
Foreword

Sixty years ago, the UN Security Council dispatched a small group of military observers to the Sinai Peninsula to help implement and monitor a fragile truce. Six decades later, the UN has deployed 63 operations and hundreds of thousands of men and women in the service of peace. Forty-five of these missions have now been closed, the vast majority of them successfully. But the demand has only increased—with 18 operations and over 112,000 uniformed and civilian personnel presently in the field, UN peacekeeping is now at an all-time high.

The challenges of contemporary peacekeeping are more than just of scale; the scope of our operations has also expanded dramatically. Today's peacekeepers are mandated to confront issues ranging from preserving peace and stability to providing the space and support for long-term peace consolidation. UN missions now have broader mandates than the observation and monitoring roles performed by yesterday's peacekeeping missions, working on an entire range of complex peace and security issues including rule-of-law concerns, judiciary reform, human rights and gender issues, electoral supervision, local institutional capacity building, and security sector reform to name only a few.

United Nations forces also find themselves increasingly deployed into environments where there is less and less peace to keep. In Darfur and in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) for example, UN peacekeepers found themselves in dangerous and violent situations which stretched their ability to function to the very breaking point. Compounding these dilemmas, this past year in several theaters of operation the blue helmets found themselves without the resources and capabilities necessary to respond

fully to new challenges—as in the case of the DRC—and to fulfill completely our Security Council mandated tasks—as in the case of Darfur. Troop and police contributions from member states are voluntary; this puts UN peacekeeping in a bind if key assets are not forthcoming (as is the case with helicopters in Darfur). The challenges we face are indeed formidable, and the UN cannot face these problems alone. The international community can leverage more resources from regional and other organizations to meet the growing demand for peacekeepers. Militarily and financially strong states need to develop and deploy more assets to meet the threats posed by state and non-state actors, especially in cases like Somalia where there is so far no real peace to keep.


But let us not forget that there are, of course, many important examples of successful UN peacekeeping that has helped to improve the lives of hundreds of millions of the world's most vulnerable people. Recently, in Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Kosovo, circumstances have improved sufficiently to allow the UN to complete or continue drawing down its operations. The situation has also continued to improve in Haiti, Côte d'Ivoire, and Timor-Leste. In Lebanon, peacekeepers have helped to build confidence and continued to help prevent the resumption of hostilities along the Litani River. In each case, difficulties remain and the road to peace is long and complicated. But in each, the arrival of the blue helmets has contributed significantly to improving the situation.

At the end of August 2008, I took on the position of Under Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations. It is already proved simultaneously uniquely fascinating and remarkably

challenging. As we move forward, we must be unafraid of asking hard questions: Have we reached the limits of our capabilities? Can we continue to function with such a limited pool of major troop and police contributing countries? Are there situations where UN peacekeeping is simply not the right tool for the job? In the year 2000, the Brahimi Report laid out a series of reforms to help us make the instrument of peacekeeping more efficient and effective. Almost ten years later, we may need to reexamine this debate—to take stock, identify gaps and to chart a path forward. This will also mean a candid examination of our recent operational models to see what has worked and what needs improvement. There is clearly much to do—and much at stake.

With this in mind, I very much welcome the *Annual Review of Global Peace Operations 2009*. Its presentation of detailed data and objective

operational analysis provide an important set of tools that can help all stakeholders to understand more completely the intricate contours of the peacekeeping landscape. As we contemplate the future of global peacekeeping, the need for objective, fact-based analysis of peacekeeping is essential. The *Review* meets this need, and I commend the Center on International Cooperation and its staff for stimulating and informing this critical debate.



Alain Le Roy
Under-Secretary-General for
Peacekeeping Operations
United Nations