

INDIA'S ROLE IN UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

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Introduction

From time immemorial it had been India's cherished stand to see fostering of a world order that would be founded on harmony, peace and cooperation among the nations and people and settlements of disputes if any through peaceful and amicable dialogue. India has been a member of the United Nations since its inception on 24th October, 1945. India has always been supporting its policies of maintaining international peace and security on the one hand and contributing in socio-economic activities to make the UN more effective and vital on the other. Indian officials, politicians and bureaucrats have served the UN in different activities. The role of India in peace-keeping/ peace making operations in different parts of the world was greatly appreciated by the international community. That is why Indian officials are demanded in various capacities in the challenging and multifaceted activities of the UN as they have worked with diligence, efficiency and impartiality. Furthermore, it took part in all key issues with soul and heart.

The United Nations was designed to make possible lasting freedom and independence for all its members and the main objective of United Nations is the maintenance of international peace and security. The UN tried to solve all conflicts by peaceful methods. Under the UN charter member states are obliged to accept and carry out the Security Council's decisions. When the dispute is brought to the attention of Security Council, its first action is to recommend to the conflicting parties to reach an agreement by peaceful methods. In some cases, the council itself undertakes investigation and mediation. So in this way peacekeeping operations are an important instrument to maintain international peace and security. And the UN peacekeepers are referred to as Blue Helmets because of their light blue helmets. Peacekeeping forces are contributed by member states on a voluntary basis. The main contributors are European nations, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and African nations. They are not heavily armed but they are there to assist the peace process

In spite of a sense of disillusionment with the United Nations in the yearly years of our independence, India never lost faith in the Organization. India has committed to strengthening the United Nations and its capacity for the achievement of its purposes and principles.

Objective behind the establishment of the UN were, the maintenance of international peace and stability, India spread no efforts in contributing to its activities in this area. Time and again, India has risked the lives of its soldiers in peace-keeping operations of the United Nations, not only for any strategic gain, but in the service of an ideal. India's ideal was and remains strengthening the world body, and international peace and security.

Concept of peace keeping

Peace-keeping is one of the measures initiated by the United Nations as parts of overall process for management of conflict. As of non-enforcement procedure, it began its life in 1946 as a relatively simply means of international observation of the manner with which parties in conflict compelled with UN resolution to cease hostilities. Since that time, peace-keeping has evolved in size, complexity, legitimacy, and effectiveness. Peace-keeping is "an extraordinary military art because it calls for the use of soldiers not to fight and win, but to prevent fighting, to maintain ceasefires, and to provide order while negotiations are being conducted" (Arther M.Cox,1971,p.19;Faridi,2008,p.577-584). It is the process of de-escalation. It is also a process "involving multiple layered responsibilities" (Larry L.Fabian,1971,p.19; Faridi,2008,p.577-584).

But before discussing the role of India's peacekeeping, it is important to note what peacekeeping really involves. It is about keeping warring factions at bay from each other in an internal conflict /civil war; quite literally coming in their way or between them. It can also be about keeping two nations which are adversaries, at bay. There can be a breakdown of order with the nation no longer able to support itself for a variety of reasons and peacekeepers step in to revive it. The situations can be quite different from each other with the UN peacekeepers either invited to maintain the peace post the signing of an agreement between parties to the conflict or it could be a forced intervention under Chapter 7 of the UN charter. The latter could involve the use of force which is specifically authorized with invocation of Chapter 7 for a given period of time. The UN missions in Bosnia and in Somalia were under chapter 7 which calls for peace enforcement. Majority of the mission are under chapter 6 which envisages only self-protection while undertaking peacekeeping. This

usually involves a mission undertaking demobilization, destruction of military wherewithal, cantoning of the disarmed cadres, their transportation and rehabilitation, finally leading to an electoral process and establishment of a democratically elected government. This is of course the most desirable process but hardly ever will situations follow the chartered course. At different stages there will be allegations and counter allegations, attempts to get more out of concessions granted, or renegade actions by those opposed to the peace process. The mission in Democratic Republic of Congo is now into its 17th year and the mission in South Sudan is headed similarly. There have been some marked successes such as Mozambique and Cambodia and well-marked disaster such as Rwanda where the biggest genocide of civilians took place even with the presence of the UN peacekeepers. The most challenging situations are under chapter 6.5, when the mandate is under chapter 6 but the situation warrants robust action under chapter 7. It is then up to local commanders to decide and later justify. Inaction by the UN in Rwanda led to genocide of 8 lakh victims.

India in the UN Peace-Keeping Operations is evident of its six fold activities

Chander Prakash (Chander Prakash, 2003, pp.345-47) has spelt out the reasons for India's willingness to participate in UN peace keeping operations in various war ridden areas:

Firstly, India, despite its limitations in terms of military and financial fields, took part in maximum number of UN peace-keeping operations. Though its participation in all activities may not always be in large numbers, yet its commitments and sense of concern have always been very right. Its involvement and conviction towards these activities can be gauged from the fact that even while it was engaged in war with its neighbors', it supplied troops for such UN activities. By going through the detail profile of its contributions from 1947 to 1955, during the 23 UN operations, a clear picture of India's participation could be ascertained.

Secondly, India did not only send some soldiers to meet out the UN requirements, but also played a key role in many operations. Not only did its defense forces perform a collective role in a well disciplined and objective manner, but it also provides leadership to some important missions, such as Sinai, Yemen, Cyprus, and Namibia etc. were to provide force commanders. Besides, its officers served as member of supervisory commissions, military adviser to Secretary General and observers in number of the UN activities.

Thirdly, the list of important defense and civilian

personalities, associated with the UN peace-keeping activities, from India is quite long. To name all of them is not feasible. However, some of the important persons who served in the UN peace-keeping along with their assignment were.

Fourthly, India has not only been associated with such activities in implementing the UN directives, but has also helped the global organization in developing and conceptualizing the framework of UN peace-keeping. Though its active participation in the debates it tried its best to highlight the anomalies associated with this concept. Simultaneously, at present it is making all out efforts to finalize the norms of this framework in the changed context of global order.

Fifthly, India has tried to set up a role-model through its activities associated with these operations. Through their exemplary courage, 88 Indian personnel have lost their lives in course of these operations. Among them were three doctors who sacrificed their lives while providing medical care in Somalia. This led to an unprecedented hue and cry by the opposition parties in parliament. But then government did not withdraw its commitment in between. Besides peace-keeping is costing India very heavily. Approximately, India is spending US \$ 16 million per year on such activities. Simultaneously, it has increased the UN budget which ultimately has hiked India's contribution to UN. But despite its poor economic conditions India has cleared all its dues to the UN pool in contrast to the major powers that have yet to pay huge share of their contribution towards this end (Ibid, p.49).

Finally, not only the past and present role of India was very significant, but it is even concerned about the future responsibilities in this context. Visualizing the growing number of peace-keeping operations there is always a great need of troops for that purpose. In this regard, due to various hazards in such missions, numbers of countries contributing troops have decreased. But India, keeping its long tradition and commitment to global peace and tranquility, took an important decision in 1995 to commit a Brigade Group to the UN Standby Force arrangement so that peace-operations would not be delayed due to lack of forces at UN command. This activity of India is likely to strengthen UN role of peace-keeping in future.

UN peacekeeping and India's National Strategy

India's sustained contribution to UN peacekeeping apart from generating goodwill among nations has acted as one of the key factors that support India's aspiration for playing a greater role in UN affairs. Although Chapter 7 of the UN charter provided allowance for use of military

personnel from different countries in maintaining international peace and security, there was no agreement on size, location and balance of forces. As a result its practice has evolved on an experimental basis. In fact, peacekeeping was an invention of the UN Secretariat and it is not explicitly stated anywhere in the Charter.

India has been actively contributing to the UN peacekeeping missions since independence in different forms beginning with a medical mission in Korea. Ever since military personnel began to be deployed for peacekeeping, India has been a key contributor beginning with 1956 Arab-Israeli war. Later India's contribution towards ensuring peace in Congo proved vital to the country's stability after decolonization. At present, there are 8680 Indian personnel in 9 of the 14 peace-keeping operations. India's contribution is not only reflective of the objectives set out in the UN charter, but also has generated goodwill in different parts of the world especially in the developing world. Furthermore, it has served India's national security interest in her near and extended neighborhood.

Donning the blue helmet for more than five decades, India has been singled out as having one of the longest and most consistent records of participation in UN peacekeeping operations. India has participated in 43 out of the 63 UN peacekeeping operations established since the inception of the UN (Krishnasamy Kabilan, 2010, pp.225-246). More than 100,000 Indian Troops, Military Observers and Civilian Police Officers have participated in UN peace operations in various troubled spots across the globe (Ibid). Of course, to say India's generous contributions are driven by more than just international goodwill is not an overstatement. Serving the needs of other states by contributing troops to UN peacekeeping operations enables India to pursue its own interests. New Delhi's pro-active foreign policy agenda is driven by politico-strategic interests, such as realizing its ambitions for 'great power' recognition in a globalizing world and a strong desire of being considered as a favorable candidate for a permanent seat on the Security Council (Krishnasamy Kabilan, 2003, pp.263-280). To most policy makers the UN peacekeeping operations in Somalia (1992-1994) were a debacle, however to India it was a grand success (Krishnasamy Kabilan, 2001, pp.27-46). The Indian brigade, as part of UNOSOM.II, had a primary responsibility of providing humanitarian relief to people caught in the intense warring zones. It had operational responsibility for one-third of Somalia, an area of 173000 square kilometers, the largest ever controlled by any contingent. India's entry in Somalia as part of UNOSOM

II came at a time when internal fighting was at its peak. The impact of violent conflicts resulting in massacres, terror tactics such as rape, extortion and physical brutality have had major psychological impacts on local populations. The painful experience of being physically abused by male uniformed military rebels made uniformed military peacekeepers unpopular even though they are there to help. Research by Medica's psychological-team indicated that raped women mostly feel uncomfortable and unable to have any sort of relationship with men (Cockburn Cynthia, 1998, p207). The research indicated that even women who had not suffered direct physical abuse from men tend to alienate themselves from the masculine culture that seemed to be particularly implicated in the barbarism (Ibid). The Indian contingent had a very different agenda in its area of responsibility, Baidoa. It focused intensely on combining the often conflicting roles of coercive disarmament and humanitarian relief to the civilian population.

India's success in Somalia can be measured qualitatively through the views expressed by various actors. The local praised Indian troops for their remarkable role in converting a war-torn area into one of peace and hope, as follows: 'we admire the Indians for their human touch. Prior to their arrival, we used to have constant clan fights. But they taught us how to love each other. Love and harmony will be in our mind to remember the Indians' (Bhatia Sidharth, 1994, 21 July). In Somalia Indian soldiers were even seen as family members. One village civilian elder in Baidoa claimed that 'Indian soldiers are like my sons. They are free to live here (Ibid). The Indian contingent in Somalia was strongly perceived to be 'understandable to the locals' (Ibid). India's role in the UN peace operation in Somalia gained the admiration of even General Farah Aided, a leader of the opposing warring faction in the Somali civil conflict and branded by the West as the "enemy", stated the following: 'on behalf of the Somali National Alliance, the Somali people and on my own behalf, I would like to congratulate and praise the Indian troops for their good start in restoring peace' (The Hindu, 1994, 21 January). India has also received praises from the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia, Mr. James Victor Gbeho who commented on the 'excellent performance and superb role played by the Indian contingent in the peacekeeping efforts of UNOSOM II (Indian Express, 1995, 9 January). In a letter to the Indian government, he praised the Indian force commander for his mature guidance and exemplary leadership' (Ibid).

India's peacekeeping missions

India's peace-keeping role is paradoxical: it is accused of being belligerent in the regions but has also

acted as a global peace-keeper. For more than 63 years of the United Nations has been mediating between the two belligerents, India and Pakistan quarrels over Kashmir continue to haunt the South Asian Security environment. South Asia was one of the first regions where the UN experimented with peace-keeping by deploying observers to monitor the cease-fire agreement between India and Pakistan in 1948. However, UN is nowhere near to resolving the Kashmir issue, which has only become more complex with growing cross-border terrorist activities and a serious nuclear race between India and Pakistan. The support of the two nations for the UN presence in Kashmir differs fundamentally. The underlying disagreements between the two countries the mandate and functions of the UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan as Pakistan strongly views the conduct of the UN plebiscite as the road to peace in Kashmir, but India no longer supports nor recognizes the presence of the UNMOGIP. New Delhi consents to that presence only because the UN wants it (Rikhey, J, 1984, p.27).

Among the many Third World Peace-keepers, India has been singled out as having one of the largest and most consistent records of participation in UN peace-keeping operations (Bullion, 1997, p.98). India's participation in external peace operations began in the late 1940s when New Delhi made representation in the first UN observer mission to Palestine. Following this, Indian soldiers became part of the first UN peace-keeping forces deployed in the Gaza in 1956. Since then India has been consistently participating in and contributing troops to UN peace mission worldwide. More than 85,000 Indian troops, military observers and civilian police officers have participated in 42 out of the 60 peace-keeping missions established since the inception of the UN. 116 Indian soldiers have made the supreme sacrifice while serving with the UN and have been awarded the 'Dag Hammarskjold Medals' (Khan Chinmaya R. Ghare, 2007, pp.201).

India's most significant contribution has been towards peace and stability in Africa and Asia. It has demonstrated its unique capacity of sustaining large troop's commitments over prolonged periods. Presently, India is one of the largest troop contributors to the United Nations. India has also offered one brigade of troops to the UN Standby Arrangements (Ibid.). In addition to its participation in UN peace mission, India has also demonstrated a capacity to launch its own peace-keeping operation. This can be seen in the late 1980s when the Indian Peace-keeping Forces was created and deployed in Sri Lanka to manage the ethnic conflict and to contain the aggression and violence of Tamil Tigers who had been

fighting for a separate state in the North (Indian Permanent Mission to the United Nations, New York, 2000).

Notwithstanding this, India has continued to participate in active representation in extra-regional peace operation under the aegis of the UN flag. New Delhi has adopted a pro-active approach to UN peace-keeping as part of its new foreign policy orientation in the post-cold war era. The phrase 'proactive' commitments are used to demonstrate India's unreserved willingness to respond to the growing demand and challenges of UN peace-keeping in post cold war era. While this is reflected in its consistency and size of participation, India now makes pro-active commitment in more operations than in the past. Along with this, India willingness to take risks and sustain its commitment in hazardous operations has demonstrated its reliability as a peace keeper.

As part of this trend and pro-active agenda, India's commitment to UN peace-keeping operations has moved to a new level in the post-Cold War era. In 1992, the Narsimha Rao regime re-affirmed India's commitments to the UN peace keeping operations by asserting that it 'wills pro-active support UN peace ventures in the future' (The Hindu, 1994; Faridi, 2008, pp577-584). In his address to the UN General Assembly, former Prime Minister I.K. Gujral, said that "as a country which place very great store on the UN's capacity to contribute to international peace and security [and peace-keeping activities]... India has vital interests in the UN (I.K. Gujral, New York, 1997). India's new level of commitment is reflected in its actual participation in post Cold-War UN peace-keeping operations. Its level of participation has significantly increased in line with the overall growth in the number of peace-keeping operations in the post - Cold War era. India has highest level of participation has been in the early 1990s. In fact, the period 1990-94 has been also one of the most active and assertive eras of UN peace-Keeping in the post war era.

The dawn of the twenty first century is witness to many conflicts being fought around the globe than, there were during the cold war period. The nature of conflicts has also become increasingly complex, which demands new approaches to resolve them. Therefore it is not surprising that the UN finds itself more and more involved in global peace keeping ever before. The Indian army, with a long history of overseas deployment, incidentally fits in all the three qualifications required for the UN peace keeping missions- consent of disputants, support from the international community and deployment of impartial forces. Due to these advantages, India's participation in the international peacekeeping operation has been

comparatively large. The country has an active role to play in peace-keeping efforts of the United Nations.

India's first assignment to UN peace keeping arose at the termination of war in Korea in 1950s. shortly afterwards, in 1956 the first United Nations Emergency Force was sent in response to the Suez Canal crisis and an Indian infantry battalion formed a vital component of it. The peace keeper mission was to oversee the withdrawal of British, French and Israeli troops from the area and act as a buffer between Israeli and Egyptian forces. In the mid fifties, India was also bestowed the honor of chairmanship of the International Control Commission for Indochina where India had one infantry battalion and supporting staff in order to implement the cease fire agreement between Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and France.

India has gained considerable goodwill for being actively involved in peace-keeping operations in the world. This opportunity has enhanced military and operational skills in handling the humanitarian aspects of war and conflict amongst the troops who are basically trained in the art of violence. The UN peace-keeping tenure also provides exposure to state-of-art military hardware that is available with other armies.

India's continuing role in supporting UN peacekeeping operations

India will continue to support the United Nations in its peacekeeping operations. This was stated by Minister of state for Defense Pallam Raju while interacting recently with Indian troops stationed in Lebanon as part of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon. Praising the Indian infantry soldiers, 900 of whom were deployed on the Eastern position of South Lebanon after 2006 Israel-Hezbollah 34 day war, the minister pointed out that the Indian peacekeepers had consistently won admiration from the UN authorities for their efforts, as they invariably helped in the social development of the areas of their posting rather than just apply force. In Lebanon for instance, Indian Army doctors were helping people with the medical camps, veterinary hospitals, rehabilitation centers and helping amputees walk by giving them Jaipur foot an artificial leg developed in India. At the same time, the Indian soldiers helped the local population with construction of schools, digging of bore wells, vocational training and sports function for school children. So minister thanked soldiers for winning the heart of population.

Although Indian soldiers are deployed on a number of UN missions at any given time, the one advantage that the Indian soldiers have is their ability to

communicate in English and familiarization with state of-the-art equipment used by peacekeepers from other countries, particularly the weapons and systems supplied by western countries like US and UK. This helps in interoperability and development of joint doctrines with troops from other countries on UN missions. It may be noted that India has also refused to be drawn into conflicts where there is no UN mandate. As a founder member of the United Nations, India has been a firm supporter of the UN principles and has significant contribution throughout in all its effort and they integrate well into the UN network. It is the third largest contributor of troops to the United Nations at present. So far, India has taken part in 43 peacekeeping missions in four continents with more than 90,000 troops all over the world from Korea to Congo, Gaza, Somalia, Lebanon, and Sudan etc. presently, India has deployed 8,875 personnel in UN peacekeeping operations worldwide. The first deployment started in 1950's when India sent troops to Korea in 1953-54 and as many as 124 of them have made the supreme sacrifice since then on various UN missions.

In Korea, India provided a paramedical unit to facilitate withdrawal of the sick and the wounded and after the ceasefire, India became the Chairman of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission. One brigade group of the Indian Army participated in the operation in Korea, authorized by the UN General Assembly through Uniting for Peace resolution. Indian troops provided guards for the prisoners of war. India has also provided 12 Force Commanders in various UN missions.

Indian troops have taken part in some of the most difficult operations, and their professional excellence has won them universal admiration. Indian Forces have demonstrated their unique capacity of sustaining large troop commitments over prolonged periods. India has also offered one brigade of troops to the UN Standby Arrangements.

India has also contributed to peace in the Middle East. The United Nation Emergency Force (UNEF) was created in 1956 following cessation of hostilities between Egypt and Israel. India provided an infantry battalion, which accounted for the bulk of the UN force. Over 11 years from 1956 to 1967, more than 12,000 Indian troops took part in UNEF.

The UN faced one of its worst crises when war between the government and the secessionist forces broke out in Congo. The UN operation in the Congo, ONUC, was unique in many ways. The operation involved heavy casualties. It was also the first time that UN undertook an

operation in an intra state, rather than an inter- state conflict. The operation upheld the national unity and territorial integrity of the Congo. The Indian contingent lost 39 men in action in the Congo. The performance of the Indian troops was distinguished by their discipline, self-restraint and humanitarian concern. Indian Army provided a Force Commander and observers for the Observer Mission in Yemen in 1963-64 (UNYOM). India also participated in the UN operation in Cyprus. India provided three Force Commanders to them. The UN set up a Military Observers Group to monitor the situation on Iran-Iraq border. India provided military observers during the period 1988-90.

Following the end of the Gulf War, the UN established the UN Iraq-Kuwait Observer Mission (UNIKOM). Indian observers were deployed there. The UN operation in Namibia considered one of the success stories of the United Nations. Indian military observers in Namibia were responsible for the smooth withdrawal of foreign troops, elections and subsequent handing over of the authority to the government. The UN established to restore peace and conduct election in Mozambique. India provided a large contingent of staff officers, military observers, independent headquarters company and engineer and Logistics Company. The operation has ended successfully.

In recent times, one of the biggest peace keeping operations which were completed successfully was the UN operation in Cambodia. India provided an infantry battalion, military observers and a field ambulance unit. India also hosted an UN Regional Training Workshop for Peacekeeping Operations in New Delhi during January 20-26, 1996 in which 17 countries of the Asia-Pacific region participated. India has considerable experience in demining activities and has made significant contribution to the de-mining work in various missions in Rwanda, Mozambique, Somalia, Angola, and Cambodia. Experienced Indian Army Engineers have employed for training of selected personnel from the host countries to execute mine clearance programmed as also to generate awareness of the problem among the local people. India has also provided opportunities for training to military officers from different countries. India at present has many army training teams in six countries like Seychelles, Laos, Mauritius, Botswana, Zambia and Bhutan.

Indian Power and the United Nations

Former President Barack Obama who won fans in New Delhi with his call for India to take a permanent seat on the UN Security Council, but while the President

explicitly endorsed India as an “emerged” power; his declaration contained an implicit challenge as well. Obama said that he wanted the U.S to work with India on an “efficient, effective, credible and legitimate” U.N. though phrased as diplomatic rhetoric; these words raised important questions that India’s leaders must answer. Can India capture a permanent seat on the Security Council simply because of its growing economic leverage and military clout? Or should India invest more in terms of strengthening the U.N to show that the country deserves its seat on the council? India like Sweden and Canada is a country that many automatically associate with the U.N Articles about multilateralism is, after all, often accompanied by photos of blue-turbaned Sikh peacekeepers. Yet New Delhi’s policy makers are ambivalent towards the U.N.

It is true that India makes huge troops contributions to blue-helmeted peacekeeping operations. Indians make up 10% of the 100,000 soldiers and police in U.N. missions. But this contribution is increasingly controversial at home. When it comes to the U.N’s direct contributions to India’s national security, Indian experts are scathing. They are dismissive of the organization’s state-building efforts in Afghanistan and its attempt to mediate with the Burmese junta. India worked hard to ensure that the Security Council did not intervene during Sri Lanka’s assault on the Tamil Tigers last year. India acceptance of the deployment of a U.N mission to Nepal in 2007 to oversee the end of that country’s 10-year civil war was unusual. But New Delhi insisted that the mission be kept small and placed political limits on its role. The resulting light-weight mission was a well- designed success, but the episode showed the limits of India’s tolerance for the U.N.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s much less publicized but no less important during his recent visit to the United States was his speech at the Summit on UN peacekeeping operations. It was after a decade that the Summit was held at a time when the world body’s peacekeeping task has been facing multiple challenges raising question in some quarters about the efficacy and need for such a dimension to the United Nations. The UN’s peacekeeping operations have travelled a long way since the first one was undertaken in West Asia way back in 1948. The journey in the last 67 years has brought mixed results for such operations- success in Nepal, Sierra Leone and East Timor and failures in Rwanda and Srebrenica. Today peacekeeping and special political missions are central

to the UN's peace and security efforts. Growing reliance on UN peace operations has led to an all-time high level of deployment of peacekeeping forces in different conflict-ravaged regions of the world. Many of UN peacekeeping and civilian-political missions face significant challenges and struggles to attain their objectives given the complex and difficult operating conditions.

It is in this backdrop that one has to see Modi's participation in the Summit in New York and his raising a few key issues relevant to UN peacekeeping operations. India has been the largest contributors to UN peacekeeping troops for a long time. More than 180,000 Indian troops have participated in UN peacekeeping missions—more than from any other country. India was the first country to contribute a Female Formed Police unit to UN missions in Liberia. But India's contribution to UN peacekeeping efforts has gone beyond giving troops and this included training to nearly 800 officers from 82 countries. In his speech at the Summit, Modi shares India's commitment to UN peacekeeping remains strong and will grow. As a measure of this, he announced India's readiness to provide an additional battalion of up to 850 troops in existing or new operations, additional three police units with higher representation of women peacekeepers, deployment of technical personnel in UN missions and additional training for peacekeepers at facilities in India and in the field. Modi also flagged some key concerns of India relating to the UN peacekeeping missions by referring to ambitious mandates and often inadequate resources and pointed out that peacekeeping "mandates sometimes make peacekeepers party to conflicts, putting at risk their lives and success of their missions" (Bhattacharya Pallab, 5 October 2015.) These problems, he said, crop up "to a large extent because troops-contributing countries do not have a role in the decision-making process and they do not have adequate representation in senior management and as Force Commanders" (Ibid.) In this context, he mentioned and welcomed the report titled "Uniting Our Strengths for Peace—Politics, Partnership and People" (Ibid.) the high-level independent committee on peace operations submitted in June this year. The report has made a frank assessment of strengths and weaknesses of UN peacekeeping efforts and lists the road map ahead to help the world body to quickly and more effectively respond to the changing nature of conflicts worldwide and the gap between troop-contributing countries on one hand and the countries which dictate the mandate of peacekeeping operations and fund them in a big way. The US remains the biggest fund-provider to UN peacekeeping operations,

giving 28 percent of the total of 8.3 billion dollars. The independent committee suggests four key 'shifts' in UN peacekeeping efforts: 1. such efforts should be guided by political solutions. 2. The Customized nature of peacekeeping operations is in keeping with specific situations and 3. Greater coordination and collaboration between the UN's political department and peacekeeping division and a bottom-up approach to designing the framework of peacekeeping that is from the ground zero rather than from the headquarters in New York.

Modi's advocacy of a greater say for troops-contributing countries to UN peacekeeping operations has been interpreted by some as India's campaign for a permanent seat in the Security Council. As he said, "wish to emphasize that the success of UN peacekeeping ultimately depends not on the weapons that the soldiers carry but on the moral forces that decisions of the UN Security Council command" (Ibid.). Some Indian analysts have questioned the necessity of India asking for a greater say in the design and controlling of UN peacekeeping operations and suggested that New Delhi instead confine itself to supplying logistics in human and armaments terms to such operations and building international coalitions for peacekeeping under non-UN missions.

Challenges to India in 21st century

New and diverse threats, often vague, have begun to question our assumptions and existing mechanism. Sovereignty is being challenged by norms such as Responsibility to protect (R2P). India has a role to play regionally as well as globally. This role is imposed on her by sheer size, demography, capacities, military powers and her strategic location. India should get its political, diplomatic and military acts together, and must continue to be proactive in terms of demanding greater participation in decision making. Demands will be placed on New Delhi to be a part of multi-national operations as this is the trend in contemporary times. There would be situations where even bilateral participation might be called for. Behavioral changes including change in style of leadership will then become necessary. In this context, there is a compelling need for a sizeable Rapid Reaction Force for the purpose of intervention, stabilization, deterrence and disaster response among others. The force should be one of tri-service corps along with a civilian component including diplomats, police personnel and human rights.

India should continue to strengthen existing cooperative mechanisms with regional and global players. Joint working groups comprising diplomats and military personnel should be set up to interact with multi-lateral

forums, and exchange knowledge and perspectives. As the mandate of peacekeeping expands, India should share its expertise and experience, and play its part in realizing the core objective of the UN Charter – maintenance of international peace and security.

Conclusions

The task of building peace to prevent the recurrence of a conflict has become an inevitable role of UN peacekeeping operation today. As this task increasingly occurs in low-intensity conflicts in populated areas, relations and interactions between peacekeepers and civil communities become significant. Peace building cannot achieve any level of success unless it is directly relevant to the communal needs and aspirations of the local. Building an alliance for peace in civil communities is vital not only for strengthening civil community-peacekeeper relations but also for fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility in the minds of the local community as a whole. By way of examining the Indian military's peace building this shows that the complex, sensitive and volatile nature of today's peace building operational environments have necessitated a need to develop a community-centered approach to UN peace building. To this end, it argues that the employment of suitable field strategies and tactics as part of a community-centered approach to peace building can help the realization of a community-peacekeepers partnership that may be operationalized overtime.

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