

ing mission wear UN blue berets or blue helmets with the uniforms of their own countries. They serve under the operational command of their commanding officer (who takes orders from the Secretary-General) but they remain under the commands of their own countries in matters of pay, discipline and promotion.

The aim of a peacekeeping force is to maintain a ceasefire and prevent a resumption of fighting so that the warring parties can try to work out a settlement to their dispute. Peacekeeping is not an end in itself, but must be part of a wider political process to bring a conflict to an end.

Peacekeepers can do many things. They may be assigned to observe a situation and report on it to the Secretary-General. They may be asked to investigate ceasefire violations or to supervise troop withdrawals. They are also used to patrol buffer zones. In addition, peacekeepers often provide emergency medical services, assist in the resettlement of refugees, and work to restore normal civilian activities in war-torn areas.

Peacekeepers can prevent fighting from breaking out by blocking the movement of troops and arms, and by reminding fighting parties that the eyes of the world are upon them. However, for peacekeeping to work well, there must be a peace to be kept and the peacekeepers' role must be clearly understood and welcomed by the local parties. If local support is lacking, peacekeepers can find their freedom of movement and use of technologies tightly constrained. Moreover, if not all armed groups are supportive of the UN presence, the peacekeepers may wind up in situations where they are under fire and cannot do their job.

The UN is not the only operator of peacekeeping forces. Regional bodies, including the League of Arab States, the Organization of African Unity, the Organization of American States, and the European Community, have also launched peacekeeping missions, though on a much smaller scale than the UN.

Canada and Peacekeeping

Peacekeeping is a particularly Canadian contribution to the UN. In addition to proposing the first organized peacekeeping force, Canada is the only country to have participated in all of the UN peacekeeping operations (see pp. 6-7 for a list). More than 87,000 Canadians have served

abroad in UN operations, and more than 80 have died while on peacekeeping duty. Canadian troops have also participated in peacekeeping and observer operations outside the UN. Because it is detached from most disputes in a way that major powers cannot be, Canada is viewed as an objective participant. It also has the diplomatic, economic and military resources to make a significant contribution to peacekeeping missions.

Canadian troops have developed a reputation as being among the world's best peacekeepers. They are needed for their technical skills as engineers, logisticians, communicators, commanders and staff planners. They are also wanted for their combat skills in riskier operations.

Each request for a Canadian contribution to peacekeeping is considered on its own merits. Canada's decision on whether or not to participate is based on the following guidelines:

- there must be a threat to international peace and security, as determined by the Security Council;
- the main parties in the dispute must agree to the peacekeeping mission and to Canada's participation;
- the operation should be linked to an agreement by the parties to work towards a political settlement;
- the operation must be accountable to a political authority, such as the Security Council;
- the operation must have a clear and realistic mandate; and
- the operation must have sufficient funding and logistical support.

Peacekeeping's Future

The end of the Cold War has made possible an end to fighting in many regional conflicts (e.g., in Afghanistan, Cambodia and Central America) leading to a demand for peacekeepers. It has also allowed the emergence of conflict in previously tightly controlled areas (e.g., Yugoslavia), further spurring the demand for peacekeepers. Most importantly, the end of the Cold War has made Security Council agreement on UN intervention more likely.

As the UN becomes more involved in maintaining global peace and security, peacekeeping is taking on new forms. Peacekeeping missions today have broader roles, more players and more clearly defined mandates than peacekeeping operations in the past. Whereas

peacekeeping traditionally aimed mainly at containing conflict, peacekeeping is now part of a range of conflict-resolution activities that often blur into each other. In addition to peacekeeping, these include:

- preventive diplomacy, or activities designed to prevent disputes from arising in the first place, to keep them from worsening or to keep them from spreading. Examples include fact-finding missions, consultations, warnings, inspections and monitoring;
- peacemaking, or activities designed to bring hostile groups to agreement peacefully. Examples include the provision of good offices, negotiation, mediation and arbitration;
- enforcement, or military activities designed to make states comply with a Security Council resolution; and
- peacebuilding, or activities — once the conflict has ended — designed to strengthen peace and prevent conflict from starting again.

Recent peacekeeping operations are much more complex than earlier ones. Peacekeeping missions today contain not only the traditional military forces, but also police, electoral officials, human rights officials and other civilians. Peacekeepers are increasingly being used to monitor human rights, organize elections, resettle refugees, supervise disarmament and rebuild economies.

In Namibia in 1989, the UN operation not only monitored a truce but also undertook a wide range of military, political, humanitarian, economic and social functions. The UN Observer Mission in El Salvador (UNOSAL) is playing a major role in restructuring El Salvador's police and in monitoring human rights violations. In Cambodia, the UN peacekeeping force is providing a transitional government. Protection of humanitarian relief operations was a new task for UN troops in northern Iraq, and is the main mission of the (non-UN) multinational force in Somalia.

There is a growing belief that the UN should be more willing to intervene in conflict situations, particularly where there is a clear need for humanitarian assistance. As things now stand, however, the UN can hardly cope with existing peacekeeping demands, let alone consider new ones. Although it is an increasingly frequent and important UN function, peacekeeping is still handled as if it were a rare emergency activity. The UN staff for overseeing peacekeeping operations is small, scat-