

TOWARDS A THEORY OF UNITED NATIONS  
PEACEKEEPING

# **Towards a Theory of United Nations Peacekeeping**

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A.B. FETHERSTON

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# List of Abbreviations

A-G	Administrator-General (Namibia)
ASPR	Austrian Study Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution
C-34	Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (Committee of 34)
CF	Canadian Forces
CF-DPKO	Canadian Forces Directorate of Peacekeeping Operations
CIVPOL	United Nations Civilian Police
DHA	United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs
DPA	United Nations Department of Political Affairs
DPI	United Nations Department of Public Information
DPKO	United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DTA	Democratic Turhalle Alliance, Namibia
EC	European Community
ECCY	European Community Conference on Yugoslavia
GA	General Assembly
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
FC	Force Commander
FOD	Field Operations Division
FRY	Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
ICJ	International Court of Justice
ICFY	International Conference on Former Yugoslavia
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDF	Irish Defence Force
IPA	International Peace Academy
JNA	Yugoslav People's Army
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officer
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OHRM	United Nations Office of Human Resource Management

P-5	Permanent Five Members of the Security Council (China, France, Russia, United Kingdom and United States)
PSC	Protracted Social Conflict
PTSS	Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome
SADF	South African Defence Force
SC	Security Council
SCR	Security Council Resolution
S-G	Secretary-General
SIPRI	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
SRO	Special Representative's Office
SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
SWAPO	South West Africa People's Organization
SWAPOL	South West Africa Police
UNCIO	United Nations Conference on International Organization
UNDRO	United Nations Disaster Relief Office
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNIC	United Nations Information Centre
UNITAF	Unified Task Force (Somalia)
UNITAR	United Nations Institute for Training and Research
UNMO	United Nations Military Observer
UNPA	United Nations Protected Area (Croatia)
UNSO	United Nations Staff Officer
UNTC	United Nations Training Centre
U-S-G	Under-Secretary-General
WEU	Western European Union
WFP	World Food Programme

# Introduction

The post-Cold War world has been marred by a proliferation of disputes. Mounting insecurity in many parts of the world has undermined hopes of an immediate peace dividend. The international arena is increasingly characterized by bitter protracted social conflicts, widespread humanitarian crises and unprecedented global ecological hazards. In many instances, the United Nations has been called upon to take concerted and effective action. In response to growing demands the UN has fielded five more peacekeeping operations in the last five years than in its previous forty-three year history. Huge operations in former Yugoslavia, Cambodia and Somalia have increased eight-fold the number of peacekeepers in the field. Peacekeepers are being asked to take on new roles and work in more demanding environments than ever before. Add to this the financial and management problems at the UN, and suggestions of further role expansion, and it is apparent that peacekeeping is approaching a critical juncture.

The overtaxed, *ad hoc* system of peacekeeping does not meet the demands posed by the post-Cold War world. For the UN and peacekeeping to more effectively manage conflict and other crises it is apparent that a framework of intervention will be needed. Boutros-Ghali's *An Agenda for Peace* provides the first step toward establishing such a framework. This study aims to carry this work further. It proposes a theory of peacekeeping based on concepts of peaceful third party intervention. Contingency models form the foundation of this analysis. While the focus is on peacekeeping, a model of intervention within which peacekeeping fits is also proposed. Beyond the theoretical analysis, this work looks at the consequences of conceptualization on the practice of peacekeeping focusing particularly on training. The general purpose of this project is to help form a foundation for further research on the theory and practice of peacekeeping.

Chapters 1 and 2 follow the development of peacekeeping from its nascent stage through to its current period of expansion. These chapters chart the major precedents and crises of peacekeeping from Suez through to Somalia. Chapter 2 con-

cludes the section by providing an in-depth discussion of the challenges posed to peacekeeping by the evolution of its practice and by the new international context.

Chapter 3 offers three case studies of UN peacekeeping in Cyprus, Namibia and former Yugoslavia. These brief studies illustrate the changes and challenges for peacekeeping outlined in Chapters 1 and 2. Moreover, they establish the basis for the proceeding discussion of theories of conflict and conflict management as they relate to peacekeeping.

Chapter 4 summarizes the academic literature on peaceful third party intervention. Concepts such as conflict management, conflict resolution, facilitation, mediation, etc., are defined and explained. Finally, contingency theory and the work of Fisher and Keashly (1991) are introduced. Contingency theory suggests a pragmatic approach to conflict management which makes use of ideas and techniques of third party intervention regardless of theoretical affiliation. Its basic criterion is success. It is argued that such an interdisciplinary approach is crucial at a time when conflicts are not only more violent and protracted, but less amenable to traditional conflict management strategies.

Chapter 5 examines United Nations peacemaking and peacebuilding as they relate to the practice of peacekeeping. This chapter defines two levels of interaction: the macro- and micro-levels. It is argued that at the macro-level, links between these three UN functions are tenuous at best. However, these functions are more successfully linked through peacekeeping at the micro-level. This chapter concludes that better coordination of all three roles at both levels is crucial for more effective conflict management.

Chapter 6 argues first that peacekeeping should be seen as a peaceful third party intervention and looks at the ramifications of such an assumption based on the conclusions of the previous chapters. Peacekeeping is then placed within a contingency framework. The consequences of this conceptualization of peacekeeping are analyzed. Finally, a contingency model for peacekeeping is introduced utilizing the work of Bercovitch *et al.* (1991). This chapter concludes by discussing the potential for both peacekeeping and other UN intervention when implemented through a contingency framework.

Chapter 7 opens with a summary of the arguments engendering a theory of peacekeeping. The problem of translating theory into practice is then considered. The subject of training is introduced as a key factor in bringing a theory of peacekeeping into practice and a brief discussion of training theory and method from the field of cross-cultural relations follows. Finally, Moskos's (1976) sociological study of peacekeeping is compared with a study on cultural adaptation by Grove and Torbjorn (1985) to point out the relevance of cross-cultural research and training for peacekeeping. This discussion then leads into Chapter 8's summary and critique of training for military and civilian peacekeepers.

By way of conclusion, Chapter 9 brings together the different arguments of previous chapters. Inconsistencies in practice revealed by the conceptualization of peacekeeping within a contingency model are briefly examined. Finally, this chapter turns to the future with recommendations both for the development of training and further research.

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