History of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations
Following the Cold War: 1988 to 1996

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD ................................................................. VII
FORMAT OF STUDY ....................................................... VIII
METHOD OF STUDY ....................................................... IX

LESSON 1 – THE END OF THE COLD WAR AND RESURGENCE OF UN PKOs. . . . . 1
1.1 The Concept of Peacekeeping
1.2 The Role of Peacekeeping During the Cold War
1.3 The Performance of Peacekeeping During the Cold War
1.4 The End of the Cold War
1.5 New Peacekeeping Operations
1.6 United Nations Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan (UNGOMAP)
1.7 United Nations Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group (UNIIMOG)
1.8 United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM)
1.9 United Nations Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA)

LESSON 2 – THE UN TRANSITION ASSISTANCE GROUP (UNTAG) ............ 33
2.1 Background on UNTAG
2.2 Negotiations Leading to the Establishment of UNTAG
2.3 The Agreement for the UNTAG Operation
2.4 The Mandate of UNTAG
2.5 The Organisation of UNTAG
2.6 The Civilian Component of UNTAG
2.7 Deployment of UNTAG
2.8 Ceasefire Violation Dispute
2.9 The Dismantling of the South African Military Presence in Namibia
2.10 South African Allegations
2.11 Monitoring the South West Africa Police
2.12 Return of Refugees
2.13 Missing Persons
2.14 The Namibian Elections
2.15 Importance of UNTAG
LESSON 3 – THE GULF CRISIS AND THE USE OF FORCE .......................... 53
3.1 Background on UNIKOM
3.2 Establishment and Mandate of UNIKOM
3.3 The Deployment of UNIKOM
3.4 The Expansion of UNIKOM’s Mandate
3.5 Situation in the DMZ
3.6 Suspension of UNIKOM and the Termination of the Mandate
3.7 The Influence of the 1991 Gulf War on Peace Operations
3.8 The Debate Over Sanctions (1991 Gulf War)
3.9 The Korean Precedent
3.10 Invocation of Chapter VII
3.11 Limits on the Use of Force

LESSON 4 – FURTHER EXPANSION OF UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS IN 1991-1994 AND NEW CHALLENGES ................................. 65
4.1 The Changing International Atmosphere and Rising Expectations
4.2 New Challenges
4.3 New Peacekeeping Operations
4.4 The Problems with Expansion

5.1 International Conflicts
5.2 United Nations Aouzou Strip Observer Group (UNASOG)
5.3 United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL)
5.4 United Nations Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ)
5.5 United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC)
5.6 United Nations Advance Mission in Cambodia (UNAMIC)

6.1 Background to Problematic Missions
6.2 UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO)
6.3 United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL)
6.4 United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH)
6.5 United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG)
6.6 United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT)
6.7 United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM II)
6.8 United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM I)
6.9 Background to UNPROFOR (UN Protection Force in Yugoslavia)
6.10 The Dilemma of Non-cooperation
6.11 Peace Enforcement
LESSON 10 – RETRENCHMENT OF UN PKOs SINCE 1994 .............................. 183
10.1 Decreasing Number of Operations
10.2 Peacekeeping versus Peace Enforcement
10.3 United Nations Observer Mission Uganda-Rwanda (UNOMUR)
10.4 United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR)
10.5 United Nations Peace Forces Headquarters (UNPF-HQ)
10.6 United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia (UNCRO)
10.7 United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP)
10.8 United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH)
10.9 United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja, and Western Sirmium (UNTAES)
10.10 United Nations Mission of Observers in Prevlaka (UNMOP)
10.11 United Nations Support Mission in Haiti (UNSMIH)
10.12 United Nations Angola Verification Mission III (UNAVEM III)
10.13 Credibility Issues
10.14 The Positive 1990s Missions

LESSON 11 – THE SITUATION OF UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS AND FUTURE PROSPECTS .......................................................... 223
11.1 Reasons for the Retrenchment of Operations in the Mid-1990s
11.2 The Approach After Bosnia, Haiti, Rwanda, and Somalia
11.3 Limitations of the New Approach
11.4 Prospects for the Future
11.5 Current UN Peacekeeping Operations as of 2005
11.6 The Nature of Current Operations as of 2005

APPENDIX A – LIST OF ACRONYMS .................................................. 235

APPENDIX B – LIST OF PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS ......................... 238

APPENDIX C – MISSION DATA ......................................................... 240

APPENDIX D – AN AGENDA FOR PEACE ............................................ 299

APPENDIX E – SECURITY COUNCIL PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENTS .......... 320

END-OF-COURSE EXAMINATION INSTRUCTIONS ............................. 324
The end of the Cold War saw a massive increase in peacekeeping activities around the world. However, this resurgence was problematic in that peacekeeping in itself did not evolve to the changed geopolitical reality of a polar world with one superpower, namely the United States. The peace dividend led to peacekeeping missions all over the world in an effort by the UN to resolve many conflicts that had become intra-state and amongst non-state actors, rather than the traditional inter-state conflicts that involved recognised political actors.

The failure of the UN to adapt to the new political realities in the immediate post-Cold War era ultimately led to disasters in the early 1990s in Somalia, Rwanda, and Bosnia, as well as the inability to stabilise Haiti. The UN over-extended its resources and implemented over-ambitious mandates that did not reflect the reality of intra-state conflicts amongst non-state actors or failed-state scenarios. These failures resulted in a process of retrenchment during the mid-1990s, which was further exacerbated by the waning support of the United States. Over-commitment and lack of U.S. support also led to yet another major financial crisis for the UN, which further established the retrenchment course. The impact of the failures of the early 1990s saw the advent of NATO taking on a robust military role in the Balkan region and U.S.-led multinational forces intervening in Somalia and Haiti.

To fully understand these events, it is important to gain a conceptual foundation and background in the history of UN Peacekeeping Operations in the post-Cold War era by reviewing the historical, political, and diplomatic background that contributed to the evolution of peacekeeping operations in a general, chronological order. Therefore, this course package begins with a brief background on peacekeeping during the Cold War and then goes on to the early peacekeeping operations (Iran-Iraq, Central America, Afghanistan-Pakistan, Angola, and Namibia) at the end of the Cold War in the late 1980s. The course then moves on to the first Gulf War and the expansion of peacekeeping operations in the first half of the 1990s and their successes and failures. The missions in Somalia and Bosnia are covered in detail as they proved to be the catalysts for the retrenchment of peacekeeping in the following years. The course then reviews the smaller missions taken on during the initial phase of retrenchment and concludes with an assessment of the new approach to peacekeeping that resulted from retrenchment. Overall, the study guide will familiarise the student with the significance of individual UN Peacekeeping Missions and the overall evolution and functioning of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations in the post-Cold War era.

At the time of this writing, some of the missions were still ongoing. However, lessons have been written in the past tense, as mission mandates could be terminated by the time this course comes to print. I hope that the student will find this updated and enhanced course informative and interesting and that the knowledge gained will be of use in dealing with issues that face peacekeepers throughout the world.

Prof. Sunil V. Ram
July 2006
FORMAT OF STUDY

This course is designed for independent study at a pace determined by the student

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course format and materials permit:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• MODULAR STUDY</td>
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<tr>
<td>• EASE OF REVIEW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• INCREMENTAL LEARNING</td>
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STUDENT’S RESPONSIBILITY

The student is responsible for:

• Learning course material
• Completing the End-of-Course Examination
• Submitting the End-of-Course Examination

Please consult your enrolment confirmation email or the end of this course for examination submission instructions.
METHOD OF STUDY

The following are suggestions for how to proceed with this course. Though the student may have alternate approaches that are effective, the following hints have worked for many.

- Before you begin actual studies, first browse through the overall course material. Notice the lesson outlines, which give you an idea of what will be involved as you proceed.

- The material should be logical and straightforward. Instead of memorizing individual details, strive to understand concepts and overall perspectives in regard to the United Nations system.

- Set up guidelines regarding how you want to schedule your time.

- Study the lesson content and the learning objectives. At the beginning of each lesson, orient yourself to the main points. If you are able to, read the material twice to ensure maximum understanding and retention, and let time elapse between readings.

- When you finish a lesson, take the End-of-Lesson Quiz. For any error, go back to the lesson section and re-read it. Before you go on, be aware of the discrepancy in your understanding that led to the error.

- After you complete all of the lessons, take time to review the main points of each lesson. Then, while the material is fresh in your mind, take the End-of-Course Examination in one sitting.

- Your exam will be scored, and if you achieve a passing grade of 75 percent or higher, you will be awarded a Certificate of Completion. If you score below 75 percent, you will be given one opportunity to take a second version of the End-of-Course Examination.

- One note about spelling is in order. This course was written in English as it is used in the United Kingdom.

Note: The appendices located in the back of this course contain reference materials that may be useful to the student, including a list of acronyms used in this text, an acronym list of all peacekeeping operations, and mission data profiles of the missions discussed in this text, including basic facts, maps, and medals.
LESSON 1

THE END OF THE COLD WAR AND RESURGENCE OF UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

1.1 The Concept of Peacekeeping
1.2 The Role of Peacekeeping During the Cold War
1.3 The Performance of Peacekeeping During the Cold War
1.4 The End of the Cold War
1.5 New Peacekeeping Operations
1.6 United Nations Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan (UNGOMAP)
1.7 United Nations Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group (UNIIMOG)
1.8 United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM)
1.9 United Nations Observer Group in Central America (OUNCA)
LESSON OBJECTIVES

After studying the material contained in Lesson 1, the student should be able to:

- State the concept, purposes, and principles of UN peacekeeping;
- Discuss the role and performance of peacekeeping during the Cold War;
- Describe the changes in peacekeeping operations after the Cold War; and
- Discuss five examples of post-Cold War peacekeeping operations.
1.1 The Concept of Peacekeeping

The United Nations developed the concept of peacekeeping at the beginning of the Cold War because the increasing mistrust among the major powers made the original UN collective security and peace enforcement system unworkable. The United Nations used peacekeeping operations as a practical mechanism to contain potential or actual armed conflicts and to facilitate the settlement of these conflicts by negotiation and other peaceful means despite the political constraints resulting from the Cold War. Unlike the enforcement actions envisioned in Chapter VII of the UN Charter, these operations are based on the principles of consent, impartiality, and non-use of force. The establishment of these operations requires the consent of the parties directly concerned: UN peacekeepers must maintain complete impartiality and are not authorised to use force except in self-defence. While peacekeeping operations must be authorised by the Security Council or, exceptionally, by the General Assembly, the Secretary-General always directs them on a daily basis.

1.2 The Role of Peacekeeping During the Cold War

Most of the Cold War years were characterised by intense rivalry between the two superpowers tempered by what came to be known as the balance of nuclear terror. These two factors led to a sort of negative stability. Between the East and West blocs in Europe, there was constant tension along the Iron Curtain, but no war. The rivalry between the two superpowers was played out mainly in the Third World, where regional conflicts were often fuelled by those superpowers in their desire to preserve or expand their spheres of influence. Here too, however, the two superpowers were careful to avoid a direct military confrontation as long as their vital opposing interests were not involved. When a regional conflict threatened to escalate and draw them into such a confrontation, they sought to contain it. Since 1948, they used the UN peacekeeping mechanism for that purpose in the form of small-scale military observer missions, or, since 1956, in that of larger peacekeeping forces. Though limited in scope, peacekeeping operations had a crucial impact on the maintenance of international peace and security, and provided an important stabilising instrument in areas where a power vacuum might have led to explosive confrontation between the superpowers. Ralph J. Bunche, Dag Hammarskjöld, and Lester Pearson developed the concept of using military personnel on missions of conflict control under the UN flag.

1.3 The Performance of Peacekeeping During the Cold War

The performance of United Nations peacekeeping operations varied with the ebb and flow of the Cold War. During the first 40 years of their history, from 1948 to 1988, only 13 such operations were formed. No peacekeeping operations were established during the last ten years of that period, which was a time of intensification of the Cold War that was marked by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the Reagan Administration’s espousal of unilateralism in foreign policy, and the military build-up of both superpowers. This period was also a time of increasing conflict in the Third World.
This included the Iran-Iraq war, conflicts in Cambodia and in Central America, invasion and civil war in Lebanon, crisis in the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), uprising in the West Bank and the Gaza strip, impasse in Cyprus, Cuban and South African interventions in Angola, and failure to move Namibia towards independence. With the Security Council deadlocked most of the time, there was little opportunity for an effective United Nations role in bringing those problems under control.

1.4 The End of the Cold War

As the Soviet Union fought an increasingly debilitating war in Afghanistan during the 1980s, the Soviet economy was also faced with the escalating costs of the arms race with the United States. Under this huge economic burden, the stagnant economy faltered and dissent began to grow within the Soviet Union. In the late 1980s, tension between Washington and Moscow began to wane largely as a result of Mikhail Gorbachev’s policy of *perestroika* (restructuring) and *glasnost* (openness), as well as his “new thinking in foreign affairs.” The relations between the two superpowers gradually shifted from competition to co-operation, and the Cold War thawed and finally ended.

Reform attempts at home led to a weakening of control over Eastern Europe, which soon led to a break up of the Soviet Bloc, started by Poland. During 1989 and 1990, the Berlin Wall came down, borders opened, and free elections ousted Communist regimes everywhere in eastern Europe. In late 1991, the Soviet Union itself dissolved into its component republics. The Cold War had come to an abrupt end after some 45 years.

1.5 New Peacekeeping Operations

These changes led to a resurgence of UN peacekeeping activities. Within the next two years, in 1988 and 1989, five new peacekeeping operations were formed:

- United Nations Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan (UNGOMAP)
- United Nations Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group (UNIIMOG)
- United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM I)
- United Nations Observer Group in Central America (OUNCA)
- United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG)

Because UNTAG was one of the major peacekeeping operations undertaken by the UN, it will be dealt with in greater detail in Lesson 2. The other four operations are discussed in this lesson.

These five peacekeeping operations were all of an international nature. They were set up in pursuance of international agreements involving mainly governments and with the strong support of the two superpowers, and they were all successful.
1.6 United Nations Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan (UNGOMAP)

Background to UNGOMAP

On 27 December 1979, following a coup in Afghanistan, Soviet forces ostensibly entered Afghanistan, in response to a reported request from the Afghan Government for assistance against insurgent movements. Initially, some 30,000 Soviet troops were engaged, but this very rapidly grew to more than 100,000 troops. The Soviets soon became entangled in a guerrilla war with the Afghan resistance (the mujahideen). The mujahideen were eventually backed by the U.S. and its proxy, Pakistan. After a pointless, protracted and bloody war, the Soviet Union was forced to withdraw from Afghanistan in 1989.

The war left more than 1 million Afghani dead and some 5 million refugees in neighbouring countries. Some 15,000 Soviets were killed and another 37,000 wounded. Most of the country had been laid waste, and there were approximately 5 million landmines covering some two per cent of the country.

The Security Council (SC) failed to produce a resolution in early 1980, just after the invasion. To end the deadlock, the matter was referred to an emergency session of the General Assembly, which, by resolution ES-6/2 of 14 January 1980, strongly deplored the armed intervention and called for the immediate, unconditional, and total withdrawal of the foreign troops from Afghanistan. Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, the Secretary-General’s Personal Representative on the Situation Relating to Afghanistan, visited the region in April and August 1981. His negotiations at the time led to the Geneva Accords.

The Geneva Accords

In January 1982, Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar took up the post of Secretary-General, and he designated Mr. Diego Cordovez as his Personal Representative. Beginning in June 1982 and over the next six years, Mr. Cordovez acted as intermediary in a series of indirect negotiations between the Governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan in Geneva.

The conclusion of the Geneva Accords came about once the Soviet Government decided to withdraw its forces from Afghanistan. In February 1988, the Soviet Union announced that it would start repatriating its troops in May. The last round of talks ended on 8 April 1988 when
Under-Secretary-General Cordovez announced that all the instruments comprising the settlement had been finalised and were open for signature.

The Accords, known formally as the “Agreements on the Settlement of the Situation Relating to Afghanistan,” consisted of four instruments:

I. A bilateral agreement between the Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on the principles of mutual relations, in particular on non-interference and non-intervention;
II. A declaration on international guarantees, signed by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America;
III. A bilateral agreement between Afghanistan and Pakistan on the voluntary return of refugees; and
IV. An agreement on the interrelationships for the settlement of the situation relating to Afghanistan, signed by Afghanistan and Pakistan and witnessed by the Soviet Union and the United States.

The Accords were signed by the four countries in Geneva on 14 April 1988. The Geneva Accords were also the basis for the establishment of a UN mission to Afghanistan. Organised as the United Nations Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan (UNGOMAP), the Mission would monitor:

- Non-interference and non-intervention by the parties in each other’s affairs;
- The withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan; and
- The voluntary return of refugees.

UNGOMAP’s operations in the field would be directed by a senior military officer designated as Deputy to the Representative. UNGOMAP would be organised into two small headquarters units, one in Kabul and the other in Islamabad, which would each consist of five military officers and a small civilian component. There was also provision for the deployment of up to 40 additional UN Military Observers (UNMOs) officers organised into inspection teams to ascertain on the ground any violations of the instruments comprising the settlement. They would all be temporarily redeployed from existing United Nations peacekeeping operations.

**Establishment of UNGOMAP**

On 31 October 1988, in resolution 622 (1988), the SC called for the setup of UNGOMAP. Mr. Cordovez was retained as the Representative and Finnish Major-General Rauli Helminen was appointed as Deputy to the Representative. He was later succeeded by Finnish Colonel Heikki Happonen in May 1989. Fifty UNMOs were temporarily assigned from the United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation (UNTSO), the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), and the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). Ten countries contributed to the mission: Austria, Canada, Denmark, Fiji, Finland, Ghana, Ireland, Nepal, Poland, and Sweden.
LESSON 1
END-OF-LESSON QUIZ

1. The purpose of peacekeeping operations is to:
   A. Supplement the peace enforcement system;
   B. Contain armed conflicts and facilitate their settlement;
   C. Militarily support the principle of collective security;
   D. Keep the peace between the superpowers during the Cold War.

2. Traditional peacekeeping operations are based on:
   A. Consent and impartiality;
   B. Impartiality only;
   C. Non-use of force and consent;
   D. Consent, impartiality, and non-use of force.

3. Besides the Charter, which document outlines the United Nations’ roles for preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping, and peace-making?
   A. General guidelines for peacekeeping operations;
   B. Presidential Statements;
   C. *An Agenda for Peace*;
   D. *The Brahimi Report*.

4. On a day-to-day basis, peacekeeping operations are directed by:
   A. The Secretary-General;
   B. The Under-Secretary-General;
   C. The Security Council;
   D. The General Assembly.

5. During the Cold War, superpower rivalry was expressed in:
   A. Direct military conflict;
   B. Involvement in regional conflicts in the Third World;
   C. The mediation and negotiation process of the UN;
   D. All of the above.
6. Post-Cold War peacekeeping operations:
   A. Decreased in number;
   B. Began to include more conflicts within “failed states”;
   C. Met increasing resistance within the Security Council;
   D. Were ineffective.

7. What was the purpose of UNGOMAP?
   A. To monitor the withdrawal of Arab mujahideen;
   B. To monitor the disarmament of Soviet forces;
   C. To provide assistance to returning refugees;
   D. To monitor the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan.

8. UNIIMOG verified and supervised the ceasefire between which countries?
   A. Iran and Iraq;
   B. Afghanistan, Iran, and Iraq;
   C. Iran and Pakistan;
   D. Kuwait, Iraq, and Iran.

9. What did UNAVEM I UNMO teams verify and record?
   A. All movements of Cuban military personnel and equipment into and out of Angola;
   B. All movements of UNITA forces;
   C. Disarmament of Cuban troops;
   D. Refugee movements.

10. On 20 April 1990, the Security Council decided to expand ONUCA’s mandate to include what additional tasks?
    A. Separating the forces and the demobilisation process;
    B. Monitoring the ceasefire and separation of forces;
    C. Monitoring the ceasefire, separation of forces, and the demobilisation process;
    D. Monitoring the ceasefire, refugee repatriation, and separation of forces.

**ANSWER KEY:**
1B, 2D, 3C, 4A, 5B, 6B, 7D, 8A, 9A, 10C