

Briefing Paper #3

PEACEKEEPING: Canada and UN Peacekeeping Efforts



UN MB/RAS

Canada has been and continues to be a strong supporter of peacekeeping and a major contributor to peacekeeping operations. Peacekeeping may be generally defined as the employment of military, para-military or non-military personnel or forces in an area of political conflict, for the purpose of restoring or maintaining the peace. The purpose of peacekeeping is to enable the parties to disengage and to give them confidence that their differences can be settled by negotiation. Peacekeeping activities range from unarmed missions with a role of observation and reporting only, through roles of investigation, supervision and control, to the interposition of armed military units and formations between the parties.

Peacekeeping has not been confined exclusively to the post World War II period. Previously there were some very successful international police operations, such as the 1935 peacekeeping force established by the League of Nations during the SAAR plebiscite which resolved the dispute between France and Germany. On this topic Sir Anthony Eden, a former British Prime Minister, wrote in his memoirs: "The machinery in the SAAR both before and during the plebiscite gave a glimpse of a supranational salvation to a world which was imprisoning itself all the while more closely within the confines of the National State..."

Since the beginning of the nuclear age, the concept of peacekeeping has been perceived by the international community as a practical means of limiting and mediating disputes, and avoiding the outbreak of a major conflict.

Since 1947, Canada has participated in a total of 15 UN peacekeeping operations. Canada's preference has been that peacekeeping operations be conducted under UN jurisdiction, and that the UN machinery for doing so be strengthened. Recognizing, however, that this is not always possible, in par-

ticular where great power interests are involved, Canada has participated in peacekeeping-type missions outside UN auspices: the 1954 and 1973 Control Commissions in Indo-China and the International Observer Team in Nigeria. A summary of Canadian participation in these operations is listed at the end of this briefing paper.

Canada contributes forces to three current UN peacekeeping operations and has agreed to participate in another peacekeeping mission in the Middle East not under UN auspices, commencing in 1986. These operations are:

a. *The United Nations Truce Supervisory Organization (UNTSO)* This, the oldest of the UN operations in the Middle East, was permanently established by the Security Council in 1948. Canada has participated in UNTSO since 1954. Its task is to observe and maintain the ceasefire ordered by the Security Council and to assist in the supervision of the application and observance of the General Armistice Agreements between Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, Syria and Israel. The Canadian participation at present consists of 20 officers, out of a total 297 members.

b. *The United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF)* Created in May 1974 by Security Council Resolution 350 after the Yom Kippur War, its task is to observe and maintain the ceasefire between Israel and Syria by interposing troops between the parties concerned. The force is deployed on the Golan Heights. Canada provides a contingent of approximately 220 personnel, whose task is to provide logistic, communications and other technical support to the Force. UNDOF enjoys the cooperation of both Israel and Syria and has been highly successful in carrying out its mission.

c. *The United Nations Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP)* This force was established in 1964 following the outbreak of hostilities between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities. Canada has been a major contributor since that time with a current commitment of 515 personnel. Its mandate is to prevent a recurrence of fighting between hostile factions, and, as necessary, to contribute to the maintenance and restoration of law and order and assist in the return to normal conditions. Although it is regrettable that the parties to the dispute have not yet been able to reach a negotiated settlement, the continued presence of UNFICYP is considered

necessary to maintain a peaceful situation in which the search for a political settlement may continue.

d. *The Multinational Force and Observers (MFO)* The MFO, which is based in the Sinai peninsula, was established in 1981 to monitor the provisions of the 1979 Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty. The Force was established by a protocol to the Treaty and is not under the auspices of the United Nations. In response to requests from Egypt and Israel, Canada has agreed to provide a contingent of up to 140 personnel and nine helicopters to the MFO, commencing on 31 March 1986. Canadian participation in the MFO will contribute to the reinforcement of the peace agreement between Israel and Egypt, and reaffirms Canada's commitment to peace and stability in the Middle East.

In addition to the above operations, Canada provides periodic airlift support to the UN Military Observer Group India - Pakistan (UNMOGIP), and the Canadian Forces Attaché in the Republic of Korea provides Canadian representation on the UN Command Military Armistice Commission (UNCMAC).

Our military role in international peacekeeping helps to prevent the outbreak or spread of hostilities so that underlying political problems can be settled through negotiation, thus minimizing the possibility of direct great power involvement. However, Canada has never considered peacekeeping to be a sufficient objective in itself. The purpose of peacekeeping is not only to prevent conflict, but also to create the conditions in which the search for solutions to the underlying causes of conflict can take place. For this reason Canada has held the view that considerable stress should be placed on the inter-relationship between peacekeeping and peacemaking efforts by all parties concerned.

It has become apparent from many years experience that certain conditions must exist if a peacekeeping operation is to have a reasonable chance of success. It is very important that the peacekeeping mission be associated with an agreement for a political settlement, or at least an expressed willingness by the parties concerned to seek such a settlement. The parties to the dispute must agree to maintain a ceasefire, and must agree to accept the presence and composition of the peacekeeping mission and respect its mandate. The mission must have a clear and attainable mandate, and must have the necessary freedom of movement and action to carry

Published by the Department of External Affairs in cooperation with the United Nations Association in Canada.

One of four Briefing Papers included in an education kit prepared to mark the 40th anniversary of the United Nations.

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