

PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS

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Contents

1. Introduction
 2. A Review of More than 50 Years of Peace-Keeping Operations
 3. The Concept of a United Nations Armed Force
 4. Political Problems Confronting the United Nations as the World's Peace-Keeping Agency
- Biographical Sketch

1. Introduction

At the end of World War II, the United Nations Organization was put into place, with many missions contemplated, but it is reasonable to say that the main thought was to create an international body that would lead to, and maintain, a peaceful world environment. The charter of the United Nations was stated in such broad terms, for the keeping of the peace, that a strict definition of peace-keeping operations would be covered as well as more ambitious programs to enforce the peace.

Article I.1 promises,

To maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace, and to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace.

Not only is this consistent with a broad mandate for the United Nations to maintain international peace, but it is the lead paragraph of the lead article, which means that it is a matter of primary concern for the United Nations.

As events have unfolded since the inception of the United Nations, more than 50 years ago (October 24, 1945), the world has not experienced another conflict as all-encompassing as either World War I or World War II. In that respect, the United Nations has fulfilled its mission, although there is much criticism of the organization and also a widespread, but not universal, feeling that it has failed to keep the peace. Yet, there is a sound basis for claiming that the United Nations Organization has gone far in contributing to more than 50 years of world peace in some degree, although there is much more to be done to establish the view, beyond any doubt, that the United Nations has been an effective keeper of the peace and is following the right path now in improving its peace-keeping performance.

2. A Review of More than 50 Years of Peace-Keeping Operations

The United Nations as an existing organization has responded to critical situations, but has not eradicated problem areas of conflict. Two of the earliest ventures into peace keeping are still operative, which means that ultimate, lasting peace in the areas involved has not been achieved in 50 years. The two outstanding cases, which are still problem areas for peace, remain as live cases of unresolved conflict. They are: Israel–Arab conflicts since 1948; Pakistan–India conflicts since 1948.

UNTSO was established to supervise the truce in Palestine, following the end of the British Mandate and later (1967) added to its scope of operations the observation of the cease fire in the Suez Canal and the Golan Heights. These changes meant that Israeli-Palestinian relations were augmented by Israeli-Egyptian and Israeli-Syrian relations. United Nations peacekeepers soon experienced a significant widening of their tasks by involving additional protagonists and neighboring territories. It has been a case not only of additional responsibility for UNTSO but also cooperation with UNDOF and UNIFIL. The former has expanded duties in the Golan Heights while the latter had to deal with Israeli-Lebanese conflicts on additional borders. The Headquarters for UNTSO are in Jerusalem but there are also offices in Damascus and Beirut.

A long list of mediators and military chiefs have been involved, some of whom have been well known international figures, in this activity which began more than half a century ago. At times the UN forces' strength in UNTSO involved more than 500 persons, but was under 200 as of 1996. The basic financing has come from the regular United Nations budget, but it is interesting and revealing to examine voluntary contributions from individual countries, such as the United States, Netherlands, and Switzerland. It should be remarked that Switzerland was neutral during World War II and has often refrained from being involved in international commitments, yet Switzerland contributed commercial aircraft facilities, as early as 1967, and more presently supplied military observers to UN peace-keeping forces.

Many countries have contributed military observers (not combatants, but strictly observers) and the original dates of military observer status go back to 1948 for Sweden (also a neutral nation during World War II), Belgium, and the United States. Countries from Europe, Asia, Oceania, and the Former Soviet Union have participated over the years. Thus the United Nations has been able to draw upon worldwide resources for its peace-keeping operations. In many respects this has been a very positive achievement, but it has rarely been enough to keep the whole world at peace.

The outbreak of war in the Middle East, involving Israel and different Arab countries, has called forth other United Nations peace-keeping operations in the Middle East on a much larger scale, involving expenditures in millions of dollars and forces of thousands of personnel. They relate to conflicts in Suez, the Golan Heights, and Lebanon, but they do not have the long history of the earliest conflict situations. Some of these involved personnel or financial support from Germany and Japan, the defeated nations of World War II. In the 1970s, Japan and West Germany provided financial support or airlift support for other governments that were sending direct participants. Gradually, these two nations have become more involved in United Nations peace-keeping operations. In

the Japanese case it involves very sensitive interpretations of the post war (World War II) constitution, which prohibits or limits military activity, but recently Japan has participated in limited policy activities, financing activities, or other humanitarian aspects of peace-keeping.

A second area of prolonged conflict, where peace-keeping operations started in 1949, is the Line of Control in Kashmir where India and Pakistan came into conflict. UNMOGIP was authorized by the Security Council as early as April 1948, more than a month ahead of the resolution for the truce in Palestine. There have been fewer fatalities of UN personnel and a somewhat smaller mission than in Palestine, but it has proved to be as difficult to come to a complete conflict resolution as in the Middle East. For a period between 1965 and 1966, UNIPOM was established to supervise a cease-fire along the India-Pakistan border between Kashmir and the Arabian Sea. This was a smaller mission and has been terminated, but the conflict over the state of Kashmir and Jammu continues and the peace-keeping operation remains active.

Another long-lasting conflict not far from the Middle East has taken place in Cyprus, requiring UNFICYP. This island, where Greece and Turkey have opposing claims, was recognized as an area of conflict where peace-keeping operations were needed as early as March 1964. In 1974 the mandate was extended, following hostile action. Originally there were more than 6000 persons involved on behalf of the United Nations, and there have been more than 165 United Nations casualties. Expenditures have been much larger than in the Middle East or Kashmir. From inception until the end of 1995, more than \$800,000,000 had been charged to the United Nations. Both Germany and Japan have participated in the funding.

These older peace-keeping operations, which constituted headline world news when they began, have been followed by much larger operations by the United Nations, both in personnel and expenditures. To name a few, newsworthy peace-keeping operations of the United Nations since 1960 have involved: Congo, Namibia, Angola, Western Sahara, Somalia, Mozambique, Uganda-Rwanda, Liberia, Qouzon Strip (verification of Libyan withdrawal), Central America (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua), Cambodia, the former Yugoslavia (Croatia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Macedonia), Georgia, Tajikistan, Haiti, West New Guinea, Dominican Republic, Afghanistan, Iran-Iraq, Iraq-Kuwait. This listing shows the regions of conflict, round the world, where peace-keeping demands have been needed. They are all restricted conflicts, not on the scale of World War I and II, yet they severely strain the resources of the United Nations and can be variously graded from success to failure, with some protracted uncertainties from stalemate situations.

Also this list omits such military conflicts as the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Falklands War, the Gulf War, the Kosovo War, and other military engagements in which the great powers maintain their own forces, sometimes with United Nations permission, but not strictly in the spirit of peace-keeping.

It is not clear whether the future will involve military action by NATO or single great powers more than the United Nations, but the hope and interest of the founders of the United Nations were that the organization would be effective in maintaining the peace.

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Biographical Sketch

Lawrence R. Klein was educated at the University of California, Berkeley (BA) and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (Ph.D.). He has served on the faculties of the University of Chicago, University of Michigan, Oxford University, and the University of Pennsylvania. He was the Benjamin Franklin Professor of Economics and Finance at the University of Pennsylvania, where he taught for 33 years, and now is Benjamin Franklin Professor, emeritus. Professor Klein is an econometrician and constructed several models of the US and various other countries. At Pennsylvania he founded Wharton Econometric Forecasting Associates and was a principal investigator of Project LINK, which combined models from countries throughout the world for studying international trade, payments, and global economic activity. He served as President of many learned societies, edited scholarly journals, and advised governments in matters of economic policy. In 1976 he coordinated Jimmy Carter's economic taskforce in successful campaign for Presidency of the US. In 1980 he was the Nobel Laureate in Economics.