

Canadian Input - Call for contributions: Member States

1. What are the main challenges confronting peace operations today and what challenges are expected to be faced by peace operations in the future?

- a. Protracted conflict dynamics increasingly involve loss of effective control by national authorities over large areas of territory; transborder zones of weak/absent state presence facilitate safe havens for armed groups. Establishment of non-state governance and coercive control by transnational armed groups and criminal networks in contested territories facilitates human/drugs/weapons trafficking and illicit financing of insurgencies and anti-state violence.
- b. Paralysis of Security Council (SC) decision-making and effective engagement and oversight over peace operations. Lack of shared commitment in the P5 to make proper use of UN peace operations in a dynamic, spectrum-oriented manner (i.e., being able to shift between types of peace operations in a fluid manner as circumstances permit). The failure to mandate new peace operations for the many country situations that would have benefited from this over the past decade has undermined the global credibility of both peacekeeping and the UN in managing international peace and security.
- c. Conflict actors – notably national governing authorities – manifesting less political commitment to do the hard work of negotiating peace agreements that entail compromises or trade-offs, implementing peace agreement provisions that require significant constitutional and/or governance reforms, and working with UN operations and agencies to allow them full access and freedom to assist all stakeholders in a peace process achieve a sustainable peace. At times, extension/restoration of state authority can become the major impetus behind a host authority's consent to the continued deployment of operations. Geopolitical divisions increasingly foster a permissive global context for national governments to impede and even expel UN missions before sustainable peace has been secured, defying the authority of the SC with impunity.
- d. UN liquidity crisis prevents missions from planning activities sufficiently in advance or, in some cases, from carrying out important tasks.
- e. Assessments of operational effectiveness do not adequately reflect the performance of a mission or its components, which impedes identification of means to improve.

2. How can United Nations peace operations adapt in response to current and future challenges (e.g., in terms of political and substantive work, mandates, operational and administrative requirements, capacities)?

- a. Mandates must be in support of a political strategy.

- b. SC adoption of more focused, phased, and adaptive approaches to mandate development and renewals.
 - i. Focused: Mandates should be more concise, express core operational priorities clearly, and focus initially on the key needs to move conflict dynamics towards reduced violence and conflict management. They should avoid template-style inclusion of other thematic issues that are not central to addressing conflict management imperatives.
 - ii. Phased: The SC should limit the operative elements of mandates in the initial phases of mission deployment, activating additional elements as may be needed in response to changing dynamics and emerging opportunities or needs on the ground. Similarly, in drawdown phases of missions, mandates should be reduced in scope and adjusted to anticipate handover to UNCT agencies and/or national authorities where relevant.
 - iii. Adaptive: Mandates should draw upon the full spectrum of UN peace operations operational concepts and capacities, from prevention to stabilisation, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. The SC must be ready to adapt and revise mandates flexibly in response to changes in country/conflict dynamics, in between mandate renewals if necessary; there should be a matching flexibility in the accompanying resources.
- c. As DPO is the main global repository of experience with multilateral peace operations, the Secretariat should ensure that its core expertise is fully available as far as possible in special political missions and across the UN. It should consider merging DPO and DPPA field presences and should seek ways to strengthen collaboration with the RC system.
- d. More rigorous articulation of clear and context-responsive political strategies for mandate implementation is required, led by top mission leadership teams that ensure cross-mission accountability for the alignment of all mission resources behind their conflict management objectives. When mandates include the extension/restoration of state authority, particular focus should be given to internal UN policy and planning to ensure both clearer mandate language and CONOPS that provide missions with a core set of requirements to ensure coherent and sustainably effective action in supporting legitimate state authorities, especially in contested areas.
- e. Mission leadership must be empowered through resources and accountability to assume responsibility for the protection of peacekeepers and respect the moral contract of provision of reasonable measures of Force Protection on behalf of the UN in exchange for the risk of ultimate sacrifice on behalf of the peacekeepers.
- f. Early and sustained use of integrated strategic and operational planning by mission HQs to translate mandates and political strategies into realistic CONOPS, mission strategic plans, and operational plans that ensure delivery of concrete, timebound results. Full alignment of

mission budgets and budget reports with results-based plans, with periodic (e.g. quarterly) reviews by senior leadership teams of status of operational delivery and relevance/impact on conflict management needs.

- g. Mission Chiefs of Staff – particularly for large integrated or multidimensional missions – must have a core set of competencies and experience in the UN system. This will allow them to serve as the mission lead on strategic mission planning, budget planning and reporting, and staffing. In the absence of this, the essential role of the senior leadership team in providing strategic management of the mission structure and capacities is undermined. This requires rigorous procedures and criteria – including a demonstrated ability to work effectively across UN silos and with uniformed personnel – to select competent COS candidates for complex missions. The current A4P+ reference to this important role does not do enough to address this systemic problem.
- h. To address the liquidity crisis, strong action is required. For instance, consideration should be given to charging interest on arrears. In addition, relying so heavily on a few Member States for the bulk of peacekeeping assessments leaves mission budgets vulnerable to payments that are made late, only in part, or not at all. Consideration could also be given to introducing changes to setting a lower cap on assessments contributions.
- i. Greater coordination between Fifth Committee, DPO, SC, and representatives of major TPCCs is required, including consultations on thematic issues to ensure that all parties have a shared understanding of mission needs at a generic level, with this understanding then being applied in Fifth Committee discussions.
- j. Greater specificity in and adherence to Statement of Unit Requirements to ensure that personnel/contingents deploy with the proper equipment and capabilities for each mission. In addition, clear language that eliminates ambiguity regarding probable tasks, such as deliberate offensive operations.
- k. A formal liaison mechanism should be established between the UNSC and UNGA (perhaps a troika of current and immediate incoming and outgoing PGAs) to be used in cases where the UNSC is unable to come to terms with a persistent threat to international peace and security. The mechanism could serve to help UNGA bridge differences between UNSC positions or, *in extremis*, move the issue to UNGA under its Charter authorities.

3. What could United Nations peace operations be expected and mandated to do in the future? Under what conditions are United Nations peace operations least likely to be effective in achieving their objectives? Under what conditions are United Nations peace operations most likely to achieve their objectives?

- a. It is not a question of *what* UNPOs can be expected to do – this should not be predetermined. However, the UNSC and Secretariat should focus on cases that do not

require counterinsurgency or war-fighting against large armed groups in order to establish minimal security conditions, particularly where national forces are fully engaged in such fighting and there is no prospect of a ceasefire or peace process.

- b. Having said this, the principle of “form follows function” should guide what peace operations are mandated to do, short of war-fighting. We should not assume that large multidimensional missions – up to and including transitional/interim administration missions for contested territory – will not be relevant in future. The UN should not hesitate to mandate such missions where necessary to support broad needs for sustainable peace, particularly in the absence of other capacities to do so.
- c. In other circumstances, the early deployment of smaller UN missions with more focused mandates is more likely to be effective in supporting conflict actors to establish and/or sustain a peace process or peace agreement. This should include consideration of new mission formats (e.g., cross-border preventive missions, technical assistance), greater integration with anti-crime activities, more in-depth analysis of regional dynamics, etc. A fluid approach to mission form should be adopted, something that will require greater integration – possibly merging – of DPO and DPPA.
- d. Rather than waiting for a situation of “mutual hurt,” giving the parties incentives to come to the table, early and more preventive use of special envoys, mediation teams, and technical assistance to address issues (e.g., language rights, resource management) should be used to foster political buy-in further upstream. UNSC unity behind clear political strategies for conflict management is key.
- e. As noted in the Pact for the Future, the UN and Member States should strengthen the roles of women in peace processes. This is key to long-lasting political solutions, sustaining peace, and protecting civilians.
- f. UN peace operations require clear political strategies focused on conflict management, with mission leadership empowered to ensure unity of effort across all mission components on conflict management priorities. Mission leadership should be held to account for directing mission resources toward strategic and operational achievement of mission objectives.
- g. UN missions will not be effective when their mandates are not supported by Member States with adequate resources, both in terms of adequate budgetary resources as well as in terms of civilian staffing and provision of uniformed contingents with the necessary training, leadership, mindsets and equipment to be effective in increasingly challenging operational settings. This includes the requisite quality and timeliness of planning at all levels and the ability for these plans to be adapt adroitly as circumstances evolve.
- h. There is a clear expectation in many contexts that a UN presence will be accompanied by efforts to protect civilians from the effects of conflict. Protection of civilians should

continue to play a central role within the mandating, planning and delivery of peacekeeping operations. The Department of Peace Operations has unique experience and expertise in protection of civilians in multilateral contexts and should seek opportunities to share this experience where the UN is present conflict contexts, and with regional organisations.

4. What could be the role of partnerships, with regional organizations, international financial institutions, or other actors, in future United Nations peace operations? What are the opportunities and challenges presented by partnerships, and what principles should underpin them?

- a. Recognizing the importance of Chapter VII of the Charter and the many roles played by regional organizations and others, we must also recognize that threats to international peace and security are not simply regional matters. Thus, engaging with partners should be encouraged but the UN must maintain an active and central role and not be relegated to simply funding activities conducted by others.
- b. Capacity of partners is an ongoing concern, both in terms of generating resources for missions and to carry out mandated tasks in an effective manner. Many of the challenges faced by the UN are also faced by partners but are even more daunting. Thus, demonstrated comparative advantage should be a key consideration when partnership/devolution of authority is undertaken.
- c. We believe that partners should adhere to standards (vis-à-vis respect for human rights, etc.) comparable to those of the UN.
- d. IFIs can bring significant financial resources to play during peace processes. A key partnership in this respect is between the UN and the World Bank's Fragility, Conflict, and Violence (WB FCV) financing modality. This UN-WB partnership should be better leveraged in countries where peace operations are deployed, in particular by ensuring that FCV allocations to host governments explicitly support the goals of UN political strategies.

5. Please share any other observations that may benefit the review.

- a. Canada values UN peacekeeping and appreciates its ability to adapt to new circumstances and to learn from past shortcomings. In our view, previous reform efforts, particularly the HIPPO, should serve as a baseline for the current exercise, and the Secretariat should review and reconsider any of the recommendations that have not been fully implemented.
- b. The Secretariat requires both the resources to carry out the analysis to provide advice and options to the UNSG and UNSC ahead of mandate considerations and the independence to provide these without prejudging outcomes.

- c. It may be useful for the Secretariat to lead a campaign among MS to highlight the benefits that UN peace operations and the PBC can bring to host countries. Former and current host countries could help by discussing in an honest manner how the UN assisted in addressing crises while also being consulted about UN shortcomings and how UN activities can have more host country engagement / “ownership.” This could help address the stigma of being on the UNSC agenda and improve host country-UN relations.

Questions for current and former Troop- and Police-Contributing Countries

9. What factors shaped your country’s decision to become a T/PCC to United Nations peace operations? What factors and considerations will determine whether your country will remain an active T/PCCs in future United Nations peace operations?

- a. Canada’s decision to contribute uniformed personnel to UN peace operations reflects a longstanding commitment to international cooperation and advancing peace and security. However, Canada’s armed forces are currently managing high levels of operational demand, limiting the personnel available for UN missions.
- b. Canada remains a strong supporter of peace operations through assessed contributions and XB funding and policy engagement. However, for the UN to remain credible in this regard and to attract the support of Canada and other T/PCCs, consistent and serious efforts need to be undertaken to ensure that:
 - i. The SC provides strong support to missions;
 - ii. Missions are integrated into a broad political strategy;
 - iii. Mandates – particularly where they are ambitious – are adequately resourced and appropriately sequenced;
 - iv. This resourcing includes robust force protection and medical care;
 - v. The Secretariat and missions have adequate resources to engage in planning both ahead of mandate adoption and throughout the course of the mission, including for transitions;
 - vi. Mission leadership is held accountable for directing mission resources toward strategic and operational achievement of mission objectives for mission performance (as noted in Question 3).

10. How would you assess the degree to which your views as a T/PCC were, or are, taken into consideration with regard to the mandates of United Nations peace operations and their implementation?

- a. We feel that our views as a TCC are generally taken into consideration with regards to the mandates of the United Nations and their implementation, commensurate with our role as

an engaged member state outside the SC. We recognise strong cooperation with DPO in areas where Canada has a particularly strong policy interest and/or provides XB support. Our cooperation with DPO allows us to influence other member states including T/PCCs and SC members in some contexts.

- b. Deployed Canadian personnel generally feel that their contributions to discussions on mandate implementation are appropriately recognised.
- c. Canada actively contributes to shaping the directions of UN peace operations through policy advocacy and diplomatic engagement through fora such as C34 and 5C.
- d. Canada plays an active role in advocacy on protection of civilians in peace operations and has leading roles in member state advocacy on related policy areas including Children and Armed Conflict and WPS. Canada engages closely with DPO to deliver this advocacy.

11. From your perspective as a T/PCC, what are the most pressing challenges confronting the United Nations peace operations that you are involved in?

- a. Goodwill of the parties to the conflict often appears to be lacking. This should be met by a united SC stance that does not tolerate the parties acting as spoilers. Unfortunately, the SC continues to be divided on many issues.
- b. Mandates are overly ambitious compared to the resources available. Mandates are also not as responsive to changing conditions as they need to be.
- c. As pointed out by the HIPPO, national caveats and overly restrictive mindsets undermine mission effectiveness.
- d. Barriers to the integration of technology into mission activities. Host nations sometimes place restrictions on the use of technologies (e.g., some types of drones) that could greatly assist missions in, *i.a.*, detecting threats to the security of both the mission and civilians. Addressing host nation concerns at a political level and being more flexible about the specifics of the technology (i.e., focusing on the desired effects) could help with this. Timely development of UN SOPs for emerging technologies may also help.
- e. Additionally, not all T/PCCs share a common baseline of technological literacy. This should be addressed through pre-deployment assessments and training.
- f. Inadequate infrastructure can present real challenges to the wellbeing of personnel, particularly in remote locations where supply chain challenges may prevent missions from maintaining adequate and secure accommodations and services, particularly for women.
- g. Other practical challenges include: a lack of helicopters and lack of mobility in general in remote and vast geographies; a lack of unified command and control in mission leadership; and a lack of joint civil-military operational planning for coherent operations to achieve sustainable effects.

12. Based on your experience deploying peacekeepers, what capabilities and support would be needed for deployments in the future?

- a. Canada's experience in deploying uniformed personnel to UN peace operations (both directly and through capacity-building partnerships) has shown that successful future deployments will require enhanced operational readiness, inclusive institutional systems, and environments that support the meaningful participation of all personnel. Adequate mission infrastructure, including secure accommodations and health supports for all personnel, especially in remote locations and with particular attention to the needs of women, is a key part of this.
- b. Some capabilities specifically to focus on:
 - i. Robust health services and CASEVAC, including rotary airlift.
 - ii. Robust pan-domain C4ISR and targeting capabilities (drones, satellite imagery, rotary airlift).
 - iii. Strategic communications to dominate the cognitive domain (e.g. mis-dis information).
 - iv. Enhanced training for deploying forces to effectively operate across the full spectrum of operations associated with the mission (standardized UN readiness training).
 - v. WPS considerations fully integrated in the planning and execution of the mission.
 - vi. Adaptive rules of engagement that enable the force to counter changes to adversary activities.
 - vii. Robust engineering (counter mine/IED) capability.
 - viii. A robust international legal framework for the use and employment of advanced capabilities, including AI.