

Rethinking Force Generation: Filling the Capability Gaps in UN Peacekeeping

PROVIDING FOR PEACEKEEPING NO. 2

ADAM C. SMITH AND ARTHUR BOUTELLIS



Cover Image: Peacekeepers with the UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) consult a map as they drive through vast desert areas in Smara, Western Sahara, June 20, 2010. UN Photo/Martine Perret.

Disclaimer: An independent study conducted by the authors for the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations in January 2012 through December 2012 provided much of the background research for this paper. The views expressed in this paper represent those of the authors and not necessarily those of the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations or IPI. IPI welcomes consideration of a wide range of perspectives in the pursuit of a well-informed debate on critical policies and issues in international affairs.

IPI Publications

Adam Lupel, *Editor and Senior Fellow*
Marie O'Reilly, *Associate Editor*
Thong Nguyen, *Editorial Assistant*

Suggested Citation

Adam C. Smith and Arthur Boutellis, "Rethinking Force Generation: Filling the Capability Gaps in UN Peacekeeping," *Providing for Peacekeeping No. 2*, New York: International Peace Institute, May 2013.

© by International Peace Institute,
2013
All Rights Reserved

www.ipinst.org

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

ADAM C. SMITH is Research Fellow and Manager of the Peace Operations Program at the International Peace Institute (IPI).

E-mail: smith@ipinst.org

ARTHUR BOUTELLIS is Research Fellow, Adviser to the Peace Operations and Africa Programs at IPI.

E-mail: boutellis@ipinst.org

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

IPI is grateful to the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations for allowing the authors to publish and disseminate research that was conducted as part of a DPKO-commissioned study. The authors are appreciative of the time and input of the many Secretariat staff, member-state officials, and experts who were interviewed for the study and who provided constructive feedback on a draft report. The study benefited from the research assistance of Josephine Roos and Bianca Selway. The authors are also grateful to Alex J. Bellamy and Paul D. Williams for their comments on a draft of this paper.

Providing for Peacekeeping is an independent research project established to broaden the understanding of the factors and motivations that encourage or discourage states from contributing to UN peacekeeping operations. Its aim is to generate and disseminate current information and analysis to support efforts to "broaden the base" of troop- and police-contributing countries, improve the quality of troop and police contributions, and fill key capability gaps.

The project is done in partnership with Griffith University and the Elliott School of International Affairs at George Washington University. IPI owes a debt of gratitude to its partners and to its generous donors whose contributions make projects like this possible.

CONTENTS

Abbreviations	ii
Executive Summary	1
Introduction	3
EVOLVING STRATEGIC CONTEXT	
Assessing the UN Force-Generation System	6
OVERVIEW: THE FORCE-GENERATION PROCESS FOR MISSION START-UP	
PLANNING	
COMMUNICATION	
TCC SELECTION AND DECISION MAKING	
KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT	
PERFORMANCE AND INCENTIVES	
Force-Generation Processes in Other Organizations	14
Recommendations	15
TECHNICAL RECOMMENDATIONS	
STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS	

Abbreviations

C-34	General Assembly Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations
CONOPS	Concept of Operations
DFS	Department of Field Support
DPA	Department of Political Affairs
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
FGS	Force Generation Service
IOT	Integrated Operational Team
MINUSTAH	United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti
MONUSCO	United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OAV	Operational Advisory Visit
OROLSI	Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions
PDV	Pre-Deployment Visit
RDL	Rapid Deployment Level
TCC/PCC	Troop- and Police-Contributing Country
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIFIL	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
UNMIS	United Nations Mission in Sudan
UNMISS	United Nations Mission in South Sudan
UNSAS	UN Standby Arrangements System
UNSMIS	United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria

Executive Summary

Force generation is the process by which the UN Secretariat generates, rotates, and repatriates contributions of military and police personnel and equipment from member states, based on the requirements derived for each peace operation from its UN Security Council resolution. At the UN, force generation is a time-intensive, complex process that must be completed with great speed. It is based on plans developed without a precise understanding of the capabilities available to operationalize those plans. It is a highly technical process requiring intricate knowledge and careful logistics that must also be cognizant of—and sometimes subordinate to—politics. It requires deep institutional knowledge, but is largely conducted by military staff seconded from UN member states for only limited periods of time. Such contradictions highlight the political, bureaucratic, and logistical challenges to effective force generation that are systemic—and, in some cases, unavoidable.

Consequently, capability gaps are an almost constant feature of UN peacekeeping operations.¹ Such gaps can stem from both the lack of particular assets (e.g., military utility helicopters) but also the uneven performance of deployed assets (e.g., a particular military or police contingent). Despite progress in a number of areas, initial efforts to adopt a “capability-driven approach” (as opposed to a “numbers-based approach”) to UN peacekeeping have yet to produce the desired effects. The UN’s system of force generation, a logical starting point for such efforts, has not yet been the subject of targeted study or reform.

Such a study is timely because the UN force-generation system stands at a crossroads. Financial constraints, combined with the resistance of some host-country governments to large troop deployments on their territory, may lead to peacekeeping missions with smaller footprints. At the same time, new, emerging, and so-called “returning” troop- and police-contributing countries (TCC/PCCs) are expressing greater interest in contributing capabilities to UN operations. In theory, a higher supply of capabilities on offer, combined with a fixed

demand, could present a window of opportunity for the UN to generate better capabilities while also filling capability gaps. But to seize this potential opportunity, the UN must reform the way it thinks about and executes force generation.

KEY FINDINGS

This paper conceptualizes the force-generation system broadly to include early mission planning, the selection of TCC/PCCs, financial negotiations, pre-deployment visits, support to deployment, assessments of contingent-owned equipment and contingent performance in the field, rotations, and repatriations. Central to these activities are the UN’s internal arrangements for knowledge management, decision making, coordination, and assessment. We identify key constraints to the current system in five areas: planning, communication, TCC/PCC selection, knowledge management, and performance/incentives. Our key findings include the following:

- Force generation starts with military **planning**, but this remains focused on numbers not capabilities. Military planning is greatly constrained by political, financial, and time limitations, as well as the use of traditional peacekeeping mission templates. It is also limited by assumptions about the eventual mission mandate and available member-state capabilities.
- **Communication** is vital to effective force generation, but communication by the UN Departments of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and Field Support (DFS) with member states is hampered by inadequate resources (staff and money) and a lack of sustained, high-level attention and strategic vision. Force-generation outreach is currently mission-specific and reactive, whereas it should also be general and forward-looking.
- **TCC/PCC selection** currently lacks standard operating procedures and a set of agreed-on criteria for evaluating member-state pledges. Selection is too often politicized. Analysis and decision making on force generation requires expertise and input from many parts of the UN system, but the system is still not structured to bring these together effectively. Greater clarity in terms of roles and responsibilities of various UN

¹ We use the term “capability” to refer to both assets (personnel and equipment) and their ability to perform particular tasks. The concept of capabilities thus includes related elements such as training, leadership, readiness, and will. Capabilities are also defined in this manner in Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support (DPKO/DFS), “A New Partnership Agenda: Charting a New Horizon for UN Peacekeeping,” New York: United Nations, July 2008.

Secretariat actors outside of the DPKO Office of Military Affairs is required.

- The UN Secretariat needs better information about existing TCC/PCC capabilities, what countries are able and willing to provide, and under what conditions. Reliable information relevant to force generation is not currently tracked or captured in a **knowledge-management** system. Pre-deployment visits are limited in their usefulness for force generation given their timing and scope, while the UN Standby Arrangements System (UNSAS) gives an inaccurate picture of the available capabilities of existing TCC/PCCs. There is no established process for the UN Secretariat to seek or capture important information on potential or emerging TCCs.
- Assessments of **performance** and preparedness are not carried out in a systematic manner. This has added to the Secretariat's reluctance to take action when a unit is underperforming. Consequently, the current system offers few disincentives for poor performance or incentives for good performance or rapid deployment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study makes two types of recommendations. First, we recommend a set of technical and immediate proposals to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of UN force generation. Second, we sketch some more fundamental proposals aimed at strategic reforms to address the most critical force-generation issues related to strategic planning and outreach, incentives and mechanisms for greater accountability, and developing capability-driven military planning.

Technical Recommendations

- Create a comprehensive TCC/PCC knowledge-management system to capture past and current practice and inform future force generation efforts.
- Refine the scope of UNSAS, limiting it to only critical capacities (such as enablers or force multipliers) and/or capabilities needed on short notice for key stages of a mission (such as start-up or surge).
- Develop standard operating procedures detailing the criteria for TCC/PCC selection and roles and responsibilities within the UN Secretariat so as to institutionalize decision making and increase

transparency.

- Hold “indicative contribution meetings” to gather initial indications of available member-state capabilities during the early mission planning process, and get TCC/PCC input on preliminary military plans.
- Hold force-generation conferences for each mission start-up and one annual meeting focused on global UN peacekeeping needs.
- Allow earlier and easier access to force requirements and concepts of operations (CONOPS) to facilitate TCC/PCC internal planning and decision making early on. Make the military planning documents, as well as TCC pledges, more formal and binding.
- Given a limited budget, rationalize the decision-making process and prioritize pre-deployment visits (PDVs). Develop a “PDV certification process” to reduce the amount of PDVs conducted for consistently high-performing and predictable TCCs.
- Make clear that final UN acceptance of a TCC/PCC pledge is contingent upon a successful PDV (or a PDV certificate).

Strategic Recommendations

- Create a Strategic Capabilities Generation Cell responsible for coordinated, forward-looking thinking in DPKO and DFS, and targeted outreach to national capitals.
- Task the Strategic Capabilities Generation Cell with refining the capability-driven vision and developing a DPKO/DFS coordinated and targeted outreach strategy.
- Utilize independent research and convening opportunities for outreach on key capabilities. Make a small number of coordinated operational advisory visits each year.
- Make military planning an ongoing exercise within the Secretariat, rather than only a mission-specific, reactive one. Engage member states on the available options for creating mission plans that are capability-driven rather than numbers-driven.
- Member states should support the DPKO initiative to establish a Directorate for Evaluation of Field Uniformed Personnel to help strengthen communication with TCC/PCCs and reinforce

the accountability of force commanders, police commissioners, and contingent commanders for the performance of units in the field.

- Member states should build on the recommendations of the Senior Advisory Group to develop performance-related financial incentives for TCC/PCCs, as well as incentives for the provision of certain critical capabilities or for rapid deployment.
- DPKO/DFS should further develop UN standards, as well as criteria for evaluating operational capabilities and performance.

Introduction

United Nations peacekeeping operates the second-largest global deployment of troops and yet must do so with no standing or reserve army. This means the UN must constantly mobilize and rotate voluntary contributions of nearly 100,000 uniformed personnel and related equipment from more than 100 different member states. Force-generation efforts are therefore of critical importance yet remain relatively understudied.

In its infancy, force generation for UN peacekeeping was wholly improvised—conducted largely via personal phone calls from a very small group of UN staff members. The process was chaotic, but the troops made it to the field quickly for the most part: it took seven days in Suez in 1956, three days for the first 3,000 troops to arrive in the Congo in 1960, and only seventeen hours to get the first troops on the ground between the armies of Egypt and Israel in 1973.² Ad hoc arrangements soon proved inadequate, however, during the surge of UN peacekeeping activity that followed the end of the Cold War.

In 1992, newly appointed UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali created the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) to rationalize and professionalize the management of peacekeeping operations.³ A UN Standby Arrangements System (UNSAS) was developed in 1994 to develop a better understanding of the personnel and assets member states would be prepared to make available to the UN. The hope

was that UNSAS would increase the predictability and speed of force generation. With some rare exceptions, UNSAS never met its envisaged purposes—neither as a planning nor as a rapid-deployment tool. As such, DPKO has continued to employ improvisation, crisis management, and feats of ingenuity to fully staff its fifteen ongoing missions around the world. For missions in remote places or where security risks are high, this has proved particularly challenging.

Today, peacekeeping has become a core activity of the United Nations and remains in very high demand. It is also more closely scrutinized and burdened with greater expectations than at any point in its history. As such, tremendous effort has been put into strengthening its institutional foundations to ensure that the UN is able to deliver on its ambitious objectives. The most recent series of initiatives for doing so aim to change the culture of UN peacekeeping from what has been characterized as a “numbers-driven approach” to a more “capability-driven approach.” The intentions were elaborated in the July 2009 New Horizon non-paper by DPKO and the Department of Field Support (DFS), which underlined the need to focus on the results, effects, and impact of peacekeeping missions—and therefore on the necessary skills, capacity, and willingness—rather than simply on generating adequate numbers of troops, police, and equipment. Despite some progress in a number of areas (e.g., more integrated planning processes, the development of new or improved guidance, training, and standards), initial efforts to move toward a capability-driven approach have not yet been fully realized.

For a variety of reasons, the overall performance of the military and police in UN peacekeeping operations is still uneven—from mission to mission and from contingent to contingent within the same mission. The lack of operational readiness or will of certain units, as well as episodes of exploitation and abuse by specific individuals, continue to undermine the UN’s efforts. Many units still lack the components of an adequate capability: proper equipment, training, posture, will, and leadership. On the other hand, the operational guidance

² Brian Urquhart, “George Lansky,” Unpublished Memorial, May 13, 2012.

³ Thant Myint-U and Amy Scott, *The UN Secretariat: A Brief History (1945-2006)* (New York: International Peace Academy, 2007), p. 85.

offered to TCC/PCCs, particularly in relation to robust or complex operations, has at times also proven inadequate.

One of the structural factors limiting the UN's effectiveness is the force-generation challenge: peacekeeping capabilities are limited because the UN's member states have not provided them in full. In addition to providing personnel and equipment, member states have a responsibility to ensure their troops come with adequate training, leadership, and will. In recent years, the UN Secretary-General has been forced to beg governments for critical enabling assets. But beggars cannot be choosers. For the past two decades, therefore, the UN has had little leverage to demand more of those countries that actually answer the call to contribute.

During this period, the UN Secretariat also lacked the resources and necessary systems to sustain an effort to increase the available base of troop and police contributors. As the New Horizon report points out, "existing force generation capacity is fully absorbed in meeting current demands ... Its capacity to build deeper contacts and longer-term relationships with current or potential contributing countries is sorely limited."⁴ It should be noted that given these constraints, the job of DPKO's Force Generation Service (FGS)—a small division of the Office of Military Affairs with eleven seconded military officers and one civilian deputy head—is largely a thankless one (success is generally attributed to benevolent TCC/PCCs, while blame for persistent capability gaps is often directed at the Secretariat).

In spite of these challenges—or perhaps because of them—UN peacekeeping reform has continued, year after year, small step by small step. Reform initiatives such as Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (2000), "Peace Operations 2010," and New Horizon all left their mark on the processes, the structures, and the management of UN peacekeeping. However, as explained below, a window of opportunity may currently exist to consolidate recent reform initiatives and make progress toward a long-needed paradigm shift in the UN's approach to peacekeeping.

The scope of this study goes beyond an analysis of

the technical processes of what is thought of in the UN as force generation carried out by FGS. This paper examines the opportunities for, and the constraints against, moving toward a new, broader concept of strategic capabilities generation. The paper begins with a diagram of the technical processes of force generation as it is observed today for a mission start-up, from planning to deployment. It then examines this broader system of force generation as broken down into five sets of issues: planning, communication, TCC selection and decision making, knowledge management, and performance. The following part draws out lessons from looking at force generation within NATO and the European Union. A final section offers a number of recommendations separated into two sets: first, recommendations that are of a more technical, short-term nature and second, those that are more strategic and have a longer time horizon.

EVOLVING STRATEGIC CONTEXT

One recent focus of the UN—called for repeatedly in the annual reports of the General Assembly's Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C-34)—has been to "broaden the base" of countries that contribute uniformed personnel to peacekeeping. Although one could argue that the base is already quite broad, with 114 countries currently contributing troops or police, their contributions are unevenly distributed. Ten of those countries provide 60 percent of all the UN's uniformed personnel (an average contribution of

Strategic Context

- Increased supply of available peacekeeping capabilities from new and "returning" TCCs
- Steady or slightly reduced demand for peacekeeping capabilities due to financial crisis and smaller footprint missions
- Increased emphasis on cost-effectiveness
- Polarized Security Council and C-34
- Presence of strong "status quo" TCCs
- Implementation of the recommendations of the Senior Advisory Group⁵

4 DPKO/DFS, "A New Partnership Agenda: Charting a New Horizon for UN Peacekeeping," p. 33.

5 UN General Assembly, *Report of the Senior Advisory Group on Rates of Reimbursement to Troop-Contributing Countries and Other Related Issues*, UN Doc. a/c.5/67/10, November 15, 2012.

5,536 per country). The other 104 countries combine to provide the remaining 40 percent (an average contribution of 344 per country). Despite a small drop in the total number of TCC/PCCs currently contributing (from a high of 120 in January 2009), anecdotally at least, the initiative to “broaden the base” has begun to bear some fruit (though due so far to external factors more than Secretariat efforts).⁶ Rising powers such as Brazil, China, and Indonesia have begun heavily investing in UN peacekeeping. Others, such as Argentina, Benin, Cambodia, Mongolia, and Rwanda are laying the foundations for more participation or have already begun larger and more frequent contributions. Increased contributions from Europe are also on the table following the end of NATO operations in Afghanistan, while other developed countries—such as Japan and South Korea—have eagerly provided enabling units in Haiti and South Sudan. Such initiatives could present a window of opportunity to consolidate the shift from numbers-driven to capability-driven peacekeeping.

A significant shift to a capability-driven approach is unlikely, however, unless the UN Secretariat adjusts its own mindset and processes with regard to force generation. To use an analogy, force generation can be likened to a marketplace, where TCC/PCCs are the suppliers and the UN is a consumer. In a competitive marketplace, an oversupply of a specific good or service will benefit the consumer, as providers of the good or service distinguish themselves by lowering prices or improving quality. At the UN, supply has often exceeded demand for certain types of peacekeeping assets, such as infantry battalions, staff officers, and military observers. (This is not to say there is a glut of supply, especially not for missions with more difficult conditions, such as in Darfur). Yet this excess supply has not necessarily led to significant improvements in the capabilities—or performance—of UN troops in the field. This is, in part, because a number of conditions also must be present for the consumer to benefit: the consumer

must (a) have adequate information (understand the precise costs and qualities of the services on offer) and (b) select a service provider based on those criteria. If the consumer does not, there is little incentive for the service providers to improve their services. At present, the UN lacks adequate information or systems to gather and process information about the contributions offered. Furthermore, its processes are not designed to make the best decisions based on the information it does possess. Unless both these conditions are remedied, the promise of increased supply of troops and assets is unlikely to significantly affect the capabilities of UN peacekeepers.⁷

Efforts to “broaden the base” face an uphill battle. Those TCC/PCCs that currently shoulder the majority of the troop burden risk losing their privileged positions (not to mention the prestige, staff posts, and financial remuneration). For understandable reasons, such countries might prefer the status quo ante. If reform processes do not take into account the perspectives and experiences of the largest TCC/PCCs, these countries may come to feel that their sacrifices over the previous decades are no longer appreciated or that their capabilities are being denigrated.

The current political context in New York among UN member states also slows capability-driven peacekeeping reforms. Disagreement over key peacekeeping issues—particularly troop-reimbursement rates—has diminished the ability of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C-34) to effectively consider other matters. At the same time, stark political divisions in the Security Council were apparent over Libya, Syria, and to a lesser degree, Côte d’Ivoire, limiting that body’s interest in taking on new and possibly controversial peacekeeping reforms. Member states also remain divided over the issue of use of force, which has recently re-emerged in the context of the proposed intervention brigade as part of the UN mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and a UN peacekeeping mission in Mali.

6 For more on efforts to broaden the base of peacekeeping contributors, see Alex J. Bellamy and Paul D. Williams, “Broadening the Base of United Nations Troop- and Police-Contributing Countries,” *Providing for Peacekeeping No. 1*, New York: International Peace Institute, August 2012.

7 This analogy has obvious limitations. For example, a key assumption of the competitive market is that companies must have their goods and services consumed in order to stay in business—and thereby can be pressured by consumers to lower prices or improve quality. This is not necessarily the case with TCC/PCCs. However, with very few exceptions, TCC/PCCs all see some national interest in providing peacekeepers—and therefore would bear some cost if the UN did not accept their contributions. The key question is: if the UN raised its capability standards, would the benefits of providing personnel still exceed the costs? For more on the varied motivations of TCC/PCCs, see Bellamy and Williams, “Broadening the Base of United Nations Troop- and Police-Contributing Countries.”

The protracted global financial crisis, combined in some cases with resistance from host-country governments to large troop deployments on their territory, also affects UN force generation. Despite the advent of new missions, such as in Mali, cost concerns may limit troop ceilings (as occurred with the mission in South Sudan, UNMISS), and prevent any major increase in the total number of UN troops authorized. Second, fiscal austerity is generating a renewed emphasis on “value for money,” or cost effectiveness. Echoing calls by other member states, in the 2013 opening session of the C-34, Japan—the second largest financer of UN peacekeeping—implored the UN to “do more with less—and do it better.”⁸ Both factors could have positive implications for moving toward a capability-driven approach, but this would be helped if a new system of determining troop-reimbursement rates could link to a more robust system of standards, evaluation, and performance. The report of the Senior Advisory Group, established by the UN General Assembly to consider rates of reimbursement to troop-contributing countries and related issues was issued in December 2012. The group of member-state officials and experts agreed by consensus on how to create a new system for determining troop rates. Although the report did not include recommendations on financial incentives or penalties based on unit performance, as an immediate step it did recommend reduced troop rates when the unit has absent or nonfunctional major equipment. It also recommended increased payments for the contribution of hard-to-generate key enablers.⁹

On a final note, there are risks inherent in a shift to capability-driven UN peacekeeping. With a more competitive contribution process, stricter performance standards, but also stagnant financial reimbursements, some traditional TCC/PCCs may come to the conclusion that contributing to UN peacekeeping is no longer in their national interest. Even if the UN attracts many more contributions from East Asia, Europe, and South America, losing some of the large TCC/PCCs that have sustained peacekeeping over the last decade would be

perilous, particularly if they pull out capabilities that remain in short supply (such as military helicopters) in the process. New contributors are an unknown quantity, and some are unfamiliar with UN procedures and systems. Even developed countries returning to the system bring their own challenges as UN peacekeepers. Under significant pressure from their domestic constituencies, many of these traditional, returning, and new TCCs would be extremely sensitive to taking casualties. At the onset of the genocide in Rwanda, for example, such forces were deliberately targeted to precipitate the withdrawal of the peacekeeping mission there.¹⁰ New contributors can also bring legal or political hurdles along with their participation. Japan, for instance, has domestic laws that restrict the area of operation of its Self-Defense Forces abroad, a significant caveat for those units serving in peacekeeping missions. In addition, lengthy parliamentary approval processes in developed countries, such as South Korea, can lead to long delays in deployment.

Given these considerations, a key element of the capability-driven approach must be the development of a system that works to accommodate both existing and emerging contributors, without making the system—or any one mission—too dependent on one group of countries.

Assessing the UN Force-Generation System

Identifying and then assembling military capabilities for deployment in a peacekeeping operation are the core tasks of force generation.¹¹ The Office of Military Affairs assembles the military component of a UN peacekeeping mission by soliciting contributions from member states (such as individual military observers, staff officers, and formed units, including enablers such as engineering and medical units and air assets). Some of these assets have traditionally been easier to generate on short notice (such as individual staff officers or military observers, as illustrated in the recent start-up for the short-lived UNSMIS in Syria). Others, such as

8 UN Department of Public Information, “Troop Contributors’ Views Must Be Reflected in Field, at Headquarters, Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations Told as General Debate Concludes,” Press Release, February 20, 2013 (GA/PK/213).

9 UN General Assembly, *Report of the Senior Advisory Group on Rates of Reimbursement to Troop-Contributing Countries and Other Related Issues*.

10 Roméo Dallaire, *Shake Hands with the Devil*, (Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 2005), p. 240.

11 DPKO Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit, *Handbook on United Nations Multilateral Peace Operations* (New York: United Nations, December 2003), p. 64.

enablers, always remain in short supply. Force-generation challenges for each of these assets are unique and can be complex, with political, technical, and financial aspects that may differ from one TCC to another. In situations where the necessary political will from the member states exists and the deployment conditions are favorable, the UN Secretariat has been able to generate and deploy the necessary personnel and assets in a timely manner (e.g., UNSMIS in Syria, UNIFIL II in Lebanon, and UNMEE in Ethiopia and Eritrea). In other cases (e.g., UNAMID in Darfur, MONUSCO in DRC, UNMIS in Sudan, and UNMISS in South Sudan), the force-generation challenge has been more acute, deployments take much longer, and critical gaps persist for years.

Given the current constraints and parameters of the UN's force-generation system, the Office of Military Affairs has done an impressive job generating and managing the rotations of personnel and assets called for in the force requirements of the UN's many peacekeeping missions. Indeed, the DPKO "military gap lists" seldom exhibit major gaps outside of air assets.¹² Force generation is done within very short timelines, with limited human and financial resources, and with an abundance of technical and political constraints. Perhaps NATO is the closest comparison, with a deployed force of 138,000 (as of August 2012). UN DPKO and DFS combined, with less than 1,000 staff, are dwarfed in size by NATO's headquarters, which includes 4,000 full-time staff.¹³ And unlike the UN, NATO is a military alliance whose members are among the most highly advanced militaries in the world and, importantly, see their contributions to NATO missions as a matter of their own national security. UN TCCs, on the other hand, rarely see their contributions in such terms, putting UN peacekeeping lower on their list of priorities and making the job of UN force generation even more challenging.

The UN's contemporary force-generation shortcomings do not lie in getting adequate numbers of personnel and equipment to fill the force requirements. Rather, the principal shortcomings are in identifying, cultivating, and securing the

right capabilities to give peacekeeping missions the best chance to accomplish their mandates. Given the multidimensional character of UN missions and the many roles being played by uniformed personnel in them, force generation should not be understood as solely the job of the staff of the Force Generation Service. While FGS is the UN Secretariat's focal point for force generation, successful identification, cultivation, and generation of the necessary military and police capabilities involves nearly every other part of the peacekeeping system: the UN Security Council, TCCs and PCCs, the UN Secretary-General, DPKO and DFS senior leadership, mission leadership, DFS staff, the Division of Policy Evaluation and Training, DPKO's Office of Operations, the Police Division in the Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions (OROLSI), and the various parts of the Office of Military Affairs. Such a difficult task—one that is simultaneously technical, highly political, constantly changing, and time-sensitive—requires a cohesive, integrated system. We argue that the UN's force-generation problems are not failures of the Force Generation Service, but rather a result of deficiencies across the spectrum of key actors both within the UN Secretariat and among UN member states.

The UN's force-generation system is still based primarily on getting the right numbers (rather than the right capabilities) on the ground. The factors that have prevented the UN from moving from this "numbers-driven approach" to a "capability-driven approach" are both political and technical. These include challenges within the UN Secretariat (coordination, division of labor, vision and leadership, knowledge management, and decision making) and challenges relating to the relationship and interactions between the Secretariat and member states (communication).

OVERVIEW: THE FORCE-GENERATION PROCESS FOR MISSION START-UP

This assessment takes a broad view of force generation to include planning, standards, readiness, performance evaluation, and incentives, all of which directly impact the ability of the UN to employ the right capabilities on the ground to

12 DPKO is currently working on identifying and communicating capability gaps in a more thorough way than the existing gap list process. In 2011, an independent evaluation of the existing gap list process recommended a more real-time and web-based system for communicating capability gaps to member states.

13 2,000 of NATO's 4,000 headquarters staff are members of national delegations and supporting staff members of national military representatives to NATO.

accomplish mandated tasks and achieve the desired results.

Figure 1 illustrates the key steps and actors in the generation of military capabilities for a mission start-up. It does not include the ongoing rotation and repatriation processes of force generation.

The technical force-generation process takes place in a time- and resource-constrained context. Given this reality, the process has worked well with regard to its primary task of finding the troops and equipment envisioned in the mission force requirements and getting them to the field. Many of the oft-cited problems of force generation (helicopter gaps, slow deployments, lack of pledges from high-capacity TCCs, uneven performance in the field, etc.) would not be fixed through adjustments to this technical process alone. These problems are rather of a strategic or political nature, or are simply beyond the scope of the force-generation process.

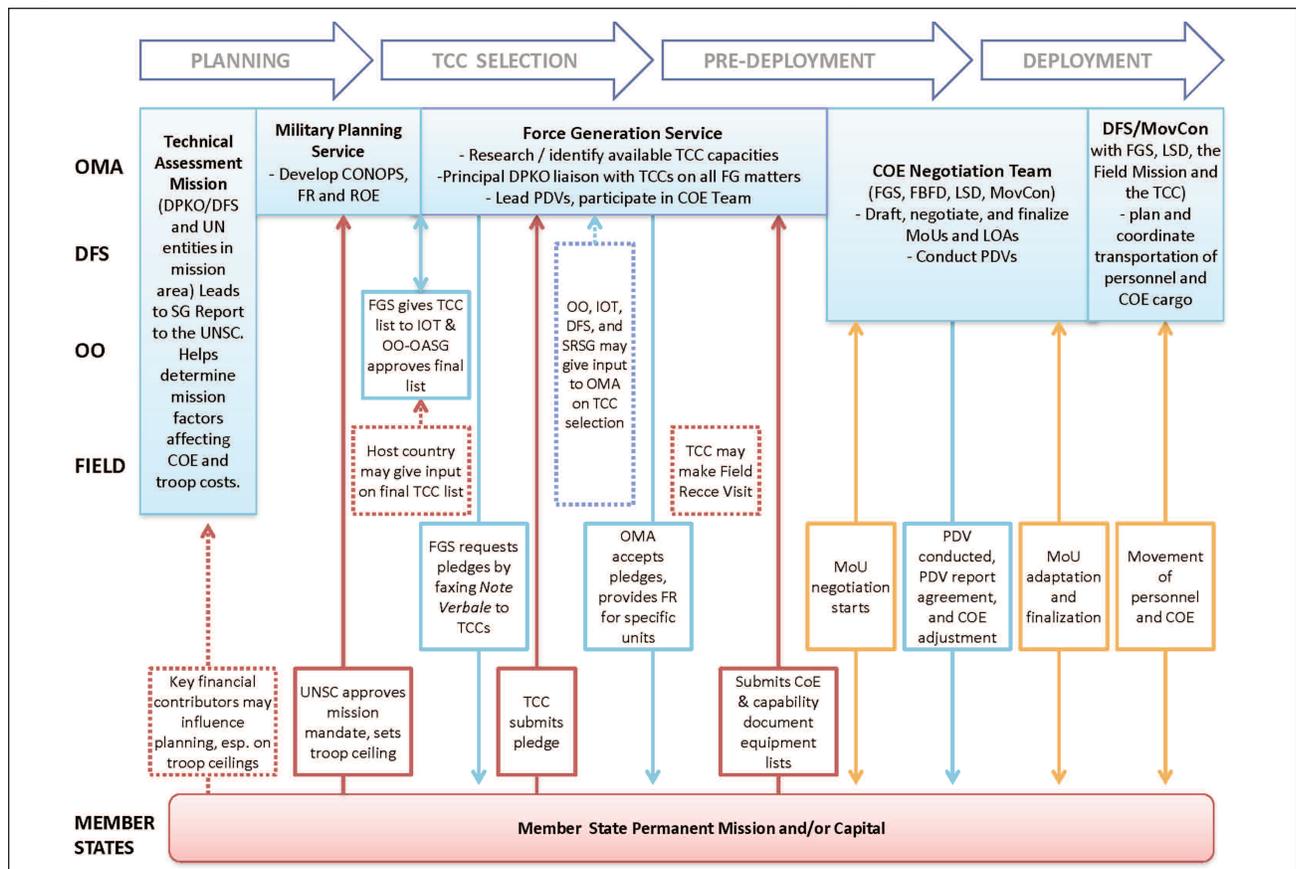
PLANNING

Force generation begins with planning. Military planning for UN peace operations is complicated

by its short deadlines and by the fact that UN planners—unlike national counterparts—do not know what exact capabilities are available at the time they are developing mission plans. Initial military planning should not be driven by what capabilities might be available, since theoretically the capabilities of all UN member states are available. However, it would be equally unwise for planners to ignore entirely the question of what is plausible in terms of available capabilities—plans must be made with some idea of how they can be implemented in practice. Therefore, they must find a balance between aspiration and available capabilities.

In theory, force generation is a part of the overall planning process for a new mission. In practice, however, force generation is distanced from the wider mission planning process. In the UN Secretariat, informal mission planning often occurs well before a draft Security Council resolution has been prepared, both through desk reviews and informal communication with UN staff in the field. The formal mission planning process, which must

Figure 1: UN Force-Generation Process for Mission Start-Up



wait until at least a draft resolution, begins with a technical assessment mission that includes the Office of Military Affairs. After a Security Council resolution is passed, a mission concept is produced by the Integrated Operational Team, based on the results of the technical assessment mission and the specifics of the resolution. The military planning, led by the Military Planning Service with input from other parts of DPKO and DFS (including the Force Generation Service), works from the mission concept to produce a concept of operations (CONOPS), force requirements, and the rules of engagement. The CONOPS specifies the military composition of a mission (contingents, individual military observers, and staff officers). The force requirements include the roles, tasks, strength, and summary of major equipment (a separate force-requirement statement is developed for each unit in the force and later provided to the appropriate TCC).

Key Findings: Planning

- A short timeframe and heavy pressure to move quickly to get boots on the ground is an impediment to planning at an early stage. For example, early informal planning for an impending mission must often be done without the benefit of a trip to the field and based on assumptions about the content of an eventual Security Council resolution. After the resolution is passed, adjustments are then required in view of differences in planning assumptions made earlier.
- The military planning process is necessarily influenced by assumptions regarding what type and amount of contributions will ultimately come from TCCs (e.g., an original assessment of eighteen helicopters for UNMISS was deemed unfeasible and revised before it was presented to the Security Council or TCCs). This situation is perhaps unavoidable, but may result in force requirements that do not accurately reflect the needs on the ground and that are not commensurate with ambitious mandates. It also may lead to setting the bar too low if assumptions about the kind of capabilities TCCs would be willing to put forward prove inaccurate.
- Planning is always done in relation to one specific mission. With political constraints (the need to wait for a specific mandate) and lack of resources, the Military Planning Service is unable to do

much advanced and/or outside-the-box scenario planning (including jointly with some regional organizations or forces and TCCs). The lack of advanced scenario planning limits the ability of the UN to devise more context-specific or innovative mission plans and is one reason for the continued use of the typical peacekeeping mission template. Instead of focusing primarily on key tasks, effects to be achieved, or key capabilities needed to carry out these tasks, the focus is on adjusting the peacekeeping mission template proportionally to whatever troop number has been authorized. Even in instances where the mission planning process was more innovative, such as for UNMISS, the final military plans predictably resembled those of other UN missions. In part, this is a byproduct of the nature of Security Council resolutions, which set inflexible troop ceilings based less on mission exigencies and more on financial constraints or political concerns.

- Disconnects exist between military planning and other dimensions of mission planning. The UN's integrated mission planning process relies mainly on the Integrated Operational Teams (IOTs) to bring together the overall mission planning in headquarters. However, the IOTs face challenges in effectively integrating their DFS and Office of Military Affairs components. Not every member of the IOT is equally and sufficiently empowered by his or her home department or office to adequately represent and integrate those views during planning and decision making. Such planning disconnects may make it more difficult to properly plan, for instance, the best ratio of commercial to military air assets. Planning disconnects can also lead to delays in deploying contingents, or contingents being deployed to unprepared sites.

COMMUNICATION

An essential part of the force-generation process is the communication between the UN Secretariat and TCCs, through permanent missions in New York or directly with the TCC capitals. Senior UN officials periodically visit member-state capitals, for which the Office of Military Affairs typically provides background information on the TCC and input to talking points. The outreach from the Office of Military Affairs to TCCs is ad hoc and

designed to fill mission-specific force-generation requirements during the start-up phase of a mission or when a gap in a mission arises.¹⁴

The Force Generation Service requests military personnel and assets contributions for a new mission by sending *notes verbales* to a selected group of TCCs through the permanent missions in New York. When allowed, informal contacts with TCCs start before obtaining a Security Council resolution. TCC meetings are often organized by the Integrated Operations Team as an opportunity for the Secretariat to explain the latest mission planning and respond to questions (but not to discuss pledges or capability gaps). When requested, draft force requirements and CONOPS are shared with the TCCs to help inform TCC decision making. The Force Generation Service follows up informally with TCCs through their permanent missions in New York to encourage them to submit pledges and discuss possible contributions.

Key Findings: Communication

- Aside from the UN Standby Arrangements System process, communication related to available contributions between the Secretariat and TCCs is mission-specific and therefore ad hoc. This is often adequate to communicate with existing and top TCCs, but is problematic with others. New or potential TCCs require cultivation and a better understanding of the specifics of contributing to UN peacekeeping. Other TCCs, particularly high-capacity European TCCs, tend to have more lengthy time-horizons for military planning and/or longer government-approval processes. Such TCCs cannot often respond positively to time-sensitive requests from DPKO for peacekeeping capabilities but rather require more time and advance cultivation. This was one limiting factor during force generation for UNMISS, when some European and other TCCs were unable to pledge any capacities despite some initial, positive indications.
- The system of requesting contributions has been described by some TCCs as archaic and lacking transparency. Such TCCs claim that they are asked through a *note verbale* for a specific type of unit without being given an adequate picture of the mission plans (i.e., force requirements or CONOPS). They would also find it helpful to have more information about other member states that are being approached for pledges and about what pledges have been received thus far. Such TCCs (particularly those that are not traditional TCCs) have said that they do not have enough information on mission plans to make a credible offer.
- Communication must, of course, be a two-way street. TCC military advisers in New York must actively seek out information on military planning and force generation when they need it, as well as keep the Office of Military Affairs abreast of the relevant developments and any planning being done in their capitals regarding their current or future peacekeeping contributions.
- Some TCCs complain about not being told why their offers are not selected. This is most common regarding offers of staff officers or military observers, and was identified as a problem in a 2010 audit of the Office of Military Affairs by the Office of Internal Oversight Services.¹⁵ TCCs are not told how to improve their chances of being selected in the future (e.g., through training to meet specific requirements). Of course, the Office of Military Affairs is often in a difficult position to elaborate further, given that some selections are in part based on geographical balance or political considerations.
- Just as the Secretariat is reluctant to inform TCCs why a pledge is not up to standards, Secretariat leadership is also reluctant to be vocal when a TCC's unit is underperforming. Typically, if this information makes it back to UN headquarters, only the military adviser of the TCC's permanent mission is informed. DPKO must rely on the TCC's military adviser to see that the situation is raised to his national military or political leadership and addressed.
- Some pledges by TCCs in response to *notes verbales* lack precision in terms of the exact content and readiness of the pledged capability, as well as the timeline within which it will be

¹⁴ The Office of Military Affairs does maintain the UN Standby Arrangements System, which attempts to identify possible member state contributions in a non-mission specific context. However, outreach for UNSAS is very limited.

¹⁵ Office of Internal Oversight Services, "Audit Report: Office of Military Affairs," Assignment No. AP2009/600/2, May 28, 2010, para. 63–64.

delivered. The force requirements could also be more detailed, particularly in operational environments that require a more robust posture with implications for force protection and the use of force. In an attempt to have TCCs better adhere to the force requirements and CONOPS and make pledges with more detailed commitments (listing any operational caveats, for instance), the Office of Military Affairs has moved to have the force requirements and CONOPS authorized by the Under-Secretary-General (with the signature of the military adviser) and communicated as part of the *note verbale*.

TCC SELECTION AND DECISION MAKING

There are two basic decision points in the force-generation process for mission start-up. The first occurs when the Force Generation Service develops and the Office of Operations approves the initial list of TCCs that will be approached for contributions. This list of potential TCCs is based on a number of factors: presumed TCC assets and desire to contribute, host-country acceptability, regional proximity, and other political concerns. This process is generally undertaken by the Integrated Operational Team and approved by the Office of the Assistant Secretary-General in the DPKO's Office of Operations. The second set of decisions occurs when the Office of Military Affairs makes recommendations to the DPKO Under-Secretary-General on which TCC pledges to accept.

After the new mission has been established, there are also occasional decisions to be made when, through rotations, downsizing, or mission reconfiguration, the opportunity is presented to send certain contingents home first or to replace one TCC for another. This opportunity could result from a change in the Security Council mandate and/or CONOPS, or a high-level headquarters visit to the field mission following a specific incident. Such a decision would be made by the Under-Secretary-General on the recommendation of the military adviser and the Integrated Operational Team, with inputs from a field mission to review the mission's military component.

Key Findings: TCC Selection and Decision Making

- Force generation must happen rapidly. Despite stated policy and a general effort by the Office of Military Affairs to broaden the base of contributors, practical factors naturally lead to a reliance on large, traditional TCCs, which are thought to be most likely to deliver quickly and for which less explaining or educating on the process is required. Time constraints, familiarity with existing TCCs, and lack of outreach to new TCCs has meant that for under-resourced missions DPKO typically must accept whatever pledge is offered. Because the Office of Military Affairs has rarely been in the situation of choosing between multiple pledges, no standard operating procedures or set of agreed criteria for selection have developed to ensure a more thorough and objective examination of TCC capabilities. In addition, once the Secretariat accepts a TCC pledge, it is not thought possible to change course if a more suitable contribution from another TCC becomes available. This makes a more considered initial decision even more important.
- Informally, FGS does take into account various criteria when making a recommendation to accept one TCC's pledge over another. However, there is no agreed-upon set of criteria, and the process of evaluating pledges is ad hoc rather than institutionalized. While a degree of flexibility is desirable, the lack of formal guidelines or standard operating procedures for this selection process allows decisions to be based on a varying set of criteria or none at all. It also leaves the process open to speculation from outsiders that selections are made based on expediency or the political influence of a member state rather than an analysis of what would be best for the mission. In fact, many TCCs feel that the political influence of a member state currently has a great deal to do with its selection. It is safe to assume that some amount of political considerations will always factor into these decisions; however, this should happen in spite of an objective, standard decision-making process rather than be facilitated by the lack of one.

- The selection process lacks clarity even for some members of the Secretariat, both in terms of the list of TCCs to be solicited and the acceptance of pledges. The responsibility to approve the list of TCCs lies with Office of the Assistant Secretary-General in the Office of Operations, and the decision to accept a pledge is the responsibility of the Under-Secretary-General of DPKO, upon the recommendation of the military adviser. The roles and responsibilities of others are not as clearly defined. For instance, there are questions as to whether and how the Special Representative of the Secretary-General or Office of Operations provides input to the selection process, and exactly how best to leverage the technical expertise of DFS (on air and medical assets, for instance) in the process. The lack of aviation and medical expertise within the Office of Military Affairs would suggest that DFS should play a key role in the solicitation and selection of these assets. DFS technical experts already take part in some pre-deployment visits, and DFS is part of the Integrated Operational Teams that manage mission planning but, as mentioned above those are still difficulties in integrating DFS expertise into IOT decision making. In addition, DFS is responsible and accountable for the financial aspects of the “letter of assist” and memorandum of understanding (both are signed by the Under-Secretary-General of the DFS or her designate). Yet, at present, decisions with financial implications, such as the acceptance of a pledge, are made by the Office of Military Affairs, which creates a certain expectation that the “deal” is done without there being a clear picture with regard to the financials.

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

While the UN Standby Arrangements System database—meant to be the first step in the force-generation process—may initially have been intended as a knowledge-management resource of available TCC/PCC capacities, it has never played this role. As such, reliable information is not currently tracked or captured in any knowledge-management system to be used for force-generation purposes. Information at present comes mostly from the experiences and personal relationships and memories of the Force Generation Service

staff. This situation limits FGS’s ability to institutionalize an objective process of TCC/PCC selection and makes strategic outreach by DPKO/DFS to emerging or potential TCC/PCCs more difficult. The loss of institutional knowledge was cited as a major finding in the 2010 Office of Internal Oversight Services audit of the Office of Military Affairs.¹⁶

Key Findings: Knowledge Management

- UNSAS is not meeting its envisaged purposes as a planning and force-generation tool or as a platform to facilitate rapid deployment. Much information contained in UNSAS is incomplete and out of date, at times misleading, and unverifiable. While a database software upgrade will improve the system’s functionality as a potential analytical tool for DPKO, it will clearly not address the fundamental limitations of the tool for force generation, rapid or otherwise.
- There is no database that collects all relevant information on the past and current contributions of TCC/PCCs, including pre-deployment visit reports, reports on inspections of contingent-owned equipment, history of sexual exploitation and abuse or other misconduct, deployment speed, inspector-general reports, or even how each TCC/PCC has responded to previous FGS requests. Information on TCC/PCCs exists, but it resides with different departments and specific individuals (mainly FGS desk officers and IOTs) and is shared informally on an ad hoc basis.
- There is a lack of credible information on the state of the capabilities to be deployed. Absent some kind of operational readiness assessment, pre-deployment visits are presently the only opportunity to assess a pledged capability prior to deployment. However, pre-deployment visits (PDVs) were not designed to assess operational readiness: they focus on the status of the hardware rather than the readiness of the personnel. Second, it is difficult for a PDV team to get an accurate picture of the hardware itself or the TCC’s ability to maintain it once in mission (spare parts, maintenance expertise, etc.). Third, PDVs are not performed early enough in the force-generation process to affect selection

¹⁶ Ibid., para. 12.

decisions. They happen after a pledge has been accepted, and because it is so late in the force-generation process, there is no turning back even if the PDV team finds a TCC unprepared to deploy or unable to perform well once deployed. Finally, there is no knowledge-management system to keep track of the PDV reports, which limits the continued usefulness of the information gathered.

- The current system is also not designed to facilitate the cultivation of new or returning TCC/PCCs. Information about TCC/PCCs is generally limited to current contributors and is gleaned from the experience and knowledge of FGS's desk officers, who (with the exception of the civilian deputy of FGS) are seconded from their home countries for only a few years. This lack of institutional knowledge increases the need for a robust knowledge-management system in DPKO.
- There is limited information on new or potential TCC/PCCs, and most of it is anecdotal. This is in large part due to the absence of a Secretariat vision and strategic (and longer-term) approach to force generation. There are a few cases of outreach initiatives led by individuals (e.g., the DFS Assistant Secretary-General's trip to Southeast Asia in 2011) or through "operational advisory visits." But the means are limited, these initiatives are not based on any overall vision or strategy, and they are not well coordinated within the system. Some operational advisory visits are conducted without the involvement of FGS, the Office of Operations, or DFS. And again, the information collected is often lost or not used effectively.

PERFORMANCE AND INCENTIVES

There is a discrepancy in the capabilities among different units in UN missions—for example, when it comes to having the correct personnel and assets for the tasks, the training and leadership needed to perform, and the will to do so. As a result, in the best case scenario, mission resources are further stretched when Special Representatives of the Secretary-General and force commanders end up relying on certain units over others for critical tasks and sidelining contingents known to be under-

equipped or underperforming. In the worst case scenario, certain personnel and units imperil the safety of themselves and others, damage the reputation of the mission and the UN more broadly, or even bring harm to those they have been asked to protect. This is the most obvious indicator of an unfulfilled vision for a capability-driven approach to peacekeeping.

Key Findings: Performance and Incentives

- There are no real incentives for TCC/PCCs to deploy rapidly, perform well, arrive prepared, or display flexibility within the mission area and beyond through inter-mission cooperation. Likewise, there are no disincentives for poor performance. TCCs still get reimbursements for their troops and contingent-owned equipment. And, unless it is an incident involving sexual exploitation or abuse, individuals and units are rarely repatriated or otherwise shamed for consistent misconduct or subpar performance of duties. Similarly, the process of negotiating a memorandum of understanding lacks flexibility and does not incentivize the provision of new or advanced assets. TCCs are incentivized to provide only the minimal amount of equipment required. TCCs that deploy to a mission without even the minimal contingent-owned equipment required are not reimbursed for the missing equipment, of course, but face no other explicit penalties.
- In addition, assessments of performance or preparedness are not carried out in a systematic manner. In 2010, the Office of Internal Oversight Services found that there was "no methodology or standards for the evaluation of the military contingents' performance."¹⁷ DPKO's Office of Military Affairs and the Policy, Evaluation and Training Division have been developing standards (for infantry battalions, for instance), but these do not set criteria for evaluating operational capabilities or measuring performance. The current inspection regime—pre-deployment visits and inspections of contingent-owned equipment—is intended to focus on assets and reimbursements rather than testing operational readiness and capabilities. The more

¹⁷ Ibid., para. 66.

rigorous inspection model employed by the Police Division would mark an improvement on current practices but would require additional resources. There is currently an initiative to create a “Directorate for Evaluation of Field Uniformed Personnel.” A senior military officer within the Office of Military Affairs would head the small directorate and conduct field assessments to report to the DPKO Under-Secretary-General on the efficiency and effectiveness of field personnel. Such a role was played informally from 2003 to 2008 by retired military commanders outside the UN system who were contracted on an ad hoc basis by the Under-Secretary-General.

- Until now, the Secretariat has been reluctant to make known, or sometimes even tell the TCC/PCC itself, when a unit is underperforming. The most robust system of knowledge gathering and management will be inconsequential if the information is not put to good use. Hard decisions by DPKO leadership must be made—and effectively communicated—to TCCs and sometimes to the broader UN community.

Force-Generation Processes in Other Organizations

While the UN’s force-generation challenges are not all shared by other organizations, such as NATO or the EU, the force-generation tasks, at their core, are not dissimilar. With some exceptions, the practices and experiences of these other organizations can be a source of useful lessons learned and innovation for the UN.

The main procedural difference between the EU and NATO on one the hand and the UN on the other is the use of force-generation conferences. Both the EU and NATO gather all members (and interested partners) together for mission-specific force-generation conferences during mission start-up and when there are significant changes to an ongoing operation. For the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan, NATO holds a force-generation conference every six months. The EU and NATO also organize mission-specific meetings at the very outset of the mission-

planning process to help planners gain a better sense of available TCC capabilities. In the EU these are called “indicative contribution meetings,” while in NATO the process is called “force sensing.” Without these, planners would be left in the dark about the resources at hand for completing the mission. Although commitments at the indicative meetings are non-binding (based, as they are, on only an initial operational assessment), the meetings can increase peer pressure to contribute and also lead to more realistic mission planning. At the very least, they should indicate early on if the organization might have difficulties generating specific capabilities.

Importantly, for both NATO and the EU, the purpose of force generation is linked to the achievement of objectives rather than merely to the fulfillment of mission requirements. As NATO describes it,

NATO’s engagement in Afghanistan in 2003 posed a number of new problems for force generation. It soon became apparent that the nature of the mission was different from previous tasks. Greater flexibility was needed in types and numbers of forces, from rotation to rotation, and from area to area. In addition, with many countries moving to smaller, more highly trained and highly equipped forces, it became unrealistic to expect large standing commitments from individual countries.¹⁸

Such concerns are clearly relevant to the UN. The complexity of a single mission showed NATO planners the need for increased flexibility in the types of capabilities required to accomplish its objectives. If this is the case, the UN—with a much wider variety of missions taking place in strikingly varied operational contexts across the globe—has an even more dire need for flexibility in its force generation. The traditional model of UN peacekeeping continues to be based on large infantry battalions. The UN must therefore begin to offer mission concepts that offer alternatives to the use of large standing commitments from individual countries.

For its part, NATO focused its force-generation reform around two central tenets. First, make force generation more responsive to operational requirements. This meant developing more flexible

18 NATO, “Force Generation through Time,” May 9, 2012, available at www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_50316.htm.

military planning and working with TCCs to identify the correct capabilities for tasks. The second reform tenet was to take a longer view of force generation. As NATO puts it, “while developments in operations, as well as political developments within troop-contributing countries, prohibit definitive troop and material commitments far into the future, NATO military planners are looking beyond immediate needs, which allows both the Alliance and troop-contributing countries to plan their resources better.” The key element to both efforts—making force generation more responsive to current operational needs and taking a longer view of force generation—was to improve communication between NATO and TCCs, accomplished in part through the use of ad hoc force-generation conferences, but also the holding of an annual Global Force Generation Conference. The annual force-generation conference aims to facilitate improved coordination, but is also an institutionalized opportunity to look together at the needs of the organization across all its missions for the coming year.

Recommendations

Based on the key findings above, our recommendations are divided into technical and strategic proposals. The former focus on how the force-generation process could be refined through increased transparency and institutionalized decision-making processes; the latter urge the UN Secretariat to develop a forward-looking vision and implement targeted outreach to member states around the concept of “strategic capabilities generation.”

TECHNICAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Create a comprehensive knowledge-management system.

Knowledge management is hampered by frequent turnover of seconded military personnel in the Office of Military Affairs, and there is a lack of formal institutional knowledge about member-state capabilities and caveats.

DPKO should create a comprehensive knowledge-management database that tracks all the relevant information related to TCC/PCC capabilities. This would include, at a minimum: past and current contributions, how the

TCC/PCC responded to previous requests from the Force Generation Service, reports from pre-deployment visits and inspections of contingent-owned equipment, reports from capital visits, histories of sexual exploitation and abuse or other misconduct, deployment delays or challenges, and reports from force commander or Special Representatives of the Secretary-General. A refined UN Standby Arrangements System could be one component of this database, but the database should also be linked to other data-collection and information-management resources, including those with data on mission capability requirements and critical capability gaps.

2. Refine the scope of UNSAS.

UNSAS is not currently a useful tool for planning or for force generation.

DPKO should refine the scope of UNSAS, limiting it to only critical capacities (such as enablers or force multipliers) and/or capabilities for key stages of a mission (such as start-up or surge). A new, clear, and targeted purpose for UNSAS would reduce confusion around the purpose of UNSAS and allow for limited resources to be targeted toward outreach aimed at generating the most critical capacities and facilitating rapid deployment.

3. Institutionalize the TCC/PCC selection process.

There is currently no agreed-upon set of technical or other criteria for selecting TCCs (such as track record on overall performance, sexual exploitation and abuse or human rights incidents, leadership training, use of caveats, etc.).

DPKO should define a set of criteria for TCC selection and develop an institutionalized decision-making process, increasing transparency and potentially taking some political pressure off DPKO leadership. This process should be codified in standard operating procedures. Final decisions on selection would still be at the discretion of DPKO but informed by other, defined considerations (e.g., the above-mentioned knowledge-management database, “best value for money,” and “the interest of the organization” as currently used by the organiza-

tion in procurement decisions). More institutional knowledge, operational assessments, better processes, etc. do not matter if the right decisions are not made in the end. Capability-driven UN peacekeeping will require that decisions related to TCC/PCC selection and performance are based more objectively on effectiveness and efficiency and are less subject to the influence of member states.

4. Hold “indicative contribution meetings.”

The military-planning and force-generation processes are rarely informed by a full picture of available capabilities.

DPKO should involve member states earlier in the military-planning process for a mission start-up, through “indicative contribution meetings” that allow TCC/PCCs to give an informal (nonbinding) indication of possible contributions. Indicative contribution meetings allow for earlier understanding of potential capability gaps in a new mission. This is also an opportunity for TCC/PCCs to make suggestions on how they could accomplish certain tasks (differently from standard UN planning templates).

5. Hold force-generation conferences.

DPKO should host a force-generation conference for each mission start-up and an annual conference on global UN peacekeeping needs. This could increase transparency, improve dialogue, and possibly improve response rates and times. Improved dialogue would help give DPKO a better understanding of the full scope of possible contributions from member states at any time, giving a more accurate picture of available options.

6. Make force requirements and CONOPS more detailed and formal.

Too often, TCC/PCC pledges are accepted without detailed knowledge of any conditionality or caveat associated with the specific unit in question.

The force requirements and concepts of operations should be made more detailed and formalized in order for the Secretariat to get clearer and more binding commitments from member states. Member states should respond to the Office of Military Affairs through a formal

pledge that refers back to the force requirements and CONOPS and elaborates any special conditions or caveats, such as length of deployment, area of deployment, rules of engagement, and potential slow bureaucratic or parliamentary approval process.

7. Allow earlier and easier access to force requirements and CONOPS.

Newer and returning TCC/PCCs need more information on mission plans at an early enough stage to allow them to complete the domestic processes required to make a pledge.

The force requirements and concepts of operations should be given to all TCC/PCCs being considered for force generation as early as possible. In general, TCC/PCCs should have easier access to mission-planning documents. If possible, preliminary military plans should be distributed before the indicative contribution meetings. This would help member states in their own planning for a possible contribution.

8. Develop a pre-deployment visit certification process.

Pre-deployment visits are currently the only method by which the Secretariat can gain an understanding of a pledged capability prior to deployment, but financial and staff resources do not allow for a PDV in every instance.

Decisions on prioritizing the PDV budget should be based on the historical track record of each TCC (in terms of outcomes of any in-mission inspections of contingent-owned equipment, as well as any other assessments from the force commander or Special Representative of the Secretary-General). TCCs pledging critical enablers and new TCCs must always receive a pre-deployment visit. To reduce the overall demand for PDVs and to acknowledge consistently dependable TCCs, DPKO may want to consider developing a process and criteria for a “PDV certification.” Based on a TCC’s continued, positive track record, and after a certification visit, DPKO would not need to conduct a PDV to that TCC for a set time period (e.g., two to three years).

9. Clearly state that final selection is dependent on assessment of readiness.

Member states do not always provide reliable or

accurate information on their capabilities before they deploy. DPKO should be able to make a reassessment of their initial selection prior to a TCC/PCC deployment.

It should be clearly stated early in the force-generation sequence that final selection of a TCC/PCC pledge is always dependent on DPKO's assessment of the TCC/PCC's readiness (i.e., a successful pre-deployment visit).

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Across the UN, force generation is still understood in terms of numbers rather than capabilities. To fulfill the objectives of the capability-driven approach called for in the New Horizon report, a paradigm shift in the UN is required—specifically by moving from “force generation” to “strategic capabilities generation.” The recommendations below describe what “strategic capabilities generation” would look like, covering the following critical areas: strategic planning and outreach, incentivized performance and accountability, and capability-driven mission planning.

1. Create a Strategic Capabilities Generation Cell.

On strategic questions, the system fails to coordinate the various parts of the Secretariat whose work is intricately connected to force generation.

DPKO should create—and member states should provide support for—a Strategic Capability Generation (SCG) Cell, responsible for forward-looking thinking and targeted outreach on capabilities. This should be a joint initiative of the DPKO Office of the Under-Secretary General; Office of Military Affairs; Office of Operations; Division of Policy, Evaluation and Training; and the Department of Field Support. At least one new post within the Secretariat should be devoted on a full-time basis to coordinating strategic, integrated thinking on capability generation. The Office of the Under-Secretary General in DPKO must drive forward this initiative. While the Office of Military Affairs has a policy team, strategic planning and targeted outreach should be a Secretariat-wide effort that goes beyond this office to involve all the relevant departments and bring together the necessary technical and political knowledge and skills. The staff officer managing UNSAS in the Office of Military

Affairs should also be part of the SCG Cell.

2. Task SCG Cell with refining capability-driven vision and developing outreach strategy.

A new push should be made to develop a forward-looking strategy on the generation of peacekeeping capabilities that reflects the New Horizon vision.

The SCG Cell should develop a DPKO/DFS coordinated and targeted three-to-five-year outreach strategy to capitals, based on the New Horizon's capability-driven vision (or an updated equivalent). After an internal process to better define and articulate the vision, the objective of the outreach should be to explain to member states the capability-driven vision of UN peacekeeping, some of the current financial and political constraints involved in realizing this vision, and the current and emerging capability needs of UN peacekeeping. The Secretariat must consistently engage in strategic planning and outreach to member states on capability needs. Many member states have long planning or procurement timelines and therefore must be engaged early and often.

3. Improve understanding of member-state capabilities and partnership opportunities.

Lack of understanding of the capabilities, decision-making processes, and domestic political situations of each TCC/PCC inhibits DPKO's ability to think creatively about force generation and incentivize it. A more thorough understanding of these factors would help DPKO to communicate strategically with member states and assist them in contributing more and better capabilities.

SCG outreach should seek to gain a more complete understanding of the relevant member-state capabilities available or being developed, challenges faced (technical, financial, political, etc.), and opportunities for partnership (with other member states, regional groupings, or training institutes, etc.). The SCG Cell could also help to develop ideas and further the institutional arrangements for rapid-deployment alternatives and crisis response (through UNSAS, inter-mission cooperation, over-the-horizon forces, partnerships with non-UN forces, including from regional organizations, etc.).

In addition to coordinated and targeted outreach to capitals, the Strategic Capability Generation Cell should make better use of or commission outside research and analysis about member states, as well as related convening opportunities. The SCG Cell should be the focal point for contact with bilateral, regional, and civil-society initiatives on enhancing peacekeeping capabilities, such as this Providing for Peacekeeping Project or the IPI-Pearson Centre “Being a Peacekeeper Series.”

4. Make military planning an ongoing exercise within the Secretariat.

Military planning in the UN is still numbers-driven and lacks a precise understanding of available member-state capabilities. Good planning requires time, which is often in short supply for UN peacekeeping. Military planning should not just be a reactive process. While it may not be politically feasible to begin a formal mission-planning process prior to a draft Security Council resolution, the Secretariat should engage in ongoing, capability-driven scenario planning.

DPKO, in consultation with TCCs, should develop various “off-the-shelf” military scenarios, to use as a starting point for a number of mission-planning contexts. DPKO and DFS should constantly engage in scenario planning for different contexts and mandated tasks, and these activities should be closely connected with the work of the Strategic Capabilities Generation Cell.

DPKO should engage member states in a discussion on how specific tasks could be accomplished with different capabilities. Further study is needed to explore the feasibility of force-requirement assessments that focus less on units and numbers and more on areas of operation and the tasks to be executed.

5. Approve additional resources for operational advisory visits.

Those TCC/PCCs who are potential targets to help “broaden the base” need Secretariat

assistance in developing new or adjusting current capabilities to be of greatest use to UN peacekeeping in the future.

Member states should approve additional resources for the Office of Military Affairs for a small number of operational advisory visits to be conducted each year based on the coordinated and targeted outreach strategy to capitals outlined above. Visits to newer and less-experienced TCC/PCCs should be prioritized.

6. Support establishment of Directorate for Evaluation of Field Uniformed Personnel.

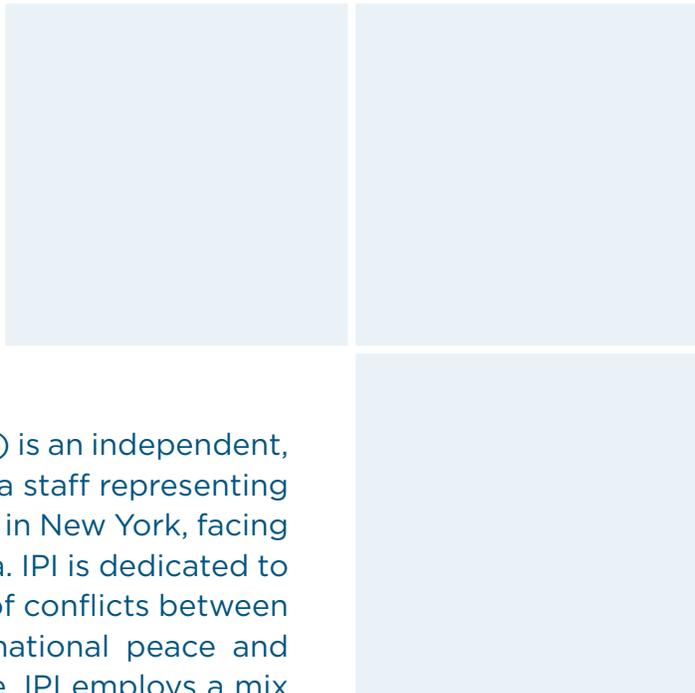
Pre-deployment visits do not provide operational assessments, and there is a distinct need for more in-depth assessments of certain TCC/PCC capabilities.

Member states should support the DPKO initiative to establish a Directorate for Evaluation of Field Uniformed Personnel. The unit could help bridge the communication gap between TCC/PCCs and UN headquarters, and reinforce the accountability of force commanders, police commissioners, and contingent commanders for the performance of their units in the field.

7. Develop performance-related financial incentives for TCC/PCCs.

The UN peacekeeping system incentivizes the quantity not the quality or capability of peacekeeping contributions. Countries are recognized publicly and rewarded financially based on the size of their contributions.

Member states should continue their discussions to work toward a reimbursement system that includes performance in the equation. There should be incentives for rapid deployment, or for contributing critical capabilities (time-limited bonuses, priority selection for other missions, consideration for more posts, increased public recognition, etc.). DPKO should further develop standards and define criteria for evaluating operational capabilities and performance. The SCG Cell could be tasked with leading the effort to study and engage member states on this issue.



The **INTERNATIONAL PEACE INSTITUTE** (IPI) is an independent, international not-for-profit think tank with a staff representing more than twenty nationalities, with offices in New York, facing United Nations headquarters, and in Vienna. IPI is dedicated to promoting the prevention and settlement of conflicts between and within states by strengthening international peace and security institutions. To achieve its purpose, IPI employs a mix of policy research, convening, publishing, and outreach.



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 +43-1-533-8881-11

www.ipinst.org