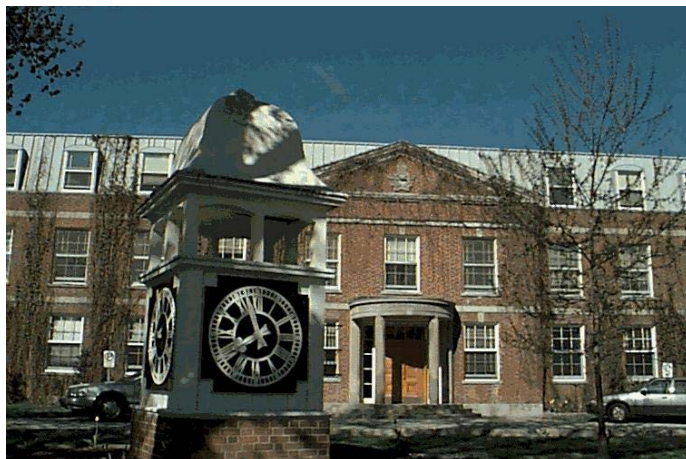


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CANADA'S RETURN TO A MAJOR ROLE IN UNITED NATIONS-LED PEACE SUPPORT OPERATIONS

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JCSP 40

Exercise Solo Flight

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SOLO FLIGHT ESSAY –

**CANADA’S RETURN TO A MAJOR ROLE IN UNITED NATIONS-LED
PEACE SUPPORT OPERATIONS**

By Major S.A. Pires
Par le major S.A. Pires

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CANADA'S RETURN TO A MAJOR ROLE IN UNITED NATIONS-LED PEACE SUPPORT OPERATIONS

INTRODUCTION

Peacekeeping has evolved to the point where demands placed on peacekeepers transcend their traditional roles, rendering it virtually unrecognizable to its founders.

– The United Nations Association of Canada

Throughout the global community debate persists regarding the value of United Nations (UN) peacekeeping, and its future. On one side, idealists remain inspired and continue to altruistically view it as the only legitimate multilateral mechanism that is truly able to create and sustain international peace. In opposition, realists are said to be abandoning UN peacekeeping in favour of more robust regional coalitions, which through the application of coercive power and influence, enforce peace while advancing interests. Where does Canada stand?

For nearly four decades, Canada habitually was the largest contributor to UN-led peace support operations (PSOs).¹ Constituting more than ten percent of the UN total,² some 125,000 Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) personnel deployed during this period in the interest of international peace.³ Canada's history of continuous involvement in UN peacekeeping, and ability to help fundamentally move the UN forward, have earned it a unique middle power status on the world's stage. This long-standing peacekeeping heritage, combined with the image of the vigilant Canadian peacekeeper, permeates the public's collective imagination and has become a part of Canada's national identity. In fact, in 2003, GPC International conducted a *'Listening to*

¹ Michael Byers, "After Afghanistan: Canada's Return to UN Peacekeeping." *Canadian Military Journal*. Winter 2012, accessed on 4 Apr 2014, 3, <http://www.journal.forces.gc.ca/vol13/no1/page33-eng.asp>.

² Walter Dorn, "Canadian Peacekeeping: Proud Tradition, Strong Future?" *Canadian Foreign Policy*. vol. 12, no. 2, Fall, 2005, accessed on 8 Apr 2014, 2, <http://www.walterdorn.org/pub/32>.

³ Lane Anker, "Peacekeeping and Public Opinion." *Canadian Military Journal*. Summer 2005, accessed on 4 Apr 2014, 3, <http://www.journal.forces.gc.ca/vo6/no2/public-eng.asp>.

Canadians' poll which revealed that nearly 90 percent of Canadians reported that 'promoting world peace' is Canada's most important foreign policy objective. The study also exposed that of the top priorities for Canada,' that 81 percent supported 'participating in international peacekeeping operations.'⁴

By 2010, the UN was running sixteen peacekeeping operations around the world with more peacekeepers deployed than ever. However, once the lead supplier of peacekeeping soldiers, at times up to 3,300,⁵ Canada ranked 49th out of a total of 116 contributing countries in 2010. Out of a total of 99,926 deployed peacekeepers, only 221 were Canadian,⁶ and at one point in recent years the numbers reached a mere 57.⁷ This data does seem to support the claims by some critics that since the mid-1990s, that Canada has moved away from its traditional role as a major contributor to, and champion of, the UN. Worse still, detractors argue that Canada is doing very little to support the UN or has altogether abandoned UN-led PSOs in favour of self-interest and military adventurism?

Canada has not abandoned its rich and proud peacekeeping heritage. However, it has moved away from its more traditional contributions. Why has Canada decided to limit involvement in UN-led PSOs? The time might be right for Canada to reconsider a return to a major role in UN-led PSOs. The re-engagement options available to Canada are diverse and range from increased leadership and troop contributions to UN-led PSOs, to the provision of critical enablers, to Canada developing niche capabilities, et al.

⁴ GPC International, *Listening to Canadian*. Poll (2003).

⁵ Steven, "Canada and UN Peacekeeping Factsheet Educates Canadians", Rideau Institute (blog), January 12, 2010, accessed on 8 Apr 2014. <http://www.peacebuild.ca/documents/CanadaUNPKOE.pdf>.

⁶ Denis Stairs, "Being Rejected in the United Nations: The Cause and Implications of Canada's Failure to Win a Seat in the UN Security Council." March 2011, accessed on 9 Apr 2014, 5-6, [http://www.cdfai.org/PDF/Being Rejected in the United Nations.pdf](http://www.cdfai.org/PDF/Being_Rejected_in_the_United_Nations.pdf)

⁷ Steven.

Canada's decision to reduce its troop contributions to the UN since the mid-1990s came from a loss in confidence in the UN's ability to plan, support, execute and lead PSOs as was demonstrated during mission failures in Bosnia and Rwanda. Despite these reductions, Canada remains committed to the UN and continues to make significant contributions towards the advancement of UN peace efforts while concurrently championing international stability and peace through other mechanisms. Canada should heavily re-engage in UN-led PSOs for a variety of disparate reasons which will be revealed. Finally, the options available to the Government of Canada (GoC) encourage re-engagement in UN-led PSOs.

HAS ANYONE SEEN THE CANADIANS?

From 1947 until the Cold War's end, the UN enjoyed tremendous success in the application of traditional Pearsonian peacekeeping.⁸ The organization and contributing states became confident in managing expeditionary operations. Of the fifteen UN-led PSOs conducted from 1947 to 1986, most were unarmed observer missions.⁹ The CAF was used extensively during these early days. The collapse of the Soviet Union saw the global security environment dramatically change. African and Asian states that had been areas of contention between the West and East were no longer constrained and could pursue their own agendas. Instead of peace, many of these states erupted into ethnic violence with many seeking revenge against historical enemies.¹⁰ This shift fundamentally challenged the way that the UN had traditionally exercised PSOs. Communications Advisor for the Assistant Deputy Minister (Public Affairs), Lane Anker

⁸ United Nations, "United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines." 2008, accessed on 8 Apr 2014, 20-21, http://pbpu.unlb.org/pbps/library/capstone_doctrine_eNg.pdf.

⁹ Anker, "Peacekeeping and Public Opinion."..., 3.

¹⁰ J.L. Granatstein, "Fatal Distraction: Lester Pearson and the Unwarranted Primacy of Peacekeeping." *Policy Options*. May 2004, accessed on 6 Apr 2014, 71, <http://www.irpp.org/assets/po/governance-and-scandal/granatstein.pdf>.

described these types of conflicts:

...these internal conflicts characteristically have no buffer zones, involve non-state actors, and are waged along religious, ethnic or tribal lines. Governments in many of these countries fail to maintain political authority. Failed or failing states, in turn, plant the seeds for threats to regional and global interests, and create humanitarian disasters...[and] makes these countries breeding grounds for organized criminals and havens for terrorists. An estimated 3.6 million persons were killed in the some 53 intrastate conflicts during the 1990s, compared to 220,000 persons killed in interstate conflicts. Consequently, symbolic and non-threatening peacekeepers in blue berets...were rendered impotent in these new operational environments.¹¹

The UN was unprepared to face this new multi-dimensional or complex peacekeeping environment as its agility was hampered by its past successes. The UN did not appreciate that its traditional peacekeeping practices for defining mandates, funding, and defining mission requirements were largely inadequate in this new security environment; leading to substantial delays and ineffectiveness at the operational level.¹² Moreover, the UN seemed unable or unwilling to evolve its peacekeeping code of neutrality and impartiality to address the challenges presented; namely prevention of crimes against humanity. Two of the most notable and tragic examples of the UN's inadequacies in the mid-1990s were Bosnia and Rwanda.

In April 1993, the UN announced that Bosnia's Srebrenica would be a 'safe area' under UNPROFOR protection. However, as Walter Dorn, a highly respected peacekeeping authority, points out, UNPROFOR was "unprepared to protect, despite its name."¹³ In 1995, the town was recaptured resulting in the subsequent massacre of some 8,000 Bosnian Muslims. This tragic

¹¹ Anker, "Peacekeeping and Public Opinion."..., 3-4.

¹² Bernd Horn and Stephen Harris, *Generalship and the Art of the Admiral*. (St. Catherines: Vanwell Publishing, 2001), 263.

¹³ Dorn, "Canadian Peacekeeping: Proud Tradition, Strong Future?"..., 9.

case demonstrated the UN's operational deficiencies, lack of will and incapacity to respond to this new era of complex peacekeeping operations.

Concurrently, the UN was equally struggling, overwhelmed and inadequate in Rwanda. Proof of this fact was easily revealed when in response to confirmed reports of genocide; the UN prevented its force from intervening. The military commander of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR), Canadian General (ret) Roméo Dallaire vividly recalls his exchange with the UN's Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) seeking direction to arrest the Rwandan genocide:

When I was done, he said, UNAMIR is not, repeat not, to fire unless fired upon. I reminded him that our rules of engagement allowed us to intervene and use an escalation of force up to and including the use of deadly force to prevent crimes against humanity. He repeated that UNAMIR was not to fire unless fired upon-we were to negotiate and, above all else, avoid conflict.¹⁴

Close to one million Rwandans were murdered over a few short months while the UN did little to help. Another Canadian military leader from that era, General (ret) Lewis MacKenzie concisely captures the UN leadership at the time: "During the early 1990s, as the United Nations was experiencing great difficulty in adapting to the post-Cold War world, some of the orders issued to its commanders in the field were ludicrous."¹⁵ The lapses in judgement above contributed significantly to the UN's inability to alter mission mandates or use of force in both instances. These lapses similarly had an adverse effect on the Canadian public and its decision makers.

¹⁴ Roméo Dallaire, *Shake Hands with the Devil: Failure of Humanity in Rwanda*. (Toronto: Random House, 2003), 229.

¹⁵ Lewis MacKenzie. *Soldiers Made Me Look Good: A Life in the Shadow of War*. (Vancouver: Douglas & MacIntyre, 2008), 216.

The primary reason why Canada moved away from being a major troop contributor to UN-led PSOs was, as political analyst Jocelyn Coulon posits' "because it could no longer be forced to stand by and witness the genocide of hundreds of thousands of people while in the service of the UN."¹⁶ The UN's incompetence directly threatened Canada's core values and interests. Canada did not move away from large-scale UN-led PSOs because of some new realist agenda, but simply because it lost trust in the UN's ability to lead complex expeditionary operations where the UN unnecessarily constrained Canadian peacekeepers from protecting themselves, innocent civilians and the peace. In Canada's assessment, the UN's peacekeeping strategy proved ineffective and came at too high a risk.

Some critics believe that Canada's decision to move away from major troop contributions to the UN was based on political party sentiments towards peacekeeping. They argue that the UN carries less favour with a Conservative government. However, it was the Liberal government under Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, not the Conservatives, which decided to commit Canadians to Afghanistan following the attacks on September 11, 2001. Further, it was the Liberal government, this time under Prime Minister Paul Martin, who increased Canada's role in Afghanistan by committing to send more troops in late 2005 just before he his tenure as Prime Minister ended. This evidence quickly dispels this argument. Canada, like many traditional UN troop contributing countries, turned to other regional and more militarily robust organizations to confront the spoilers of peace.

¹⁶ Jocelyn Coulon and Michael Leigenois, "What Ever Happened to Peacekeeping? The Future of a Tradition." *Canadian Defence and Foreign Affairs Institute*. January 2010, accessed on 8 Apr 2014. 42, <http://www.cdfai.org/PDF/Whatever%20Happened%20to%20Peacekeeping%20The%20Future%20of%20a%20Tradition%20-%20English.pdf>.

MOVING THE PEACE YARDSTICKS IN A DIFFERENT WAY

In 1995, the UN was replaced by NATO as the primary provider of peacekeeping forces. Dorn points out that "...although it was a new role for NATO, the military organization managed to do well, [successful stabilization in Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan] having far more troops, resources, and enforcement capability than the UN."¹⁷ Within these efforts, Canada's contributions achieved great effect. However, Canada's offerings to NATO peace efforts have also brought criticism. In 2010, in their *What Ever Happened to Peacekeeping? The Future of a Tradition*, Coulon and Leigenois explain:

While Canada participated in all of the UN peace missions until the mid-90s, it now focuses its military resources on only one peace mission under the NATO umbrella: the deployment to Afghanistan under ISAF. This has created a grave uneasiness within some political parties and within a public deeply attached to the traditional figure of the 'peacekeeper.'¹⁸

Proposing that Canada has deserted peacekeeping by contributing to NATO efforts is quite simplistic; warranting a simple retort. Arguably, in many ways Afghanistan represents today's typical PSO. Within this failed state, a broad range of conflict management tools, such as combat, post-conflict peace-building, humanitarian aid, and stabilization activities were required.¹⁹ Must Canada's armed forces personnel wear blue helmets to contribute to international peace and stability efforts?

Canada's alignment with NATO as a force for peace does not necessarily prove an abandonment of the UN. The *Canada First Defence Strategy* states: "Projecting leadership abroad can take many forms."²⁰ While Canada has a proud tradition of participating in UN-led

¹⁷ Dorn, "Canadian Peacekeeping: Proud Tradition, Strong Future?"..., 6.

¹⁸ Coulon and Leigenois, "What Ever Happened to Peacekeeping?...", v&45.

¹⁹ Anker, "Peacekeeping and Public Opinion."..., 6.

²⁰ Government of Canada, National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces. "Canada First Defence

PSOs, it has also consistently played a pivotal role in advancing innovative peace initiatives and supporting the UN. For instance, Canada was a co-founder of the Multinational Stand-by High Readiness Brigade (SHIRBRIG). This force is a rapidly deployable UN peacekeeping force comprising some 4,000-5,000 troops, with a short response time. Canada assumed the Presidency of SHIRBRIG in 2003 and a Canadian, Brigadier commanded it from January 2004 until summer 2006.²¹ More still, Canada created the Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) as a response to humanitarian crises as well as spearheaded the Land Mines Treaty and Responsibility to Protect (R2P) efforts.²² Canada has not departed from contributing to the UN; its inputs have simply taken alternate forms. These novel contributions may offer strong support for the argument - why should Canada even bother? Are not its current efforts, contributions and means enough? Subsequent sections in this analysis will counter this opinion and demonstrate why it is the ideal time for Canada to more robustly re-engage in UN-led PSOs.

In order to regain its credibility and Canada's confidence, the UN has made substantial and measureable reforms since its failures in the 1990s which are worthy of Canadian consideration. Accepting its portion of responsibility for the Rwandan genocide and Srebrenica massacre, the UN under the Secretary General directed that the very concept of peacekeeping be scrutinized in order to reinforce substantially its operational management capabilities. In 2000, the Panel on UN Peace Operations under Algerian Foreign Minister Lakhdar Brahimi completed an analysis of the UN's peacekeeping practices in order to address existing deficiencies, and recommend

Strategy", accessed on 8 Apr 2014, 8, <http://www.forces.gc.ca/en/about/canada-first-defence-strategy.page>.

²¹ United Nations Association in Canada, "Peacekeeping to Peacebuilding: Lessons from the Past Building for the Future." March 2007, accessed on 8 Apr 2014, 51, <http://unac.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/UN-Report.pdf>.

²² Martha Hall Findlay, "Can R2P Survive Libya and Syria?" *Canadian Defence & Foreign Affairs Institute and Canadian International Council*. November 2011, accessed on 11 Apr 2014, 7, http://www.cdfai.org/PDF/Can_R2P_Survive_Libya_and_Syria.pdf.

approaches in which to enhance capacity. The *Brahimi Report* made numerous recommendations including:

- Each peace operation must have a stated objective and a clear mandate;
- When the United Nations does send its forces to uphold the peace, they must be prepared to confront the lingering forces of war and violence, with the ability and determination to defeat them;
- Impartiality for United Nations operations means adherence to the principles of the Charter and given mission mandate and not to the disputing parties because the UN needs to be able to distinguish victims from aggressors;
- Peacekeeping forces must be able to apply appropriate force in order to “defend themselves, other mission components and the mission’s mandate.” Rules of engagement should be sufficiently robust and not force contingents to cede the initiative to spoilers of the peace process;
- United Nations peacekeepers who witness violence against civilians should be presumed to be authorized to stop it, within their means, in support of the basic United Nations principles. Operations given a broad and explicit mandate for civilian protection must be given the specific resources needed to carry out that mandate; and
- There must be a rapid deployment of capability.²³

Based on the *Brahimi Report*, the UN initiated several reform initiatives. First, the DPKO and the Department of Field Support (DFS) embarked on a reform plan that was designed to strengthen and professionalize UN peacekeeping operations planning, management and support procedures.²⁴ Secondly, the Security Council empowered its peacekeepers giving them more ‘robust’ mandates, rules of engagement and enablers to protect themselves, innocent civilians, and their given mandate/s.²⁵ The revolutionary concept of ‘Robust Peacekeeping’ emerged from this effort. Robust peacekeeping are combat operations whereby the Security Council authorizes, and the host nation consents to, the use of offensive force at the tactical level.²⁶ As former Canadian Chief of the Defence Staff and former Military Advisor to the United Nations

²³ United Nations, *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations: The Brahimi Report*. A/55/305, S/2000/809. New York: The United Nations, 2000, accessed on 26 Apr 2014, Executive Summary, <http://www.unrol.org/doc.aspx?n=brahimi+report+peacekeeping.pdf>.

²⁴ UN, “United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines.”..., 6.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 34.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 36.

Secretary-General, General Maurice Baril advocates: “Peacekeeping has evolved to meet the challenges of contemporary conflict. Robust peacekeeping is more tactical in that it is authorized to use force by a UN peacekeeping force to defend its mandate against spoilers who constitute a threat to civilians or to those whose actions risk undermining the peace process.”²⁷ This change is significant because it now permits UN peacekeepers the ability to be preemptive, seize the initiative, and project coercive combat power against rivals to the peace process. This empowerment directly addresses the deficiencies experienced in Rwanda and Srebrenica and now serve as a means to reduce, or to possibly avert future ethnic cleansing.

The UN can boast reforms implemented, however, to convince Canada that it can successfully lead during complex PSOs, quantifiable proof is required. Three recent examples demonstrate how the UN has translated these initiatives into operational success during complex peacekeeping operations.

The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL I & II)

In 2006, at the request of the Lebanese government, and in response to renewed conflict between the Israeli Defence Force and the Palestinian Liberation Organization, the Security Council significantly enhanced UNIFIL I from 2,000 to 15,000 military personnel and expanded its mandate.²⁸ This new mandate authorized UNIFIL II to:

...take all necessary action in areas of deployment of its forces and as it deems necessary within its capabilities to ensure that its area of operations is not utilized for hostile activities of any kind, to resist attempts by forceful means to prevent it from discharging its duties under the mandate of the Security Council, and to

²⁷ Maurice Baril, “Future Roles for the Canadian Forces.” November, 2009, accessed on 9 Apr 2014, 24, http://cips.uottawa.ca/eng/documents/Priorities_Baril.pdf.

²⁸ United Nations. United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, accessed on 24 Apr 2014, <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unifil/mandate.shtml>.

protect United Nations personnel, facilities, installations and equipment, ensure the security and freedom of movement of United Nations personnel, humanitarian workers, and, without prejudice to the responsibility of the Government of Lebanon, to protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence.²⁹

UNIFIL I was buttressed with unprecedented speed, with battalions from Spain, Italy and France being on the ground within four weeks.³⁰ UNIFIL II demonstrated the UN's newfound appreciation of the requirement for robust coercive measures. Coulon and Leigenois described these measures:

The mission [UNIFIL II] is equipped with heavy arms such as artillery, tanks, anti-air missiles, and a naval component [first time a Maritime Task Force was deployed as part of a UN-led PSO], and uses reinforced ROE. It has a Force staff adapted to NATO standards; a 'strategic military cell' has been created by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Commanding Officer of UNIFIL II is not subordinate to the UN Head of Mission [UNIFIL II's Commanding Officer is "double-hatted" to also serve as the UN head of mission, eliminating any potential conflict between the military and political leadership].³¹

As former Leader of Canada's Official Opposition, Michael Ignatieff contends, "...to be a serious peacekeeper in the modern world of failed states and civil wars, you have to have tanks, helicopters and military lift."³² Actions suggest that the UN has made progress. UNIFIL demonstrates the UN's newfound appreciation of the requirement for more substantial coercive joint combat power and ROE as a credible deterrent. Likewise, by effectively making its Commanding Officer both the military leader and Head of Mission, it facilitates more effective alignment of political and military initiatives. UNIFIL is not an anomaly; the UN's mission to Haiti provides another example of obvious and effective reform.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ Coulon and Leigenois, "What Ever Happened to Peacekeeping?...", 45.

³² John Geddes, "Smart guy, eh?" *Maclean's*. June 23, 2003, accessed on 11 Apr 2014.

<http://www2.macleans.ca/2003/06/23/smart-guy-eh/>.

The United Nations Mission for the Stabilization of Haiti (MINUSTAH)

At the same time that the UN was heavily engaged in Lebanon, Haiti was struggling with internal violence. In the slums of Port-au-Prince illegally armed gangs savaged the populace and posed an inexcusable threat to the security, stability and peace of Haiti. In April 2006, President Preval asked the UN to forcefully intervene to restore peace.³³ As in the case with UNIFIL, for Haiti, the UN authorized a more forceful mandate for MINUSTAH and enabled it with modern technological advantages. MINUSTAH's mandate read:

...support the Transitional Government in ensuring a secure and stable environment; to assist in monitoring, restructuring and reforming the Haitian National Police; to help with comprehensive and sustainable Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) programmes; to assist with the restoration and maintenance of the rule of law, public safety and public order; to protect UN personnel, facilities, installations and equipment and to protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence, et al.³⁴

Enabled by advanced intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities, and armed with strong peacekeeping mandate, MINUSTAH's Brazilian peacekeeping battalion group planned and executed highly successful, yet limited, precision offensive operations to address Haiti's gang threat. After a mere three months, Port-au-Prince's slums were back under Haitian government control, with no UN fatalities, and only a few UN casualties.³⁵ Where UNIFIL demonstrated the UN's appreciation of the need for more coercive measures to ensure peace, MINUSTAH's successful tactical actions in 2006-2007, make evident the UN's actual will to employ these coercive measures to create peace.

³³ Walter Dorn, "Intelligence-Led Peacekeeping: The United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), 2006-2007." *Intelligence and National Security* 24, no.6 (December 2009), 813.

³⁴ United Nations. United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, accessed on 24 Apr 2014, <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/minustah/mandate.shtml>.

³⁵ Dorn, "Intelligence-Led Peacekeeping: The United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH),...817.

United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO)

In 2010, the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) was plagued by consistent conflict by foreign and indigenous illegally armed groups and the DRC's security forces were incapable of protecting civilians, enforcing rule of law or in protecting its sovereignty. In response, the UN established an 'intervention brigade' to fortify the existing peace operation. MONUSCO's mission was similar to MINUSTAH's. This 'intervention brigade' under the direct command of the MONUSCO Force Commander, comprised three infantry battalions, as well as artillery, special, and reconnaissance forces. The brigade was further supported by armour and attack aviation. In conjunction with the Congolese armed forces, this formation preemptively targeted several illegally armed gangs that were continuing the violence and committing human rights abuses.³⁶ The UN's empowerment of MONUSCO speaks to the fundamental change in attitude that has taken place within the UN and to the significant reforms that it has made to more effectively support peace initiatives.

These examples show that Canada has obtained the operational, organizational and doctrinal reforms that were desired in UN peacekeeping. These cases also demonstrate the UN's renewed commitment to enable forces engaged in PSOs to succeed in their mandate. The UN's aggressive, precise and focused use of force sends a clear message to the spoilers of peace and finally gives the initiative to its peacekeepers. These revolutionary reforms protect 'blue helmets', innocent civilians, restore the UN's credibility and Canada's confidence.

³⁶ United Nations. United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, accessed on 24 Apr 2014, <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/monusco/mandate.shtml>.

There will be future UN missions where civilians and the host nation government are threatened by illegally armed groups. Given its strong peacekeeping background and most recent full spectrum experiences in Afghanistan, Canada's armed forces are ideally suited for these new UN-led PSOs. Even though UN peacekeeping has undergone substantial reform, detractors may argue that Canada's current strategy with NATO is achieving its foreign and national security policy objectives. However, there are other tangible benefits and incentives that renewed engagement provide worthy of consideration.

Increasingly, other strong middle powers are rising and making significant and influential contributions to UN-led PSOs. Based on the monthly *Summary of Contributions* afforded by UN officials, as of 31 December 2013, Canada only contributed 115 total personnel ((Police (82), UN Military Experts on Mission (13) and Troops (20)). During the same time, Brazil contributed 1,748 personnel ((Police (15), UN Military Experts on Mission (24) and Troops (1,709)), while South Africa contributed 2,173 ((Police (61), UN Military Experts on Mission (20) and Troops (2,092)), and India provided 7,849 ((Police (984), UN Military Experts on Mission (50) and Troops (6,815)).³⁷ Further, countries like Mongolia, Benin, Cambodia and Argentina, among others, have begun making greater or more regular contributions. Even South Korea and Japan are contributing by offering enablers in places like South Sudan and Haiti.³⁸ Such offerings by these middle power nations increase their status on the world's stage, while suggesting that Canada's prominence may be slipping given its reduced troop numbers, and may reflect a change in the balance of power. However, such a suggestion is dismissed by those who contend that

³⁷ United Nations, "Contributors to United Nations Peacekeeping Operations." 31 December 2013, accessed on 8 Apr 2014, http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/contributors/2013/dec13_1.pdf.

³⁸ Adam Smith and Arthur Boutellis, *Rethinking Force Generation: Filling the Capability Gaps in UN Peacekeeping* (New York: International Peace Institute, 2013), 5.

many nations are simply contributing troops to supplement their hard currency holdings since the UN pays countries \$1,000 US per soldier per month.³⁹ Then again, Managing Director of the Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre Mariano Aguirre postulates: “The more a nation contributes with forces or funds, the more influence it generally has in the UN.”⁴⁰ In order to regain its place as a leader among the middle powers, Canada should re-invigorate its efforts in UN-led PSOs.

Other critics argue that after a decade of combat and stability operations, and given the current fiscal climate, that Canada cannot afford to commit its national blood and treasure to UN-led PSOs. In spite of this, evidence suggests that UN-led PSOs are more cost-effective than perhaps efforts along Canada’s current trajectory. In 2012-2013, the UN spent approximately \$7 billion on fifteen missions involving approximately 80,000 soldiers.⁴¹ Canada spent a comparable sum in Afghanistan in 2010-2011.⁴² Dorn notes: “UN deployments are much cheaper for Canada because the UN reimburses the majority of the expenses.”⁴³ Furthermore, savings go beyond the mere financial. Dorn asks us to consider the human cost by adding that “In that one decade, operating in one country, more Canadian soldiers died [158] than in six decades of peacekeeping [114] in over forty years.”⁴⁴ Evidence indicates that contributing to the

³⁹ Granatstein, “Fatal Distraction...”, 72.

⁴⁰ Mariano Aguirre, “Pressing Issues for UN Peacekeeping Operations.” Transnational Institute – Peace & Security, 29 September 2009, accessed on 26 Apr 2104, <http://www.tni.org/article/pressing-issues-un-peacekeeping-operations>.

⁴¹ UN Department of Peacekeeping, “Peacekeeping Fact Sheet,” 31 August 2012, accessed on 22 Apr 2014, www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/resources/statistics/factsheet.shtml.

⁴² Office of the Parliamentary Budget Officer, “Fiscal Impact of the Canadian Mission in Afghanistan,” 9 October 2008, accessed on 22 Apr 2014, [www.parl.gc.ca/PBO-DPB/documents/Afghanistan Fiscal Impact FINAL E WEB.pdf](http://www.parl.gc.ca/PBO-DPB/documents/Afghanistan_Fiscal_Impact_FINAL_E_WEB.pdf).

⁴³ Dorn, “Canadian Peacekeeping: Proud Tradition, Strong Future?..., 13.

⁴⁴ Walter Dorn, “Unprepared for Peace: A Decade of Decline in Canadian Peacekeeping.” *The United*

UN-led PSOs comes at a comparatively lower cost in terms of national treasure, while permitting Canada to still project military power.

Does the UN really need Canada's contributions? After all, it has managed to match the world's peace needs for the last twenty years without significant troop contributions from Canada. The demand for UN peacekeeping continues to rise, with missions lacking the necessary mandated troop levels. More pressing is the need for countries with peacekeeping experience and other critical capabilities like logistics that Canada possesses.⁴⁵ Although several African Union nations must be recognized for possessing the courage to deploy forces into complex hostile environments, in many respects their capabilities are regrettably lacking. These contingents at times are as Coulon and Leignoix remark are: "barely mobile and poorly equipped thereby making them incapable of earning the respect of armed groups."⁴⁶ Canada's interoperable state-of-the-art military is well-trained, experienced, equipped and perhaps more suited to execute the higher end of complex multi-dimensional UN-led PSOs than many contributor nations may be capable of. Equally, even without contributing troops, its technological, logistics and support offerings are invaluable and could help the UN reduce operational overstretch and buttress the efforts of nations that are new to peacekeeping or lacking critical capabilities.

With Canada's mission in Afghanistan completed, and increasing emphasis by the United States (US) on multilateralism, the application of 'smart power', and with the revitalization of American support for UN peacekeeping, some cynics argue that the CAF is in need of something to do. Dorn suggests: "Since US-led coalitions on the ground are

Nations and Canada: What Canada has done and should be doing at the UN. World Federalist Movement. September 2013, accessed on 8 Apr 2014, <http://www.worldfederalistscanada.org/TheUnitedNationsandCanada.html>.

⁴⁵ Steven.

⁴⁶ Coulon and Leignoix, "What Ever Happened to Peacekeeping?...", 23.

unlikely in the coming years; the Canadian military does not have many alternatives to make itself useful.”⁴⁷ The GoC will always ensure that its armed forces are meaningfully employed. That said, during its commitment to Afghanistan, Canada significantly modernized its equipment and enhanced its capability. Concurrently, its deployed personnel gained vast experience in a unique and extremely complex security environment. From this, the CAF emerged as a modern, respected, combat-hardened, agile and expeditionary-minded force. Re-engagement in UN-led PSO will help the CAF to maintain its relevance, keep its operational edge, and exploit the capabilities of its new acquisitions.

The International Peace Institute’s Adam Smith and Arthur Boutellis suggest that so-called ‘returning’ troop contributing nations are conveying more interest in providing capabilities to UN-led PSOs.⁴⁸ Moreover, many other first world countries like Italy, Germany and France are now acting as force multipliers in support of leading troop contributors like India, Bangladesh and Pakistan.⁴⁹ Coulon posits “Countries forge international reputation on their participation in UN peacekeeping operations.”⁵⁰ This evidence and Coulon’s statement suggests that leaders appreciate the significance that troop, enabler, and fund contributions play as political currency in the international arena.

A desire among Canada’s leadership to reinvest in UN-led PSOs has been clearly articulated. The GoC, National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces’s *Backgrounder – Canada and Multilateral Operations in Support of Peace and Stability* states: “Peace

⁴⁷ Dorn, “Unprepared for Peace: A Decade of Decline in Canadian Peacekeeping.”

⁴⁸ Smith and Boutellis, *Rethinking Force Generation...*, 1.

⁴⁹ Steven.

⁵⁰ Coulon and Leigenois, “What Ever Happened to Peacekeeping?..., iv-v.

support operations have been, and will continue to be, an important part of Canada's defence policy. The Canadian Forces will continue to participate actively in UN-authorized and UN-conducted peace support operations."⁵¹ The GoC reinforces this pledge in its 2008 *Canada First Defence Strategy* by confirming:

As a trading nation in a highly globalized world, Canada's prosperity and security rely on stability abroad. As the international community grapples with numerous security threats, Canada must do its part to address such challenges as they arise. Indeed tackling such threats at their source is an important element in protecting Canada. Providing international leadership is vital if Canada is to continue to be a credible player on the world stage. This will require the Canadian Forces to have the necessary capabilities to make a meaningful contribution across the full spectrum of international operations; from humanitarian assistance to stabilization operations to combat... These operations will often be conducted under the auspices of the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Canada will continue to support and contribute to these key international bodies.⁵²

Critics could offer that although the current government may be committed, will support for UN-led PSOs change at election time? Evidence suggests otherwise. In its 2011, *Your Family. Your Future. Your Canada*, the Liberal Party of Canada remarked that: "After years serving bravely and effectively in Afghanistan, Canada's military is an experienced, battle-hardened force, respected internationally. That force will be indispensable to a renewed concept of Canada's role in the world."⁵³ The New Democratic Party aligns by adding it is proud of Canada's "strong

⁵¹ Government of Canada, National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces. "Backgrounder – Canada and Multilateral Operations in Support of Peace and Stability", accessed on 8 Apr 2014, 5, <http://www.forces.gc.ca/en/news/article.page?doc=canada-and-multilateral-operations-in-support-of-peace-and-stability>.

⁵² Government of Canada, National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces. "Canada First Defence Strategy", accessed on 8 Apr 2014, 8, <http://www.forces.gc.ca/en/about/canada-first-defence-strategy.page>.

⁵³ Liberal Party of Canada, "Your Family. Your Future. Your Canada." 2011, accessed on 6 Apr 2014, 82, http://www.liberal.ca/files/2011/04/liberal_platform.pdf.

record of recognized peacekeeping as a key aspect of sound foreign policy.”⁵⁴ There appears to be little impediment among Canada’s leadership to reinvesting in UN-led peacekeeping.

Canada understands that having the ability to influence international affairs in a significant way is largely based on the assets we have and our willingness to bring them to the table.⁵⁵ The *Canada First Defence Strategy* affirms:

One thing is clear, however: Canada cannot lead with words alone. Above all else, leadership requires the ability to deploy military assets, including boots on the ground. In concert with its allies, Canada must be prepared to act and provide appropriate resources in support of national interests and international objectives.⁵⁶

Not only are the physical circumstances and conditions ideal for Canada to re-invigorate its commitment to UN-led PSOs, more importantly, the will to re-engage clearly exists amongst its leadership and population.

THE CANADIANS ARE BACK!

A range of re-engagement options is available to Canada to more distinguishably contribute to UN-led PSOs. The initial and most recognizable option involves provision of military leadership and of a noticeable deployment of peacekeepers on the ground. Canada can deploy a joint headquarters to take the lead of a major multinational UN-led PSO and has the physical capacity to make a substantial contribution such as offering a reinforced battalion group.

⁵⁴ New Democratic Party, “Statement from Official Opposition Defence critic Jack Harris on National Peacekeeper’s Day”, accessed on 6 Apr 2014, <http://www.ndp.ca/news/statement-official-opposition-defence-critic-jack-harris-national-peacekeepers-day>.

⁵⁵ Michael, J. Lawless, “Canada and NATO: A Starving Fish in an Expanding Pond”, accessed on 2 Apr 2014, 8, <http://www.journal.forces.gc.ca/vo7/no2/lawless-anarchiq-eng.asp>.

⁵⁶ GoC, “Canada First Defence Strategy” . . . , 8.

The GoC's employment of its armed forces in 2010 offers clear evidence that this re-engagement option is quite viable. In that year, the CAF demonstrated it could deploy and sustain a Canadian task force headquarters as well as a reinforced infantry battle group heavily engaged in full spectrum operations in Afghanistan. During the same year, it remained an active partner in NORAD, supported the Winter Olympics and G8 and G20 Summits at home, as well as responded to a humanitarian crisis in Haiti. These large-scale, disparate, and, at times concurrent commitments each align with the core missions guaranteed in the GoC's *Canada First Defence Strategy*.⁵⁷ There are several conclusions that can be drawn from this example. First, this example demonstrated Canada's will and ability to project leadership at home and abroad and make meaningful contributions to international security through PSOs overseas. Of note, Canada's 1st Canadian Division Headquarters is specifically designed to serve as a fully deployable, task-tailored unit at high readiness to command and control joint, inter-agency, multinational forces at home and abroad.⁵⁸ Such a modern headquarters could easily guide the efforts of a complex peacekeeping operation. Secondly, it showed that Canada has the capability to conduct effectively full spectrum operations. Lastly, it revealed Canada's capacity to make a substantial contribution to UN-led PSOs without overly taxing existing resources or commitments particularly given the relatively quiet period of reconstitution that the armed forces is now facing.

Undeniably, Canada does commit frontline 'blue helmets' to UN efforts. Recently, Canada deployed an infantry platoon from the 2nd Battalion, Royal 22e Regiment, as part of a Brazilian battalion in support of MINUSTAH. Platoon commander, Captain Nicolas Payne

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁵⁸ Government of Canada. Canadian Army. 1st Canadian Division Headquarters, accessed on 30 Apr 2104, <http://www.army-armee.forces.gc.ca/en/1st-canadian-division/index.page>.

explained: “It is the first time we [Canada] have done a large-scale embed like this with the Brazilian military or any other Latin American country.”⁵⁹ The concept of directly embedding formed sub-sub units and/or sub-units directly within partner nation battalion groups is not novel. This option has advantages. This embed option affords an excellent alternative to large-scale Canadian contributions and strengthens the professionalism, interoperability and effectiveness of UN-led PSOs. Unfortunately, the current intent is that this embed with the Brazilians will be a single deployment, therefore permitting detractors to posit that this recent and valuable contribution is simply minimalistic and more symbolic than meaningful. If this experience with the Brazilians is successful, then it should be perpetuated in some manner. A commitment of a platoon of thirty some peacekeepers as the only formed grouping that Canada is willing to offer to UN-led PSOs given the size of its armed forces, strengthens critics argument that Canada is not making relevant contributions. Canada easily has the capacity to inject penny-packet embeds within a variety of different UN missions globally. The deployment of a formation, unit or sub-unit contingent of Canadian ‘blue helmets’ in support of the UN is perhaps the only true means to dispel immediately any further criticism of Canada’s supposed lack of commitment to UN-led PSOs.

If a lack of appetite to commit Canadian military personnel to frontline ‘blue helmet’ duties persists, nevertheless, a number of invaluable response mechanisms are available to Canada to enable UN-led PSO efforts and to project its power.

Noticeably absent from UN-led PSOs are critical joint enablers and other advanced technologies. Smith and Boutellis remark that “capability gaps are an almost constant feature of UN peacekeeping operations. Such gaps can stem from both the lack of particular assets (e.g.,

⁵⁹ The Maple Leaf. “Peacekeeping in Port-au-Prince.” *The Maple Leaf*, October 2013, vol.16, no. 9, 4.

military utility helicopters) but also the uneven performance of deployed assets.”⁶⁰ Dorn posits that, “Canada can specialize in areas where smaller groups of specialized and well-equipped Canadians can fill a current need.”⁶¹ Although the UN could benefit from the contribution of many traditional military capabilities, unique resources and technical expertise that Canada has could close the mandate-means gap.

During the Afghanistan conflict, Canada invested heavily in modern cutting-edge technologies and earned invaluable experiences in applying them to the contemporary operating environment, whereby enabling it with critical capabilities. Two of these included strategic and tactical airlift capability in addition to ISR sense capabilities which are offered as response options for consideration.

According to the *Brahimi Report*, “...soldiers must be on the ground within six weeks for most peacekeeping missions to be successful and the majority of missions to date have failed to respond in a timely manner.”⁶² In the past, Canada, like the UN, was severely limited in its strategic and tactical airlift capability making it difficult to reliably and promptly contribute to global, as well as, in-theatre rapid response initiatives. Canada is now able to project rapidly and effectively lift capability virtually anywhere. This capability was visibly proven in recent years when, in addition to supporting operations in Afghanistan, the CAF was able to respond within mere days with C-17 Globemaster and/or CH-146 Griffon utility helicopter support to efforts in Jamaica, Haiti and the Philippines.⁶³ The addition of four C-17 Globemaster strategic lift aircraft,

⁶⁰ Smith and Boutellis, *Rethinking Force Generation...*, 1.

⁶¹ Dorn, “Canadian Peacekeeping: Proud Tradition, Strong Future?..., 13.

⁶² UN, *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations: The Brahimi Report...*, 14.

⁶³ Josh Winsgrove, “Canada Dispatches Helicopters to the Philippines as 51 Canadians Remain Unaccounted For”, *The Globe and Mail*, November 16, 2013, accessed on 30 Apr 2104,

seventeen C-130J Hercules tactical lift aircraft and sixteen CH-47F Chinook helicopters into Canada's response options is a real strategic game change.⁶⁴ According to Defence Minister Robert Nicholson, these unique capabilities possessed by Canada give "additional means to reach and help those who desperately need our assistance."⁶⁵ Robust strategic and tactical airlift offer Canada great utility and the ability to project unilaterally influence globally as has been proven by the recurrent successes of its DART. More importantly, they make readily available the means for Canada to deliver on its R2P promises.

Another problem challenging contemporary expeditionary operations is the inability to sense and appreciate accurately the nature of the problems presented so as to be able to effectively address them. This capability gap places effective ISR capabilities at a premium. A proponent for increased necessary technologies for UN-led PSOs, General Baril, advocates: "Without detailed and accurate information based on more than rumour and assumption, robust peacekeeping could be detrimental to a peace process, particularly when civilian casualties become the headlines on the worldwide news circuit."⁶⁶ Baril is not alone in his opinion. Given the results of his extensive research into MINUSTAH's mission in Haiti in 2006-07, Dorn attributes much of that mission's success to the effective exploitation of ISR: "Intelligence-led operations helped the UN to take the initiative, to control the battlespace, and to minimize the risks to both its own personnel and innocent bystanders."⁶⁷ Canada's experience employing tactical ISR and maturation of All Source Intelligence Cell (ASIC) capabilities in Afghanistan, as

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/canada-sending-helicopters-to-philippines-as-51-canadians-remain-unaccounted-for/article15476285/>.

⁶⁴ GoC, "Canada First Defence Strategy" ..., 9.

⁶⁵ Winsgrove.

⁶⁶ Baril, "Future Roles for the Canadian Forces." ..., 25.

⁶⁷ Dorn, "Intelligence-Led Peacekeeping: The United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), 2006-2007." ..., 807.

well as the Brazilian example of the use of similar capabilities in defeating Haiti's illegally armed gangs, demonstrate the technical advantage ISR presents. Tactical ISR delivers the persistent and time-sensitive capability UN peacekeepers need to give them an edge to find, fix and pre-emptively strike peace spoilers. Contributing strategic and tactical airlift and/or ISR capability to UN-led PSOs are another beneficial, non-kinetic use of Canadian military expertise and resources. Moreover, these more specialized supporting roles perhaps provide options that may be more palatable to the Canadian public by further reducing the likelihood of casualties. Finally, it remains worthy to mention, that the *Report of the Senior Advisory Group on Rates of Reimbursement to Troop-Contributing Countries and Other Related Issues* in 2012 suggested "increased payments for the contribution of hard-to-generate key enablers."⁶⁸ Such capabilities provide yet another incentive for seriously considering these niche options for Canada.

CONCLUSION

Canada occupies neither the idealist nor realist position. Instead, it remains interposed between these disputing parties. True, Canada drifted away from certain UN efforts for a period of time. However, this direction was not a radical departure; but merely a shift in support. Canada reduced troop contributions following the UN troubles during the 1990s. Fortunately, these UN inadequacies have clearly been addressed. Sizeable benefits can be accrued by adopting a strategic posture of more meaningful re-engagement in the UN. Canada's CAF is a modern, respected, combat-hardened, versatile, adaptive, agile and expeditionary-minded force. Canada possesses tremendous military capabilities to bolster, enable, and lead in complex

⁶⁸ United Nations General Assembly, *Report of the Senior Advisory Group on Rates of Reimbursement to Troop-Contributing Countries and Other Related Issues*, UN Doc a/c.5/67/10, November 15, 2012.

expeditionary UN-led PSOs. Canada has a broad selection of more tangible re-engagement response options at its discretion that allow it to recapture its global influence, uphold its policy objectives and respect its values. Re-engagement comes at reasonable cost with minimal risk, while still permitting the GoC to project military power. Most importantly, there really is no significant impediment preventing re-engagement.

Recently, extreme violence erupted in the Central African Republic (CAR). Reports of significant human rights violations against mainly the civilian population abound. These accounts speak of “killings, enforced disappearances, arbitrary arrests and detentions, torture, sexual violence against women and children, rape and attacks on civilians”⁶⁹ being committed by rival Christian and Muslim illegally armed militias. The Security Council has unanimously approved a 12,000-strong UN peacekeeping force for the CAR with a separate 2,000-strong French vanguard force currently in place and authorized to use “all necessary means” to support the arrival of the new UN force.⁷⁰ Currently, Canada has only pledged \$5 million dollars in support of the mission. If Canada truly is looking to be a leader among the world’s middle powers, and demonstrate its renewed will and capacity to end violence and create peace, than it must consider how else it can support UN-led PSOs.

⁶⁹ The Associated Press, “Central African Republic to get UN Peacekeeping Force.” *Canadian Broadcasting Corporation*, 10 April 2014, accessed on 10 Apr 2014. <http://www.cbc.ca/news/world/central-african-republic-to-get-un-peacekeeping-force-1.2605464>

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

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