

Senior Leadership Training in UN Peace Operations

KEVIN S. KENNEDY AND LAURA POWERS



Cover Photo: Senior Mission Leaders course in Beijing, 2016. Peacekeeping Affairs Center of China's Ministry of National Defense.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

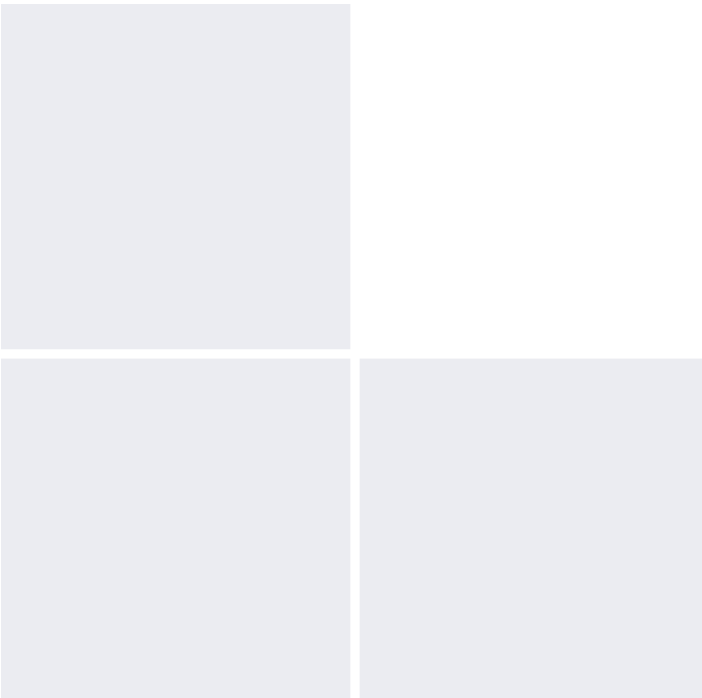
KEVIN KENNEDY is a former UN official who served in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, and Department of Public Information, as well as in several field missions and in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General over the course of a thirty-seven-year career in the Secretariat. Among his peacekeeping-related assignments were service as team leader for the Integrated Operational Teams for the Great Lakes Region of Africa and for Mali and as head of the Integrated Training Service for the Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support.

LAURA POWERS is a former Research Assistant at IPI.

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Abbreviations

A4P	Action for Peacekeeping initiative
DFS	UN Department of Field Support
DOS	UN Department of Operational Support
DPA	UN Department of Political Affairs
DPKO	UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DPO	UN Department of Peace Operations
DPPS	UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs
DSRSG	Deputy special representative of the secretary-general
HIPPO	High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations
IOC	Intensive Orientation Course
ITS	Integrated Training Service
LSS	Leadership Support Section
MAST	Mission Advanced Staff Training
MLT	Mission leadership team
OHRM	UN Office of Human Resource Management
OIOS	UN Office of Internal Oversight Services
SLAS	Senior Leadership Appointments Section
SLP	Senior Leadership Programme
SMART	Senior Mission Administration and Resource Training
SML	Senior Mission Leaders (course)
SRSG	Special representative of the secretary-general

Executive Summary

Due to their unique and complex nature, UN peacekeeping missions depend on effective leadership. The UN Secretariat faces the challenge of finding and rapidly deploying leaders who possess the requisite mix of skills, knowledge of the operating environment, political judgment, and physical and mental stamina. Few, if any, mission leaders can be expected to be fully prepared upon being selected, no matter how rigorous the selection process. Senior mission leaders therefore require continuous, institutionalized, and sustained training and learning support.

The Secretariat has undertaken a number of initiatives to prepare prospective candidates and new appointees to serve in senior leadership positions. The Integrated Training Service (ITS) is the primary provider of formal training for senior leaders of peacekeeping missions. The Secretariat also provides ongoing learning support, including through peer-to-peer consultations, mentoring, and online learning. Beyond the UN, a proliferation of non-UN entities independently develop and deliver training for current or prospective senior mission leaders. However, these efforts do not constitute a systematic approach that guarantees appropriate training and learning support to all senior mission leaders.

As a result, current training for senior leadership faces gaps across three broad areas. The first is a gap in knowledge of constantly evolving UN peacekeeping doctrine, policy, and practice in areas such as authority, command and control, the use of force, the roles of police and military components, crisis management, and the protection of civilians. The second is a gap in knowledge of UN policies and procedures regarding the management of financial and human resources. The third is a gap in the knowledge, skills, and competencies needed to exercise leadership and—most importantly—to build and maintain fully functional, effective mission leadership teams that can integrate action across mission components in response to operational challenges, including crises and transitions. In addition, the capacity of mission leaders to manage strategic communication is a critical crosscutting gap that affects mandate implementation.

Despite these gaps, the UN has made only

limited progress in addressing leaders' needs through training and learning support. There are four main impediments to progress. First, there is a continued disconnect between the recruitment and appointment process and training for potential candidates or newly appointed senior mission leaders. Second, there is inadequate time budgeted for pre-deployment trainings. Third, it has become increasingly difficult to meet demands as the scope of leadership training has increased, while assessed budgets for leadership training have diminished, leaving it to be funded by voluntary contributions from member states or levies on peacekeeping missions. Finally, there is no single body in the UN Secretariat responsible and accountable for senior mission leadership training.

In keeping with the secretary-general's stated commitment to enhancing leadership, reform, and accountability in the Secretariat as a whole, and particularly in field missions, the Secretariat should prioritize actions in the following areas:

- **Centralize responsibility for mission leadership training:** The secretary-general should instruct the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) and Department of Peace Operations (DPO) to assign to the Leadership Support Section (LSS) of the Office of the Director for Coordination and Shared Services the mandate of coordinating all facets of training and learning support for senior mission leaders, from recruitment through exit. LSS should work in close partnership with the Integrated Training Service (ITS), which should take the lead in ensuring delivery of relevant training and learning programs for senior mission leaders. DPPA and DPO, working with the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance and Department of Operational Support, as appropriate, should ensure that LSS and ITS have the dedicated capacity and resources to fulfill these responsibilities.
- **Integrate training into planning and recruitment processes:** The Secretariat should consider the composition of the leadership team when planning a new peace operation and, where possible, train this team as a group. Newly appointed senior mission leaders should deploy only after completing the necessary in-briefing and minimum training required as determined by an individual training needs assessment.

Training and in-briefing should be factored into the succession planning and management of vacancies in order to allow sufficient lead time for the selection process, individual training needs assessment, and pre-deployment training. Participation in the Senior Mission Leaders (SML) course should also be more closely linked to the process for recruiting senior mission leaders.

- **Provide more sustained support to training:** The Secretariat should work with member states to devise an alternative that would provide it with greater flexibility and certainty in forward planning of the SML course, include sufficient funds to support participants from developing countries and ensure that the course maintains its UN identity.
- **Employ new tools for in-mission training:** The Secretariat should identify ways to employ information technology to enhance training, including webinars or videoconferences. It should also encourage and support the development and roll-out of scenario-based exercises, drills, and rehearsals in missions.

Introduction

UN peacekeeping faces an increasing array of challenges due to the changing nature of conflict, fractious geopolitics, the growing complexity of mission mandates, and the number of tasks peacekeepers are expected to perform, often in vast, remote theaters. Modern missions with multidimensional mandates must address multiple political and security challenges through the integrated action of their various components while working with the UN country team and an array of other national and international actors. This is difficult in contexts where host-state consent is tenuous and where peacekeepers have become high-value targets for armed groups and extremists that employ asymmetric and unconventional tactics. It is especially difficult in contexts where there is no peace to keep and peacekeepers are mandated to give top priority to the protection of civilians and expansion of state authority. No organization can manage such complexity without effective leadership.

This paper aims to identify gaps in training, preparation, and learning support for senior leaders of UN peacekeeping missions, analyze obstacles that impede progress in addressing those gaps, and recommend possible courses of action the Secretariat and member states could take to close the gaps. It begins by examining why training is important and who it is intended for, giving a brief overview of the process for identifying and appointing mission leaders. It then reviews the current “training architecture” for prospective and newly appointed senior mission leaders, including the state of implementation of various Secretariat initiatives and recommendations in response to earlier studies and assessments, and key gaps in the knowledge and skills of senior mission leaders. It also examines key factors that have hindered progress and concludes with recommendations to relevant stakeholders on ways to overcome challenges and provide better training and learning support to senior mission leaders.

This paper is based on a review of recent reports and studies by the UN and by independent policy and training institutions and on informal, open-ended interviews. Secretariat officials and peacekeepers at UN headquarters and in the field were interviewed, including current and former members of mission leadership teams (MLTs). This paper also draws heavily on the 2015 report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) on the evaluation of the senior leadership training of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and Department of Field Support (DFS). The OIOS report provides a concise overview of leadership training and reflects the results of a formal survey of senior mission leaders and participants in DPKO and DFS senior leadership training programs.¹ The statistics and budgetary information in the OIOS report remains representative of the current situation. The OIOS evaluation led to conclusions and recommendations, some key elements of which are revisited in this paper.

WHY TRAINING FOR SENIOR MISSION LEADERS MATTERS

Incidents involving peacekeepers in South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the

¹ As of January 1, 2019, DPKO was replaced by the Department of Peace Operations (DPO) and responsibility for DFS senior leadership training programs moved to the new Department of Operational Support (DOS).

Central African Republic in 2016 and 2017 demonstrate what can happen when mission leadership teams are unprepared, particularly in times of crisis. These incidents led to special investigations and other reviews that the UN Secretariat has classified as confidential. Nevertheless, the executive summaries and press releases that have been made publicly available, and informal interviews with Secretariat officials and other individuals familiar with the reports, confirm that they revealed similar deficiencies. These studies found that peacekeepers often did not understand mission mandates (including the critical mandate for the protection of civilians) and lacked clarity regarding rules of engagement for UN military forces, directives on the use of force for UN police, and the policy on authority, command, and control. The studies consistently found that missions suffered from a lack of coordinated—much less integrated—efforts across their components. Undisclosed national caveats that limited some units' scope of action, parallel chains of command both within and outside the UN, and low morale were all identified as factors that undermined performance.

The studies also attributed lack of performance to the inadequate preparedness and training of personnel. Mission-specific training of peacekeepers up to the command level, in particular, was found to be either inadequate or completely lacking. While training cannot address all performance issues, each investigation and study identified significant gaps in training—notably with regard to the protection of civilians, the use of force, and soldiering skills suited to the operational and threat environment. These investigations and evaluations invariably recommended specific training initiatives, including for mission leaders and leadership teams.

The importance of leadership to effective peace operations was also a key focus of these studies. The challenges faced by civilian, military, and police mission leaders in forming effective MLTs

are well documented. Nongovernmental and governmental policy institutes, academic researchers, and UN officials themselves have published extensively on the role of leadership in peacekeeping.² Moreover, the International Forum for the Challenges of Peace Operations, a partnership among some twenty states and more than forty organizations devoted to the improvement of peacekeeping, is currently revising its landmark work “Considerations for Mission Leadership in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations,” originally published in 2010. This document provides mission leaders with authoritative, practical insight into the unique work of senior mission leaders.

For nearly two decades, assessments of peacekeeping operations have routinely cited leadership as key to their success. In 2000, the seminal report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations chaired by Lakhdar Brahimi (the “Brahimi report”) stated that “effective, dynamic leadership can make the difference between a cohesive mission with high morale and effectiveness despite adverse circumstances, and one that struggles to maintain any of those attributes. In effect, the tenor of an entire mission can be heavily influenced by the character and ability of those who lead it.”³ Fifteen years later, the report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) echoed the Brahimi report, stating, “Throughout the Panel’s consultations, all partners and stakeholders identified the quality of leadership as one of the most crucial factors in the success or failure of UN peace operations.”⁴ The Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C-34) routinely discusses the full gamut of training issues, and its annual reports include numerous calls for training initiatives. Likewise, leadership is a recurrent issue in the committee’s discussions, and its 2018 report highlighted “leadership and performance and accountability at all levels” among the factors critical to the improved performance of peacekeeping operations.⁵

2 See, for example, recent publications from the International Forum for the Challenges of Peace Operations: Robert Gordon, “Leading United Nations Peace Operations,” 2017; Jibecke Joensson, “Strengthening the Selection, Preparation, Support and Appraisal of Senior Leadership in United Nations Peace Operations,” 2017; Joensson, “Taking Leadership to the Next Level: Leading Peace Operations in a Complex World,” 2017; and “Considerations for Mission Leadership in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations by International Challenges Forum,” 2010.

3 UN General Assembly and Security Council, *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations*, UN Doc. A/55/305-S/2000/305, August 21, 2000, para. 92.

4 UN General Assembly and Security Council, *Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations—Uniting Our Strengths for Peace: Politics, Partnership and People*, UN Doc. A/70/95-S/2015/446, June 17, 2015, para. 268.

5 UN General Assembly, *Report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations*, UN Doc. A/72/19, 2018, para. 100.

In September 2017, the Security Council requested an update from the secretary-general on efforts to improve peacekeeping performance, “including through more effective and efficient training and capacity building.”⁶ In the letter he submitted three months later, Secretary-General António Guterres noted, “The generation of capabilities for United Nations peacekeeping... focuses increasingly on all of the factors that lead to effective performance, including agility, *training*, equipment, technology, doctrine, *leadership*, discipline, interoperability, welfare and mindset, and *gender balance*, as well as the absence of operational caveats” (emphases added).⁷ In addition to the highlighting of gender balance as a strategic and operational priority, the references to “training” and “leadership” are encouraging.

The HIPPO report, as well as the review of the UN peacebuilding architecture and the review on women, peace, and security, have all stressed the importance of a gender perspective and the need for women to play leadership roles in UN peace operations. The Secretariat has stepped up efforts to redress the long-standing gender imbalance in senior leadership appointments, both at headquarters and in the field. While progress toward gender parity in MLTs is slow, it has implications for how senior leaders are prepared and trained. Mission leaders need training and learning support to evolve beyond traditionally male-dominated models of collaboration and decision making. Such support is also needed to prepare more prospective women candidates for leadership positions and to help those appointed to roles in MLTs that had rarely, if ever, been occupied by women in the past.

Virtually all other factors that contribute to effective peacekeeping performance, from political support to the effective use of resources, ultimately rely on both leadership and training (crosscutting and generic as well as mission-specific and specialized). With some 200,000 annual personnel rotations, 20,000 national and international civilian

staff, and extraordinary diversity of functions, personnel, and nationalities, UN peacekeeping is a unique enterprise. Effective leaders working together in MLTs are needed to provide missions with an overarching direction and ensure efforts are integrated, as well as to seize opportunities and manage risks. Mission personnel also need training to ensure they operate both effectively and in a manner consistent with UN principles and the essentially political nature of UN peacekeeping. Such training must be continuous, institutionalized, and sustained across every aspect and phase of peacekeeping and for all categories of peacekeeping personnel—including senior mission leaders.

UN peacekeeping does not operate in an institutional vacuum. The UN’s heightened focus on leadership goes beyond peacekeeping. In April 2017, the Chief Executives Board, at the initiative of Guterres, adopted an official “Leadership Framework” that sets out “defining characteristics of UN leadership.”⁸ This is meant to guide and motivate UN leaders and provide a framework for operationalizing a new leadership culture throughout the UN system. The framework expects UN leaders to demonstrate “a commitment to continuous learning and professional/leadership development” and exhorts them to understand the integrated nature and root causes of the issues and problems the UN is called upon to address.⁹ The Leadership Framework is not an administrative instruction or mandatory regulation but has been presented as an essential part of the secretary-general’s overall efforts to reform and revitalize the UN.

Although the framework does not explicitly reference UN peacekeeping or peace operations, it has direct implications for MLTs, which must function as part of a broader system. UN peacekeeping plays a time-bound but pivotal role in developing and implementing strategies for dealing with violent conflict and its aftermath at the national, subregional, and regional levels.

6 UN Security Council Resolution 2378 (September 20, 2017), UN Doc. S/RES/2378, para. 10.

7 UN Security Council, *Letter Dated 15 December 2017 from the Secretary-General Addressed to the President of the Security Council*, UN Doc. S/2017/1079, December 20, 2017, Annex, para. 4.

8 The UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, chaired by the secretary-general, is the highest-level coordination forum in the UN system. Its members are the thirty-one executive heads of the UN and its funds, programs, and specialized agencies, the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organization, the UN Office for Project Services, and the International Atomic Energy Agency. Chief Executives Board, *United Nations System Leadership Framework*, UN Doc. CEB/2017/1, April 18, 2017, paras. 10–12.

9 *Ibid.*, para. 17.

Toward this end, senior mission leaders must ensure their efforts are complementary—if not fully integrated—with those of the rest of the UN system. They need to understand the system in order to leverage the comparative advantages of different entities and to manage crises and transitions. This requires rigorous preparation, particularly for senior mission leaders without previous UN field experience.

The secretary-general's initiatives to reform the UN peace and security architecture, UN management structure, and UN development system create both an opportunity and an obligation for the Secretariat to intensify efforts to better prepare mission leaders for their political, operational, and managerial roles. The new peace and security architecture aims to streamline work across departments, place conflict prevention and sustaining peace at the center of the UN's work, and shift decision making, accountability, and responsibility closer to the delivery point. The overhaul of the Secretariat's management structure also significantly raises the stakes for all senior UN managers, especially those on MLTs. Reform of the development system emphasizes unity of vision and effort among UN actors as well as the empowerment and accountability of leaders in the field. In particular, it emphasizes the central importance of the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), which engages all UN entities in-country as well as the host government, making it essential for MLTs and the UN country team to share a common understanding of roles and responsibilities.

Peacekeeping is among the most visible and dramatic of UN undertakings. It would seem logical that peace operations should occupy an important place in the secretary-general's efforts to instill a new organizational culture and project an image of dynamic, effective, and principled leadership. In 2016, nearly half of the \$49 billion spent by the UN system at the country level was spent in places with an integrated UN presence, and the lion's share in places where UN peace operations were deployed.¹⁰ Providing training and learning support to leadership teams responsible for these

operations should be part of overall UN reform efforts and is essential to managing risk.

THE TRAINING AUDIENCE: NEWLY APPOINTED AND PROSPECTIVE SENIOR MISSION LEADERS

There are currently around fifty-five senior-most civilian and uniformed positions across fifteen missions led by the Department of Peace Operations (DPO, which has taken the place of DPKO as of January 1, 2019) and twelve led by the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA, which has replaced the Department of Political Affairs, or DPA).¹¹ This paper concentrates primarily on the challenges faced by MLTs in multidisciplinary peacekeeping missions, although leaders in other peace operations may face similar challenges. For multidisciplinary peacekeeping operations, the MLT normally consists of the special representative of the secretary-general (SRSG), one or two deputy special representatives of the secretary-general (DSRSG, often with one political DSRSG and one "triple-hatted" DSRSG/resident coordinator/humanitarian coordinator), a force commander or head of military component, a police commissioner or head of police component, a director or chief of mission support, and a mission chief of staff. This small group of high-level personnel is responsible for setting and articulating mission strategy and integrating the work of mission components to deliver on complex mandates with limited resources.

Members of MLTs are senior civilian, military, and police professionals with a variety of professional and cultural backgrounds and perspectives. Many have no previous UN experience, and even UN veterans appointed as senior mission leaders may have no prior peacekeeping experience. As of November 2018, nearly 90 percent of deputy heads of mission (twenty-two out of twenty-five) were considered "internal" appointees, having previously served within the UN system at the D2 level or below. However, just 32 percent of heads of mission are "internal" appointees. The majority of heads of mission and deputy heads of mission appointed from outside the UN system have

¹⁰ This refers to the total estimated expenditure at the country level relating to humanitarian assistance, peace operations, development, and other areas. Executive Office of the Secretary-General, unpublished slide presentation, slides 5–6.

¹¹ Statistics in this section are drawn from a March 2018 internal briefing note by the Senior Leadership Appointments Section (SLAS) of DPKO and DFS and updated quarterly. These figures are illustrative and do not include heads of military and police components in integrated missions or mission chiefs of staff and directors of mission support.

previously served as diplomats or in a national government. The remainder have served in another international organization, the military, academia, or an NGO.

In line with the Secretariat's objective to improve gender representation in senior ranks, the search for women candidates for appointment as senior mission leaders has intensified. Progress toward redressing the longstanding gender imbalance in senior leadership positions is making MLTs more diverse. The number of women appointed as head of mission or deputy head of mission has increased from 2 percent of the sixty serving in 2006 to 38 percent of the fifty serving as of November 2018.¹² As of November 2018, five women have been appointed head of mission, and women represented approximately 60 percent of all appointed heads of mission and deputy heads of mission. This is the largest percentage appointed to such positions in a single calendar year (the previous high was 54 percent in 2017). This progress is in line with initiatives such as the secretary-general's strategy to achieve parity at senior levels by 2021 and DFS's strategy to increase the proportion of women serving as head or deputy head of mission at the end of each year until 2021. In 2017, DFS reached its end-of-year target of 30 percent, and it again reached its target of 41 percent for 2018.

The process for selecting and appointing heads of mission and other members of the leadership team focuses on recruiting individuals with the required skill sets and who demonstrate the highest standards of efficiency, competence, and integrity, as required by Article 100 of the UN Charter. Selection criteria are driven by job profiles and include the right mix of professional knowledge and experience, solid reputation, strength of character, and political considerations (acceptability to or influence over parties to a conflict and other influential actors or international stature). With the support of the Leadership Support Section (formerly the Senior Leadership

Appointments Section, or SLAS), DPO and DPPA identify candidates and recommend them to the secretary-general for appointment.¹³ The Leadership Support Section manages a large database of potential candidates for head and deputy head of mission, which is an important tool for identifying candidates for specific positions. The database contains profiles of potential candidates identified through proactive searches conducted by the section or received through a variety of channels, including suggestions from internal and external partners and UN entities, direct nominations by member states, recommendations from regional organizations, and self-nominations by interested individuals. Appointments across missions are tracked to help identify outreach priorities that take into account requirements in terms of skill sets, geographic distribution, and gender.

Secretariat officials familiar with the process who were interviewed for this paper cited continuing efforts to make the appointment process more transparent, rigorous, and systematic. The Leadership Support Section has developed a standardized competitive assessment procedure that incorporates several candidate-screening mechanisms, interviews, and reference checks. Proactive searches, development and maintenance of databases, and initiatives like the "global call" for candidates that encourage member states and other entities to nominate candidates and invite individuals to self-nominate have enriched the selection pool. A similar call for women nominees for a "senior women talent pipeline" at the director level has shown promise as a means of addressing the longstanding, severe gender imbalance in MLTs.

Recruitment and selection of senior mission leaders is not solely a technical process but inevitably involves political calculus. Political consultations with key actors can influence the entire process, affecting timelines for filling vacancies as well as the ultimate appointments. Beyond the qualifications or experience of individual candidates, the interests of member

¹² Interview, New York, March 2018.

¹³ DPO's Office of Military Affairs and Police Division normally conduct the search for candidates to head military and police components. The selection of "multi-hatted" DSRSGs is conducted by the Inter-Agency Assessment Panel under the auspices of the UN Development Operations Coordination Office. This limits the "leadership team approach" to selecting MLT members in integrated missions. With the restructuring of the Secretariat's peace and security architecture, a "Standing Principals' Group" of the under-secretaries-general for political and peacebuilding affairs and for peace operations was established. Its tasks include supporting senior leadership appointments in missions. UN General Assembly, *Restructuring of the United Nations Peace and Security Pillar—Report of the Secretary-General*, UN Doc. A/72/525, October 13, 2017, para. 42.

states, parties to a conflict, or regional actors may need to be taken into account. This political reality complicates succession planning and, depending on the background of the person ultimately appointed, may also affect the kind and extent of training and learning support a newly appointed senior mission leader might need from the Secretariat.

In addition to ensuring that individuals appointed as senior mission leaders have or can readily acquire the knowledge and skills required for peacekeeping, the Secretariat faces the challenge of bringing together individuals with the right combination of professional and personal strengths to form effective MLTs. Rarely are entire teams recruited or deployed at the same time, and turnover of individual team members is frequent over the life of a mission. To facilitate the integration of new MLT members and reinforce teams already deployed, the Leadership Support Section supports DPO and DPPA in developing terms of reference for recruitment purposes that consider the existing team, permitting a more targeted candidate search. MLT members, particularly heads of mission, must nonetheless contend with the near constant challenge of establishing and maintaining relationships with other team members to ensure effective, coherent leadership of the mission as a whole. The Secretariat faces the challenge of finding and rapidly deploying leaders who possess the requisite mix of “hard” and “soft” skills, as well as extensive knowledge of the operating environment, sound political judgment, and the stamina to bear the physical and mental strains of an extremely demanding job.

Training cannot always substitute for experience or compensate for an unsuitable appointment, but learning support is essential, given the complexity of peacekeeping. As one DPKO veteran with extensive experience at headquarters and in the field put it, “You shouldn’t be hired if you don’t have the skills, but there’s value in ongoing education.”¹⁴ Many mission leaders have served with distinction, overcoming challenges by drawing on their own experience and strengths with little or no leadership training or preparation

from the UN. However, few, if any, candidates can be expected to be fully prepared upon being selected for their role as mission leaders in complex political, security, and management environments, no matter how rigorous the selection process.

The Mission Leadership Training Architecture: Fragmented and Under-resourced

The Secretariat provides several types of training and learning support for prospective and current senior mission leaders. The overall foundation for peacekeeping training was laid in 1995 by General Assembly Resolution 49/37, which covered all aspects of peacekeeping. The resolution’s provisions on training focused primarily on uniformed personnel and provided for collaboration between member states and the Secretariat. It set out a basic division of labor: training of peacekeeping personnel is the responsibility of member states, while the UN Secretariat is responsible for establishing basic guidelines and performance standards and providing “descriptive materials” and other support to member states’ training efforts. The resolution contained only two references to civilian training and just one to leadership: it encouraged the establishment of peacekeeping training centers “for military and civilian personnel” and requested the secretary-general “to investigate the means to strengthen the leadership cadre available for peace-keeping, inter alia, by coordinating relevant training for potential Force Commanders and other senior military and civilian personnel.”¹⁵

Since 1995, the scope of peacekeeping training and of the Secretariat’s related activities has expanded considerably as missions have grown in size, number, and complexity. Nonetheless, the basic division of responsibilities for peacekeeping training has remained unchanged. The development of training for civilian peacekeeping personnel and for senior mission leaders has been primarily driven by the Secretariat.

¹⁴ Interview with Secretariat official, New York, April 20, 2018.

¹⁵ UN General Assembly Resolution 49/37 (December 9, 1994), UN Doc. A/RES/49/37, para. 49.

INTEGRATED TRAINING SERVICE: THE FOCAL POINT FOR PEACEKEEPING TRAINING

The Integrated Training Service (ITS), established in 2007 as a shared service of DPKO and DFS, is the Secretariat unit with principal responsibility for peacekeeping training.¹⁶ Given the size and composition of the constituency it serves—all peacekeeping personnel—ITS is relatively lightly staffed with thirty-five personnel (twelve professional civilian staff, nine general service staff, eleven seconded military personnel, and three police officers). ITS is funded from the Peacekeeping Support Account, for which all member states are assessed and whose size is determined by the General Assembly and scaled to reflect the resources needed at headquarters for all areas of support to current missions.

Most of ITS's budget and staff are devoted to developing and rolling out peacekeeping training standards and materials, mainly for use by member states, and to supporting pre-deployment training conducted by troop- and police-contributing countries and in-mission training led by DPO. ITS collaborates with other DPO offices and with the wider Secretariat to develop and support training initiatives directly related to peacekeeping. The Peacekeeping Support Account included \$1,059,916 for ITS for the two-year period 2018–2019 (down from \$1,441,200 for 2014–2015). The ITS budget has been cut by 55 percent since 2009–2010 and includes no program funding for leadership training.

Most of the Secretariat's capacity-building activities related to peacekeeping are funded not by the Peacekeeping Support Account but by voluntary contributions from member states. ITS receives significant voluntary contributions for specific training-related activities from some fifteen donor countries, as well as in-kind contributions from countries that host training activities. Senior leadership training is among the activities supported by voluntary contributions, primarily the Senior Mission Leaders (SML) course, which costs an average of approximately \$250,000 per

course.¹⁷

Member states and regional organizations have access to UN peacekeeping training materials and can use them freely to prepare uniformed personnel and contingents for peacekeeping operations. To improve the operational readiness of uniformed peacekeepers, in recent years DPKO and DFS have worked with member states to devise a certification process to ensure that uniformed personnel have been trained to UN standards and with UN training materials.

From 2016 to 2017, ITS's Leadership Management and Communications Training Team comprised four staff members (three professional and one general service). ITS, particularly the leadership team, is responsible for designing and delivering the SML course, Senior Leadership Programme (SLP), Senior Mission Administrative and Resource Training (SMART), and Mission Advanced Staff Training (MAST). In collaboration with the Office of Military Affairs and Police Division, it is also responsible for the Intensive Orientation Course (IOC) for heads of military component. In addition, in conjunction with the Police Division, ITS has completed the first UN Police Commanders Course. Only travel costs for staff, mentors, and facilitators for the SML course and Senior Leadership Programme are covered by DPO's assessed budget. All other costs of the SML course, SLP, IOC, and UN Police Commanders Course are covered by voluntary and in-kind contributions from member states.

ITS, the Office of Military Affairs, and the Police Division are currently developing two additional leadership programs: a course for peacekeeping infantry battalion commanders and a course for formed police unit commanders. These were prioritized largely as an outcome of the dos Santos Cruz report. Both courses are supported by voluntary contributions. Since 2016, DPKO and DFS have expanded pre-deployment briefings for the incoming SRSG of the UN mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), the DSRSG/resident coordinator/humanitarian coordinators for the missions in South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the

16 For a brief background on ITS and peacekeeping leadership training, see OIOS, *Evaluation of the Senior Leadership Training of the Department of DPKO and DFS*, December 29, 2015, pp. 8–10.

17 The amount fluctuates depending on how many SML courses are delivered in one year. For 2014–2015, it was \$775,000, but for 2017–2018 it was \$500,000, with only two SML courses being delivered.

Congo (MONUSCO), and the new head of the mission in Lebanon (UNIFIL). These briefings, which include former senior mission leaders or resource persons, are not yet an established policy or practice.

Since 2013, the SML course has trained 203 potential civilian and uniformed senior mission leader candidates, of whom 75 (37 percent) have been women. Since the first SML course in 2005, some eighty participants have gone on to serve in UN peacekeeping, political, or other field missions, and many others have assumed national positions dealing with the UN.¹⁸ The SLP is mandatory for

current senior mission leaders, who are required to complete it within six months of deployment. The 2015 OIOS evaluation report showed that 62 percent of current mission leaders eligible for the course (forty-two out of sixty-eight) had completed it (see Box 1 for more on this evaluation).¹⁹

The two other ITS leadership and management courses—the SMART and the MAST—aim to develop a cadre of potential senior leaders in peace operations among mid-level managers. Both are funded by a combination of funds drawn from mission budgets and, for the MAST, voluntary contributions.

Box 1. 2015 OIOS evaluation of DPKO and DFS's senior leadership training

In 2015 OIOS's Inspection and Evaluation Division issued a report on training provided by DPKO and DFS to senior mission leaders. The evaluation narrowly aimed

1. to determine, as systematically and objectively as possible, the extent to which current DPKO/DFS senior leadership training programmes in general, and the Senior Mission Leaders (SML) course in particular, result in the provision of personnel more capable of meeting the complex challenges facing senior mission leaders in the field; and
2. to enable the Secretariat and Member States to engage in systematic reflection, with a view to increasing the effectiveness of DPKO/DFS senior leadership training.²⁰

The report examined in detail the objectives and intended target participants in the SML course and Senior Leadership Programme organized by the Integrated Training Service (ITS), as well as their outcomes and statistics on levels of participation and costs. The report also examined other learning support for newly appointed senior mission leaders provided by various offices of DPKO and DFS, notably the initial in-briefing of newly appointed leaders and the Intensive Orientation Course for heads of military component organized by the Office of Military Affairs in collaboration with ITS.

The population of senior mission leaders and participants in the SML course surveyed by OIOS for its 2015 report did not differ markedly from the current population, despite some variations, including more women currently in senior mission posts.²¹ In addition to a review of relevant documents and interviews of senior mission leaders and other UN- and non-UN personnel, OIOS conducted a formal survey of senior mission leaders, as well as a formal survey of participants in the SML course. It was not possible to replicate the OIOS's survey methodology for this paper, nor is it possible to review all of the evaluation's findings. However, the documentary research and semi-structured interviews conducted for this paper broadly reconfirmed the overall findings of the OIOS evaluation and highlighted several salient points that deserve to be mentioned:

- A significant number of current leaders did not complete mandatory training within the required time period (p. 14).
- Mission-specific briefings at UN headquarters and in-mission briefings were much more likely than any training to have been undertaken [by questionnaire respondents]. Despite this, compliance rates were still

¹⁸ Data provided by ITS. The figure includes staff from DPKO and DPA who were promoted to a D2 position or higher after attending the SML course.

¹⁹ OIOS, *Evaluation of the Senior Leadership Training of the Department of DPKO and DFS*, December 29, 2015, pp. 15-16. According to ITS, this percentage rises to nearly 75 percent when taking into consideration leaders of special political missions and those appointed internally from the Secretariat.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 8

²¹ See footnote 14, above, regarding the statistical "snapshot" prepared by SLAS

well below the expected 100 per cent (p. 18).

- Headquarters-based interviewees suggested that attitudes to training... accounted for some of the ambivalence towards it among some new appointees; there was no compulsion to complete training, and no sanction for non-completion (p. 18).
- Peacekeeping leaders... valued the training they received, with a clear correlation between the number of trainings and preparations taken and the subjective sense of increased capacity. Among the leaders who had undertaken training and other preparatory activities almost all found them useful, with 90 percent of questionnaire respondents reporting that the support they had received had increased their capacity to deal with challenges they subsequently faced. Those who had completed the SML course, which is not a mandatory training, were particularly likely to regard their training outcome positively (pp. 18–19).
- The SML course received consistently positive comment, with 65 percent of current leaders responding to the survey reporting that they found the SML course very useful for their subsequent leadership role (p. 19).
- There was similar positive feedback regarding the Intensive Orientation Course for force commanders and for the SMART, and a judgment by leaders who participated in briefings with peers and counterparts that their capacity had increased “a great deal” (although this effect was higher among non-military leaders) (p. 20).
- Leaders valued post-deployment support in the form of opportunities to share insight and best practices with peers and advice from UNHQ staff on mandate related or operational matters (p. 21).
- Despite the primacy DPKO and DFS policy accorded to ITS for directing and coordinating peacekeeping training, no single office or division had responsibility for, or oversight of, the overall preparation of any particular individual. Every Office and Division within DPKO/DFS had some responsibility in relation to the identification, selection, training, induction, briefing and continuing support of senior peacekeeping leaders (p. 25).

PEER-TO-PEER CONSULTATION, MENTORING, AND ONLINE LEARNING

Beyond formal trainings, the Secretariat also offers more informal support, including to better prepare and support newly appointed women senior mission leaders. In March 2017, DFS’s Senior Leadership Appointments Section (SLAS, now the Leadership Support Section) organized the first “Female Heads and Deputy Heads of Mission Retreat” to bring together the growing community of women leaders of peace operations and provide them with a platform to engage on issues unique to their positions. This retreat included peer-to-peer consultations on redefining leadership beyond preconceived, male-oriented notions; meaningful gender parity; and further avenues for leadership support. In order to maintain the momentum, SLAS launched a modest web-based forum for women heads and deputy heads of mission following the retreat.

Based on the principle that all senior leaders should have ready access to learning support

throughout their service, the Leadership Support Section manages a leadership support program called the Leadership Partnering Initiative. This initiative aims to provide newly appointed heads and deputy heads of mission the opportunity to partner with a veteran mission leader to serve as a mentor or a “sounding board.” Launched as a pilot in 2014, the program has been funded through extra-budgetary resources since March 2017. As of November 2018, twenty-seven partnerships have been administered under the program, which has recently been extended to military heads of mission. The Leadership Support Section also offers professional leadership coaching to those who may be interested in additional tools. It is currently exploring the potential for using more advanced web-based platforms for additional peer-to-peer knowledge and experience-sharing among leaders in the field. The possibility has been raised of using information technology to establish a “virtual” discussion group to bring together Secretariat officials and mission leaders, helping

them exchange ideas and experience and share knowledge.

Other UN programs not specifically designed for senior mission leaders might also offer learning support to newly appointed members of MLTs if integrated into the training architecture. The Secretariat's Office of Human Resource Management (OHRM) collaborates with ITS and integrated mission training centers in the field on delivering Secretariat-mandated management training for peacekeeping personnel. As part of this, it offers some learning and training support to senior personnel, including the Induction Programme for Senior Leaders at UN headquarters. Although such sessions are not geared specifically toward the challenges mission leaders face in the field, they may introduce those without prior UN experience to unfamiliar aspects of the UN environment. To date, however, it appears that no members of MLTs have taken part in the Induction Programme for Senior Leaders. A Secretariat official familiar with the program indicated that OHRM operated on the assumption that "the SML covers mission leaders." It should be noted that OHRM also faces resource constraints: due to staff reductions in 2017, it was limited to running a condensed induction program (two half-days) at UN headquarters for incoming under-secretaries-general and assistant secretaries-general.

A PROLIFERATION OF TRAINING INITIATIVES

ITS develops and maintains a broad network of collaborators, partnering with member states and others. However, many UN and non-UN entities independently develop and deliver training for current or prospective senior mission leaders. These institutions offer both training to peacekeeping personnel at all levels and training targeted to specific members of senior leadership teams. Some national and nongovernmental training institutions also offer courses and trainings intended for prospective or current senior leaders of peace operations. The African Union, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and Southern African Development

Community (SADC) have all run SML courses based on the UN course but with content tailored to their own requirements. Serving and former UN mission leaders and Secretariat personnel have contributed to these courses as presenters and facilitators. No centralized database or depository exists to track the content or participants in such courses, nor is there any capacity within or outside the UN to evaluate their impact on senior mission leaders.

As of November 2018, over 110 national and regional peacekeeping training centers and independent nongovernmental or quasi-nongovernmental training centers offer training for peacekeepers, while a number of policy institutes and think tanks also provide such training.²² Some 200 representatives of training organizations and training experts attend the International Association of Peacekeeping Training Centres each year.²³ The most successful platform for web-based distance learning for peacekeepers is run by an NGO, the Peace Operations Training Institute (POTI), whose work has been acknowledged by the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations but which has no formal link to the UN.²⁴

Information made publicly available by member states and organizations engaged in peacekeeping training indicates that many peacekeepers receive training through this highly decentralized system. However, it is difficult to consider this proliferation of training activities and institutions a "training architecture" where priorities are clear, content is monitored, and impact is measured. ITS, member states, and independent institutions engage in significant ad hoc collaboration, but no authoritative, overarching body sets priorities, coordinates activities and calendars, or tracks expenditures and outcomes. Under existing DPKO-DFS policy, ITS is responsible for the direction and coordination of peacekeeping training. However, ITS's remit and capacity do not match the scope and scale of the current peacekeeping training requirements or the fragmented nature of the peacekeeping training system.

22 Data from Center for International Peace Operations.

23 Ibid.

24 The Peace Operations Training Institute initially operated under the umbrella of the UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), but the organizations ended their relationship in 2009.

Given this fragmentation, it is particularly important that the UN Secretariat has the capacity to manage an authoritative architecture that guarantees training and learning for prospective and current senior leaders of UN peacekeeping missions. Such training needs to align squarely with UN peacekeeping doctrine and operational requirements and to advance UN principles and reform efforts.

Gaps in Training for Senior Mission Leaders

UN officials maintain that significant progress has been made toward improving the way the Secretariat selects, appoints, supports, and manages senior mission leaders. Nonetheless, they acknowledge that challenges remain, including the need to enhance support to newly appointed leaders and define a robust performance-management system that holds leaders to account in the field, in headquarters, and at the level of member states.²⁵

Secretariat officials acknowledge that it has become increasingly difficult to meet the demand for support to peacekeeping training, as the demand for and scope of training have grown and assessed funding has shrunken. Ongoing issues with performance indicate that gaps in knowledge and skills remain, despite the wide range of training initiatives developed and supported by DPO's Integrated Training Service (ITS, part of the Division of Policy, Evaluation and Training). Since 2008, ITS has conducted three global training needs assessments to determine peacekeeping training requirements for all categories and levels of personnel, including senior mission leaders. The most recent of these, the 2016–2017 assessment, focused on training needs with respect to the protection of civilians, reflecting the paramount importance of this mandate.²⁶ All three needs assessments have found persistent gaps in the crosscutting knowledge and skills leaders need to

address peacekeeping challenges.

Broadly, the skills and knowledge gaps identified in this paper with respect to civilian and uniformed members of MLTs fall into three areas: The first is a gap in knowledge of doctrine, concepts, policies, and processes that are often unique to UN peacekeeping. The second is a gap in knowledge of the UN management structure and procedures unique to the UN system. The third is a gap in the knowledge, skills, and competencies needed to exercise leadership and—most importantly—to build and maintain fully functional, effective MLTs that can integrate action across mission components in response to operational challenges, including crises and transitions. In addition, the capacity of mission leaders to manage strategic communications is a critically important gap.

Filling these gaps requires both mission-specific and non-mission-specific training tailored to the needs of individuals and teams. Training and learning support should help mission leaders adapt and apply doctrine and leadership skills appropriately by providing them with knowledge of the mission itself, including its configuration, assets, posture, challenges, and initiatives. It should also give them an in-depth understanding of the political and security environment in which they operate. Non-mission-specific training should be continually updated to ensure it is relevant to all current peace operations.

KNOWLEDGE OF UN PEACEKEEPING DOCTRINE, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES

UN peacekeeping doctrine has evolved significantly since the Brahimi report. Based on hard-learned lessons in the field and the demands of the Security Council, DPKO and DFS produced more than 170 separate guidance materials (policies, guidelines, standard operating procedures, manuals, etc.) to aid the overall direction and management of peace operations. These span the entire range of issues and activities of concern to

²⁵ Paraphrased from a “strictly confidential” note from the under-secretary-general for DFS to the secretary-general’s transition team, December 2016.

²⁶ As noted in OIOS’s 2015 evaluation report of DPKO and DFS’s senior leadership training, the 2008 strategic assessment of current and future training needs for UN peacekeeping found that UN peacekeeping staff and partner institutions perceived leadership as one of the main crosscutting skills gaps. OIOS also noted that the 2012–2013 Global Peacekeeping Training Needs Assessment referred to training as a “strategic investment in peacekeeping” and recommended strengthening senior management training. Citing the secretary-general’s 2008 report on the financing of peacekeeping operations, OIOS also noted that in 2008 ITS stated its intention to develop a senior leadership training strategy for peacekeeping that would “also be a part of the DPKO/DFS approach to senior leadership selection.” The OIOS report adds that “this strategy never materialized and remained an informal ITS document.” OIOS Inspection and Evaluation Division, *Evaluation of the Senior Leadership Training of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and the Department of Field Support (DFS)*, December 29, 2015, p. 9.

missions' civilian, military, and police components in the field and to UN headquarters.²⁷

Doctrine continues to evolve as new guidance is issued to respond to new mandates and operational challenges and as existing policies and practices are updated and revised. In 2017 alone, DPKO and DFS released twenty-three new and revised guidance materials. In the same year, they collected or developed seventy "best practices" materials that capture experiences that could be valuable for current and future missions. These included after-action reviews and other reports, lessons-learned studies, and end-of-mission and end-of assignment reports.²⁸ The development of peacekeeping policy and guidance has been welcomed and encouraged by the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, troop- and police-contributing countries, and member states in general, despite occasional intense debates over specific policies.

Progress in the development of UN peacekeeping doctrine presents both opportunities and challenges for senior leadership training. On the one hand, policy and guidance are invaluable for decision makers in the field. They are intended to bring consistency and coherence to decision making, to integrate action across mission components, and to promote efficient use of resources and risk management while also preserving the legitimacy and credibility of operations by promoting adherence to the principles of the UN Charter. Building on best practices identified across missions, peacekeeping policy and guidance offer cautionary advice as well as models and potential courses of action that mission leaders can adapt to respond to challenges. On the other hand, the sheer volume of policy and guidance is difficult for any training to cover thoroughly, and even more difficult for any one member of a leadership team to retain and implement.

In order to make the best use of such guidance and to apply policy effectively, mission personnel must be familiar with and share a common

understanding of key elements, particularly where the objective is to integrate action across mission components. Familiarity with policy and guidance, clarity about "who does what" in the mission—and about whom senior mission leaders can rely on for advice and support on policy procedures—are especially important for MLT members.

Sometimes, however, peacekeeping policy and guidance are not applied or fail to bring about improved performance, timely, coherent, and well-informed decision making, effective integration of planning and efforts, and prioritization in the use of resources. Investigations, evaluations, studies, and training needs assessments have revealed that this often happens because key mission personnel—including, in a number of instances, members of MLTs—were unfamiliar with policies, lacked a shared understanding of them, or had not been sufficiently trained, drilled, or rehearsed in applying them. They have also found that when leaders are unaware of or uncertain about the implications of policies and procedures, their decisions can lead to disconnects, confusion, or conflicting actions. In this way, well-intentioned actions initiated under different policies or standard operating procedures can inadvertently become drivers of crises or impede appropriate responses by mission personnel. For example, early in the deployment of the UN mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), a general instruction issued to all mission personnel to shelter in place in Bangui delayed key personnel from carrying out their responsibilities under crisis management procedures.²⁹

One expert interviewee familiar with command-and-control issues in multiple UN missions noted that there were many examples of individuals or components (both uniformed and civilian) "just doing their own thing" and not following procedures, directions, or orders. This phenomenon was aggravated when senior mission leaders did not understand their role or the extent of their

27 These materials include: the policy on authority, command and control; guidelines on the use of force by military components; policies and guidelines on joint operations centers and joint mission analysis centers; standard operating procedures on integrated reporting to UN headquarters; policies on crisis management, the protection of civilians, and human rights in UN peacekeeping; the policy governing requests from field missions for delegation of authority; manuals on military units in peacekeeping; the peacekeeping intelligence policy; guidelines on police capacity building and development; standard operating procedures on boards of inquiry and notification of casualties; and the policy on accountability for conduct and discipline and on detention in UN peacekeeping.

28 UN Division of Policy, Evaluation and Training, briefing to the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations on best practices and training in peacekeeping operations, December 2017.

29 UN DPKO and DFS, evaluation of contingency planning and crisis management (internal document).

authority or were unfamiliar with the relevant mission structures. The interviewee noted that there was a sharp difference in understanding between senior civilian and uniformed leaders with previous experience in senior UN positions or who had been thoroughly trained and prepared and those who lacked such support or previous experience. The command structure of UN peacekeeping is decentralized, making thorough training, a shared strategic vision, and an effective framework for accountability essential for leaders in the field.³⁰

A Secretariat interviewee cautioned that difficulties in command and control were not solely a training problem, noting that factors like caveats, second reporting lines back to capitals, and strained relationships between MLT members can create issues. Implementation of policy and adherence to procedures should not be treated as ends in themselves. Compliance does not necessarily equate to performance, and policy does not prescribe how to deal with every situation. “Out-of-the-box” thinking and the ability to improvise are important traits for peacekeepers at all levels, including in MLTs. “Doing your own thing,” the official added, “otherwise known as ‘initiative,’ pays off when everything else is going badly.”³¹

However, incidents such as those in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Central African Republic have repeatedly demonstrated the potential consequences of failing to provide senior mission leaders and personnel with the training and learning support necessary to understand when and how to apply policies and procedures. Various internal reviews and investigations have highlighted cases where confusion or lack of clarity among senior mission leaders and command-level subordinates over the chain of command and the roles of different components prevented the mission from acting effectively. Such confusion in times of crisis has had serious consequences for the protection of civilians and the security of peacekeeping personnel.

A prime example of a critical gap is the frequent lack of clarity, even among senior mission leaders, regarding the respective roles of military and

police. A March 2018 internal DPKO evaluation of formed police units found a frequent misunderstanding of their role and purpose. According to those familiar with the evaluation, peacekeepers reported that mission leaders did not always understand the role and capabilities of these units. One example cited was an instance when the force commander considered formed police units to be akin to light military units. A related issue is the lack of understanding that the police component is independent from the military component, which has implications for both the civilian nature of policing and the conduct of operations that involve both the police and military components.³²

There is often a particular lack of clarity among military personnel who have not previously served in UN peacekeeping operations. As noted by Alexandra Novosseloff, “Working in a UN peacekeeping operation is often a culture shock for military personnel,” as “procedures, policies and mindsets differ from other military settings and civilians have a greater and more controlling role than in other military operations.”³³ Making decisions and implementing mandates can be difficult and a source of conflict if a force commander and director of mission support have not been adequately prepared to work together on such issues. Lack of a common understanding of even basic issues such as the level of authority exercised by the military and support components over decisions and procedures governing the use of mission resources (e.g., aviation or engineering assets) can generate contention, friction, and, in the worst case, paralysis.

In addition to training that provides the foundational knowledge needed to manage missions, members of MLTs also need to be sensitized to the importance of in-mission training, particularly in fields such as crisis management, the protection of civilians, and other areas that require integrated planning and action by different mission components. In this regard, DPKO and DFS called on members of MLTs to support in-mission training, including by participating in scenario-based exercises and drills designed to test missions’

30 Interview, New York, September 19, 2017.

31 Interview, New York, November 9, 2018.

32 UN DPKO and DFS, *Evaluation Report: Evaluation of Formed Police Units in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations* (internal document), March 2018, p. 21.

33 Alexandra Novosseloff, “Keeping Peace from Above: Air Assets in UN Peace Operations,” International Peace Institute, October 2017, p. 24.

crisis preparedness and response and to ensure consistent after-action review and follow-up (see Box 2).

The need for ongoing mission-specific training at all levels is demonstrated by the challenge of preparing peacekeepers to implement their protection of civilians mandate. For at least a decade, DPKO, DFS, other Secretariat entities, and non-UN institutions have devoted sustained effort to developing policy, guidelines, procedures, and

training to enhance peacekeepers' ability to protect civilians in accordance with their mandates. Despite these efforts, the 2016–2017 global training needs assessment conducted by ITS concluded that “there is often a lack of coherent vision and definition of what [the protection of civilians] means for each Mission, including amongst senior leadership.”³⁴ The assessment recommended more extensive use of tabletop exercises and mission-specific training on the protection of civilians, specifically for senior leaders.³⁵

Box 2. Scenario-based exercises

Several Secretariat initiatives attempt to reinforce the teamwork and leadership skills needed in situations that may arise in real-world peacekeeping through scenario-based training and simulations. ITS has developed a Senior Mission Leaders (SML) course for senior-level participants, including both internal and external participants (i.e., current staff members and potential candidates nominated by member states or culled from lists). The SML course uses multiple scenario-based exercises set in the fictional post-conflict country “Carana” to allow participants to explore a variety of operational and leadership issues. Leadership within the mission leadership team (MLT) is the central theme throughout the course. Over two weeks of intensive discussions and exercises, the course requires participants to carry out specific roles in the Carana MLT. The SML course capitalizes on the expertise of former SRSGs, DSRSGs, force commanders, police commissioners, and directors of mission support as mentors, facilitators, and subject-matter experts. ITS has recently added two scenario-based exercises to its Senior Leadership Programme (SLP) that bring together currently serving MLT members from different missions. It has also integrated scenario-based training into the Intensive Orientation Course (IOC) and the newly developed Mission Advanced Staff Training (MAST).³⁶

Scenario-based exercises such as tabletop exercises are widely seen as effective for enhancing the performance of MLTs and missions as a whole. They provide a means for developing and testing contingency and other plans, drilling participants on crisis-management procedures, and identifying weaknesses and potential corrective measures. In response to the findings and recommendations of recent investigations, after-action reviews, and other studies, the under-secretary-general for peacekeeping issued a directive calling for all missions to conduct at least one tabletop exercise each year. DPKO, DFS, and several missions significantly stepped up their efforts to build internal capacity to design and run scenario-based training exercises and drills. The missions in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), and South Sudan (UNMISS) have undertaken scenario-based exercises with senior leadership teams at mission headquarters and, in some cases, at the sector level. DPKO and DFS have led tabletop exercises for the UN missions in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and Liberia (UNMIL).

Secretariat officials note, however, that some missions have still not initiated scenario-based drills or exercises. They cite continuing difficulty securing the buy-in and participation of some members of senior leadership teams in such exercises. Scenario-based exercises are not one-off events but must be repeated and refreshed to reflect rotations of senior personnel as well as shifting operational realities and mission priorities. Their aim should be to test and strengthen the ability of missions to integrate efforts across components to deal with likely crises and operational challenges.

34 UN Integrated Training Service (ITS), *Final Report: Training Needs Assessment of Protection of Civilians, 2016–2017*, p. 34.

35 *Ibid.*, Annex, key recommendations nos. 3, 4.

36 Interview, New York, September 10, 2018.

In response to this need for training on the protection of civilians, new DPO polices require all missions to conduct at least one mission-level crisis management exercise and one casualty evacuation exercise each year. In addition, with the support of member states, and with added impetus from the 2017 report from Carlos Alberto dos Santos Cruz on improving the security of UN peacekeepers (the “dos Santos Cruz report”), DPO has initiated a program of mission stress testing, and a force-level command-post exercise program is underway.

KNOWLEDGE OF UN MANAGEMENT

In addition to training in UN peacekeeping doctrine, interviews with Secretariat and senior mission personnel reveal a growing conviction that training for senior mission leaders must address UN management issues and processes. The intense scrutiny peacekeeping operations face over sexual exploitation and abuse (and other disciplinary issues), plus pressure to use scarce resources efficiently, have increased this sentiment. Like other aspects of preparing leaders, this issue is not new. Writing in the *Annual Review of Global Peace Operations* in 2008, Lakhdar Brahimi and Salman Ahmed noted that “SRSGs ignore at their peril the administrative and logistics aspects of missions comprised of tens of thousands of military, police, and civilian personnel, with budgets of up to one billion dollars per year.”³⁷

A current senior leader, a veteran of multiple missions, noted the challenge of making senior leaders understand the importance of management processes, particularly budgeting, and speculated that management reforms may change this:

The issue in the past has been how to convince heads of mission to take ownership [of the budget]. In the past, one problem has been their inability to influence it: ‘If I can’t change it, why get involved?’ They need to be educated to see the budget as a strategic tool and enabler of the mandate. You can’t get them interested unless they know that it benefits them. They need to understand budgets and the overall thrust of the [results-based budgeting] framework.³⁸

A core element of the management reform launched by Secretary-General Guterres is the delegation of authority to the field level, with a corresponding increase in accountability. Implementation of the reform presupposes that heads of mission and their colleagues in MLTs will understand the UN system’s complex management processes and procedures. They should at least know what questions to pose when making operational decisions that have resource implications, involve potential reputational risk for the organization, or put at risk the safety and security of personnel. Member states expect the UN to optimize the use of scarce resources and expect mission leaders to be responsible and capable managers:

MLTs must ensure the efficiency of large and complex missions, operating as a tight unit with coordination across the military, police and civilian pillars of the mission. Heads of Mission must understand the UN’s processes and operating model in order to effectively manage, support and motivate their staff, and ensure sound financial and resource management. This requires strong organizational management skill from the [head of mission], and resource and project management experience within the MLT.³⁹

In his report on the restructuring of the UN peace and security pillar, the secretary-general noted the General Assembly and Security Council’s calls for progress across a number of core areas, “including the need to enhance policy and operational coherence within and across the United Nations system; *improve internal leadership, accountability and capacities*; and strengthen partnerships among the United Nations and key stakeholders” (emphasis added).⁴⁰ The secretary-general has proposed putting in place a robust performance management and evaluation system that holds leadership and staff at headquarters and in the field accountable for delivery of their mandates and for upholding UN norms and values, including a 360-degree evaluation mechanism. He has also proposed investing more in staff training and development, providing more leadership

37 Lakhdar Brahimi and Salman Ahmed, “In Pursuit of Sustainable Peace: The Seven Deadly Sins of Mediation,” Center on International Cooperation, May 2008, p. 12.

38 Interview, New York, May 28, 2018.

39 Quinary Consultations on Peacekeeping Operations, December 6–8, 2016, “Supporting Effective Mission Leadership,” unpublished discussion paper, p. 2. The “quinary consultations” are periodic informal meetings of representatives of the governments of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

40 UN General Assembly, *Restructuring of the United Nations Peace and Security Pillar—Report of the Secretary-General*, UN Doc. A/72/525, October 13, 2017, para. 5.

coaching for key managerial personnel, and increasing opportunities for mid-level staff to benefit from leadership and management training. It remains to be seen what resources the Secretariat will devote to these initiatives and how it will tailor them to meet the specific needs of leadership teams in peacekeeping missions, given the downward pressure on budgets.⁴¹

BUILDING AND MANAGING TEAMS

Effective leadership in peacekeeping depends not only on competent and well-prepared individual senior mission leaders but also on effective MLTs, particularly where peacekeeping environments are volatile and crisis-prone. The study on “Considerations for Mission Leadership in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations” put the challenge succinctly: “The individual leadership qualities of the MLT membership are of crucial importance, but can be optimized only if personalities complement each other and the MLT operates compatibly as an inclusive, coherent team in which the members are respectful of each other’s competencies and mandates.”⁴² Good working relationships within leadership teams are necessary to capitalize on each member’s strengths and compensate for any weaknesses. MLTs are almost constantly evolving, with high turnover in their membership and frequent changes in the operational environment.

The prospects for building effective teams improve when senior mission leaders have the knowledge and skills to fulfill their own responsibilities and receive adequate preparation to understand how those responsibilities dovetail with those of other members of their MLT. This was highlighted by an interviewee who stated, “Leadership doesn’t get together until they’re in-mission. It will always be a catch-up effort. You can arrange early on to have a team-building exercise, but it will only take you so far at the end of the day.... We need continuous learning.”⁴³

The diversity of MLT members is one of UN peacekeeping’s greatest strengths, but it also poses

a challenge to forming effective teams and devising training and learning support to reinforce them. SRSGs or heads of mission in multidisciplinary integrated missions face the task of forging team spirit among a diverse group of individuals who are themselves leaders with extensive experience in their own professions. This task would be daunting in any organization as large as some UN peace operations, but the multicultural, multinational nature of UN missions and the complex political and security environments in which they operate magnify the difficulty.

Mission personnel frequently cite the different organizational cultures of mission components—particularly the civilian-military divide but also the divide between substantive and support sections—as an impediment to integrated action and mandate implementation. In interviews, members of MLTs often point to the challenge of senior mission leaders reaching consensus on the overarching strategy for implementing the mandate and operational priorities. Senior-level interviewees in the Secretariat and the field cited several recent situations where relations between members of MLTs were so poor as to render the teams virtually dysfunctional. The 2015 OIOS report highlighted this phenomenon:

Many leaders reported tensions and misunderstanding within their teams, often related to roles, responsibilities and procedures. Navigating relationships across the uniformed-civilian pillars was challenging for many new appointees and was the source of considerable frustration, especially where the input of one pillar (e.g. mission support) was critical to the output of another (e.g. military redeployments).⁴⁴

The OIOS evaluation concluded that training offered by the Secretariat did not adequately address team-related challenges: “Attempts to train and exercise leadership teams in crisis management through scenario-based training were initiated by DPKO/DFS on several occasions, with varied results.” There was reportedly “difficulty in achieving buy-in from mission leadership teams”

41 DPKO and DFS developed a mentoring/development program for a group of potential future mission chiefs of staff. They conducted a 360-degree evaluation and provided coaching sessions to approximately fifteen senior leaders (from D1 to the under-secretary-general level) both at headquarters and in the field.

42 International Forum for the Challenges of Peace Operations, “Considerations for Mission Leadership in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations,” 2010, p. 16.

43 Telephone interview with former SRSG for several peacekeeping operations, June 19, 2018.

44 OIOS, *Evaluation of the Senior Leadership Training of the Department of DPKO and DFS*, December 29, 2015, para. 59.

for such exercises.⁴⁵

As a former senior mission leader noted, “People management and team-building skills are very critical for mission leaders.... Training should focus more on teamwork and collective responsibility of mission leadership.”⁴⁶ Most current and former MLT members interviewed for this paper expressed similar views, ranking leadership and team building among the highest priorities for training. If an individual has serious deficiencies in these areas, training is unlikely to remedy the problem. However, training and learning support can help leaders enhance and adapt their skills to navigate the unique UN peacekeeping environment.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

The capacity of mission leaders to manage strategic communications is a critically important gap that cuts across the above gaps, affecting implementation of peacekeeping mandates and performance across the full spectrum of mission activities. To effectively engage in strategic communication, senior mission leaders need to be able to establish and maintain open channels of two-way communication with key interlocutors, advocate with key audiences on behalf of the mission, manage expectations, and mitigate reputational risk.

The Secretariat has included modules on strategic communications in the SML course, Mission Advanced Staff Training (MAST), and Senior Mission Administration and Resources Training (SMART). However, these efforts are inadequate to prepare mission leaders to effectively manage strategic communications in peacekeeping environments. No consistent effort is made to assess and address individual mission leaders’ needs for training and coaching in areas such as media relations. Nor are they prepared to deal with the explosion of social media and other digital platforms, which are both drivers of conflict and potential tools for mission leaders to implement mission mandates.

The Current State of Play: Obstacles to Progress

Despite multiple reports and assessments that identify similar gaps and comments by former and current senior leaders that reinforce these findings, the UN has made only limited progress in addressing leaders’ needs through training and learning support. In order to identify potential measures to improve the situation, it is necessary to review positive initiatives already under way, as well as major impediments to progress. In addition to the ongoing training for senior mission leaders delivered by ITS, the Office of Military Affairs, and the Police Division as described above, DPKO and DFS also engaged in additional, less formal measures to prepare candidates for and appointees to senior mission posts.

CONTINUED DISCONNECT BETWEEN SELECTION AND TRAINING

The Leadership Support Section approaches field leadership as a life-cycle that commences with initial contact with and support to prospective candidates and continues with sustained support during their appointment, induction, in-briefing, early deployment, and through the duration of their field posting. By identifying these steps, the Secretariat acknowledges the need to prepare and support newly appointed mission leaders. But aside from the DPO guidelines for in-briefing and debriefing—which fall short of a policy requirement—training and preparation of senior leaders are not treated as integral to the recruitment process. Moreover, these different stages are not linked through a serious accountability mechanism with terms of reference that are used not only to help select senior mission leaders but also to appraise them and determine whether to renew their appointment.⁴⁷

Individuals continue to be appointed to leadership positions without any systematic individual

⁴⁵ Ibid., para. 61.

⁴⁶ Email exchange, April 11, 2018.

⁴⁷ United Nations, *System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity*, 2017.

assessment of the training or other support they might need before or during their deployment. No formal pre-deployment training requirements have been established to ensure that newly appointed senior mission leaders are at least familiar with key UN and peacekeeping policies and practices and with mission-specific issues. The normal in-briefing for civilian mission leaders consists of a compressed series of meetings over five to seven days, while incoming force commanders take the Intensive Orientation Course, which takes roughly the same amount of time. Under the security management system, designated officials are also required to receive pre-deployment training from the UN Department for Safety and Security. However, the Secretariat's principal focus is almost invariably on deploying new appointees as quickly as possible. No time is budgeted in the selection and on-boarding process for more in-depth or formal mission-specific pre-deployment preparation tailored to the needs of a new appointee.

The Senior Mission Leaders (SML) course is only informally linked to the selection and appointment process for senior mission leaders. Senior Secretariat officials involved in the appointment process do not appear to routinely consider a candidate's participation in the SML course as a factor in selection or to treat it as necessary. The 2015 OIOS evaluation concluded that the SML course is "not functioning as a career pipeline as originally intended."⁴⁸ Member states are nonetheless eager to place individuals in the course, and participants consistently rate it highly.⁴⁹ As the only training that DPO offers to potential senior appointees, the SML course is a logical tool to prepare potential leaders prior to deployment and to generate interaction between candidates and the UN to aid in the appointment process, albeit informally. But because it is disconnected from the selection process, the SML course fails to deliver its full benefits to either prospective senior mission leaders or to Secretariat officials engaged in the

selection process. While many participants in the SML course have gone on to serve in senior mission leadership posts, many former participants are not nominated by member states or otherwise considered for appointment.

PRE-DEPLOYMENT IN-BRIEFING OF APPOINTEES: ESSENTIAL BUT HURRIED

While not a formal "training," the in-briefing of newly appointed senior mission leaders is an important part of preparing them for deployment. In 2016, DPKO and DFS issued new *Guidelines on In-briefings and De-briefings for Civilian and Uniformed Senior Mission Leaders*, noting that the secretary-general has emphasized the need for senior mission leaders to receive "the support necessary to provide political direction and executive management of often large and complex operations."⁵⁰ These briefings, received on appointment and on exit, are mandatory for all members of MLTs.⁵¹

The guidelines prescribe an in-briefing program of meetings at UN headquarters of five to seven working days for newly appointed leaders, preferably pre-deployment, and provision of a resource package tailored to individuals, their specific functional responsibilities, and the country context. The relevant integrated operational team coordinates the briefing program in collaboration with the Leadership Support Section, the Office of Military Affairs, and the Police Division, as appropriate, while the Knowledge Management Team (part of the Division of Policy, Evaluation and Training's Policy and Best Practices Service) assists in preparing the resource package. The guidelines specify that the program and package "must provide an overview of all UN-internal policies and guidance material as well as best practices and lessons learning resources that are relevant to the mission mandate and country context."⁵²

48 OIOS, *Evaluation of the Senior Leadership Training of the Department of DPKO and DFS*, December 29, 2015, para. 78.

49 *Ibid.*, para. 43. "A majority of SML course participants reported a high degree of its utility... Regardless of whether participants did nor did not subsequently take up senior leadership positions in peacekeeping, they reported gaining utility form the course, with 33.3 per cent claiming that they had been able to apply the SML learning in their work to a great extent and 53.8 per cent somewhat."

50 UN DPKO and DFS, *Guidelines on In-briefings and De-briefings for Civilian and Uniformed Senior Mission Leaders*, DPKO/DFS Doc. No. 2016.01, para. 6.

51 These briefings are provided to SRSGs, DSRSGs, heads of military component, police commissioners, and others as determined by the under-secretaries-general of DPO or DOS or the office arranging the in-briefing. In-briefings may also be provided for newly appointed mission chiefs of staff or directors of mission support.

52 *Ibid.*, para. 11.

Most headquarters personnel and new appointees consider pre-deployment briefing programs essential, though they frequently describe them as too rushed, with too many tightly compressed, disparate elements to be addressed in too little time. Newcomers to the UN system frequently indicate that they are overwhelmed by the volume and unfamiliar nature of the material presented in rapid-fire meetings. Reactions to the resource packages (which usually contain forty or more policy and guidance documents, reports, and manuals or reference materials) vary. Some newly appointed officials (mostly UN veterans) reportedly show little interest, while others (frequently those without previous UN or peacekeeping experience) cite them as being integral to their preparation. One former Secretariat staff member noted that DPPA has a Special Political Mission Start-Up Manual designed for senior leaders, but in five years it has never been used for a mission start-up, and most senior leaders are unaware of it.

INSUFFICIENT DEDICATED RESOURCES DESPITE STATEMENTS OF COMMITMENT

Member states and successive secretaries-general have highlighted the need to strengthen and empower mission leaders. Secretary-General Guterres has emphasized his commitment “to enhance leadership capacities and further strengthen the organizational culture” by placing greater emphasis on investing in staff training and development. He has specified that “this includes offering leadership coaching for key managerial personnel and increasing the opportunities for mid-level staff to benefit from leadership and management training.”⁵³ Such expressions of support and diverse initiatives to enhance training are welcome but have not yet translated into a systematic approach or a sustained commitment of resources to training and supporting mission leaders and leadership teams.

It is difficult to reconcile expressions of commitment and persistent calls for better mission leadership and more effective leadership teams with the

secretary-general’s explanation to the Security Council in December 2017 that “the reduction in funding has removed all institutionalized support for peacekeeping leadership training, which is now funded by voluntary Member State contributions or levies on peacekeeping missions.”⁵⁴

As noted above, donors and host countries make it possible for the Secretariat to deliver the SML course and Intensive Orientation Course for senior uniformed peacekeeping leaders. But member states and the Secretariat appear unwilling to assign a high priority to establishing and sustaining an institutional framework in the UN dedicated to training senior mission leaders. Without such a framework funded by assessed contributions, the Secretariat is unable to provide MLTs with guaranteed learning support from pre-deployment support throughout their service. Voluntary contributions are welcome but uncertain and address only tightly defined initiatives that attract donor support. They cannot permanently fill this institutional gap. Levies on mission budgets for leadership training cover only the costs of the Senior Mission Administration and Resources Training (SMART) and Mission Advanced Staff Training (MAST) programs, which, though essential, are limited to a relatively small number of mid-level civilians, mostly support personnel.

The 2015 OIOS evaluation report noted that the “limitation of resources allocated to senior leadership training could only be increased at the expense of those available for the totality of other peacekeeping training.”⁵⁵ The report also noted that in 2007 the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations requested the secretary-general to submit a funding proposal for the SML course for consideration by the General Assembly but that such a proposal was never submitted. This situation remains essentially unchanged. In his December 2017 letter to the Security Council, the secretary-general acknowledged that “the lack of sustainable resources continues to curtail our efforts to support training and capacity building” and reduces the capacity of ITS to support member

53 UN General Assembly, *Restructuring of the United Nations Peace and Security Pillar—Report of the Secretary-General*, UN Doc. A/72/525, October 13, 2017, para. 59.

54 UN Security Council, *Letter Dated 15 December from the Secretary-General Addressed to the President of the Security Council*, UN Doc. S/2017/1079, December 20, 2017, Annex, para. 12.

55 OIOS, *Evaluation of the Senior Leadership Training of the Department of DPKO and DFS*, December 29, 2015, para. 71.

states and field missions. Faced with relentless pressure to reduce overall UN spending, member states and the Secretariat have failed to guarantee adequate resources for leadership training.

LACK OF A SINGLE UNIT RESPONSIBLE FOR MISSION LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Although the Secretariat initiatives highlighted in this paper are useful, the central dilemma remains: the UN Secretariat has not established a center with the mandate and resources needed to prepare mission leaders. Neither has it devised a system to ensure that those appointed to senior positions in MLTs are provided the training and learning support they need from pre-deployment through to the conclusion of their service. The 2015 OIOS evaluation's finding that "no single office or division had responsibility for, or oversight of, the overall preparation of any particular individual" to assume their functions as a member of an MLT compounds the problem. As a result, training and preparation for senior mission leaders are not sufficiently prioritized in the recruitment or appointment process, and no one is accountable for ensuring that the content and nature of the training and learning provided are timely and relevant.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Although the secretary-general's reform agenda offers an opportunity to take decisive action to strengthen the current system for preparing senior mission leaders to assume their roles, immediate prospects for major improvements do not appear promising. In the wake of the HIPPO report and the investigations and reviews mentioned above, in 2017, the secretary-general launched the Action for Peacekeeping initiative (A4P). A4P aims to solidify the political will of member states to strengthen peace operations. It is striking that despite HIPPO's conclusions and recommendations, reviews and investigations by dos Santos Cruz and others regarding the need to enhance the preparedness and quality of peacekeeping leadership—both civilian and military—the Secretariat's action plan following up on the dos Santos Cruz report includes virtually no measures to improve leadership training and preparation. Likewise, the A4P initiative exclusively addresses training for uniformed peacekeepers. A new version of the action plan is being developed by DPO's Office for Peacekeeping

Box 3. The contrast between peace operations and humanitarian operations

The low priority accorded to leadership training and learning for senior leaders and leadership teams in UN peace operations contrasts with the Secretariat's more structured approach to donor-financed learning support for humanitarian coordinators and humanitarian country teams. The Geneva-based Humanitarian Leadership Strengthening Section (HLSS) of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) provides dedicated support to those fulfilling humanitarian coordination leadership functions (humanitarian coordinators, resident coordinators, regional humanitarian coordinators, and deputies) as well as to leadership teams. It also organizes mentoring and coaching by veteran humanitarian leaders for first-time humanitarian coordinators, as well as for individuals identified as potential future humanitarian coordinators. The section has devised a pilot initiative to bring together several humanitarian coordinators with members of their teams to exchange practices and lessons learned. Conceived as a "training-of-trainers," the workshop would support the development of an action plan at the field level.

This is not to suggest that peacekeeping could adopt the humanitarian community's model as is, since the structural and policy frameworks for humanitarian coordination differ sharply from those of peace operations. Not all aspects of the Humanitarian Leadership Strengthening Section would necessarily apply to a peacekeeping mission's MLT. But the concept of a program dedicated to preparing field-based leaders to fulfill their responsibilities both pre- and post-deployment, and especially to help with team building, is a model worth considering.

Strategic Partnership, but it remains to be seen how, or indeed if, it will prioritize improvement to leadership training and preparation.

The need for stronger MLTs and the deficits in the preparation of senior mission leaders are well documented and widely known, and the recommendations in the 2015 OIOS evaluation report remain valid and largely unimplemented. In keeping with the secretary-general's stated commitment to enhancing leadership, reform, and accountability in the Secretariat as a whole, and particularly in field missions, the Secretariat should prioritize actions in the following areas. These are addressed in particular to the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, the Department of Peace Operations (DPO), Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA), and the Department of Operational Support (DOS).

CENTRALIZE RESPONSIBILITY FOR MISSION LEADERSHIP TRAINING

1. **Designate clear responsibility for mission leadership training and learning support and provide dedicated resources:** As part of the reform of the Secretariat's peace and security architecture, the secretary-general should instruct DPPA and DPO to assign to the Leadership Support Section (LSS) of the Office of the Director for Coordination and Shared Services the mandate to coordinate all facets of training and learning support for senior mission leaders, from recruitment through exit. LSS should work in close partnership with the Integrated Training Service (ITS), which should take the lead in ensuring delivery of relevant training and learning programs for senior mission leaders. DPPA and DPO, working with the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance and DOS, as appropriate, should ensure that LSS and ITS have the dedicated capacity and resources to fulfill these responsibilities. The Secretariat should evaluate the effectiveness of this arrangement with a view to determining if, in the next budget cycle, a specific unit for senior mission leadership training and learning should be created within LSS. In this case, resources should be made available to ensure they have the expertise and capacities required to guarantee support to all senior mission leaders and their teams.

INTEGRATE TRAINING INTO PLANNING AND RECRUITMENT PROCESSES

2. **Consider the composition of the leadership team when planning a new peace operation:** In planning for new peace operations, the Executive Office of the Secretary-General and the lead department, with the support of the LSS, should give early consideration to the composition of a MLT with a view to determining a pool of potential candidates. To the extent possible, the senior mission leadership team should undergo training as a group. Such group training should be designed and organized by ITS in consultation with the relevant regional office and the Leadership Support Section. As part of the group training, ITS and the UN Operations and Crisis Centre (UNOCC) should collaborate in organizing at least one scenario-based exercise on crisis response and management that reflects the prospective mission's likely mandate and challenges.
3. **Assess the training needs of all candidates:** All candidates under active consideration for possible appointment as a senior mission leader should undergo a thorough individual knowledge and training needs assessment based on the profile and terms of reference of the posts for which they are being considered. The LSS should oversee this assessment in collaboration with ITS. The content and duration of the tailored in-briefing should take this needs assessment into account, and initial pre-deployment training should be determined through consultation among the LSS, ITS, and the relevant substantive office at headquarters (i.e., the integrated operational team or office of the assistant secretary-general for the region where the mission is deployed, as well as the MLT of the mission concerned, as appropriate).
4. **Factor the time needed for training into the recruitment process:** Training and in-briefing should be factored into the succession planning and management of vacancies to allow sufficient lead time for the selection process, individual training needs assessment, and pre-deployment training.
5. **Encourage all mission leadership candidates to participate in the SML course:** Participation

in the SML course should be more closely linked to the process for recruiting senior mission leaders. While participation should be open to all with suitable profiles, candidates under active consideration for appointment or included in the pool of potential appointees to current or near-term vacancies should be strongly encouraged to participate in the SML course. Toward that end, Secretariat officials who interview candidates for appointment should prompt them to share insights or observations gained from the course. Moreover, member states that nominate individuals to participate in the SML course should be strongly encouraged to nominate only those at the appropriate level and with the right professional profile for MLTs, with an emphasis on nominating qualified women participants. Finally, the Office of Military Affairs and Police Division should intensify their systematic, proactive search for qualified candidates, particularly women, for positions as head of military and police component to participate in the SML course.

6. **Certify that new leaders have completed training requirements before deployment:** Newly appointed senior mission leaders should deploy only after completing the necessary in-briefing and minimum training required, as determined by the individual knowledge and training needs assessment. Directors of the relevant divisions should be required to certify that these steps have been satisfactorily completed. Organization and execution of in-briefings and pre-deployment training should formally include performance evaluations of the relevant personnel.
7. **Provide all new senior mission leaders with a mentor:** All newly appointed senior mission leaders should be accompanied during their in-briefing by a mentor or resource person with the experience and knowledge to complement or supplement information provided in briefings.

PROVIDE MORE SUSTAINED SUPPORT TO TRAINING

8. **Provide more sustainable funding to the SML course:** DPO, DPPA, and DOS should work with member states to devise an alternative to

the current course-by-course funding of the SML course through ad hoc voluntary contributions and hosting arrangements. Such an alternative should provide the Secretariat with greater flexibility and certainty to allow for forward planning, include sufficient funds to support participants from developing countries and ensure that the course maintains its UN identity.

EMPLOY NEW TOOLS FOR IN-MISSION TRAINING

9. **Use information technology to enhance training:** DPO, DPPA, and DOS should identify ways to employ information technology to enhance training and learning support intended for senior mission leaders. For example, it could initiate a program of webinars or videoconferences exclusively for members of MLTs to improve their understanding of key issues relevant to their missions and share best practices. In the first stage of such a program, priority should be given to preparing senior mission leaders to deal with the implications of the reforms of the UN's peace and security architecture, management, and development system.
10. **Expand the use of scenario-based training:** DPO, DPPA, and DOS should encourage and support the development and roll-out of scenario-based exercises, drills, and rehearsals in missions. To that end, they should enhance the capacity of missions and the Secretariat to carry out such exercises and ensure that missions have the necessary resources and personnel. To meet the current requirement for all members of MLTs to participate in at least one major scenario-based exercise annually, DPO, the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance, and the Department of Safety and Security should ensure that they are formally consolidated under the new management structure. In addition, they should be required to conduct after-action reviews and share the resulting reports with UN headquarters. Such reports should describe any weaknesses or deficiencies identified and measures taken to remedy them.

Annex 1: UN Trainings

Office/ Department	Training Name	Timing and Location	Duration	Participants	Facilitators	Methodology	Focus Area
Integrated Training Service (ITS)	Senior Mission Leaders (SML) course	Pre-deployment/ Pre-appointment	2 weeks	Potential senior mission leadership for UN peace operations (uniformed and civilian)	Former senior leadership of peace operations (uniformed and civilian) and senior Secretariat staff	Briefings and lectures; exercises, including scenario- based/role-play exercises (exercises are Carana-based)	
Integrated Training Service (ITS)	Senior Leadership Programme (SLP)	Within six months of deployment	1 week	Newly appointed senior mission leadership, includ- ing for special political missions (uniformed and civilian)	Former senior leadership (uniformed and civilian) and senior Secretariat staff	Briefings and lectures; exercises and case studies (exercises are Carana-based)	
Integrated Training Service (ITS)	Senior Mission Administrative and Resource Training (SMART)	E-learning and three modules over a one-year period	3 weeks	Mid-level managers, primarily in mission support, with potential to serve at higher levels	Current and former mission leaders and senior managers, and subject-matter experts (external and from the Secretariat)	Online e-learning; lectures; planning and project- management exercises; scenario-based exercises	Administration and management of mission financial and human resources; resource planning and project management
Integrated Training Service (ITS)	Mission Advanced Staff Training (MAST)	During mission/ off-site	8 days	Heads of component, mainly civilian, and potential candidates for appointment as mission chief of staff or director/chief of mission support	Current and former mission leaders and senior managers, and subject-matter experts (external and from the Secretariat)	Lectures and presentations; planning, scenario- based, and role- play exercises	Leadership; strategic planning; problem solving; crisis manage- ment

Office/ Department	Training Name	Timing and Location	Duration	Participants	Facilitators	Methodology	Focus Area
Office of Military Affairs (in cooperation with ITS)	Intensive Orientation Course (IOC)	Pre-deployment	5 days	Newly-appointed force commanders/ heads of military component	Current heads and senior staff of relevant Secretariat departments and offices and subject matter-experts, accompanied by mentors/resource persons (former heads of military/ police	Briefings and presentations	Issues and processes relevant to military and police components; UN policies and procedures; roles of and relationships between mission components; mission-specific challenges
Police Division (in cooperation with ITS)	Intensive Orientation Course (IOC)	Pre-deployment	5 days	Newly appointed police commissioners/head of police component	Current heads and senior staff of relevant Secretariat departments and offices and subject matter-experts, accompanied by mentors/resource persons (former heads of military/police component)	Briefings and presentations	Issues and processes relevant to military and police components; UN policies and procedures; roles of and relationships between mission components; mission-specific challenges
Office of Operations (in collaboration with Department of Policy and Training)	In-briefing	Pre-deployment at headquarters	Varies, normally 5-7 days	Newly appointed senior mission leaders (uniformed and civilian)	Staff of the Office of Operations and other relevant offices and services	Briefings	General UN peacekeeping-related policies and procedures; mission-specific challenges

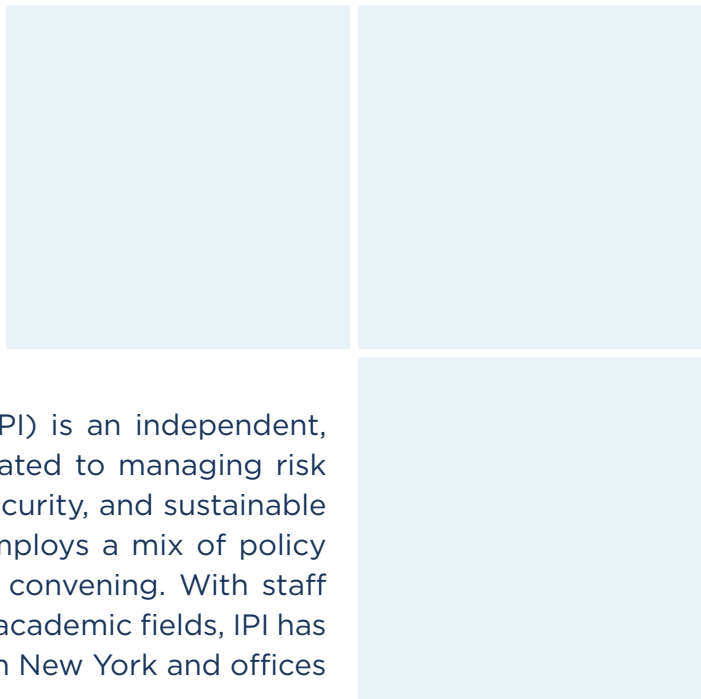
Office/ Department	Training Name	Timing and Location	Duration	Participants	Facilitators	Methodology	Focus Area
Department of Safety and Security (in collaboration with security focal point)	Designated official training	Pre-deployment at headquarters	3 days	Designated officials of the UN security management system (usually heads of mission)	Security focal point and Department of Safety and Security staff	Briefings; rehearsals and drills	
UN Operations and Crisis Centre	Crisis management training	Pre-deployment at headquarters	2 hours	Newly appointed senior mission leaders (uniformed and civilian)	Operations and Crisis Centre staff	Briefings	
Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA)	Mediation training	On request	Varies	Mission leaders and senior personnel	Mediation Support Unit staff within DPPA and external experts	Tailored one-on-one coaching for mediators and training for mediation teams	Mediation and negotiation techniques and skills; strategy development; process design; thematic issues
Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (in collaboration with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee)	Humanitarian coordinator professional development and mentoring		Varies	Current and prospective humanitarian coordinators and deputy special representatives of the secretary-general/resident coordinators/humanitarian coordinators	Humanitarian Leadership Strengthening Section and subject-matter experts	Team workshops and exercises; mentoring and network building	Development and implementation of strategies for humanitarian action in complex emergencies and post-conflict and post-conflict environments

Annex 2: Non-UN Trainings⁵⁶

Organization/ Institution	Training Title	Timing and Location	Duration	Participants	Specific to Peace Operations?	Methodology	Focus Area
UN System Staff College	UN Leaders Program	During tenure off-site	5 days	Director-level UN managers	No	Briefings and discussions	Leadership qualities; adaptive leadership
UN System Staff College (UNSSC)	UN System Executive Management Programme	Remote and off-site	19 weeks	UN managers at P5 level and above and managers for NGOs and member states with work related to the UN	No	Mixed method- ology including coaching and case- based training	Management, planning, and communication skills
Folke Bernadotte Academy	Viking 18/ Bogaland	Pre-deployment and on retreat (during mission but off-site)	10 days plus pre-training	Civilian, military, and police at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels in peace operations	No		Civil-military- police coopera- tion and coordination in peace operations; protection of civilians, leader- ship, and gender (for the 2018 exercise)
Folke Bernadotte Academy	Ad hoc senior leadership training for EU peace operations	In-mission	Varies	Senior leaders for European Union peace operations	Yes		Leadership and management skills, as requested by mission
Norwegian Defence International Center (NODEFIC)	Field Crisis Management Course	Pre-deployment and on retreat (during mission but off-site)	5 days	Leaders in DPO-led field missions, Secretariat mission support staff, and UN country teams	Yes	Scenario-based exercises	Crisis manage- ment policies and preparation

⁵⁶ This list is not exhaustive.

Organization/ Institution	Training Title	Timing and Location	Duration	Participants	Specific to Peace Operations?	Methodology	Focus Area
Center for International Peace Operations (ZIF)	Leadership Course	Pre-deployment/ pre selection	1 week	Prospective leaders	No		Attitudes and skills of leadership
Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe	Leading for Success	Remote learning with some in- person, off-site learning	6 months	Heads of mission, deputy heads of mission, directors, and those with major supervisory functions	No	Case-based exercises; webinars; self- reflection assign- ments; face-to-face workshop	Leadership and management skills
African Union	Senior Mission Leaders (SML) course	Induction/ off-site learning	1 week	Heads of mission and heads of civilian, police, and military components	Yes	Mixed methodology including scenario-based exercises	African Union peace operations compliance, management and architecture, as well as leadership and management skills



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777 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017-3521
USA
TEL +1-212-687-4300
FAX +1-212-983-8246

Freyung 3
1010 Vienna
Austria
TEL +43-1-533-8881
FAX +43-1-533-881-11

51-52 Harbour House
Bahrain Financial Harbour
P.O. Box 1467
Manama, Bahrain
TEL +973-1721-1344