Chapter 1

Introduction to the Developments, Trends and Challenges to UN Peacekeeping Operations

Boris Kondoch and Brendan Howe

I Introduction

Peacekeeping is the flagship operation of the United Nations (UN), and its major contribution to global governance and the protection of vulnerable groups. Uniquely universal and legitimate, it is seen as a "strong and effective tool that is protecting people, saving lives and helping countries to emerge from conflict."1 Between 1948 and March 2016, the UN conducted 71 peacekeeping operations (PKOs). As of 31 March 2016, there are currently 16 UN peacekeeping operations and 123,053 personnel deployed from 123 countries.2 The budget for UN PKOs for the fiscal year 1 July 2015–30 June 2016 is about $8.27 billion, and the main financial contributors to UN peacekeeping operations from 2013–2015 were the United States (28.38%), Japan (10.83%), France (7.22%), Germany (7.14%), United Kingdom (6.68%), China (6.64%), Italy (4.45%), Russian Federation (3.15%), Canada (2.98%) and Spain (2.97%).3 By the end of 2012, however, 85% of all UN peacekeepers came from Asia and Africa. Indeed, in July 2014 the top 15 military and police contributors were Bangladesh, India, Ethiopia, Pakistan, Rwanda, Nepal, Senegal, Ghana, China, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Indonesia, Egypt, Tanzania, Morocco – all from these two continents.4

The majority of current UN peacekeeping operations take place in the Africa and the Middle-East. Thus the participation of regional African powers with their local self-interest and responsibilities is perhaps not surprising. Asia is the home to some of the greatest challenges and triumphs of the UN. These have included peacekeeping and state-building operations in Cambodia – the

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UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), and Timor-Leste – the UN Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), and the UN Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT). Asia is also home to the second oldest UN peacekeeping operation, the UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP), which was established in 1948, and is still ongoing. Other landmarks include the Korean War, the largest enforcement action ever undertaken; and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) – the only political mission under UNPKO auspices. Non-UN peacekeeping operations were deployed among others to Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. In 1999, the Security Council authorized the International Force in East Timor (INTERFET) led by Australia. INTERFET was another non-UN operation mandated to provide security and peace on East Timor. Yet given that states and international organizations within the region (such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)) have a reputation for resistance to multilateral security operations, and advocacy of the principles of state sovereignty and non-intervention, Asian enthusiasm for participation in UN PKOs represents something of a conundrum. Thus this volume explores the motivations for the contemporary, and growing participation of Asian states as a central conceptual theme.

II Developments and Trends

Since the end of the Cold War most of the conflicts the UN has had to face have been domestic rather than international. During the 1990s, after a preceding decade which saw no new missions, UN peace operations mushroomed around the world. The sudden upsurge was not limited to the number of missions, but also involved a dramatic increase in scope. Increasingly the UN has become engaged in more complex missions including tasks like state-building, the protection of human rights, and election monitoring. Another development has been the authorization of UN peacekeeping operations under Chapter 7 of the UN Charter; wherein one can find the enforcement activities of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). This has come about because the UNSC adopted a more co-operative approach towards peacekeeping.5

Many missions established in the last decade have, in fact, had a significant military component and a strong mandate to protect civilians. In 2013, the

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