United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Some Win-Win Applications

Paul F. Diehl
Program in Arms Control, Disarmament, and International Security
Department of Political Science
University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign

Chetan Kumar
Department of Political Science
University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign
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359 Armory Building, 505 E. Armory Ave.
Champaign, IL 61820-6237
Paul F. Diehl is associate professor of political science and a faculty member in the Program in Arms Control, Disarmament, and International Security at the University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign. He is co-author of *Territorial Changes and International Conflict* (1991) and editor of *Measuring the Correlates of War* (1990), *The Politics of International Organizations* (1989), and *Through the Straits of Armageddon* (1987), as well as the author of over thirty articles on peace and security affairs.

Chetan Kumar is a Ph.D. candidate in Political Science at the University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign.
International intervention in a dispute, almost by definition, results from a failure to resolve underlying sources of conflict at a lower level. Indeed, the United Nations is authorized to address only those disputes that threaten international peace and security. There are various mechanisms available to the United Nations for dealing with such threats. Yet most do not involve solutions in which all the protagonists benefit from the outcome.

Typically, the United Nations will begin its intervention by calling for a cease-fire and sometimes labelling one side or the other as the aggressor. Recommended solutions, including negotiations and international adjudication, structure the outcome so as to constitute a partial or complete zero-sum game. Collective security actions, in which the international community aids an innocent state victim of aggression, are designed to satisfy the interests of one protagonist at the expense of the other; the recent international action in support of Kuwait is indicative of this. Perhaps not surprisingly then, intervention by the United Nations has been relatively infrequent, and actually declined in effectiveness after 1970 through the early 1980s (Haas, 1986).

Without that international intervention, antagonists usually face one of four sets of joint outcomes to their conflict: (a) The parties could arrive at a Pareto-optimum solution in which none of the sides comes out worse off, and at least one side comes out better off; (b) they might obtain a Pareto-malium solution in which none of the disputants is better off, and one of the sides is worse off; (c) they might be in a situation in which at least one side is better off, but other sides are worse off; or (d) they might be stuck in a lose-lose situation, in which all sides come out worse off. In the absence of a quick victory, the disputants are unlikely to arrive at a win-lose outcome. A protracted and violent struggle between disputants with seemingly irreconcilable preferences (the kind of struggle most likely to prompt international intervention) will probably not lead to a solution (if one is indeed found) that leaves both sides better off.

Despite its overall mixed record of success, the United Nations offers the basis for international intervention under which all sides might be better off: peacekeeping. In this paper, we analyze the potential of U.N. peacekeeping for generating win-win solutions to international disputes. Thus, we are not concerned with peacekeeping roles that might lead to Pareto-malium, win-lose, or lose-lose solutions. Rather, we consider a particular kind of optimum solution in which all sides are better off. We explore when U.N. peacekeeping operations might help establish peace where none previously existed or provide the mechanism for cooperative actions by conflicting parties. In these ways, U.N. peacekeeping forces might be introduced so that the disputants might escape the traditional outcomes of international conflict and end up better off than under other proposed solutions.

We begin by describing the peacekeeping option and reviewing past applications. We then specify conditions that favor win-win solutions in peacekeeping. We conclude by analyzing several U.N. peacekeeping roles that may lead to win-win solutions; references to contemporary conflicts are provided.

The Concept of United Nations Peacekeeping

The term “peacekeeping” has been popularly used to designate a wide range of phenomena. The troops that participated in the invasion of Grenada were called the “Caribbean Peace Keeping Forces.” President Reagan even labeled the MX missile the “Peacekeeper.” Most commonly, peacekeeping is used to refer to any international effort involving an operational component to promote the termination of armed conflict or the resolution of a long-standing dispute. Such a definition encompasses military action to punish an aggressor, such as the Korean “police action,” as well as multilateral efforts at negotiation. In many cases, the use of the term seems to contradict the whole notion of “peace,” much less that such a condition should be preserved or “kept”.

1. A version of this paper will appear in Stuart Nagel (ed.) Resolving International Disputes Through Win-Win or SOS Solutions. The authors would like to thank Stuart Nagel and Jeremiah Sullivan for their comments and suggestions.
2. The various approaches to peace at the disposal of the Security Council are provided in Articles 33-51 of the United Nations Charter.
The United Nations itself has no established definition of peacekeeping. Nevertheless, the International Peace Academy, an organization devoted to study of ways to improve peacekeeping, offers some reasonable parameters for use of the term: “. . . the prevention, containment, moderation, and termination of hostilities, through the medium of a peaceful third party intervention, organized and directed internationally, using multinational forces of soldiers, police, and civilians to restore and maintain peace.” (quoted in Rikhye, Harbottle, and Egge, 1974: 11).

Peacekeeping has certain unique attributes that distinguish it from other forms of international intervention. One distinguishing attribute of peacekeeping is the performance of a non-coercive mission. In contrast, troops trained in traditional military maneuvers work to restore order, defend a given piece of territory, or seize and hold that piece of territory. The general goal of a traditional military operation is to deter an opponent or defeat that opponent in battle should deterrence fail; these are missions that include enforcement and coercion with military force.

Peacekeeping operations are significantly different in several ways. First, peacekeeping troops are not designed to restore order or stop the fighting between rival armies. Peacekeeping troops are usually deployed following a cease-fire agreement by the protagonists. They are not constituted for the mission of stopping bloodshed on a battlefield. Thus, unlike a collective security operation, peacekeeping troops are traditionally deployed as an interposition force after fighting is halted rather than prior to, or during, military conflict.

Peacekeeping forces also have the distinguishing feature of being lightly armed. A typical peacekeeping soldier is equipped with only a rifle, and peacekeeping units have access only to vehicles for transportation purposes (e.g., helicopters, personnel carriers, etc.) and not to those primarily intended for offensive military action (e.g., tanks, fighter planes, etc.). Although the military personnel of some poorer countries in the world might also have no more than rifles on their backs, peacekeeping troops are inherently restricted as such by a guiding philosophy rather than by economic or technological underdevelopment. Peacekeeping troops are lightly armed because their mission is non-traditional; they are designed to use those arms only in self-defense; peacekeeping troops have neither an offensive military mission nor the capability for one. Peacekeeping troops are not designed to alter the prevailing distribution of power in the area of their deployment nor do they seek to appear threatening to the disputants or the local population.

A third distinguishing conceptual component of peacekeeping is its neutrality. A collective enforcement operation presupposes that there is an identifiable aggressor, the target of enforcement action; in this case, there must be a determination of the victim and the guilty party by the United Nations or some other international agency. Peacekeeping forces do not brand one side or the other as responsible for the military conflict that they seek to mitigate.

Neutrality encompasses more than just the purpose of the force. The composition and activities of the troops also are impartial in character. Most U.N. peacekeeping forces are composed of personnel from non-aligned states; typically, Canada, Fiji, and Sweden have been among the most generous contributors of troops. Soldiers from the major powers, or those from other states with a vested interest in the conflict at hand (e.g., Saudi Arabia in Middle East operations), are explicitly not used. In contrast, one could hardly imagine an effective collective enforcement operation without the active participation of the major military powers. Yet, a similar contribution to peacekeeping jeopardizes its neutral character and perhaps its likelihood of success.

A final feature of peacekeeping operations is that states on whose territory the troops will be stationed must give permission. A parallel requirement in collective enforcement operations (needing the permission of the aggressor to undertake military actions against it) would be absurd. Peacekeeping operations recognize and respect the sovereignty of states and are assigned roles commensurate with the authority granted by the states involved. The absence of permission would jeopardize the mission of a peacekeeping operation. It is likely that any attempt to station troops in a country without its consent would precipitate military attacks on those forces by the host country. Not only would this defeat the purpose of limiting hostilities, but it would be suicidal for the peacekeeping troops in that they have neither the military equipment nor the training to resist the actions of a well-armed and determined enemy. Intervention without consent, under most scenarios, would also violate international legal standards (see Garvey, 1970).
Thus, peacekeeping involves the stationing of neutral and lightly armed interposition forces following a cessation of armed hostilities, with the permission of the state on whose territory they are deployed, in order to discourage a renewal of military conflict and promote an environment suitable for resolving the underlying dispute.

### Previous Applications of the U.N. Peacekeeping Strategy

Despite the apparent attractiveness of the peacekeeping option and the limited consensus in the Security Council needed for its exercise, there have been only nine peacekeeping operations since 1945.3 These are listed in Table 1.

Despite being few in number, U.N. peacekeeping operations have been employed in several different types of situations. Most commonly, U.N. peacekeeping forces have been deployed to prevent a serious situation from expanding to a full-scale war or if war has occurred, to prevent an expansion to other participants. The U.N. force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) was put in place in order to head off a confrontation between Greek and Turkish communities on the island as well as deter external intervention by Greece and Turkey. Similarly, the second stage of the U.N. Emergency Force (UNEF II) was a part of the cease-fire agreement ending the 1973 Yom Kippur War, thereby lessening the likelihood of superpower intervention and possible direct confrontation.

Beyond those situations, U.N. peacekeeping troops have been sent to internationalized civil wars, such as in the Congo (ONUC) and Lebanon (UNIFIL). Their purposes were to secure the withdrawal of foreign forces from the areas involved and promote long-term internal stability. The most recent peacekeeping operations represent something of a change for U.N. operations. The mandates for the operations in Namibia (UNTAG) and Cambodia (UNTAC) include provisions for monitoring democratic elections, a largely new form of peacekeeping.

Despite the variety of situations in which peacekeeping troops have been used, their absence was notable in Cold War disputes. To some extent, this may be because the superpowers have used the Security Council veto to block any U.N. actions that they disfavored.4 Yet the United Nations has traditionally ignored most conflicts with a direct involvement between the superpowers (e.g., the Berlin Crises) or played a minimal role (e.g., Cuban Missile Crisis). Proxy conflicts between the superpowers (e.g., Angola and some Middle East conflicts) have only prompted U.N. intervention when the prospects of direct superpower intervention would have entailed

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**Table 1. United Nations Peacekeeping Operations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operation</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United Nations Operation in the Congo (ONUC)</td>
<td>1960–1964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP)</td>
<td>1964–present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF)</td>
<td>1974–present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)</td>
<td>1978–present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Nations Transnational Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC)</td>
<td>1991–present</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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3. Information is current as of January 2, 1992. In addition to peacekeeping operations, there have been 11 peace observation missions carried out by the United Nations since 1945 (United Nations, 1990). Peace observation differs from peacekeeping in that observer forces are usually smaller (one individual can constitute a force) are not even lightly armed, and do not carry out all of the same duties including acting as an interposition force. A complete review of all peacekeeping and observation missions, including those before 1945 is contained in James (1990a).

4. It is possible to bypass the Security Council by having the General Assembly assume some responsibility for peace and security affairs. The “police action” in Korea and the deployment of the first peacekeeping operation (UNEF I) were achieved through General Assembly. Nevertheless, over the past three decades, this practice has declined and the Security Council has reasserted its primary responsibility for peace and security affairs.
high costs. Otherwise, U.N. peacekeeping has stayed at the periphery of the international security system. One might expect, however, that the end of the Cold War might facilitate the use of peacekeeping troops in situations heretofore precluded by superpower tensions.

Previous U.N. peacekeeping operations, except for the most recent two, have followed the traditional roles outlined in the previous section. Each was a band-aid, put in place following a cease-fire with the hope that peaceful and successful negotiations would follow. Despite calls for a permanent U.N. peacekeeping force and proposals for the use of peacekeeping forces in unconventional roles, the basic ad hoc U.N. peacekeeping operation has remained largely unchanged.

The overall record of U.N. peacekeeping operations is one of mixed success. One can evaluate peacekeeping success according to the operation’s ability to (1) limit armed conflict and (2) promote conflict resolution (Diehl, 1988). Using these two criteria, several operations can be considered successful in limiting violence in the area of deployment, although to varying degrees. For example, the Golan Heights have been quiet over the past two decades of United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) deployment. Similarly, there have been few serious incidents, except for the 1974 Turkish invasion, on Cyprus.

With respect to the second criterion of success, only UNEF II might be said to have achieved some measure of conflict resolution. The stability offered by UNEF II provided an environment conducive to the signing of the Camp David accords. By the time UNEF II was withdrawn in 1979, the prospect of another war between Israel and Egypt was significantly reduced. More typically, U.N. peacekeeping operations have lingered for years, incapable of being withdrawn for fear of renewed fighting (i.e., violence is abated, but without resolving the underlying conflict). The operations in Cyprus and Lebanon continue today, testaments to the seeming intractability of their respective circumstances.

If one accepts a less stringent and more ambiguous criterion that peacekeeping operations be judged merely against the option of total inaction, then all U.N. peacekeeping operations might be considered successful (even the widely derided UNIFIL operation). Indeed, there are positive results from U.N. peacekeeping, but few, if any, achieved what might be called win-win solutions.

The reasons that U.N. peacekeeping operations are not all successful are complex. Several factors involve the authorization and conduct of the operations themselves. Frequently, a vague mandate or poor logistics (Mackinlay, 1989) complicate a peacekeeping mission, as can difficult geographic terrain for patrols (Diehl, 1988). Yet, certain other factors prevent U.N. peacekeeping from achieving better net outcomes. Most prominent are the non-cooperation of third parties to the conflict and the perceived partiality of peacekeeping troops (Diehl, 1988; Nelson, 1984). For both of these reasons, various protagonists often do not believe that their interests are served by the presence of peacekeeping troops. For example, Israel felt that UNIFIL (and the United Nations in general) was biased toward the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO); not surprisingly, Israel took matters into its own hands in 1982, smashing through UNIFIL lines in its invasion of Lebanon.

Overall, the record of U.N. peacekeeping is a reasonably good one. Yet, peacekeeping has been applied only a few times over the past fifty years and while somewhat successful, there is much room for improvement. In order for U.N. peacekeeping to offer win-win solutions for international disputes, two modifications of existing practices are necessary. First, U.N. peacekeeping operations must be deployed only in circumstances that maximize the cooperation of the protagonists and the perceived neutrality of the U.N. troops. This means that peacekeeping is not necessarily a strategy that is appropriate for all threats to international peace and security. Second, new roles (beyond those of a traditional interposition force following a cease-fire) need to be devised to enhance the prospects that the use of U.N. troops will result in a situation in which all sides might be better off. This involves more creative thinking in applying the peacekeeping strategy rather than a fundamental overhaul of peacekeeping forces. We address these concerns and provide contemporary examples in the following two sections.
Conditions Favorable for Win-Win Solutions

Although peacekeeping troops may continue to be used in a variety of situations, the prospects for their use in achieving win-win solutions are best only under limited conditions. Below we discuss, ceteris paribus, the general environment under which success is most probable.\(^5\)

The first set of conditions relates to the kind of dispute. First, win-win outcomes are most likely to occur in an interstate dispute, as opposed to a civil or internationalized civil war (Nwafor, 1970). There are several reasons for this. In the case of a civil war, the peacekeeping operation may inherently favor the interests of the challenged government. A cease-fire tends to favor the protagonist that benefits the most from the continuation of the status quo. For example, after pressure on the challenged government is relieved, it may win some political support from a populace longing for stability. In addition, the ruling elites retain control during the period of peacekeeping deployment; finally, there is little incentive for the challenged government to grant concessions in negotiations or create conditions under which peacekeeping forces can be withdrawn. From the viewpoint of rebel groups in an intrastate conflict, the peacekeeping operation offers the benefits of stopping the fighting, but puts rebel groups at a political disadvantage in future efforts to overthrow the government. Conversely, an interstate conflict offers greater potential that all sides might benefit from a freezing of the status quo brought about by the peacekeeping forces.

In addition, border disputes might be conducive for peacekeeping operations that lead to win-win solutions. This may seem surprising at first glance, given that territorial disputes appear zero-sum (i.e. only one side can control a given piece of territory). Yet, acquisition of territory through military force is difficult and relatively rare; only eight percent of all territorial changes have been achieved through military means since 1945 (Goertz and Diehl, 1992). The stationing of peacekeeping troops in a disputed area provides a solution that prevents one or both sides from coming out worse off by virtue of a fruitless confrontation over the area. Peacekeeping troops reduce the possibility of a militarized dispute, and thereby ensure that neither side is worse off because of losses from such a dispute. Furthermore, none of the protagonists would have to fear the loss of strategic advantage from a possible unilateral cease-fire.

The second set of conditions concerns the protagonists. Peacekeeping forces are more likely to promote win-win solutions in instances of dyadic disputes than in multiparty confrontations. The reconciliation of two disputants’ preferences is difficult enough. Aggregating the preferences of multiple states and actors may be all but impossible in such a way that all come out ahead. In the case of peacekeeping, this means that conflicts such as the Arab–Israeli one will be difficult to solve through peacekeeping (or any other approach) because of multiple actors involved.

The third condition relates to the military and political relationship between the disputants. The assumption is that win-win solutions are most likely in conflicts between disputants of approximately equal power. It is under these circumstances that a win-lose solution is less likely, unless the status quo circumstances strongly favors one side or the other. Among relatively equal actors, the prospects that one side or the other can achieve its respective desired outcome through military force is limited. The imposition of peacekeeping forces provides several benefits for the protagonists that allows them to escape a stalemate. First, it stops the fighting and ongoing losses. Second, peacekeeping offers insurance against future losses. Third, it offers a face-saving way out of the dispute for all sides. Finally, it allows the claims of all parties to be retained for later negotiation and mediation.

Finally, peacekeeping operations offer the best chance as a win-win application when they facilitate conflict resolution (for example, see the discussion on election supervision below), rather than being a solution in themselves. We noted above that peacekeeping operations do not have a good track record in resolving underlying conflict, although they are effective in mitigating the most violent manifestations of that conflict. Although peacekeeping may not constitute a win-win solution in the formulation stage of the policy process, peacekeeping may lead to one in the implementation phase. As neutral entities, peacekeeping troops can provide

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\(^5\) There are of course some inherent costs and risks for states that have peacekeeping forces on their soil. See James (1990b).
the assurance of a fair implementation of an agreement, rather than requiring that disputants rely on the good faith of their opponents.

Thus, peacekeeping forces have the best opportunity to implement win-win solutions for international disputes that are dyadic, interstate, involve equally matched protagonists, and deal with border areas. Nevertheless, the successful use of peacekeeping troops in such circumstances requires innovative applications. In the next section, we offer specific roles, with operational examples, for peacekeeping troops in pursuit of win-win solutions.

**Win-Win Roles for U.N. Peacekeeping Troops**

Despite their inherent limitations and the constrained conditions under which they might be effective, U.N. peacekeeping forces can offer many opportunities that provide mutual benefits to disputants. Some of those opportunities include peacekeeping troops employed as traditional interposition forces between hostile parties. More often than not, however, peacekeeping troops can be part of win-win solutions only if applied in unconventional ways. The most prominent of these are outlined below.

**Trip-Wire**

The first new role for U.N. peacekeeping troops could be as a trip-wire against surprise attack from either disputant. In this role, U.N. peacekeeping troops would be placed in or near a defined border region. The peacekeeping forces would monitor military movements in the area and serve as a mediator for any disputes that arose over the cease-fire agreement. Surprise attacks (by either protagonist) would have to pass through the peacekeeping forces, thereby sounding an alarm for the international community and the country being attacked as well as taking the moral high ground away from the attacker. The use of peacekeeping forces as a trip-wire is not a new concept; indeed, it corresponds largely to the traditional roles assumed by peacekeeping missions. What would be different in this proposed application is the deployment of peacekeeping forces prior to (instead of following) the initial onset of armed conflict (Rikhye, 1989). In this fashion, peacekeeping forces exercise preventive diplomacy instead of acting as band-aids for international crises that have already occurred.

The placement of peacekeeping troops as a preventive buffer offers benefits to all protagonists. First, the trip-wire troops provide an early warning mechanism against attack that would not otherwise be present. They also provide a moral and political disincentive for an opponent to attack. Second, peacekeeping troops assure that accidental engagements (which by definition neither side desires) do not occur because of the buffer or are reconciled without escalation.

Third, peacekeeping forces are considerably less expensive for the disputants than having their own troops stationed in the area. With peacekeeping troops, whose expenses are primarily borne by the United Nations, the disputants can demobilize or reassign troops that might normally be stationed near that border area. Finally, United Nations troops would present neither a threat to the disputants (as might American or Soviet forces), nor would they favor one side’s position over the other’s. In general, the use of U.N. troops as a trip-wire is superior to almost any other multinational arrangement and superior to the status quo situation of proximate hostile forces.

There are several potential contemporary applications of peacekeeping in this respect. The substitution of allied troops in southern Iraq near the Kuwait border with U.N. observers represents a similar circumstance. Iraq benefits by having the withdrawal of foreign forces that did so much damage to its land during the Persian Gulf War, and it regains some of the sovereignty it lost. Kuwait retains some of the protection it had with the Western troops (another Iraqi invasion would presumably prompt a similar Allied response), but it does not have to deal with the domestic, regional, and international problems that attend to having Western troops stationed in the area. The United States, Britain, France, and other states also benefit by having the financial and political burdens of large scale troop deployment in the area lifted.

Peacekeeping troops might also be deployed as a trip-wire in several other tense border areas, prior to armed conflict. Such troops might replace current unarmed observers in the Kashmir region of India as a buffer against
Pakistan. They might also be placed in northern Chad to form a deterrent to Libyan adventurism. Finally, one might even see peacekeeping troops positioned along the borders of China with Vietnam, India, or the former Soviet Union; in each of those cases, the border areas are heavily militarized and have a history of violent confrontations and several wars.

**Election Supervision**

We indicated above that peacekeeping operations would, in many cases, experience difficulty in civil conflicts. Yet they may play a constructive role, benefitting all sides, when they act to supervise elections intended to resolve internal conflict. Resolving factional conflict in a state by democratic elections is becoming more common; popular sentiment rather than force of arms then decides which groups will control the government. United Nations peacekeeping forces would be charged with several tasks in the electoral supervisory process. First, they would patrol the area in which the election is held seeking to limit campaign violence that has become common in many parts of the world. Second and most importantly, the peacekeeping forces would monitor the election process to ensure that the fair and regular procedures were followed; in effect they would be on hand to report (and thereby deter) ballot tampering or other irregularities on election day. The peacekeeping force might also assume some government functions (e.g., local police patrols) in the transition period prior to the election.

Using peacekeeping troops as election supervisors is a win-win solution that offers several advantages. Presumably both sides desire an end to bloodshed and hence the agreement for elections. Peacekeeping forces help ensure that fighting will not be renewed, thereby jeopardizing peace agreements and perhaps costing the lives of thousands of supporters on all sides. The presence of peacekeeping troops also prevents an opponent from manipulating election results or from using claims of fraud to invalidate or ignore those results should it lose. In effect, peacekeeping troops guarantee the legitimacy of the election. Without peacekeeping troops, conflict could be renewed during or after the election and both sides (even the election winner) could be worse off—the whole purpose of elections is to establish order and prevent extra-constitutional challenges to the government.

The only completed case of peacekeeping troops serving in this capacity was in Namibia (see Jaster, 1990 for details). There, peacekeeping forces kept a watch on South African troops and on indigenous forces to make sure that the election signalling Namibia’s independence would go smoothly. Despite some problems, that peacekeeping operation was largely a success. The same strategy might be applied to other states when warring groups agree to allow democratic elections. The most obvious is Cambodia, where four factions at the time of this writing have agreed to hold elections sometime in the future. United Nations supervision of the elections would be superior to any other arrangement; the United Nations Transnational Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) has been created to perform that function. It is unlikely that peaceful elections could be held without such presence. A regional force composed of interested states might cast doubts on the neutrality of the force and disrupt the process. A similar problem was encountered in Liberia when one of the rebel groups questioned Ivory Coast’s participation in an African multinational force, arguing that Ivory Coast was partisan in its dealings with the Liberian civil war.

Proposed agreements to end civil conflict and hold elections in El Salvador and Angola might also include peacekeeping provisions for election supervision. The large flow of arms over the years into those countries and the tremendous political distrust among factions makes peacekeeping a virtual necessity as part of a win-win solution to those conflicts.

**Humanitarian Assistance**

A second possible win-win role for peacekeeping troops in a civil conflict is providing humanitarian assistance (Gordenker and Weiss, 1992). During many civil conflicts, control over the country is split between the central

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6. There are, of course, some examples of observation forces acting as election supervisors. League of Nations observers conducted several plebiscites during the 1920s. See Wainhouse (1966).
government and various rebel groups. Combined with the disorder caused by the civil war, this prevents many essential services (e.g., food supply and medical care) from being delivered to the population and usually creates a flood of refugees as well. There are international agencies (e.g., International Red Cross) that provide emergency assistance to these victims. Yet, such efforts are often hindered by the challenged government or by rebel groups out of a fear that relief supplies might fall into the hands of their enemy troops and contribute to the war effort.

U.N. peacekeeping forces could provide protection for relief agencies to ensure that the supplies would reach the affected populations without interference from the disputants. This benefits all sides in the conflict as well as being optimal for the distressed population. Under the aegis of a U.N. operation, central government and the rebel forces are relieved of the burden of providing food and other assistance to those in the areas they control (and they also are relieved of the bad publicity attendant to pictures on CNN of starving children and emaciated adults). The affected population not only receives the supplies it needs, but it also is likely to be provided with additional assistance as international donors will be more generous when they know that supplies will reach their intended destination. The assurance that food and medical supplies will go to affected populations benefits both sides.

Several areas of the world, torn by war and famine, might benefit by the use of peacekeeping troops in this fashion. Sudan, in the middle of a civil war at this writing, seems to be urgently in need of this solution. Similarly, problems caused by civil war in El Salvador, Sri Lanka, and the Philippines could be alleviated by the U.N. forces supervising and protecting humanitarian relief efforts.

**Arms Control Verification**

Another new role for peacekeeping forces that allows for mutual benefits is in arms control verification. An essential part of a modern arms control agreement is that each party must be assured that the other signatories will live up to the terms of the agreement or at least that violations will be detected early enough to permit a timely response. Not surprisingly, it has often been disagreements over the verification procedures that have sidetracked or derailed arms control agreements rather than conflicts over substantive provisions of those agreements.

Peacekeeping forces offer the potential to be a verifying agency for arms agreements. Most conventionally, peacekeeping forces might verify troop reductions or withdrawal within a given area. Traditional peacekeeping operations have performed this role in the past, as in the Israeli and Egyptian disengagement following the Yom Kippur War (UNEF II). A more innovative activity could have peacekeeping forces performing on-site inspections; one could envision that they might supervise the destruction of weapons or verify that troops levels and weapons deployment are within prescribed limits. The most ambitious use of peacekeeping personnel in arms control verification involves aerial surveillance (Krepon and Tracey, 1990). There, peacekeeping forces would be equipped with their own planes, satellites, radar, and other intelligence gathering mechanisms to verify arms agreements through international technical means.

The use of international peacekeeping troops for verification offers several advantages over national verification. One might expect that achieving arms agreements that are in the self-interest of all parties will be easier if the option of international peacekeeping verification is available. Furthermore, all sides are provided with unbiased estimates of arms control compliance, rather than relying on what may be varying, politically motivated internal reports (e.g. the phantom “missile gap” of the late 1950s and early 1960s). Accordingly there are likely to be fewer disputes over verification. Moreover, peacekeeping forces provide mechanisms to resolve disputes when they do occur.

Peacekeeping operations in arms control verification also lessen the fear of espionage that accompanies the gathering of information in another country. National on-site inspectors are likely to be tempted to gather other strategic information during visits to military installations. National technical means may also be used to collect information in addition to that related to verification. Verification by peacekeeping forces eliminates that possibility as information gathering is in the hands of neutral parties and involves only matters related to the arms control agreement.
As noted above, peacekeeping forces have already performed this role in a very limited fashion (i.e. troop withdrawals as part of a cease-fire agreement). Successful international arms verification has also occurred in a limited fashion. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspects nuclear energy facilities under provisions of the Non-Proliferation Treaty in order to verify that nuclear materials are not diverted to weapons purposes. Win-win solutions in this area could be applied to almost any arms agreement in Europe that reduced troops or eliminated a class of weapons (indeed, peacekeeping troops might have been suitable for verifying the recent INF Treaty). They might also supervise proposed bans on chemical weapons production. In either case, and dozens of more hypothetical situations, peacekeeping forces could insure that the agreement is faithfully executed (as both sides desire) without the accompanying intrusion common to national means of verification.

**Naval Peacekeeping**

Another innovative role for peacekeeping forces might be as a naval patrol. Previously, peacekeeping operations have been almost exclusively land-based, except for some instances of helicopter reconnaissance. U.N. personnel could be deployed on ships flying under the U.N. flag. Duties might include escorting neutral shipping through dangerous waters in a war zone. This would discourage belligerents from attacking neutral shipping or conducting illegal search and seizures in international waters. U.N. forces could also conduct mine sweeping operations in the contested area.

A naval peacekeeping force might also play a role in the verification of naval treaties (Rikhye, 1989). For example, it could verify those provisions of the Sea Bed Arms Control Treaty which prohibits the placement of nuclear weapons on the ocean floor. It could play a similar role with regard to regional arrangements, such as the Treaty of Tlatelolco which established a nuclear-free zone in Latin America; the peacekeeping force could verify that signatory states did not place nuclear weapons in the sea bed beneath their territorial waters.

With respect to naval peacekeeping during an ongoing war, a U.N. operation would be preferable to any multinational operation or no international effort at all. United Nations flagged escorts would not be suspected by the disputants of performing strategic roles which might exceed the immediate peacekeeping requirements; this would not be the case, for example, if the United States Navy assumed an escort role. In addition, it would be less likely, given the acceptance of a U.N. naval force by all the parties, to raise concerns of national sovereignty stemming from incursions into territorial waters. The international community as a whole benefits from ensuring the continuation of commerce in a war-torn area and by limiting the potential for war expansion; the combatants avoid a situation in which both sides lose by having supplies cut-off and their economies even more adversely affected by war.

Naval peacekeeping by the United Nations has never been tried, but it was first suggested during the Iran–Iraq war. When attacks by Iran and Iraq against each other’s naval targets and tankers, irrespective of the latter’s registry, escalated, Kuwait made an appeal to the United Nations for protection of neutral shipping. The United States and other countries responded unilaterally to this request, by reflagging ships and providing escorts for them through the Persian Gulf. The Soviet Union and other states in the immediate area grew apprehensive of the large Western naval presence and unsuccessfully argued for a U.N. force to replace national navies in the area. Among the unfortunate incidents was the shooting down of an civilian Iranian airliner by a U.S. Navy ship that mistakenly thought it was under attack. Had U.N. naval peacekeeping forces been in the area, it is unlikely that this incident and other attacks on Gulf shipping would have occurred, or at least been as numerous. Naval peacekeeping might be a win-win application in similar conflicts that threatened the safe passage of shipping through a given area (e.g. Suez Canal, Panama Canal).

**Drug Interdiction**

Another new use of peacekeeping forces as a win-win solution involves their use in stopping the production and distribution of narcotics (Rikhye, 1989). United Nations troops could be used to search for and destroy fields of

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7. There have been some minor incidents of U.N. peacekeeping forces assuming a naval role. UNEF I included a Landing Ship Tank, which provided practice for troops loading and unloading personnel and vehicles on beaches. The UNSF also had five coastal vehicles that provided supplies to the peacekeeping troops and the local population.
opium and coca; this could include aerial surveillance as well as ground operations. Presumably, the U.N. troops would work in conjunction with local authorities in the mission. Peacekeeping forces might also monitor air and sea traffic in and over international waters that are known corridors for drug transit.

The use of peacekeeping forces as drug enforcers represents a positive sum game for countries that grow most of the narcotics as well as for those that provide markets for the products. Host countries frequently cannot eradicate illegal crops on their own. Yet getting direct assistance (e.g. personnel and equipment) from narcotic consuming states typically causes serious domestic political problems; the host government is often criticized for relinquishing its sovereignty, and under such conditions drug lords are able to make nationalistic appeals against drug eradication efforts. United Nations peacekeeping troops can provide the necessary assistance, but without the political costs associated with outside intervention.

Similarly, states with a large drug market may not want to devote the resources necessary for drug eradication efforts in other states. Furthermore, efforts to stem the flow of drugs in or over international waters pose certain legal and jurisdictional problems. Even without those barriers, the military establishment in those states is often ill-trained and reluctant to assume drug interdiction missions far from home. A peacekeeping force offers a professional cadre of drug fighters armed presumably with international legal authority. Drug consuming states are also spared the criticism that often stems from their efforts to curb the supply of drugs when little corresponding effort is made to temper demand.

The disputes that the United States has had with Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia might be ameliorated if U.N. peacekeeping troops were introduced into the drug war. Those efforts might also be more effective than weak national programs financed by the United States. Similarly, the golden triangle in Asia, crossing several national boundaries, seems a good target for peacekeeping and drug interdiction.

Conclusion

Intervention by the United Nations is by no means guaranteed success. Furthermore, its primary mechanism for intervention, peacekeeping, may not be an appropriate solution for all conflict that threatens international peace and security. Nevertheless, U.N. peacekeeping operations offer the potential to alter the joint outcomes of many conflicts in such a way that all parties, and the international community, are better off than through any other mechanism.

We have noted that traditional applications of U.N. peacekeeping have produced some favorable results, but have not always provided win-win solutions for the protagonists. Our first contribution has been to specify the conditions under which U.N. peacekeeping is most likely to produce win-win solutions. We argue that U.N. peacekeeping will most likely lead to all sides being better off when used to implement agreements in dyadic, interstate conflicts between equally matched opponents. At first, this may seem to limit seriously the use of the peacekeeping strategy. Yet we have discussed several new roles (e.g. humanitarian assistance, election supervision) for U.N. peacekeeping troops that can transcend these limits. We also note several other applications of peacekeeping strategy that offer the potential for benefitting all sides to a conflict, including affected third parties. These include roles in arms control verification, naval peacekeeping, and drug interdiction. A common aspect of all these roles is that they provide collective goods over and above any that might be provided by the conflicting parties or by any third party that might be involved. Because of this, peacekeeping operations may lead to outcomes that exceed the best initial expectations of all the parties involved.

United Nations peacekeeping operations have failed to reach their potential because of two key problems. One is their misapplication to situations for which they are inappropriate. There is an increased risk that this mistake may be repeated in the future given calls for a “new international order,” and an enhanced role for the United Nations, includes suggestions for peacekeeping troops in a variety of contexts. A second problem has been the use of peacekeeping troops only in traditional roles established by the UNEF I precedent. We believe that our analysis has demonstrated that U.N. peacekeeping troops have great potential for generating joint positive solutions to international conflicts. This is possible only if we recognize the limits of their applicability on the one hand and expand the horizons of their roles on the other.
References


