

Peacekeeping is designed to assist the parties to a dispute to draw back from conflict when they recognize that this is in their best interests, and to help create circumstances in which their differences can be settled by negotiation. Peacekeeping is a military task involving the placement of an international force between quarrelling parties. It is not an end in itself. It is intended to create the conditions for the process of peacemaking, that is, the diplomatic search for a solution to the underlying causes of a conflict.

But in Cyprus there was a distinct lack of progress towards a political settlement. So successful was the U.N. force in peacekeeping that it came to be viewed as almost a permanent fixture on Cyprus with the result that there was relatively little incentive for the two sides to make the difficult compromises that are necessary for a political settlement. The countries contributing troops to the U.N. force expressed concern about this lack of progress, and consequently its restructuring was undertaken in the hope that this would induce the parties to realize that they could not depend indefinitely on an outside force for their security.

Then in July 1974 the situation in Cyprus changed dramatically. In response to an attempted coup d'état against the Makarios administration by the Greek-led Cypriot National Guard, Turkey landed forces on Cyprus and rapidly occupied about forty per cent of the island.

This altered radically the position of the peacekeeping force. It had been created to police the ceasefire between the two communities but now the major confrontation was between the Turkish armed forces and the Cypriot National Guard. To cope with this situation the Canadian contingent, along with those of the other contributing countries were increased at the request of the U.N. Secretary-General. With this increase in size the force was able to respond successfully to this new challenge and to keep further fighting to a minimum. Nevertheless the situation today continues to be volatile and renewed violence could occur at any time.

The experience in peacekeeping in Cyprus merits close study for it reveals the basic problems in U.N. peacekeeping and peacemaking procedures.

Peacekeeping cannot be made a substitute for peacemaking. If it is to serve a useful purpose, peacekeeping must be accompanied by a parallel effort on the political level, especially by the parties most directly concerned, to convert the temporary peace that a peacekeeping force is asked to maintain