

# Briefing Paper



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## PEACEKEEPING

A central function of the United Nations organization is the "maintenance of international peace and security". Peacekeeping, although not originally envisaged in the UN Charter, eventually became one of the means of implementing that function. The system to maintain peace set out in the Charter entrusts the Security Council with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. The Council has the task of promoting pacific settlement under Chapter VI, and was granted enforcement powers, including the ability to make decisions binding on all members, under Chapter VII. The concept of collective security envisaged in Chapter VII was predicated largely on Great Power agreement and the overwhelming superiority of armed force deriving from the forces of the permanent members. However, the political assumptions on which the security system had been based proved to be illusory. It was rendered inoperable by the onset of the cold war and dissension among the Great Powers.

The effectiveness of the Security Council was curtailed from the outset by the deterioration of relations between the East and West which prevented it from finding accepted formulas for the settlement of international disputes.

In order to obviate the threat of being deadlocked into impotence, in 1950 the General Assembly adopted the Uniting for Peace Resolution. The Resolution was conceived as a measure to meet critical situations in which the Security Council was unable to fulfill its primary responsibility to maintain international peace and security, or was prevented from doing so by the veto of a permanent member. The Resolution enabled the Assembly to recommend actions it deemed appropriate to maintain international peace.

A gradual transition in attitude and approach towards settlement of disputes has resulted. The manner in which international peace and security was pursued fundamentally changed. Since agreement to invoke Chapter VII was impossible to obtain, the Organization turned to measures that were politically feasible to implement, including resort to the Uniting for Peace Resolution as mentioned above. As no formal mechanism for the creation of peacekeeping forces exists, peacekeeping operations continue to be established on an *ad hoc* basis.

### UN-SPONSORED PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

The origins of UN-sponsored peacekeeping operations may be traced to a considerable number of fact-finding and military observation missions. These missions were composed of unarmed officers whose objectives were to investigate, supervise cease-fires, and report to the Security Council on events transpiring in areas of tension. In 1946 the United Nations Special Committee on the Balkans (UNSCOB) was established to observe the compliance by the governments of Greece, Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia with the Security Council's resolution urging them to supercede hostilities with the establishment of diplomatic relations. 1947 marked the first time the Security Council called for the establishment of a cease-fire between combatants, the Netherlands and Indonesia. The UN Consular Commission helped in Indonesia's transition from colony to nationhood.

In 1948 the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) was created to supervise a truce agreement between Israel and her Arab neighbours in Palestine. It was followed in 1949 with the United Nations Military Observer Group for India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP), an observer mission to patrol the cease-fire lines along the border of Kashmir which separates the forces of India and Pakistan. Essentially observation, investigation and reporting missions, these operations represent antecedents to the mode of peacekeeping which later emerged.

Of even greater consequence to peacekeeping were the activities of the United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea (UNTCOK). Initially UNTCOK was mandated to observe elections in Korea. Later it was used for broader coordinative purposes when North Korea attacked the southern half of the country in 1950. Upon the initiative of the United States, the Security Council adopted a resolution recommending that "the Member States furnish such assistance to the Republic of Korea as may be necessary to repel the armed attack and to restore international peace and security in the area". Adoption of the resolution was made possible by the absence of the Soviet Union from the Council.

The subsequent creation of a unified military