

Several participants feared there was an impression among Northern governments that Africa might be a 'lost cause'. It was thought that this contributed to a lower level of international will for UN missions to Africa. The example of Sierra Leone was cited to demonstrate that certain missions to Africa are, in fact, working very well. It was generally agreed that good lessons can, and should, be taken from the current operation in Sierra Leone.

Another reason behind the North's reluctance to engage in Africa is the increased use of Chapter 7 mandates. There is a widespread, albeit questionable, perception that such missions are far more dangerous for troop contributors. The representative from the UN referred to a recent study, which indicated that casualty rates under Chapter 6 mandates stand at 34 percent while casualty rates for Chapter 7 mandates stand at 6 percent. Further, there was a shared sense that Chapter 7 missions would tend to be safer given the authorization for the limited use of force, the capacity to act, as well as a credible presence that would more likely deter violent behavior.

Vague and unviable mission mandates were cited as an impediment to the effective protection of civilians during UN missions. It was stated that individual nations have an aversion to Chapter 7 mandates because they fear losing troops and the higher costs often associated with these missions. Another aspect of this problem was attributed to complicated mandates that are not understood by troops on the ground. Complex mandates may be politically useful, but they must be translated into something that is clearly understandable for UN commanders on the ground if they are to be militarily useful. This suggestion sparked several comments on rules of engagement in UN operations. It was explained that each force has its own, national rules of engagement that it must adhere to. The fact that UN missions are multinational leads to obvious problems. Developing a unified system of rules of engagement for all UN missions was deemed to be inappropriate due to the fact that each UN mission is unique. However, it was brought to the group's attention that countries that train together generally have similar or complementary rules of engagement, thus helping to nullify this problem in an actual conflict situation.