekeeping as the most costly and visible aspect of peace operations, recognizing that further setbacks could destroy it, and that peacebuilding efforts often depended on the security provided by peacekeepers. Prevention, peacebuilding and issues related to the security of UN field personnel were each the focus of a separate UN study, so the Panel concentrated most of its attention on peacekeeping.

The Panel also focused on key areas within peacekeeping, including clarity of mandates and communication between UN officials, states and staff; planning, logistics, and mission leadership; rapid availability and deployment of troops, police, and civilian personnel; and issues related to human rights and rule of law. Nevertheless, not all issues within peacekeeping could be addressed adequately in the Panel's work. Other key questions, such as training, HIV/AIDS, medical care in the field, gender-related issues, security of UN field personnel, and the definition of exit strategy, were largely unaddressed in the Report. Many were picked up subsequently by the implementation process.

The Panel's report was sent to the General Assembly, Security Council, and heads of state by the Secretary-General on 21 August 2000.

1.3 RESPONSES TO THE REPORT

The Security Council, meeting at the head of state and government level in early September, "welcomed" the Report, promising to strengthen UN peacekeeping operations and to address its recommendations in detail, which it did in November 2000. In that later resolution, the Council endorsed the Report's recommendations on the content and character of mandates for operations; early and frequent Council consultations with troop contributing countries; UN Secretariat information gathering and analysis; integrated mission planning; and rapid deployment needs and benchmarks.⁷

⁷ UN Security Council Resolution 1318, 7 September 2000; and UN Security Council Resolution 1327, 13 November 2000.

Table 1: A UN Budget Glossary

Type of Budget	What It Covers	Fiscal Year
<p>Regular Biennium Budget</p> <p>Billed to member states according to the “regular scale of assessment” (see Appendix C).</p>	<p>General headquarters expenses, the costs of “special political missions,” and the costs of the two oldest peacekeeping missions.</p>	<p>Two calendar years; current biennium runs from January 2002 to December 2003.</p>
<p>Peacekeeping Mission Budgets</p> <p>Billed to member states according to the “peacekeeping scale of assessment” (see Appendix C). <i>Includes funding for Peacekeeping Support Account and UN Logistics Base.</i></p>	<p>Costs of operating peacekeeping missions (salaries, equipment, transport, reimbursements to troop contributors).</p>	<p>Separate one-year budgets for each mission running from 1 July to 30 June.</p>
<p>Peacekeeping Support Account</p> <p>Billed to member states as a prorated surcharge on peacekeeping mission budgets.</p>	<p>Headquarters-related costs of planning and supporting peacekeeping operations. Funds most of DPKO, supporting elements of the Department of Management, and a handful of posts in other headquarters offices.</p>	<p>One-year budget running from 1 July to 30 June.</p>
<p>UN Logistics Base (UNLB), Brindisi, Italy</p> <p>Billed to member states as a prorated surcharge on peacekeeping mission budgets.</p>	<p>Costs of operating the UN’s equipment reserve designed to expedite deployment of new peacekeeping operations.</p>	<p>One-year budget running from 1 July to 30 June.</p>

The General Assembly, meeting initially at the level of heads of state and government at the Millennium Summit, issued a Millennium Declaration on 18 September that “took note” of the Brahimi Report—a polite but noncommittal acknowledgment foreshadowing later struggle over some of the Report’s recommendations.⁸ While UN member states by and large welcomed

⁸ UN General Assembly, *United Nations Millennium Declaration*, A/RES/55/2, 18 September 2000.

them, developed states tended to be more enthusiastic, developing states more reserved. Some of this reserve derived from implicit linkages between the Report's call (discussed at length below) for more "robust" operations and speeches by the Secretary-General over the previous two years to the effect that states could no longer expect to hide behind a shield of sovereignty while abusing their citizens. The Panel had skirted any reference to so-called "humanitarian intervention" in an effort to avoid this controversy, but for several member states, limiting the UN's ability to support or plan for such action became a focus of their approach to implementing the Report, even though such limitations—on information and analysis, for example—would hamper the UN's ability to undertake effective conflict preventive action as well.

Inside the UN system, work on implementing the report began almost immediately following its release. The first implementation documents, seeking "emergency" increases in support for DPKO and other Secretariat offices involved in peacekeeping support, followed the Panel's report by just two months. The second round of implementation ensued and built upon a comprehensive management review of DPKO and several of its largest field operations, long called for by the UN General Assembly's Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations,⁹ that was conducted by outside consultants in the spring of 2001.¹⁰ These implementation plans fleshed out the operational and financial implications of the Report's many recommendations and worked with the UN's complex network of inter-governmental bodies to win their approval.¹¹ Meanwhile, new leadership in the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations pressed for the key changes in management culture that were stressed by the Panel as crucial to the longevity of all other reforms.

⁹ The Special Committee, established by the General Assembly in 1965, is composed of representatives of peacekeeping troop contributing countries. It holds regular meetings every spring, advising the General Assembly's Fourth (Special Political) Committee on peacekeeping issues. For more information online, see: www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/ctte/CTTEE.htm.

¹⁰ The implementation reports were cast, as are most UN reports to the Council or the Assembly, in the voice of the Secretary-General. All arguments and recommendations within the reports are, formally, his arguments and recommendations, which permits convenient shorthand in referring to them that we use frequently in this paper. A complete list of implementation-related documents may be found in the bibliography of this report.

¹¹ The intergovernmental bodies are those composed of UN member states. Key bodies for purposes of implementing the Brahimi Report included, for policy matters, the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, and for financial matters, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), a 16-member body that reviews and makes recommendations (that are usually accepted) on every budget-related document sent to the GA's Fifth (Financial) Committee of the whole. See UN General Assembly, *Appointment of members of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Note by the Secretary-General*, A/57/101, 10 July 2002.

1.4 THE CHANGING POLITICAL AND CONFLICT ENVIRONMENT

The Brahimi Report offered a roadmap for reforming UN peacekeeping operations and acknowledged candidly the need for such measures. Member states were a key audience for the report, since many of the reforms recommended by the Panel require their direct support, participation and funding. UN peacekeeping depends completely on the willingness of states to offer troops and police for operations, which imposes key limitations on those operations, especially when states decline to contribute forces, as has been the case with developed states and the newer missions in Africa. While European states have reduced their military spending and personnel, their troop commitments to NATO-led missions in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo have not halted European contributions to older UN missions in the Middle East and Cyprus, or independent contributions of troops to African crisis situations, including by Great Britain in Sierra Leone or France in Côte d'Ivoire and, under European Union (EU) colors, Democratic Republic of Congo.

For whatever reason, experience from the mid- and late-1990s stimulated efforts to build greater regional capacity for peace operations, especially in Europe and Africa. In December 1999, the European Union agreed to create a Rapid Reaction Force (RRF) and a Civilian Crisis Management Capacity; in April 2001, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) established REACT (Rapid Expert Assistance and Cooperation Team), to support timely deployment of police and other civilian expertise; and in November 2002, NATO decided to create a NATO Response Force (NRF). The African Union (AU) has a nascent conflict management mechanism, the Peace and Security Council, and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which sponsored peacekeeping forces of varying effectiveness in Sierra Leone and Liberia in the 1990s, has taken steps to establish a peacekeeping secretariat and a system for financing its forces. Whether these structures will complement or compete with the UN for troops, personnel, funding and logistical support is not clear.

The United States government largely welcomed the Brahimi Report, partly because it didn't mince words and offered a path to more successful future operations without prescribing when or where to conduct them. Better yet, the Report called for reform without a large requirement for money. The Clinton Administration supported most of the recommendations, as did traditional UN critics on Capitol Hill. The 2000 election of President George Bush, however, and the events of 9/11 wrenched the focus of American foreign policy away from the questions of the 1990s although, despite the new Administration's open disdain for nation-building and peacekeeping, it soon found itself sustaining ongoing UN operations and working with the United Nations to develop a

Sidebar 3:

Funding Gaps in the 1990s

The United Nations found itself financially strapped from the mid-1990s, borrowing money from peacekeeping accounts to cover shortages in the UN regular budget, which in turn delayed reimbursements to states that had contributed thousands of troops to UN peacekeeping operations. Many member states paid their dues for UN peacekeeping late or not in full, especially the United States. (During the Reagan Administration, the United States shifted to paying its regular budget assessments to the United Nations in the fiscal year following receipt of the bill from the UN—in other words, nearly a year late. Even when Congress approved full funding, annual appropriations bills were rarely passed before the start of the U.S. fiscal year [1 October], for assessments issued the previous January.)

While the early 1990s growth in UN operations was supported by U.S. presidents George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton, American support began to fade with perceived UN peacekeeping failure and increased U.S. costs. The U.S. share of UN assessments grew along with the difficult operations in Somalia, Rwanda, Haiti, and the former Yugoslavia, creating a large U.S. bill of nearly \$1 billion annually. The United States experienced fractious foreign policy disagreements between a Democrat-controlled White House and Republican-led Congress, which characterized the UN as inept and in need of reform. In this environment, peacekeeping's problems helped justify Congressional withholding of U.S. funding to the United Nations and ushered in a period of U.S. arrears that continued through the fall of 2001. While more financially sound today, the UN continues to face questions of funding for its peace operations.

strategy in Afghanistan that tackled the problems of terrorism and nation-building simultaneously. This honeymoon with the United Nations ended badly, however, in the fall of 2002 and early 2003 as the Bush Administration tried to win Security Council support for its use of force against Iraq and faced strong opposition from other Security Council members. Six difficult months later, as the U.S. sought UN authorization later in 2003 for the post-conflict operation in Iraq, its recognition if not appreciation for the many roles of the UN—as coordinator of the relief community, as convener of member states, as experts on governance, or (outside Iraq) as the organizer and authorizer of peace operations—was much clearer.

1.5 STRUCTURE AND GOALS OF THIS STUDY

The following chapters review how key recommendations of the Brahimi Report have fared to date, organized in three broad areas: doctrine and strategy, capacity to plan and support operations, and rapid and effective deployment.

Within each area, this study integrates a discussion of the main Brahimi report measures, generally but not always following the Report's original structure. (For example, we treat Secretariat restructuring as an enhancement to mission planning, which precedes mission deployment; the Report discussed deployment first). Within each section, this study identifies reasons for progress or delay, and distinguishes elements of recommendations for which the UN system or the Secretariat bore primary responsibility from elements whose implementation has depended primarily on the actions and engagement of UN member states. In addition to the 57 main recommendations of the Report, we also consider some of the 25 supplemental recommendations of the Panel, which were in the main text but not pulled into the summary list of recommendations that is the standard checklist (That list is reproduced in Appendix A). For a summary chart on progress in implementing each recommendation in the Report that is cross-referenced to this discussion, see Appendix B.)

Understanding how and why Report-related changes occurred (or did not) requires a detailed look at UN offices, tools, and capacities to organize, manage and run peace operations. In presenting the details, we highlight some very real challenges, indicate where progress is still needed, and hope to encourage member states to accelerate efforts to solve the tough remaining problems that face the UN and the conduct of peace operations. Many of these can only be addressed by states, which owe it to those who live in conflict situations and those who serve in peace operations that such operations function as effectively as possible. The truly hard questions, beyond this study, however, concern *when*, *where* and *how* the international community may be willing to use peace operations to help maintain or restore peace and security within or between war-torn societies. Answering those questions requires a solid understanding of what capacity is available, how it can be utilized effectively and, where it is lacking, what needs to be done to make it available.¹²

¹² For further information about the *Future of Peace Operations* project, see: www.stimson.org/fopo.

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