

UN PEACEKEEPING 2009

OVERVIEW

Excerpts from the Report of the Secretary-General on the Work of the Organization
[A/64/1]

“2. Peacekeeping

“46. The challenges that peacekeepers face today are unprecedented in scale, complexity, and risk level. Their engagement includes supporting political dialogue between parties, assisting national Governments to extend State authority, strengthening human rights and the rule of law, advising on security sector reform, supporting disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes and protecting civilians. The latter, in particular, is challenging the capacity of the Organization’s peacekeeping missions to robustly implement authorized mandates.

“47. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations, with the support of the Department of Field Support, currently manages 17 operations deployed across five continents. These operations comprise more than 117,000 deployed military, police and civilian personnel. The budget has risen to nearly \$7.8 billion a year, at a time when available resources are in danger of shrinking.

“48. On the ground, peacekeepers encounter a full spectrum of environments ranging from those where some form of conflict continues, to those where a fragile stability has been reached, to those where solid peace processes are in place and peacebuilding processes dominate.

“49. Over the past year the United Nations peacekeeping presence in Chad, Darfur and the Democratic Republic of the Congo increased. In Chad, a United Nations peacekeeping mission successfully succeeded the military force deployed by the European Union in March. In Darfur, deployments increased allowing the mission to project its presence more effectively. Nevertheless, the mission continued to lack resources, including helicopters, critical to the effective implementation of its mandate. The United Nations Mission in the Sudan has continued to support the resolution of core issues of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement which promise to enhance the prospects for stability in the entire region.

“50. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, renewed fighting erupted at the end of August 2008. The Security Council approved in November the mission’s request to deploy an additional 3,000 military and police to increase the flexibility and reaction capacity of the mission to meet emerging needs. While some of these additional capabilities were expected to begin deploying by July 2009, the deployment of other specialized capabilities remained uncertain.

“51. A deteriorating security environment is also a primary concern for the United Nations presence in Afghanistan. The efforts of the United Nations mission have been focused on coordinating the international community’s development assistance and providing support to national institutions, including their preparations for elections in August 2009.

“52. In Somalia, the Organization pursued a carefully calibrated set of steps in support of the highly fragile peace process, as endorsed by the Security Council in resolutions 1863 (2009) and 1872 (2009). Preparedness plans are being drawn up in the event of a future decision by the Security Council to deploy a United Nations peacekeeping mission.

“53. The past year saw relative stability and some progress towards a reduction of tensions in Lebanon. The United Nations peacekeeping mission focused its efforts on confidence-building and assisting securing stability.

“54. In Burundi, Côte d’Ivoire, Haiti, Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste, peacekeepers are supporting peace consolidation processes, extension of the rule of law, national capacity-building on gender equality issues and the creation of an environment conducive to the development of a sustainable local economy.

“55. Despite divergent political views in the Security Council on the situations in Georgia and in Kosovo, the missions carried out their mandates over the past year supported by concerted diplomatic efforts. Following an agreement in the Security Council, the United Nations Mission in Kosovo began the phased handover of the operational responsibility in the rule of law area to the European Union in December 2008. The mission in Georgia came to an end this June due to a lack of consensus among Security Council Members on mandate extension.

“56. Over the last year, the Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support continued to evolve and adapt. Important organizational reforms are under way, including developing a standing police capacity in a strengthened Police Division, increasing capacity in the Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions and in the Office of Military Affairs in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, and developing the capacity of the Department of Field Support as a service provider. Notwithstanding these recent reforms, much work still remains to ensure that the United Nations can meet evolving demands.

“57. United Nations peacekeeping is at a crossroads. The Organization needs a renewed global partnership with Member States and its partners within and outside the United Nations system to ensure that requests for United Nations peacekeeping are accompanied by active political strategies and political support to implement mandates, support for faster deployment, and adequately calibrated and optimally configured human and capital resources. This is essential if the Organization is to deliver results for a more secure world.”

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