Logistical Support to United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: An Introduction

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## Table of Contents

- Forum Questions ................................................................. viii
- Method of Study ................................................................. ix

### Lesson 1  An Overview of UN Peacekeeping and Logistical Support ................................................................. 10
- Section 1.1  Introduction to United Nations Peacekeeping ......................................................... 12
- Section 1.2  Spectrum of Peace and Security Activities ............................................................... 19
- Section 1.3  Types of UN Peacekeeping Operations ................................................................. 23

### Lesson 2  UN Logistics at Work ................................................................. 30
- Section 2.1  Global Field Support Strategy – An Overview .......................................................... 32
- Section 2.2  Objectives of the Global Field Support Strategy ....................................................... 34
- Section 2.3  Umoja ........................................................................ 38
- Section 2.4  Integrated Support Services – UN Logistics at the Mission Level ......................................................... 39
- Section 2.5  United Nations-Owned Equipment in the Field ......................................................... 43

### Lesson 3  Contingent-Owned Equipment ................................................................. 48
- Section 3.1  Memorandum of Understanding ........................................................................... 50
- Section 3.2  Personnel .............................................................................. 53
| Section 3.3 | Major Equipment | 57 |
| Section 3.4 | Mission Factors – Loss or Damage | 59 |
| Section 3.5 | Self-Sustainment | 61 |
| Section 3.6 | Inspections | 63 |

**Lesson 4**  **UN Medical System**  
| Section 4.1 | UN Medical System Command Structure | 70 |
| Section 4.2 | Level I to IV Medical Support | 70 |
| Section 4.3 | Casualty Treatment and Evacuation | 74 |
| Section 4.4 | Medical Logistics | 77 |

**Lesson 5**  **Funding UN Peacekeeping**  
| Section 5.1 | Finance | 87 |
| Section 5.2 | The Budget Approval Process | 90 |
| Section 5.3 | Financial Responsibilities Within the Mission Area | 91 |
| Section 5.4 | Procurement Activities | 92 |
| Section 5.5 | Property Control and Inventory | 93 |
| Section 5.6 | In and Out Survey | 93 |
| Section 5.7 | Equipment Write-Off | 94 |
| Section 5.8 | Letters of Assist | 94 |

**Lesson 6**  **Logistics During Mission Start-Up**  
| Section 6.1 | Fundamentals of Expeditionary Logistics | 101 |
| Section 6.2 | Logistics Planning Tools | 104 |
| Section 6.3 | Mission Start-Up Considerations During Pre-deployment | 107 |
| Section 6.4 | Rapid Deployment and Mission Start-Up Logistics Activities | 109 |
| Section 6.5 | Reception, Staging, Onward-Movement, and Integration | 112 |
# Lesson 7  Logistics During Mandate Implementation  ........................................... 118

Section 7.1  Mission Support Drivers .................................................................. 120
Section 7.2  Logistics Focus During the Mandate Implementation Phase ................. 122
Section 7.3  Peacekeeping Engineering ................................................................ 126
Section 7.4  Peacekeeping Transportation and Maintenance .................................. 127
Section 7.5  Peacekeeping Supply ........................................................................ 130
Section 7.6  Host Nation Support (HNS) ............................................................... 131

# Lesson 8  Logistics During Transition ............................................................. 136

Section 8.1  Logistics Focus During Transition ...................................................... 138
Section 8.2  UN Liquidation .............................................................................. 140
Section 8.3  Liquidation Procedures .................................................................... 143
Section 8.4  Scaling Down and Withdrawal of Mission Personnel and Equipment .... 145
Section 8.5  Material Disposal/Depreciation ........................................................ 153

# Appendices

Appendix A  Model Memorandum of Understanding ........................................... 160
Appendix B  List of Acronyms ............................................................................ 165
Appendix C  Glossary ......................................................................................... 170
Appendix D  Current UN Peacekeeping Missions .............................................. 199
About the Author: Major Rod Little .................................................................. 200
Instructions for the End-of-Course Examination ............................................... 201
Forum Questions

- From your perspective, why is it important for all members of a UN mission to understand how logistics is provided?
- How do mission factors influence how logistics is carried out?

—Major Rod Little, 2015.
Method of Study

This self-paced course aims to give students flexibility in their approach to learning. The following steps are meant to provide motivation and guidance about some possible strategies and minimum expectations for completing this course successfully:

- Before you begin studying, first browse through the entire course material. Notice the lesson and section titles to get an overall idea of what will be involved as you proceed.
- The material is meant to be relevant and practical. Instead of memorizing individual details, strive to understand concepts and overall perspectives in regard to the United Nations system.
- Set personal guidelines and benchmarks 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 possible, read the material twice to ensure maximum understanding and retention, and let time elapse between readings.
- At the end of each lesson, take the End-of-Lesson Quiz. Clarify any missed questions by re-reading the appropriate sections, and focus on retaining the correct information.
- After you complete all of the lessons, prepare for the End-of-Course Examination by taking time to review the main points of each lesson. Then, when ready, log into your online student classroom and take the End-of-Course Examination in one sitting.

» Access your online classroom at <www.peaceopstraining.org/users/user_login> from virtually anywhere in the world.

- Your exam will be scored electronically. If you achieve a passing grade of 75 per cent or higher on the exam, you will be awarded a Certificate of Completion. If you score below 75 per cent, you will be given one opportunity to take a second version of the End-of-Course Examination.
- A note about language: This course uses English spelling according to the standards of the Oxford English Dictionary (United Kingdom) and the United Nations Editorial Manual.

Key Features of Your Online Classroom »

- Access to all of your courses;
- A secure testing environment in which to complete your training;
- Access to additional training resources, including multimedia course supplements;
- The ability to download your Certificate of Completion for any completed course; and
- Forums where you can discuss relevant topics with the POTI community.
Lesson 1 discusses and gives a brief introduction of UN Peacekeeping, including how mandates are established, the spectrum of peace and security activities, types of peacekeeping operations, and how missions are supported.

In this lesson »
Section 1.1 Introduction to United Nations Peacekeeping
Section 1.2 Spectrum of Peace and Security Activities
Section 1.3 Types of UN Peacekeeping Operations

Lesson Objectives »
• Understand the main United Nations bodies that are involved in peacekeeping
• Discuss how UN logistics must be shaped by the type of peacekeeping activity
• Explain the role and objectives of the Department of Operational Support
• Explain the main differences in the types of peacekeeping operations and how logistics planning is affected depending upon the mission
Introduction

UN peacekeeping operations have evolved over the years to encompass a wide range of tasks to promote peace and security. Peacekeeping missions often operate in volatile and unpredictable environments, with the host nation’s infrastructure being minimal or severely degraded. The administration, logistics, and other support arrangements for UN peacekeeping operations are of the utmost importance for the effective implementation of the tasks related to the mission.

The logistical and administrative support for UN peace operations is more complex than many other logistical support models. This complexity is due to the requirement to support contingents deploying with widely varying levels of self-sufficiency, and the differing requirements between military contingents, civilian staff, police, and military observers.
Mission assets are distributed to all mission components on an equitable basis, depending on functional needs and assessed priorities. This means that the tasks that directly support the mandate would be higher priority on the list to carry out. Logistical planners and staff carrying out logistics must understand the mission mandate clearly and also be knowledgeable about the environment where the mission is being carried out.

**Section 1.1  Introduction to United Nations Peacekeeping**

**The United Nations**

The United Nations is an international organization founded after the Second World War. Its purpose is to maintain international peace and security, develop friendly relations among nations, and promote social progress, better living standards, and human rights. The UN is made up of 193 sovereign Member States. It is the tool of all its Member States that come together to discuss common problems and make decisions by voting on major issues. The UN was founded to be an impartial organization in which States from all around the world are considered as equal members. The impartiality and universality of the UN are key elements of its overall legitimacy.

**The Charter of the United Nations**

UN Member States are bound together by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The Charter is an international treaty that lays out the Member States’ rights and duties as members of the world community. It is the foundational document that guides the work of the UN, including peace and security activities. Specific parts of the charter relate to peacekeeping mandates. It is these mandates that initiate the field mission (civilian, military, and police personnel deployed to a country to carry out peacekeeping tasks) and, subsequently, the logistical support required to carry out the mandate effectively.

**The main United Nations bodies involved in peacekeeping**

The General Assembly is made up of representatives of all the Member States of the UN. They discuss and make decisions on all international issues covered by the Charter. This ranges from developmental topics, furthering humanitarian issues, and social and human rights issues, to financial matters, which includes approving the budget for UN peacekeeping missions that will be covered in detail during this course. The General Assembly is the main deliberative, policymaking, and representative organ of the UN. Each Member State has one vote in the General Assembly. Decisions on important questions, such as those on peace and security, admission of new members, and budgetary matters require a two-thirds majority for approval. Decisions on other questions are by simple majority. The General Assembly has regular sessions annually but may also have special or emergency sessions as needed.

Under the Charter, the Security Council has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. It has 15 members, and each member has one vote. Under the Charter, all Member States are obligated to comply with Security Council decisions. The Security Council takes the lead in determining the existence of a

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**Further reading**

threat to the peace or an act of aggression. It calls upon the parties involved in a dispute to settle it by peaceful means and recommends methods of adjustment or terms of settlement. In some cases, the Security Council can resort to imposing sanctions, or even authorizing the use of force to maintain or restore international peace and security. The Security Council also recommends to the General Assembly the appointment of the Secretary-General and the admission of new members to the UN. Together with the General Assembly, it elects the judges of the International Court of Justice.

The Secretary-General is the Chief Administrative Officer of the UN. The Secretary-General is appointed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Security Council. The Secretary-General has the power to bring any situation that she or he thinks may be a threat against international peace and security to the attention of the Security Council. The Security Council still maintains the power to decide whether the situation is in fact a threat to international peace and security.

The Secretariat is the administrative arm of the UN and is led by the Secretary-General. The Secretariat is made up of a number of departments and offices that handle all aspects of the mandates set by the Security Council. The Secretariat employs international civil servants who work directly for the UN.

The Secretary-General gives the primary responsibility for the executive direction and administration of all UN peacekeeping operations to the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, who leads the Department of Peace Operations (DPO). DPO directs and controls peacekeeping operations. It develops policies and operational guidelines using Security Council resolutions. DPO advises the Secretary-General on all matters related to the planning, establishment, and conduct of peacekeeping operations. DPO must consider logistics, as it is responsible and accountable to the Secretary-General for ensuring that the requirements of the UN security management system are met by the DPO-led field missions.

The Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) plays a central role in UN efforts to prevent and resolve conflict around the world. DPPA monitors and assesses political developments with a view to detect potential crises before they escalate (conflict prevention), and determine effective responses. DPPA provides close support to the Secretary-General and his envoys, and to UN political

1) Prior to 1 January 2019, DPO was known as the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.
2) Prior to 1 January 2019, DPPA was known as the Department of Political Affairs.
missions deployed to areas with mandates to help defuse crises, and promotes lasting solutions to conflict. DPPA has other important functions that contribute directly to UN efforts promoting peace and preventing conflict. These include DPPA’s role in coordinating UN electoral assistance activities, and in providing staff support to the Security Council and other bodies.

**Organization of UN Headquarters mission support bodies**

At UN Headquarters in New York (UNHQ), the **Department of Operational Support (DOS)** is responsible for delivering logistical support to UN field operations, including peacekeeping operations and special political missions. DOS works closely with DPO so that the logistics plans support the operational plan. It provides support in the areas of finance, logistics, information, communication, and technology (ICT), human resources, and general administration to help missions promote peace and security. Under DOS is the **Logistics Support Division (LSD)**. The LSD is responsible for the implementation and monitoring of policies and procedures for all logistical support in peacekeeping. The LSD consists of three elements, which are the Operational Support Service, Transport and Movements Service, and Specialist Support Service.

**Operational Support Service**

The **Operational Support Service (OSS)** is responsible for planning and coordinating integrated logistical support for new field missions, as well as existing and expanding ones, including several political affairs offices. OSS manages the Strategic Deployment Stocks (SDS) inventory to ensure readiness, rapid deployment, and replenishment are maintained, and for managing DPO air operations and assets to meet the required international safety standards.

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3) Prior to 1 January 2019, DOP was known as the Department of Field Support.
Transport & Movement Service

The Transport & Movement Service (TMS) has the crucial task of ensuring that effective and efficient logistic capabilities are present in the mission area. This includes air transport support and strategic air and sealift for movement of personnel and/or equipment into and out of a mission area, and that civilian personnel and cargo, vehicles, and spare parts are provided at the required time and place. Transportation is expensive; therefore, TMS must ensure tasks are carried out in the most cost-efficient manner in order to support UN peacekeeping and other field operations. This involves transforming capability requirements into detailed plans for the acquisition of goods and services and enhancing the recruitment and development of field staff, as well as writing and updating transport and movements policies and procedures.

Specialist Support Service

The Specialist Support Service carries out strategic planning and management of material and services to effectively support the requirements for peacekeeping missions, special political missions, and the UN Logistics Base in Brindisi, Italy.

Logistics Operations Section

The Logistics Operations Section (LOS) is a section under the OSS that coordinates the provision of integrated logistics support to the field missions by the LSD technical sections from the mission planning phase through the liquidation phase. LOS is the key link for support coordination between field missions, the various components of DPO, and external bodies. LOS is also the first point of contact of field missions for all matters related to support. LOS consists of a Planning Unit and three Operational Units responsible for several field missions each: Africa 1 Unit, Africa 2 Unit, and the Asia/Middle East/Europe/Americas Unit.

Strategic Deployment Stock Unit

A key component to a successful mission start-up is rapid deployment, which requires having equipment on standby to be deployed to the field. The SDS Unit handles the SDS operations to ensure the readiness, rapid deployment, and replenishment of SDS inventory. As of February 2006, there was approximately $90 million worth of inventory under the care of the SDS Unit. The SDS Unit develops, coordinates, promulgates, reviews, and revises overall SDS concepts, policies, operating procedures, and guidelines. The SDS Unit produces implementation reports, support account budgets, and performance reports, and provides valuable input to audits, updates, and follow-ups. It also supports the development of the Global Service Centre (GSC) (to be discussed later in the course).
Aviation Safety Unit

The UN relies heavily upon air movements, as they are fast, and the ground movement of material in peacekeeping missions is often difficult, or even impossible. The Aviation Safety Unit is responsible for air safety awareness. It provides advisory services to the department’s managers for air safety matters, implementing accident-prevention programmes through safety assistance visits and surveys of missions, and carrying out the mission aviation safety programmes. In compliance with the International Civilian Aviation Organization (ICAO) recommendations, the unit was established as an independent advisory unit not involved in the day-to-day aviation management in the field, which is handled by the Air Transport Section (ATS), the Movement Control Unit (MCU), and the peacekeeping mission itself. The Aviation Safety Unit is responsible for preparing the Annual Report on Aviation Safety, revising the Aviation Safety Manual to ensure it remains current, developing and implementing the Aviation Safety Document Management system, and reviewing missions’ Accident Prevention Programmes and Emergency Responses. The key here is to take lessons learned and implement change. The Aviation Safety Unit provides training to the mission on air safety, as well as technical clearance for candidates on air safety for the field for Personnel Management and Support Services.

Movement Control Section

Under the Transportation & Movements Service, the Movement Control (MOVCON) section plans and executes strategic movements, including deployment, rotation, and repatriation of military contingent and civilian police unit personnel and their equipment. Expeditionary operations are challenging due to mission elements needing to be moved from their home country to a mission area. MOVCON arranges the movement of UN-owned equipment (UNOE) on deployment, redeployment, and withdrawal. The MOVCON staff works with representatives from permanent missions to the UN, troop-contributing country (TCC) military/police headquarters, DPO Office of Military Affairs staff, Department of Management Procurement Division staff, and field mission administrative and military staffs. Other duties include providing the advice and technical expertise to DPO and DOS.

Air Transport Section

The ATS is responsible for managing the air fleet of DPO and DPPA. At UNHQ in New York, it provides advice and technical expertise to senior leadership. ATS plays a leading role in strategic and operational planning, as well as organizing, training, and equipping UN peacekeeping missions with the required aviation assets, personnel, and aviation services. ATS manages air policy and procedures while supporting and monitoring all areas of aviation. Its involvement in a mission begins with the pre-mandate technical assessment, followed by the assessment of what will be the initial fleet size and composition, and ends at the liquidation of the mission.

Surface Transport Section

The Surface Transport Section (STS) provides policy guidance on all operational ground transportation issues, from 4x4 vehicles to heavy specialist vehicles. It also coordinates the development, management, and implementation of overall mission ground transport strategies, and intra and interdivisional/departmental policies and procedures. STS plans, establishes, and subsequently monitors ground transport support for field missions, incorporating UN-owned transport
assets, Member State-contributed vehicles, and commercial transportation capacities. It advises DPO, DOS, peacekeeping mission staff, Member States, and legislative bodies of the transport organization on ground transportation operational issues pertinent to UN field missions, as well as contingent issues, transport standards, Memorandums of Understanding (to be discussed later), and leasing and outsourcing arrangements.

Supply Section

The Supply Section is composed of the Support Unit, the General Stores Unit, the Contracts Compliance Management Unit, the Fuel Unit, and the Rations Unit. The Supply Section provides the necessary planning, strategic management, performance monitoring and technical oversight for the provision of crucial field supplies and major services, which for 2006/2007 were valued at over $1.2 billion.4

Engineering Section

Peacekeeping missions are engineer-heavy, having to create temporary support infrastructure from existing assets or new ones. At UNHQ, the Engineering Section of the Specialist Support Service is composed of a Plans/System Contracts Unit, a Support Unit, an Operations Unit, and an Engineering Policy Unit. These units provide accommodation services to peacekeeping missions, including office space, living units, warehousing of material, and workshops. They also provide essential utilities including water, disposal of wastewater, and the provision of electricity. The Engineering Section is also responsible for peacekeeping mission infrastructure, including road construction, repair and maintenance, camp construction, bridge and culvert repair and building, helipad construction, and repairing and maintaining runways to ensure any required air support can be realized. It also provides engineering support to UN programmes such as disarmament, demobilization, and reconstruction (DDR).

4) All currencies noted in this course are in United States dollars unless otherwise specified.
Contingent-Owned Equipment Unit

Contingent-Owned Equipment (COE) is, essentially, the equipment brought by military or police units from their home country to the mission area. The COE Unit identifies and reports any shortfalls or surpluses in the overall COE capabilities of field missions, and liaises with permanent missions to address these shortfalls and surpluses in conjunction with other UN partners. The COE Unit provides an analysis of COE capabilities in field missions and develops COE-related policies, procedures, and other guidelines, as well as training material. It provides technical advice on COE to the field mission itself, and at UNHQ on all LSD-related aspects of the COE system. It maintains a detailed database of all COE. Finally, the COE Unit provides COE staffing proposals for newly established missions. The student will be introduced to COE in detail in Lesson 3.

Property Management Unit

Having the right material in the right place at the right time is a key aspect of logistics support. The Property Management Unit analyses UN inventory reports from field missions to look at trends in UN-owned equipment management. The Property Management Unit analyses and keeps statistics for both single and global mission performance in UNOE management and records-keeping, with a view to enhance asset management and meet the aim of having the right material. When new missions are being considered, the Property Management Unit will develop staffing proposals, provide technical clearance for candidates, and provide advice and training for field mission staff.

Medical Support Section

The role of the Medical Support Section provides the timely and effective operational medical support for UN peacekeeping operations. As a component of the broader logistics support function, the Medical Support Section is responsible and accountable for the assessment, planning, coordination, management, and oversight of medical resources, services, and capabilities deployed in support of peacekeeping operations.
Geospatial Information Section

A key aspect of planning operations and logistics starts with knowing the ground. Roads, rail, waterways, and obstacles will always shape logistics support. The Geospatial Information Section renders that important geographic information support (GIS) to UN peacekeeping missions. The Geospatial Information Section is responsible for providing accurate, up-to-date, and timely geographic information in support of the decision-making and operational needs of the planes in DPO, as well as the logistics planners in DOS. It provides cartographic and geographic information support services to the Security Council, as well as the senior management of the UN.

In summary of Section 1.1, at UNHQ the General Assembly, Secretary-General, Secretariat, DPO, DOS, and DPPA are the main bodies involved in UN peacekeeping, with DOS being the body responsible for mission support.

Section 1.2  Spectrum of Peace and Security Activities

UN logistics and the operating environment

UN logistics will be planned and executed taking the operating environment into careful consideration. There is a range of peaceful and coercive measures that the Security Council can authorize in cases of conflict. Peacekeeping is only one of those activities and often links or overlaps with conflict prevention, peacemaking, peace enforcement, and peacebuilding. While UN peacekeeping operations are generally deployed to support a ceasefire or peace agreement, they often play a role in peacemaking efforts. They may also be involved in early peacebuilding activities. It is therefore important for peacekeeping personnel and logistics planners to understand how these activities are related. Their peacekeeping work will also have an impact on conflict prevention, peacemaking, and peacebuilding efforts.

Conflict prevention

Conflict prevention involves the use of diplomatic measures and/or other tools to prevent inter or intrastate tensions from turning into violent conflict. Conflict prevention occurs before a conflict starts. It is generally a peaceful measure adapted to the particular source of the dispute or tension. Conflict prevention may include dialogue, mediation, inquiries into sources of disagreement, or confidence-building measures. One common conflict prevention measure is the use of the UN Secretary-General’s “good offices” as a mediator to engage in dialogue with the parties. The aim of this dialogue may be to decrease tension, mediate a disagreement, or help resolve a dispute. Regional organizations, such as the African Union, may be asked to provide measures to assist in conflict prevention. Logistical support to a mission in conflict prevention may be as simple as providing Mission Substance Allowance (MSA) to cover living expenses incurred by staff members in the field in connection with their temporary assignment or appointment to a special mission. Ground transportation using UN vehicles or rentals may also be required.
Peacemaking

Peacemaking involves measures to deal with existing conflicts. It usually involves diplomatic action aimed at bringing hostile parties to a negotiated agreement. This may include direct activities by the United Nations to assist in negotiating a peace agreement. It may also mean the UN facilitates peacemaking actions by peace negotiators or other regional or international actors, for example, by providing a neutral location for negotiations, or chairing negotiation sessions. The Security Council may request the Secretary-General or other peacemakers, such as regional organizations like the African Union, to take action. Peacemakers may also be envoys, governments, or groups of States. Peacemaking efforts may also be undertaken by unofficial and non-governmental groups, or by a prominent personality working independently. One of the first examples of a UN peacemaking initiative was the appointment of the Swedish diplomat Count Folke Bernadotte as the UN mediator in Palestine in 1948 to use “his good offices [to] promote a peaceful adjustment of the future situation in Palestine”. Another example is the appointment of the Joint United Nations-African Union Chief Mediator for Darfur by the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the African Union in 2008. Although peacemaking is not specifically mentioned in the Charter of the United Nation, the legal basis for peacemaking is contained in Chapter VI and VII of the document. Logistics support for peacemaking activities can range from simple to complex, depending on the circumstances and environment of the mission area. When logistics planners at DOS begin to shape the logistics plan, the scope of the conflict and the mandate the Security Council has authorized are key facts planners must consider. A peacemaking operation will differ widely from a mandate involving conflict prevention.

Peace enforcement

As the term implies, **peace enforcement** is more robust than peacemaking and involves the use of a range of **coercive measures**, such as sanctions or blockades. As a last resort, the **use of military force** may be authorized. Such actions are authorized as an attempt to restore international peace and security where the Security Council had determined there is a threat to the peace, a breach of the peace, and/or an act of aggression. Because of the use of force, coercive measures are taken only with the authorization of the Security Council. It is important to note that the Security Council may authorize peace enforcement action **without the consent of the parties to the conflict** (a key fact for logistics planners) if it believes that the conflict represents a threat to international peace and security, or for humanitarian and protection purposes. Peace enforcement is different than peacekeeping since there is not a peace process in place or consent from the warring parties. Chapter VII of the UN Charter provides the legal basis for such an operation or action. The UN does not generally engage in peace enforcement. Rather it may use regional organizations for peace enforcement action under Chapter VIII of the Charter. The UN may engage in “robust peacekeeping”, which is when a UN peacekeeping operation is deployed with the consent of the main parties to the conflict, and a strong mandate to use force if necessary deters spoilers and makes sure the peace agreement is properly implemented. Peace enforcement presents the UN with logistical challenges that requires careful planning and many resources to carry out. It is important that all the required logistical support is available to carry out any mandate that involves peace enforcement, as the lives of peacekeepers could potentially depend on it. Force protection is a paramount logistical planning factor.

*A United Nations peacekeeper from the Indian battalion of MONUC takes stock of weapons and ammunition collected during the demobilization process in Matembo, North Kivu, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. 8 November 2006. UN Photo #132362 by Martine Perret.*
Peacekeeping

**Peacekeeping** is the technique designed to preserve the peace where fighting has ended, and to assist in implementing agreements achieved by the peacemakers. UN peacekeeping operations are therefore deployed in situations where the main parties to a conflict have shown their commitment to a ceasefire or a peace process. There will also need to be consent by all parties for working with the UN to lay the foundations for sustainable peace. Over the years, peacekeeping has changed from a traditional military model to a complex, multidimensional model involving military, civilian, and police actors working together, each with their own logistical needs that requires a flexible and integrated UN logistics model in order to be successful.

Peacebuilding

Stabilizing a conflict situation is not enough if the likelihood of a long-lasting peace is low. **Peacebuilding** involves a range of measures aimed at reducing the risk of an area lapsing or relapsing into conflict, which history has shown to be quite possible. Through these measures, the national capacity to manage conflict and build a solid foundation for sustainable peace and development is strengthened at all levels. For this reason, many multidimensional peacekeeping operations are also involved in peacebuilding when they are mandated to help national authorities rebuild a State. Peacebuilding is a complex, **long-term process of creating the necessary conditions for lasting peace**. It works on the deep-rooted, structural causes of violent conflict in a comprehensive manner. Examples of peacebuilding activities include security sector reform, which “aims to enhance effective and accountable security for the State and its peoples. SSR transforms institutions to make them more professional and more accountable. It is a process led by national authorities and the reform should be undertaken without discrimination and with full respect for human rights and the rule of law”.

Peacebuilding can mean assisting in rebuilding justice systems, support for the creation of national

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human rights institutions, or any other activity aimed at strengthening State structures. From a logistics view, support to peacebuilding will often flow from previously supporting a peacemaking, peacekeeping, and/or peace enforcement activity; therefore, flexibility in a UN logistics system is key. A mission support element must be flexible enough to adapt quickly to changing circumstances on the ground, allowing for greater internal capacity to respond to the mission’s substantive operations.

Section 1.3 Types of UN Peacekeeping Operations

Any military, civilian, or police personnel who is employed or will be employed in a mission must understand what type of mission he or she is going to. A logistics specialist needs to make plans and assumptions based on the type of mission it is or will be. Supporting peacekeeping will be different than supporting peacebuilding. Experience and training are key factors in understanding these differences, such as consumption of fuel rates versus the need for hard rations.

Mandates

First and foremost, in planning and executing operations and logistics is the mandate. The term “UN mandate” is typically used to refer to a long-term international mission that has been authorized by the Security Council. UN mandates typically involve peacekeeping operations. UN peacekeeping operations are deployed and supported logistically on the basis of mandates from the Security Council. Over the years, the range of tasks assigned to UN peacekeeping operations has expanded significantly in response to shifting patterns of conflict and to best address threats to international peace and security.
Although each UN peacekeeping operation is different, there is a considerable degree of consistency in the types of mandated tasks assigned by the Security Council. Depending on their mandate, peacekeeping operations may be required to deploy to prevent the outbreak of conflict or the spill-over of conflict across borders. Peacekeeping mandates can stabilize conflict situations after a ceasefire in order to create an environment for the parties to reach a lasting peace agreement or assist in implementing comprehensive peace agreements. Mandates can lead States or territories through a transition to stable government, based on democratic principles, good governance, and economic development.

**Peacebuilding activities**

Depending on the specific set of challenges, UN peacekeepers are often mandated to play a role in the following essential peacebuilding activities:

- DDR\(^8\) of ex-combatants;
- Mine action;
- Security sector reform and other rule of law-related activities;
- Protection and promotion of human rights;
- Electoral assistance;
- Support for the restoration and extension of State authority; and
- Promotion of social and economic recovery and development.

Security Council mandates also reflect a number of cross-cutting, thematic tasks that are regularly assigned to UN peacekeeping operations on the basis of the following landmark Security Council resolutions:

- Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace, and security;
- Security Council resolution 1612 (2005) on children and armed conflict; and

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Types of peacekeeping operations

Based on UN mandates, there are three different types of peacekeeping operations: traditional peacekeeping, multidimensional peacekeeping, and transitional authority, each with its own logistical challenges that must be met. These types of peacekeeping operations evolved in response to changing international political environments and different types of conflict facing the Security Council. When the UN first became involved in peacekeeping after the Second World War, it addressed conflicts between States that tended to focus on border disputes or territorial disagreements. Since the end of the cold war, the Security Council has increasingly considered civil war as a threat to peace and security, particularly when there is massive human suffering and when the conflict threatens to spill over to neighbouring States.

Traditional peacekeeping

Traditional peacekeeping is deployed as a temporary measure to help manage a conflict. It creates safer conditions for other actors to work on peacemaking activities. Traditional peacekeeping operations do not normally play a direct role in political efforts to resolve the conflict. Other actors, such as diplomats or other representatives of individual States, regional organizations, or special UN envoys, may be working on longer-term political solutions, which will allow the peacekeeping operation to withdraw. As a result, some traditional peacekeeping operations are deployed for decades before a lasting political settlement is reached between the parties.

The tasks assigned to traditional UN peacekeeping operations are observation, monitoring, and reporting through the use of static post, over-flights, and other technical means with the agreement of the parties. Traditional peacekeeping can mean the supervision of a ceasefire and support to verification mechanisms. Traditional peacekeeping missions are mostly military in character and often headed by military personnel. In contrast, multidimensional peacekeeping operations are headed by a civilian. Unlike traditional authorities or multidimensional peacekeeping operations, traditional peacekeeping operations do not carry out functions of the State, nor do they engage in governance or capacity-building activities; therefore, these types of activities will not be reflected in the mandate.

From a UN logistics view, traditional peacekeeping mission support could mean more static infrastructure, such as hard-standing permanent buildings. Lines of communications from troop-contributing countries can be established and maintained over a long period of predictable times. Long-term local contracts can be put in place.

As traditional peacekeeping operations are mostly military in nature, military-style resupply and transport standard operating procedures will be in place and used. Regularly scheduled movement flights can be established. Communication and medical needs can be put in place and maintained. With a mostly military contribution, the “self-reliance” concept with some local contracts could be in place, but most supplies and equipment are brought in by the TCCs.
Multidimensional peacekeeping

Since the end of the cold war, multidimensional peacekeeping operations have become the most common form of UN peacekeeping. These operations are typically deployed in the dangerous aftermath of a violent internal conflict. Once there is a peace agreement in place, even a fragile one, the operation works to create a secure and stable environment while working with national authorities and actors to make sure the peace agreement is implemented. These missions are deployed as part of a broader international effort to help countries emerging from conflict make the transition to a sustainable peace. Sometimes this means that the peacekeeping operation will work with other actors inside or outside of the UN, such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), to support or actively promote a national dialogue and reconciliation between different groups to make sure the peace agreement holds. In this way, multidimensional peacekeeping operations are more involved in peacemaking than traditional peacekeeping operations, which also means they require more detailed planning and collaboration. They employ an integration of military, police, and civilian components to support the implementation of a comprehensive peace agreement. The multidimensional peacekeeping operation also provides a framework for ensuring that the UN and other international actors work in coordination at the country level. This is often difficult in practise because there are so many actors involved. This is why peacekeeping personnel need to be aware of what those actors do and how they cooperate with the UN peacekeeping operation.

Supporting a multidimensional peacekeeping operation is challenging for many reasons. First, the UN must consider the needs of the military, police, and civilian components and how best to provide support on a determined priority level. The ability of the three components to self-sustain will be different. Considerations for UN agencies, police, TCCs, UN military observers (UNMOs), mission staff, international agencies, and even NGOs must be made. Each UN actor will have varying needs when it comes to engineering, transportation in the mission area, contracting abilities, and maintenance capabilities. In a multidimensional peacekeeping mission, there are often multiple troop-contributing countries creating interoperability challenges that will need to be met. As situational awareness of what other actors are doing in the mission is important, communications systems must be strong to allow a successful mandate implementation. Multidimensional peacekeeping operations take place in countries where infrastructure has often collapsed and reliance on host nation support is not possible; therefore, temporary support structures may need to be established by the mission.

Transitional authority

In very rare circumstances, the Security Council will authorize a multidimensional peacekeeping operation to temporarily assume the legislative and administrative functions of a State. Called a transitional authority mission, it is a measure taken in order to resolve sovereignty questions, such as supporting the transfer of authority from one sovereign entity to another, or until sovereignty questions are fully resolved. It can be mandated to help the State establish administrative structures that may not have existed previously.

As transitional authority missions are multidimensional, the challenges facing the UN logistics support structure and the means to meet those challenges are complex.
Summary

In Lesson 1, you have been introduced to the main bodies of the UN that are involved in peacekeeping activities, with the DOS being the body engaged in UN logistical support. The spectrum of peacekeeping and the logistical considerations of the same have been covered. Finally, the types of UN peacekeeping operations were introduced, along with the logistical challenges of supporting them. As you progress through the course, you will be able to reflect back upon Lesson 1 to gain an understanding of why no two missions are supported in the same way, and how the principles of logistics must be used to shape logistical support to UN peacekeeping missions.
End-of-Lesson Quiz »

1. Who are the members of the United Nations?
   A. DKO, DOS, and DPPA
   B. 193 Member States
   C. The Security Council
   D. The five permanent members of the Security Council

2. Which document spells out the rights and duties of Member States?
   A. The Charter of the United Nations
   B. International Law
   C. Geneva Convention
   D. UN mandates

3. Which UN body is responsible for maintaining peace and security?
   A. The General Assembly
   B. The Secretary-General
   C. The Secretariat
   D. The Security Council

4. Which of the following activities preserves the peace once hostilities have ended?
   A. Peacebuilding
   B. Peacekeeping
   C. Peace enforcement
   D. Peacemaking

5. _____ is an activity to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict.
   A. Mandate implementation
   B. Peace enforcement
   C. Peacebuilding
   D. Mission Support

6. What will lead to a mission being established to maintain peace and security?
   A. International tribunal
   B. UN mandate
   C. Vote in the General Assembly
   D. All of the above

7. Which type of mission is usually headed by a military person?
   A. Traditional
   B. Transitional
   C. Multidimensional
   D. Peace enforcement

8. Which of the following is a peacebuilding activity?
   A. Protection and promotion of human rights
   B. Electoral assistance
   C. Support and extension of State authority
   D. All of the above

9. Complete this sentence by choosing the correct option: _____ authorizes a multidimensional UN peacekeeping operation to temporarily assume the legislative and administrative functions of a State.
   A. A UN mandate
   B. Humanitarian Law
   C. A Transitional Authority Mission
   D. The Secretary-General

10. Which UN department is primarily concerned with UN Logistics?
    A. The Secretariat
    B. Department of Peace Operations (DPO)
    C. Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA)
    D. Department of Operational Support (DOS)

Answer Key provided on the next page.
End-of-Lesson Quiz »

Answer Key »
1. B
2. A
3. D
4. B
5. C
6. B
7. A
8. D
9. C
10. D
About the Author: Major Rod Little

A retired major in the Canadian Armed Forces, Rod Little spent more than 20 years working in human resources and training, including work on United Nations peacekeeping missions.

Little’s career highlights include a tour with a Canadian Embassy and the challenges associated with working with foreign forces and industry, being a senior leader in an operational environment, being a course director, and directing staff working with international military, police, and civilian participants.

Little completed the Advanced Logistics Officers Course in Borden, Ontario, Canada. In December 2006, he completed the Army Operations Course in Kingston, Ontario, Canada. He has finished all six Officer Professional Military Education courses, four with honours. His other officer qualifications include Financial Services, Human Resources, and Army Logistics Phase 4 training. As a non-commissioned member, Little completed Senior Leadership Training — the highest level of Administration Clerk Training — and the Middle Management Course. He has participated in many major Army training exercises, including brigade-level exercises in Canada, combined US, UK, Australia exercises, as well as Northern operations in Norway. In Germany, he worked in the Wing Operations Centre during CF18 exercises, and in Cairo, he was responsible for arranging ship’s handling for Suez Canal transits and port visits.

Little speaks English, French, and Egyptian Arabic. He has the Canadian Forces Decoration 1, Special Service Medal, UN, and Canadian Peacekeeping Service Medals. Little was born in Quebec, Canada and currently lives in the Philippines.