

# UN AGENCIES CONNECTING WITH ACADEMICS AND THE CIVIL SOCIETY

JANUARY 11-13, 2012

## BRIEF REPORT ON THE LECTURE AT THE DIPLOMATIC ACADEMY

By Bertha Nyarire Makilagi

**DATE:** 11<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, 2012, 1900HRS

**TITLE:** THE FUTURE OF UN PEACE KEEPING

**GUEST SPEAKER:** DR. ABIODUN WILLIAMS, PRESIDENT ELECT OF THE ACADEMIC COUNCIL ON THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM (ACUNS)

**CHAIR OF SESSION:** PROF. CHRISTER JONSSON, ACADEMIC COUNCIL ON THE UN SYSTEM

**DISCUSSANTS:** PROF. IRENE ETZERSDORFER, UNIVERSITY OF VIENNA

BG. DR. WALTER FEICHTINGER, AUSTRIAN NATIONAL DEFENCE ACADEMY

### INTRODUCTION:

This is a brief report on the presentation on the Future of UN Peace Keeping by Dr. Abiodun Williams. The lecture was among a series of lectures that were being presented by academics and the civil society during the three-days conference. Prior to the presentation, Prof. Kornprobst, the Head of International Relations Department of the Diplomatic Academy of Vienna, briefly informed the audience on the institution's programmes and the interconnectedness and importance of such lectures to the students of the Academy. He further stated that global governance diplomacy is a network of different actors and thus play a vital role in global politics. Lastly, he welcomed Mr. Michael Platzer from ACUNS to invite the Chair of the session, guest speakers and discussants.

### 1. PRESENTATION ON THE FUTURE OF UN PEACE KEEPING BY DR. WILLIAMS

*Dr. Williams started his presentation by stating that Shakespeare always has a way of capturing our dilemma. He posed the question as to how do we get the spirits to respond when you call for them? And how can you get to respond to peacekeeping when you need them?*

1.1 Peacekeeping was not in original framework of the UN Charter, it is a tool to deal with threats of international peace and security.

1.2 Peacekeeping is an instrument for conflict prevention and burden-sharing.

1.3 UN Peacekeeping mission becomes a success if given the right mandate, resources, organization structure and political support.

1.4 No other organization (regional or any other) can substitute the legal and moral authority of UN Peacekeeping.

**2.0 The presentation focused on three main issues; First, the prerequisite of successful peacekeeping operations; Second, discussing the challenges facing peacekeeping and; Third, reflecting important issues to share political space and collective conflict prevention.**

### **2.1 PREREQUISITE OF SUCCESSFUL PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS**

- 2.1.1 There must be a peace to keep. Over the past fifteen (15) years, Peacekeeping missions have been sent to areas with little or no peace to keep. For instance, in Yugoslavia and Bosnia, troops were sent into no man's land; thus a cause of disaster.
- 2.1.2 There must be a viable political process to support peacekeeping operations. Peacekeeping operations support a political process which allows factions in a society to have durable peace.
- 2.1.3 Peacekeeping operations should have a credible and achievable mandate in order to become a successful operation.
- 2.1.4 Furthermore, there is a need for adequate resources and capability to implement the mandate. For instance, if there has been an additional task on top of the original mandate without adjusting the resources, then the mission is likely to face difficulties.
- 2.1.5 Cooperation of the parties is a sine qua non for a successful mission/operation.
- 2.1.6 There is a need of political will on part of the Security Council. A good example is the Preventive Mission in Macedonia where a clear mandate was provided, was achievable and had adequate resources. In Macedonia, US deployed for the first time more UN Peacekeepers to the Balkans than the Nordic countries. This was a clear example of *political support* in the Security Council.
- 2.1.7 Thus the above prerequisites lay a foundation of a successful peacekeeping mission.

### **2.2 CHALLENGES FACING PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS**

- 2.2.1 In the past years, there were less than 30,000 peace keeping operations in the field. Today, nearly 150 countries participate in UN peacekeeping and 30,000 national civilians and U.S have personnel serving worldwide.
- 2.2.2 The annual budget has increased from 1 billion in 1997 to 7.1 billion today. The United States pay 26 per cent of the peacekeeping budget. The UN Peacekeeping budget is less than funding a US force.
- 2.2.3 The Brahimi Report (2000) envisaged a peacekeeping operation with possibility to launch a multi-disciplinary mission. There is a need for capacity to launch one field mission per year and for adequate resources to match the mission.

❖ ***The Quantitative Challenges: The cost of quantity of peacekeeping***

- 2.2.4 Despite the search for peace and high demand of peacekeeping, the required attention needed in terms of reflection, policy, effective public communication is not a given. This is vivid in current missions which do not enjoy member states' support.
- 2.2.5 It is a priority to speed up some missions; however, there is still inadequate support for ongoing missions, shortage of experienced and qualified staff on management.
- 2.2.6 There is also the inability to generate troops and enabling capacity. Peacekeeping is labor intensive; therefore, numbers and capabilities are very important. For instance, UN Peacekeeping troops in the Democratic Republic of Congo have the mandate to protect civilians, but only limited capacities. Thus, it is very difficult for the UN to do a credible job.
- 2.2.7 Furthermore, there is inadequate training of units, shortage of personnel vivid in logistics, communication, engineering, etc. Dr. Williams gave the example of a helicopter that was used on a mission from tropical areas and then deployed in an area experiencing winter. The helicopter had no heating at a temperature of minus 27 degree. Thus such situations are a big challenge to peacekeeping operations.

❖ ***The Qualitative Challenges***

- 2.2.8 These challenges are more complex than the quantitative challenges.
- 2.2.9 In search of UN peacekeeping operations in the past, peacekeeping operations had distinguished features:
- Comprehensive peace settlement
  - The P-5 had united support
  - Belligerents were easily identified, cohesive and few
  - Mandatory peacekeeping - it was limited and focused on transfer of state
  - Limited in size, and troops were sustained
- 2.2.10 However, at present the peace agreements do not enjoy *Universal Participation* or support. For example, the UN in the DRC, there is no peace to keep, although some stakeholders had signed peace agreements. In Darfur, no general support even though there is pressure to deploy traditional peacekeeping troops in no peace to keep. There is also no contribution to multinational forces to peacekeeping.
- 2.2.11 Moreover, the number of total factions has proliferated - shifting alliances, lucrative opportunities for economic gains.
- 2.2.12 Among the P-5 (Responsibility to Protect), some situations have created tensions.

- 2.2.13 At present, peacekeeping operations face complex mandate. The operation challenges have also increased. For instance, the DRC is equivalent to the size of Western Europe. The number of troops deployed is less while the task is complex, the lines of communication are subject to frequent destruction, services are nonexistent, no local language skills, insufficient time to prepare, plan and deploy.
- 2.2.14 The success in Macedonia is because the force was deployed rapidly.

❖ ***The Challenge of Governments***

- 2.2.15 The UN faces in the future those who *decide, pay and who take risks on the ground*.
- 2.2.16 *Decide* - authorizes peacekeeping operations, i.e. the Security Council. The Security Council needs to be reformed, as it reflects the political reality of the 1940s.
- 2.2.17 The composition threatens the legitimacy of the Security Council which has effects on its effectiveness.
- 2.2.18 For wider support, decisions have to be broadly represented in the reality of our times, thus a more legitimate Council of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- 2.2.19 *Pay* - in the peacekeeping budget, the U.S supports 26-27 per cent, the EU 40 per cent, Japan, 20 per cent. The total is 87 per cent and the remaining countries 13 per cent. This is not a sustainable model.
- 2.2.20 The countries which provide troops are South Asia, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Latin America and African countries.
- 2.2.21 Even traditional support of peacekeeping in the 1960s-70s, small countries like Canada were major contributors, however, it is not seen now in terms of commitment of troops on the ground.
- 2.2.22 This challenge needs to be crucially looked into.

**2.3 SHARING POLITICAL SPACE IN CONFLICT MANAGEMENT BETWEEN REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND THE UNITED NATIONS**

- 2.3.1 This raises legal authority and political will and consideration role of regional and international organizations.
- 2.3.2 New actors and old actors are redefining their roles.
- 2.3.3 Since 1990s, there have been 22 cases of sharing roles between regional organizations; in the Balkans, Afghanistan and African countries.
- 2.3.4 Peacekeeping can be integrated, joined, coordinated, parallel or sequential.
- 2.3.5 The question is whether outsource hybrid should be encouraged further? This is an important question when we look at the future of peacekeeping.

2.3.6 Is this phenomenon here to stay and how can it be improved?

2.3.7 UN Security Council peacekeeping is the sole and primary role of which peace keeping was envisaged.

2.3.8 Regional organizations have an essential part and have to act in the framework of the UN Charter.

2.3.9 The original role has to have a wider conduct. For instance, ASEAN, Africa, Middle East contributions to peace should not be exclusive but should be within the UN.

2.3.10 Sharing political management in conflict is desirable and achievable but have a long way to share the model without diluting the effect.

Lastly, Dr. Williams concluded his presentation by pointing out the following;

❖ The Unique Qualities of UN Peacekeeping

2.3.11 No organization can match the UN legal and moral authority.

2.3.12 Authoritative act on the Charter and legitimacy counts very much.

2.3.13 UN is the best vehicle for burden and cost sharing.

2.3.14 UN can be flexible, less costly than all other alternatives.

2.3.15 UN have more experience and more troops.

2.3.16 UN has indispensable management to be used by the international community for a common good.

2.3.16 UN tries to blend in par and principles. Par in the service of principle and not otherwise, or vice versa.

2.3.17 Par and principle vision and pragmatism elevates politics into achieving more important objectives.

### **3.0 VIEWS FROM DISCUSSANTS**

❖ **BRIG. DR WALTER FEICHTINGER**

In general, Dr. Feichtinger discussed the worthiness of considering the topic.

3.1 He supported Dr. Williams' view on the manageable costs of UN peacekeeping. He stated that there was some empirical finding which shows that it is eight (8) times cheaper to deploy a peacekeeping operation than unilateral peacekeeping efforts of states. It is highly cost effective and important for future.

3.2 His presentation also covered the questions Why, Where, Who and How?

3.3 There is a need for peacekeeping opportunities by projecting instability in the future societies. This is because there is interlinked violence which shows that 90 per cent of

civil wars occur in countries which had civil wars in the past. Then, is this a projection for the future conflicts?

3.4 Two thirds of UN Peacekeeping is deployed in Africa, therefore, Africa holds a strong possibility of UN Peacekeeping in the future.

3.5 Brig. Feichtinger further discussed the growing protection of civilians. He stated that there is need for a stronger engagement of the international community and the international society.

3.6 He further mentioned some challenges peacekeeping faces at present. These include the aim of engagement, Dilemma Bridge of self-defense and protecting civilians, preparation for mission creep, the establishment and management of partnerships and how to bring back Western states to participate in UN peacekeeping and deploy personnel.

3.7 Brig. Feichtinger concluded by emphasizing that UN peacekeeping is indispensable in the future.

#### ❖ DR. IRENE ETZERSDORFER

3.8 Dr. Etzersdorfer discussed the first generation of peacekeeping mission in Cyprus, which was a success due to the support it had. However, the second generation of peacekeeping in Somalia could not deliver humanitarian aid to civilians due to complex reasons. According to Chapter VI of the Charter, the missions were deployed to war zones but with weak consent.

3.9 Moreover, the Principle of Sovereignty is eluding from the 'Responsibility to Protect' when a state cannot protect its citizens, therefore softening the norm of non-intervention.

3.10 Furthermore, there is no respect of UN troops nowadays due to attacks by different factions in the society. International Law is not able to cover international conflict anymore. Therefore, there is need to revise international law as well.

## 4.0 QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

After the presentation from the guest speaker and discussants, the Chair invited questions and answers from the audience.

**4.1 QUESTION:** Do the challenges have a positive impact on the future? And what are the chances of reforms given the fact that the Security Council has been resistant to the UN reforms?

**ANS:** There is a role of realism but it is important to be optimistic. It is also important to share the financial burden thus the present model needs to be changed/ revised.

Sovereignty should not be a shield that states use to violate human rights. States/ governments have the primary responsibility to protect their citizens.

The lack of accountability of the private securities and military companies is an important concern. UN has accountability mechanisms, legitimacy and Security Council unlike the aforementioned private entities.

**4.2 QUESTION:** Who is held accountable/ responsible when UN peacekeeping troops commit unnecessary acts of destruction against properties, or rape?

**ANS:** The UN takes such acts more seriously now than it did before. The respective national governments will make sure that soldiers are held accountable.

**4.3 QUESTION:** What is the role of China and Russia in future developments of the UN? And what is the future of peacekeeping in Africa given the projections of being an epi-centre of conflicts? Is there a necessity of peace contingency?

**ANS:** About thirty years ago, China was not very keen on UN peacekeeping. Currently, it has played a role in peace in Libya and Haiti. Its position is not fixed but evolves and changes. Further with the reflection of African epicenter for peacekeeping; it is important to international engagement to peacekeeping and peace-building. There is a need to continue to support the development of an African peacekeeping capacity of the African Union.

**4.5 CONTRIBUTION:** There was another contribution from a member of the Hungarian UN Association calling for the UN to involve the police, former UN peacekeepers in current peacekeeping operations. UN should try to collect experiences as micro-problems become better visible this way.

## **5.0 CONCLUSION**

The lecture ended at around 2100hrs with a vote of thanks delivered by a representative from the Austrian Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs. He expressed his appreciation of the attendance, presentations and participation of the audience. The evening was then followed by a reception at the Academy hall.

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