United Nations Peace Operations 2020: The United Nations Reviews and Their Implications for Tomorrow's Missions

On 8-9 May 2016, the Challenges Forum Partnership[1] marked its 20th Anniversary of cooperation in support of United Nations (UN) peace operations by hosting a high-level seminar on *United Nations Peace Operations 2010: The United Nations Reviews and Their Implications for Tomorrow's Missions*. The event was co-hosted by the Permanent Missions to the UN of Armenia, Indonesia, Nigeria, Sweden and the United States. Organized in conjunction with, but separate from, the General Assembly High-level Thematic Debate on the *UN, Peace and Security*, the Challenges Forum event addressed a number of areas of central importance to the planning and conduct of UN peace operations. This summary highlights some of the main observations and recommendations made by participants during 8-9 May, pertaining to today's challenges with a view to shed light on possible options for future action and solutions. This note should not be viewed as a concensus document as it does not necessarily represent official governmental positions, but should be viewed as a smoergoesboard of ideas for the consideration by governments, practitioners, and academics alike.

The event comprised a series of interactive high-level conversations, focusing on the implications on future missions of the findings of recent reviews of UN peace operations: *Uniting Our Strengths for Peace – Politics, Partnership and People* by the High-level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (HIPPO); *The Future of United Nations Peace Operations: Implementation of the Recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations* by the UN Secretary-General; *Challenges of Sustaining Peace* by the Advisory Group of Experts (AGE) on the Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture; *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace – A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325: Transforming Our World Global Study); The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,* and *Performance Peacekeeping* by the UN Expert Panel on Technology and Innovation in Peacekeeping.

United Nations Peace Operations 2020 – Observations and Recommendations

The conversation between the prominent civilian, military and police panelists representing the UN, Member States, non-governmental organizations, academia and think tanks, focused on a selection of key issues linked to the reviews of UN peace operations, and built on thematic areas of focus of the Challenges Forum over the past 20 years. A summary of the main observations and recommendations made within each area is provided below.

The Reviews' Findings and Effective Implementation

The first session considered the content of the reviews and what impact these could and should have on future missions. In addition to the findings of the HIPPO Report and the UN Secretary-General's subsequent response, key recommendations of the AGE Report and the Global Study on Security Council resolution (SCR) 1325, such as the primacy of politics and importance of conflict prevention; national ownership, as well as the roles of leadership and engagement with

local communities, including civil society and local women's organizations were assessed to be of particular relevance for peace operations. It was noted that the challenges presented by institutional structures and financing arrangements (which reinforce conceptual and practical stovepipes between peacekeeping and peacebuilding) remained significant and would need further attention by the next UN Secretary-General. Nonetheless, many of the speakers suggested that partners and Member States should not wait until the next Secretary-General is in office to progress many of the reforms, as the momentum needs to continue.

Issues that participants believed had gained sufficient traction with Member States and that could be or were already in the process of being implemented this year included improved force generation processes which, together with pledges made at the 2015 peacekeeping summit, will improve deployment times; enhanced use of technology and innovation (including the deployment of more unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and development of intelligence policies); better performance management by troop and police contributors (including repatriating under-performing units); and engagement with host countries through the use of compacts. Recommendations that were recognized as requiring further analysis and sustained attention and leadership under the next Secretary-General included financing and structural arrangements; engagement in early prevention activities, including with regional organizations; improving efforts to implement the Women, Peace and Security agenda; and strengthening responses against sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA).

The background paper for the session proposed a methodology for tracking and moving forward on implementation, and participants discussed to what extent and how it could provide support during the ongoing implementation phase. Lessons that could be drawn from previous reform processes, such as that following the Brahimi Report, were considered and it was suggested that the role of Member States, which have money, political power and control, would be particularly important to bear in mind in order to promote effective implementation of the findings of the recent reviews. It was suggested that a lot of the focus to date had been on the UN Secretariat driving implementation, and that now it was time for Member States to put their full weight behind the process and consider and commit to what they could do to support further implementation of required changes and improvements. It was also noted that the responsibility to deliver on the various tasks fall on different actors; i.e. the Member States, the UN Security Council, the UN Secretary-General and Secretariat; the General Assembly; different UN funds, agencies and programs; and regional organizations. This called attention to the fact that progress will require concerted efforts by all involved parties.

The Leaders Peacekeeping Summit and Upcoming Defence Ministers Meeting – Current Status, Follow-Up and Requirements

Forum participants took stock of the current status of pledges made through the Leaders' Peacekeeping Summit process on capabilities generation, in which some 50 countries last year announced significant, new, and concrete support for UN peace operations. Mechanisms developed to support the progress, such as the Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System, were viewed as a positive development and one that assisted Member States in following through on their pledges. However, in order to ensure such pledges improved operational capabilities and enhanced impact on the ground, there was seen to be room for improvement in the areas of the guidance and direction; integration; leadership; management of diversity; force generation and compliance; and mission support. To keep the momentum of the process, the panel and participants discussed what was required next – by the Member States as well as the UN Secretariat.

In preparation for the upcoming Defence Ministers Meeting in London in September, the question of pledges was complemented with what participants thought would be required in terms of preparedness and performance of those commitments and contributions. The session also addressed how best to ensure that the implementation of the UN reviews' findings is effectively linked to and achieve synergies with the process to generate new capacities and capabilities for UN peace operations. Suggestions included the need for the UN to enhance its dialogue with Member States on some of the domestic requirements to follow through on pledges, which for some countries requires political authorization, e.g. by Parliament. There was also an extensive discussion on the important role of police and the need for greater understanding of the content and implications of SCR 2185 on policing and UN peace operations. Finally, the panel elaborated on what they thought could realistically be achieved during this year, 2016, in preparation for a new UN Secretary-General assuming leadership, and what they believed would require additional work over the next few years. In sum, this included ongoing efforts to generate pledges, enhance performance, improve planning, and prioritise and phase mandates. Importantly, it was noted that serving the UN should be an honour, which may, in turn, generate a larger supply of personnel to the UN, allowing the Organization a choice among offered contributions.

Peace Operations Partnerships between the UN and Regional Organizations

The third conversation focused on the evolving partnerships between the UN and regional organizations, and what the implications of the UN reviews can mean for future missions, both those of the UN and regional organizations. Participants noted that the relevance of Chapter 8 of the UN Charter, welcoming regional solutions to conflicts, has by no means faded. On the contrary, many of today's conflicts benefit from a proactive regional approach. It was suggested that as the UN cannot handle all conflicts on its own, by supporting as well as being supported by regional efforts, local capacity can be strengthened, as and when required, and UN missions can be strengthened by regional capacities, when the situation so calls for. In order to fully realize synergies and benefit from the comparative advantages of the UN and regional organizations, it was proposed that these partnerships needed to be more predictable, formalized and institutionalized, while yet maintaining a degree of flexibility to respond to the particular needs of each situation. Clearly defined roles and burden-sharing were seen to reduce the risk of disagreements and any barriers to fruitful cooperation. The potential benefits and possible negative or unintended consequences of working with regional and sub-regional organizations were discussed. Issues that were raised included the need to develop more substantive cooperation with a broader base of regional organizations. The benefits of examining experiences across regional organizations, and in particular, the 'trilateral' cooperation between the AU, EU and UN, were noted. The implications of recent external and internal challenges for, or competing requirements on, regional organizations were assessed. It was agreed that the varied situations of different regional organizations, in turn, could impede formalizing their relationships with the UN in identical ways.

Specific attention was paid to the partnership between the UN and the AU. Participants elaborated on how cooperation could be further institutionalized, referring to the importance of early consultations between the UN Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council when considering engagement before or in a crisis. Experiences from different case studies were discussed ranging from "hybrid" models, e.g. UNAMID; "embedded" models, e.g. in the way that the UN Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) – while also UN – is a separate component of MONUSCO; "direct support" models, e.g. AMISOM; "sequenced" models, e.g. Mali and

CAR, etc. Interoperability among different components and countries was identified as a particular challenge for some contributing countries. . In light of the recommendations of the reviews, the financing and support models that would ensure sufficient and reliable financing and support for regional operations were discussed, with participants acknowledging the need for a more comprehensive discussion about the different types of financial and in-kind support provided by different partners. Approaches such as opening up the UN contracts system for the AU to draw on were identified as positive and creative mechanisms that should be considered going forward.

Safety and Security of UN and Associated Personnel in UN Peace Operations

During the fourth conversation, participants addressed the challenges related to the increasing deployment of UN and associated personnel into high-risk environments. Participants acknowledged that safety measures have indeed been implemented by the UN, with Member State support, but noted that the demanding and ever-changing security context will require both the UN and Member States to remain committed to and focused on exploring and implementing ways in which to enhance the safety and security of UN peacekeepers and associated personnel. It was recognized that accidents and threats such illness and disease often pose greater risks to personnel in the field than malicious acts, and that this should be considered when designing safety measures.

Views were expressed that prevention and mediation constitute the best prescription for peace and stability. Political solutions must determine the design and implementation of UN peace operations, and the UN should draw on its strength in terms of breadth and legitimacy by employing its whole system in an integrated way. It was suggested that two way communication with the local society was key. Missions need to explain their activities and objectives to the local population and authorities, hence strategic communication should be a priority. Such communication must build on careful analysis and a well-developed strategy, ensuring that the messages and means of communication are adapted to the local setting and targeted audience. More needed to be done to support the development of effective strategic communication in support of UN peace operations. Furthermore, it was stressed that any misconduct by UN and associated personnel could have a detrimental impact on the safety of mission staff as well as the UN as a whole.

Efficient information analysis capacities were deemed crucial if the UN is to be effective on the ground and ensure the safety of its personnel. It was proposed that the UN needs to develop its policy and guidance; capacities and overall system, for effective, efficient and fully-integrated and coordinated gathering, analyzing and disseminating of information. The deployment of the All Sources Information Fusion Unit (ASIFU) as part of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) offered a useful opportunity to draw lessons, illustrating the critical value of missions having an enhanced information picture, but also the need for the UN to ensure that the structures are in place to effectively use that intelligence. The participants discussed how far and in what manner the United Nations could or should engage in addressing transnational organized crime.

The report of the Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture states that the United Nations is a fragmented organization. The current process led by UN Department of Safety and Security (UN DSS) of integrating safety and security staff and processes across the Secretariat to achieve greater professionalism in the delivery of safety and security services was explored. The participants also discussed how a strategic and increased participation of women

could, directly or indirectly, reduce security risk to United Nations personnel. In order to be able to make significant progress in enhancing the safety and security of UN and associated personnel, possible roles and responsibilities for the UN Security Council, Member States and the UN Secretariat as well as required actions were discussed. Suggestions were made that there should be more extensive engagement with the host government from the onset of the mission on issues related to safety and security to clarify roles and responsibilities. The importance of rapid deployment of a mission was noted in order to prevent a security vacuum, as was the valuable role that regional organizations can play in facilitating such quick deployment.

Implementation of UNSCR 1325 in and by Peace Operations

The fifth conversation emphasized that the involvement and consultation of women in peace efforts is essential in order to gain full understanding of the local context and conflict as well as to ensure local ownership and that policies and programs reflect all parts of society. Involving e.g. women leaders, ex-combatants and organizations was suggested to be decisive for building sustainable peace and stability. It was emphasized that gender mainstreaming must permeate all components and different phases of a peace operation, including the initial conflict analysis and mandate design. Similarly, all actors – Member States, including the host state; UN agencies, funds and programs; the Security Council; the Secretariat; and partner organizations – must cooperate to ensure that gender lenses are applied. Furthermore, the need to translate the relatively broad contents of relevant Security Council resolutions into practical goals and requirements was noted.

The importance of promoting women leaders in UN missions and Country Teams was underlined. Identifying and investing in suitable women candidates at mid-level positions for more senior positions was one suggestion to encourage more women in leadership roles. Another suggestion for promoting gender awareness was that the UN should establish the post of an Under-Secretary-General on Women, Peace and Security. The main challenges for management to successfully lead the process of gender mainstreaming were explored and included a general lack of awareness of what gender mainstreaming entails. The importance of providing pre-deployment training on related issues was highlighted, and the inclusion of gender aspects in e.g. national crisis management exercises was mentioned as a positive example. The challenge of increasing the number of women serving in UN peace operations due to the limited number of women serving in national forces was acknowledged.

It was underlined that gender aspects need to be included already in the conflict analysis to enable translation of the mandate into practice in a gender-sensitive manner. Other aspects discussed were the value of the Secretary-General's decision on including a senior gender adviser function directly attached to the senior management. However, it was added that gender awareness concerns all headquarters and mission staff. . Participants drew attention to the need to consult local women leaders and organizations in order to ensure dialogue on how to enforce gender-sensitive mandate implementation. The importance of role models for women and involving youth to encourage behavioral change was stressed. It was noted that forums such as Challenges should continue to engage youth in discussions on peace operations.

Participants agreed that sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) by members of the UN against local populations lead to individual and communal suffering; undercut trust in the Organization; and can result in increased risk to all UN and associated personnel. The zero tolerance by the Organization and a more resolute commitment by Member States and individual civilian UN Staff were urgently required on all accounts and at all levels.

UN Peace Operations Doctrine and Guidelines

The sixth conversation at the Forum focused on the ongoing work by the UN to develop and update policies and guidelines for peace operations and what was required to ensure that developed policies, guidelines and doctrines were effectively implemented at all levels and by all actors: the UN system itself and, not least, Member States and Contributing Countries. It was noted that in the last few years, there had been major and concrete progress in the development of guidance and manuals related to specific core functions of UN peace operations, such as the protection of civilians, but that the principles of peacekeeping had remained intact, as had the relevance of e.g. the Capstone Doctrine. The importance of ensuring that there were links between the strategic, operational and tactical level guidance was stressed. The effective development of military doctrine and guidance in several areas, including the development of military unit manuals led by Member States, was discussed and broadly welcomed.

It was suggested that the effective implementation of these doctrine and guidance materials needed to be a priority, in the preparation for deployments as well as during mission execution. The use of mechanisms such as table-top exercises were important to identify the practical challenges of implementing guidance. The session also deliberated on what progress had been made in the guidelines development for UN policing, with participants welcoming the finalization of the overarching but also thematic guidelines for international police peacekeeping.

Participants noted that findings of the recent and ongoing reviews of UN peace operations would require further adaptation or revision of existing doctrine and guidance. It was also discussed to what extent there was a need to develop new guidance in areas identified as emerging ones by the reviews and where currently no, or insufficient doctrine and guidance existed. This generated considerable discussion about the type of role UN peace operations have in engaging in terrorist environments, noting that the HIPPO review is explicit that peace operations should not undertake counter-terrorism operations. Some of the thematic focuses where guidance development were already under way included the use of intelligence and information frameworks for peace operations, and improvised explosive device survivability.

It was suggested that policies, doctrine and guidance as at 2016 were in general on a solid ground and that there needed to be a balance in ensuring Member States were not overwhelmed by instructions, yet ensuring they have the right guidance in order to be prepared for peace operations. Participants were of the view that there may be areas, such as policing and capacity-building activities, which would benefit from further guidance. More generally, the UN and Member States needed to ensure that the right training was being delivered to the right actors on the right tasks. In effect, there was no reason to slow down, but instead steam ahead, with the broad implementation of available guidance – linking doctrine development to education and training, capacity building to ensuring operational readiness.

Capabilities and Capacity-building for Future Missions

The final session focused on assessing what implications there may be of the UN reviews findings on future capabilities and capacity-building for the military and civilian, including police, components. It was generally agreed that the recommendations of the reports in conjunction with the recent broad and specific development of new guidance and doctrine for

the military, civilian and police components, as discussed in earlier sessions, have indeed generated a need to review existing both capabilities and capacity-building requirements for UN peace operations. Issues of specific interest and relevance included the need to ensure that missions were tailored to the context they were deploying in and invested in developing national capacities. It was noted that capacity building and the development of policing institutions in particular can take several decades and requires sustained and ongoing engagement.

The ongoing development of training materials and programs by regional and national peacekeeping training centres was welcomed, but more needed to be done in terms of ensuring that peacekeeping training was integrated into the DNA of security forces, with the suggestion that peacekeeping training should be included as part of ordinary military training. For police, there needed to be more analysis on how much countries were willing to invest in preparing their national police forces for international peacekeeping activities, to ensure the investment in developing training was appropriate. Given the limited deployment time of police officers, the question of determining how much of that time should be spent on training was raised as part of the discussions.

A number of areas were raised by participants where the development of capabilities and capacities, not least through capacity-building, was highlighted as a priority. These included the subject of leadership in and as it relates to peace operations, a theme that was suggested could be explored further, particularly as it relates to the role of women in leadership.
Finally, in order to coalesce many of these broader reforms on capacity building, it was suggested that the UN needed to significantly overhaul the financing support to the spectrum of peace operations. This might include establishing a single peace operations account including headquarters backstopping support which included mediation activities, including programmatic funding in the first three years of mission funding budgets and established multi-partner trust funds in the fourth year and beyond that to meet mission mandates. Such extensive reform recommendations highlight the breadth and depth of challenges when it comes to supporting UN efforts to building sustainable peace.

Conclusion

The two-day Challenges 20th Anniversary Forum convened some 230 key stakeholders and experts to address *United Nations Peace Operations 2020: The United Nations Reviews and Their Implications for Tomorrow's Missions*. A whole range of observations, propositions, ideas and recommendations were explored and discussed amongst the global Challenges Forum Partnership and their invited colleagues from the UN Secretariat, other UN Member States, and the broader academic, think tank and civil society community. Two overarching conclusions stood out and included reflections on how the international community can get better at conflict prevention. The other main observation and conclusion was the importance of and need for professional leadership at all levels, at Headquarters and in the field, at the UN and by Member States representatives. Coherent and collective action was called for.

Concluding the 20th Anniversary Forum, an Exhibition titled *Mission in Motion: Peace Made Possible* developed in collaboration with Färgfabriken and the United Nations Department for Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support was launched outside the General Assembly Hall, bridging the conversation of the Challenges Forum with the opening of the General Assembly High-level Thematic Debate on *United Nations, Peace and Security.*