



Need to strengthen UN peace-keeping operations

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Abstract

The United Nations has done a commendable job in the field of peace-keeping operations. It has been instrumental in solving many problems related to the world peace and security. It has succeeded in solving many issues related to peace-keeping operations such as the Afghanistan issue, Iran-Iraq cease-fire, Namibian problem, the issues of Western Sahara and Cyprus and resolved the spreading of many local wars like Korea, Indonesia, Kashmir and the Palestine. The Security Council and the General Assembly praised it in this regard. But its failure in Somalia, Rwanda and particularly Bosnia stressed the need of strengthening the peace-keeping operations. The need of permanent UN forces, the Rapid Reaction Forces and the need of more finances for it is the need of the time.

Keywords: world peace, security, peace-keeping

Introduction

The Institution of war precedes the Institution of armaments and armaments is psychologically based on the suspicion about security of the nation and the mad race of armaments and lust of military powers have generated another kind of conflict in the international community which is distinguished from war itself ^[1]. Since its inception the UN has done a commendable job in the field of maintaining international peace and security and under the UN Charter the responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and peaceful settlement of disputes rests with the Security Council which has sought to achieve it through mediation, good-offices, stationing of military observers and the peace-keeping forces ^[2].

The United Nations has been instrumental in settling numerous controversies which could have a potential danger to world peace and security ^[3]. Some of the disputes resolved by the by the United Nations in recent years include Afghanistan, Iran-Iraq cease-fire, Namibian Problem, the issues of Western Sahara and Cyprus and prevented the spread of four local wars- Korea, Indonesia, Kashmir and the Palestine ^[4].

The Peace-keeping, as defined by the United Nations, is “a way to help countries torn by conflict create conditions for sustainable peace” ^[5]. Peacekeepers monitor and observe peace processes in post conflict areas and assist ex-combatants in implementing the peace agreements they may have signed and such assistance comes in many forms, including confidence-building measures, power sharing arrangements, electoral support, strengthening the rule of law and economic and social development ^[6]. Most of these operations are established and implemented by the UN itself with troops serving under UN operational command and in these cases, peacekeepers remain members of their respective armed forces, and do not constitute an independent ‘UN army’, as the UN doesn’t have such a force ^[7]. In the cases where UN

involvement is not considered appropriate or feasible, the Security Council authorizes regional organizations such as the NATO, The Economic Community of West African States, or coalitions of willing countries to undertake peacekeeping or peace enforcement tasks ^[8].

The General Assembly affirmed that the efforts of the United Nations in the peaceful settlement of disputes, including through its peacekeeping operations are indispensable ^[9]. Although the peace-keeping operation is not particularly defined in the Charter of the UN, but it has been invented by the UN and it was created out of the idea of preventive diplomacy. Since its creation the UN has carried out more than 35 peace-keeping missions and helped negotiate more than 100 peaceful settlement of the inter-state disputes and at present, the UN is engaged in peace-keeping missions in about 17 countries involving some 7000 civilian and military personnel drawn from 70 countries ^[10].

Some peace-keeping operations have not been successful and failed such as UN mission in Somalia, Rwanda and Bosnia, and especially in Bosnia the UN has been relegated to side-line and it is NATO troops who are operating as peace-keeping mission under the Dayton Pact of 1998 ^[11]. This situation produced a marked despondency concerning the UN’s peace-keeping capability and many thinkers thought as a peace-keeping agency, the UN is widely held to have gone into decline ^[12]. It is, however very commonly claimed that the organization is seriously deficient so far as the mounting and conducting of operations is concerned on account of its failure to prepare for them ^[13]. So in this context some thinkers like Lionel Rosenblat and Larry Thompson, advocate the creation of a permanent UN peace-keeping force on the grounds that the present system of peace-keeping is too slow, too cumbersome, too inefficient and too prone to failure ^[14]. The limited mandate (role, instruction) and strength (Personnel, armament) of UN forces have frequently left them as helpless bystanders ^[15]. The concepts of collective security

and peacekeeping also failed in many domestic civil wars, in which there is no state aggressor or the aggressor is not identified, In Rwanda's crisis many UN peacekeepers were killed by Hutu militants because there was no proper command and coordination among peacekeeping forces of many countries and another problem was of finance.

The failure in Rwanda has forced the UN to take some measures to improve and strengthen its peacekeeping capabilities. The UN headquarters in New York now have a 24-hour watch centre to monitor crises around the world and a rapidly deployable headquarters team is being formed to assess crises early on, before peace-keeping forces are sent out ^[16]. The standby arrangements system maintains a register of personnel and equipment volunteered by member states that can be utilized for peace-keeping missions, and planning, intelligence and early warning functions have been enhanced ^[17]. Time is a critical factor because the opportunities to defuse a situation are lost in the time between a Security Council decision and the actual deployment of the troops on the ground, so the best solution to these problems is the creation of a standing, permanent international military and police force made up of volunteers and under the direct command of the UN Security Council: What has variously been called a Rapid Reaction Force, a Rapid Deployment Brigade, a UN Foreign Legion ^[18]. In accordance to the above needs the UN peace-keeping budget must be increased accordingly.

The UN General Assembly also stressed the need for the United Nations to continue to improve its capabilities in the field of peace-keeping and to enhance the effective and efficient deployment of its peace-keeping operations ^[19]. The General Assembly also noted the widespread interest in contributing to the work of the Special Committee on peace-keeping operations expressed by member states, in particular troop and police-contributing countries ^[20]. It was also decided that the special committee, in accordance with its mandate, shall continue its efforts for a comprehensive review of the whole question of peace-keeping operations in all their aspects and shall review the implementation of its previous proposals and consider any new proposals so as to enhance the capacity of the United Nations to fulfil its responsibilities in the field ^[21]. The Security Council expressed deep concern about the serious and continuous allegations and abuse by the UN peace-keepers and non-United Nation Forces, including military, civilian and police personnel, and underscoring that sexual exploitation and abuse, among other crimes and forms of serious misconduct, by any such personnel is unacceptable and requested the Secretary General to gather and preserve evidence ahead of investigations of sexual exploitation and abuse in United Nations peace operations with due consideration for the safety, security and confidentiality of victims, to ensure that the concerned United Nations peace-keeping operation takes immediate steps to prevent, including through risk assessments, future incidents of sexual exploitations ^[22]. So the need of the time is to strengthen the UN peace-keeping operations for the maintenance of world peace and security.

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