



# The Canadian Contribution to United Nations Peacekeeping





# Foreword

**T**he original version of this booklet was published in 1992. It became a popular educational tool for all those who participated in or who wrote about Canada's peacekeeping missions. Both the scope and the number of Peace Missions have changed significantly over the past decade. The United Nations Association in Canada is pleased to revise and update the original text, confident that the story of peacekeeping is still a source of pride for all Canadians.

Geoffrey Pearson  
*National President,  
United Nations Association in Canada*

*Front Cover:  
DND Photo*

*Opposite:  
DND Photo*





# Peacekeeping: a Canadian Trademark

**O**n the morning of November 4, 1956, at the United Nations General Assembly, a unique resolution was put forward calling for the setting up of an Emergency Force to secure and supervise the cessation of hostilities in the Suez Canal area. It passed 57 to 0 with 19 abstentions.

This was the first UN force to be established for peacekeeping purposes. Previous UN missions in the Middle East and Kashmir had consisted of military observers. Though not yet fully developed, the idea of sending UN peacekeepers was destined to earn the respect and admiration of all the peace-loving peoples of the world.

If the United Nations can be said to have given birth to peacekeeping, then Canadians should take special pride in the knowledge that the resolution was the brainchild of the then Canadian Minister for External Affairs, Lester B. Pearson.

War had broken out between Egypt and Israel in late October 1956. Britain and France sent forces to the region, feeling their interests were threatened by Egyptian president Nasser's nationalization of the Suez Canal. The international community suddenly found itself ensnared in a complex and

intractable situation. The deadlock threatened to expand and involve neighboring states, and the specter of nuclear escalation had become a possibility.

The war was becoming intense, and Cairo and other parts of Egypt were under bombardment. As casualties mounted steadily, all sides desperately sought some face-saving means of ending the killing.

In the early morning hours after an emergency meeting of the UN General Assembly, Mr. Pearson proposed his idea of a UN peacekeeping force. He envisioned a multi-national force to separate the combatants, lower tensions, and ultimately mediate negotiations in order to bring lasting peace to the area.

“Peace,” he said in his address to the General Assembly of the UN, “is far more than ceasing to fire, although it certainly must include that essential factor...” After outlining his vision for a UN peacekeeping force, he added, “My own Government would be glad to recommend Canadian participation in such a United Nations force, a truly international peace and police force...”

Within hours of the adoption of Pearson’s resolution, the nucleus of the first UN emergency force was formed with a Canadian, Major General Burns, as commander. For the first time ever, a military force was dispatched — not to impose a settlement — but rather to

*Warrant Officer Jim Buskell, a vehicle technician, presently serving with 2 PPCLI Bn Gp in camp Coralici, Bosnia Herzegovina is destroying weapons confiscated from the Former Warring Factions.  
DND Photo*



facilitate it.

On November 6, then UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld was able to announce to the world that a cease-fire had been achieved. The following day, Egypt formally agreed to let the UN force enter, and on Thursday, November 15, 1956, at 9:35 A.M. local time, the first-ever UN peacekeeping troops arrived in Egypt.

## What is Peacekeeping?

**A**ccording to the United Nations, the standard definition of peacekeeping refers to “a United Nations presence in the field (normally involving civilian and military personnel) that, with the consent of the conflicting parties, implements or monitors arrangements relating to the control of conflicts and their resolution, or ensures the safe delivery of humanitarian relief. It is a technique initiated by the United Nations as a means for maintaining international peace and security”<sup>1</sup>

Peacekeeping can be divided into three broad categories:

- 1) Assisting in the maintenance of cease-fires  
Peacekeepers assist in the monitoring of cease-fires by providing a buffer



force that separates opposing armies. This buffer zone allows hostile forces to pull back to a safe distance so that proper negotiations among political leaders and diplomats can take place. An example of such a peacekeeping operation would include the peacekeeping operations established on borders of conflict between Egypt and Israel, or India and Pakistan.

## 2) The implementation of comprehensive settlements

Another form of peacekeeping is known as multi-dimensional peacekeeping. This structure of peacekeeping has become prevalent since the Security Council's establishment in 1989 of an operation in Namibia. Following the Cold War, members of the Council were able to agree on more ambitious and diversified operations. Multi-dimensional peacekeeping operations include a wide range of civilian experts to assist in areas of human rights, local security, elections, and the re-integration of combatants to civilian life. These operations have been successful in restoring political, social and economic changes to countries such as Mozambique, Cambodia, and El Salvador. Peacekeeping operations are usually limited to 18 months to two years but in some cases they last longer so that the peace-process can be sufficiently consolidated.





### 3) The protection of humanitarian operations

The protection of humanitarian operations requires the international community to alleviate situations of massive human suffering. Under this mandate, peacekeepers are employed to protect the delivery of humanitarian relief in cases where armed violence has prevented efforts to assist a distressed population. This operation is generally the most difficult to perform, as warring parties often continue to engage in hostile actions while peacekeepers attempt to help in the distribution of aid.

A peacekeeping force seems at first to be a contradiction of terms; history has taught us well that lasting peace is rarely won by force. Although paramilitary in nature, a peacekeeping force has no military objective. It must respect the sovereignty of states and can occupy no territory except by the invitation of a host nation.

The success of any peacekeeping action still relies to a great extent on the ingenuity, skills, and diplomacy of every member of the force. Good will and impartiality — tempered by a steadfast resolve — are the qualities of these rare few who span chasms of mistrust that separate opposing factions. Although the risks are very real and the costs often high, Canadians who have served as peacekeepers under the UN flag



*DND Photo*

understand its unique rewards.

Peacekeepers understand that they are not deployed to an area in order to impose their will upon others. Their role is to facilitate the peaceful resolution of disputes, and prevent the loss of innocent lives.

Peacekeepers are drawn from geographic regions outside a given conflict area, and must be willing to go when and where needed.

It is difficult and often frustrating work. Calm, reserve, and determination are required attributes of these men and women. Peacekeepers know that theirs is a vital job, often a last hope for people engulfed in turmoil.

*DND Photo*



# Canada and peacekeeping

**P**eacekeeping has become an important aspect of our national heritage, as well as being a reflection of our fundamental beliefs. Peacekeeping is a dynamic concept that must respond to a changing international environment. Canada is building on an established tradition by continuing to make solid and imaginative contributions to international peace and security.

Fifty years of experience in peacekeeping has established an international reputation for Canada. Peacekeeping is an important component of Canada's foreign policy and its contribution to the multilateral security system. Canada has participated in an overwhelming majority of peacekeeping missions mandated by the United Nations Security Council.<sup>2</sup>

Over 120,000 men and women have served in close to 50 different operations ranging from truce observance to the supervision of elections from Cambodia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, El Salvador and Somalia, just to name a few. One hundred and eight Canadians have given their lives while serving on UN peacekeeping missions.

Perhaps nothing illustrates the difficult nature of peacekeeping more than the complex and long-standing situation in Cyprus. Trying to solve the

taxing puzzle of an old conflict between Greek and Turkish Cypriots has tested the resilience and conciliatory abilities of peacekeepers since 1964 to the present day.

Today, peacekeeping troops patrol the buffer along the “green line” that divides the island, working to prevent skirmishes from breaking out. Although many critics feel that the apparent stalemate prevents any ultimate conclusion to the dispute, the fact remains that many innocent lives have been spared thanks to the presence of the United Nations.

The difficulty in resolving international conflict is often multiplied when dealing with internal disputes such as the situations in Bosnia-Herzegovina, East Timor, and Rwanda.

Hundreds of Canadians have participated in peacekeeping duties in the former Yugoslavia, where they were subjected to random sniper fire and shelling. Their mandate has included providing emergency shelter, patrolling, mine clearance, and the maintenance of critical distribution routes for delivery of vital humanitarian aid shipments.

Since the earliest peacekeeping missions, the presence of the blue helmet has served as a reminder of the United Nations’ commitment to preserving peace. With the full support and moral weight of the international community behind them, Canadian peacekeeping forces of the United Nations can and do

UN interim force in Lebanon, 1978  
“Like most Canadian military personnel in similar circumstances, I wore the Canadian flag with more than just pride. It also offered considerable comfort as you realized its worth as a passport and peace-maker. Although our vehicles were UN blue and white, and we had UN insignia and flags on our uniforms and vehicles, the largest flag we carried was on a pole attached to our vehicles; and it was always a Canadian flag.”  
- *Captain Blaine Williams*



*DND Photo*

make a difference. Nowadays, the complexity of situations has led peacekeepers to increasingly be “peacebuilders” as they attempt to reconstruct destroyed areas such as Kosovo and East Timor.

Traditionally peacekeeping has been primarily a military activity but Canadian involvement in international peacekeeping now includes such diverse groups as the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), Civilian Police, Elections Canada, CARE Canada, the Canadian Red Cross, and many other NGOs.

Increasingly, UN military peacekeepers have relied on the important input that NGOs can play in peacekeeping operations. Often, NGOs



provide salient information about the politics, economics, and social situations in a conflict-bound environment that UN peacekeepers have just entered. Their input has had only positive results in informing peacekeepers about the current situation within the country.

The challenge posed by the decreasing number of traditional military peacekeepers in recent years has been, in part, addressed by the increasing involvement of civilian police in UN missions.<sup>3</sup> Civilian police play an important role in the transition from

*DND Photo*



peacekeeping to peacebuilding. The demand for civilian police is growing as peace support operations expand to assist the return to civil society.<sup>4</sup> Civilian police serve as trainers, monitors and investigators and complement military, election observers, and others active in a peace support operation. Canadian police have provided assistance in regions as diverse as the Western Sahara, the Balkans and the Caribbean.<sup>5</sup>

## A View to the Future

**P**eacekeeping has evolved into something very different from Pearson's original concept of a standing international UN force. As yet, no standing force has ever been mounted. Each peacekeeping mission has been cobbled together from multinational forces and designed to specifically deal with problems as they have occurred, on an individual basis. Furthermore, peacekeeping has been progressively involving people drawn from occupations outside traditional military forces.

Member states are making new requests for UN peacekeeping involvement at an accelerated rate. In the past 10 years alone, Canada has committed peacekeepers to over 30 new

initiatives — compared to only 18 in all previous years. Current UN missions reflect a rapidly changing world, and challenge Canadians to respond to ever increasing demands.

The willingness to take on more complex roles and tackle multifaceted disputes has left the resources of the UN stretched very thin. The cost of UN peacekeeping personnel and equipment peaked at almost \$4.0 billion in 1993, although this has dropped to \$2.0 billion for the budget of 2001. The UN continues to strain under the heavy cost of peacekeeping. Naturally, funding additional peacekeeping campaigns has become a high-priority issue.

There have been several initiatives that have been developed as a result of Canada's 1995 Report "*Towards a Rapid-Response Capability for the UN*"<sup>6</sup>. Denmark, in conjunction with Canada and several other countries, has been instrumental in developing a Multinational Stand-by Forces High Readiness Brigade (SHIRBRIG). This idea was tabled in the General Assembly by Canada in 1995. The idea for this is to have a standing UN military contingency in place that would be able to respond rapidly to a conflict area. This rapid response capability would enable UN troops to respond quickly and more effectively to conflict areas before they become unmanageable situations. In the long run this would save lives, and ultimately reduce the high costs of



*DND Photo*

peacekeeping missions.

The Brahimi Independent Panel Report on peacekeeping was tabled in the General Assembly in August 2000. This report, which was based in part on Canada's 1995 report "*Towards a Rapid-Response Capability for the UN*", provides suggestions for improving peacekeeping operations. As a result of this report, the staff of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) is to be expanded from 200 to 470. There will be \$22 million dollars added to the DPKO for salaries and other costs. It is hoped that further improvements will be made on managing future peacekeeping operations.

Meanwhile, Canadian men and women continue to uphold the ideals of the United Nations with their lives when conflict erupts around the world.



## Canadian Peacekeeping Service Medal

**T**he United Nations Association in Canada is pleased that the Canadian Peacekeeping Service Medal (CPSM) has recently been initiated. It is especially appropriate to recognize civilian contributions, alongside those of their military

counterparts, in key international peacekeeping operations. The Peacekeeping Service Medal is meant to be awarded to military, police, and civilian peacekeepers. In the case of the Canadian Military and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and other Canadian Police contingents, the Department of National Defence or the RCMP have records of those who participated. However, civilians who participated in peacekeeping operations over the last fifty-three years are not always known to the Government. Such individuals are encouraged to check their potential eligibility for the Peacekeeping Service Medal through the contacts listed below.

For more information on the CPSM, please visit the Department of National Defence's Web site at <http://www.dnd.ca/hr/dhh/>

*CPSM Project Office* (National Defence): 1-877-741-8333

### Footnotes

- 1 <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/field/pkeep.htm>
- 2 *ibid.*
- 3 *ibid.*
- 4 *ibid.*
- 5 *ibid.*
- 6 Please See <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/english/news/newsletr/un/rap1.htm> for more information

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### *DND Photo*





# Canadian participation in UN peacekeeping forces and observer missions

## **Africa**

ONUC – 1960-1964

UN Mission in Congo

UNTAG – 1989-1990

UN Transition Assistance Group in Namibia

UNAVEM II – 1991-1995

UN Angola Verification Mission II

MINURSO – 1991-present

UN Mission for the Referendum in  
Western Sahara

ONUMOZ – 1992-1994

UN Operation in Mozambique

UNOSOM I, II – 1992-1995

UN Operation in Somalia

UNOMUR – 1993-1994

UN Observer Mission Uganda-Rwanda

UNAMIR – 1993-1996

UN Assistance Mission for Rwanda

MINURCA – 1998-2000

UN Mission in the Central African  
Republic

## **Americas**

DOMREP – 1965-1966

Mission of the Special Representative  
of the Secretary-General in the  
Dominican Republic



ONUCA – 1989-1992  
UN Observer Group in Central America  
ONUSAL – 1991-1995  
UN Observer Mission in El Salvador  
UNMIH – 1993-1996  
UN Mission in Haiti  
UNSMIH – 1996-1997  
UN Support Mission in Haiti  
MINUGUA – 1997  
UN Verification Mission in Guatemala  
UNTMH – 1997  
UN Transition Mission in Haiti  
MIPONUH – 1997-2000  
UN Civilian Police Mission in Haiti

## **Asia**

UNMOGIP – 1949-  
UN Military Observer Group in India and  
Pakistan  
UNSK – 1950-1954  
UN Service in Korea  
UNSF – 1962-1963  
UN Security Force in West New Guinea  
UNIPOM – 1965-1966  
UN India-Pakistan Observation Mission  
UNGOMAP – 1988-1990  
UN Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan  
and Pakistan  
UNAMIC – 1991-1992  
UN Advance Mission in Cambodia  
UNTAC – 1992-1993  
UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia

## **Congo, 1964**

While attempting to rescue two nuns and three priests from Jeunesse militants at Kasendji, Lieutenant Colonel Mayer was knocked unconscious from behind. As he lay on the floor, a Jeunesse militant removed Colonel Mayer's revolver, thrusting it into his stomach, and pulled the trigger. Fortunately, Mayer had not placed a live round in the chamber, or his life would have ended there. Meanwhile the three priests and two nuns were evacuated by helicopter. After arranging for the freedom of eight remaining sisters, Colonel Mayer himself was permitted to leave.

## **Haiti, 1997**

On June 5, 1997, during his tour of duty in Haiti, MCpl

Dominique Sauvé saved a woman and her four children from a burning apartment in a small Port-au-Prince shantytown.

On hearing that a family was unable to escape because the stairs were blocked by flames, MCpl Sauvé climbed onto the roof of a lottery stand and then onto the balcony of an upstairs apartment, which was covered with pieces of burning wood. After fighting his way through the inferno, he carried the woman and her four children, one by one, to a colleague who had stayed on the lottery stand roof. He left the premises only after ensuring that no one else was in danger.

## **Europe**

UNPROFOR – 1992-1995

**UN Protection Force in the Former Yugoslavia**

UNMIBH – 1995-

**UN Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina**

UNCRO – 1995-1996

**UN Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia**

UNPREDEP – 1995-1999

**UN Preventive Deployment Force in the Former Yugoslavia**

UNTAES – 1996-1998

**UN Transitional Administration for Eastern Slovenia, Baranja, and Western Sirmium**

## **Middle East**

UNOGIL – 1958

**UN Observer Group in Lebanon**

UNEF I – 1956-1967

**First UN Emergency Force Sinai Peninsula**

UNYOM – 1963-1964

**UN Yemen Observation Mission**

UNEF II – 1973-1979

**Second UN Emergency Force Sinai Peninsula**

UNIFIL – 1978-

**UN Interim Force in Lebanon**

UNIIMOG – 1988-1991

**UN Iran/Iraq Military Observer Group**

*UNA-Canada acknowledges that there are other peacekeeping operations that are not under the auspices of the UN. Only the peacekeeping operations falling directly under UN authority and in which Canada participated have been included in this booklet.*



## Current Canadian Participation in UN Peacekeeping Forces and Observer Missions (December 2000)

MONUC – 1999 -  
UN Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

UNAMSIL – 1999 -  
UN Mission in Sierra Leone

UNDOF – 1974 -  
UN Disengagement Observer Force - Golan Heights

UNFICYP – 1964 -  
UN Peacekeeping Forces in Cyprus

UNIKOM - 1991 -  
UN Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission

UNMEE – 2000 -  
UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea

UNMIK – 1999 -  
UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo

UNMOP – 1996 -  
UN Mission of Observers in Prevlaka

UNTSO – 1948 -  
UN Truce Supervision Organization - Jerusalem

UNTAET – 1999 -  
UN Transitional Administration in East Timor



*The Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson, Governor General of Canada, presents a peacekeeper with the Peacekeeping Service Medal (DND Photo).*

*The Honourable Art Eggleton, Minister of National Defence and General Maurice Baril, Chief of the Defence Staff at the unveiling of the 10 new missions at the Peacekeeping Day ceremonies in Ottawa (DND Photo).*



### **Useful Peacekeeping Websites**

*The Canadian Association of Veterans and UN peacekeepers*  
<http://pk.kos.net/cavunp3.html>

*The Department of Foreign Affairs*  
<http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/peacekeeping/menu-e.asp>

*The Department of National Defence*  
<http://www.army.dnd.ca/pstc-cfsp/>

*The Lester B. Pearson International Peacekeeping Centre*  
<http://www.cdnpeacekeeping.ns.ca/>

*The Royal Canadian Mounted Police*  
<http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/html/peacekeeping10.htm>

United Nations Peacekeeping  
[http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/home\\_bottom.htm](http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/home_bottom.htm)



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National  
Defence

Défense  
nationale



Canadian  
Heritage

Patrimoine  
canadien

This Booklet has been produced by the United Nations Association in Canada (UNA-Canada). UNA-Canada is a nationally-registered, volunteer-based charity which promotes Canadian understanding of the United Nations and its programmes and activities. Working in partnership with the Federal and Provincial Governments, UNA-Canada has its national secretariat in Ottawa but derives much of its strength and support from its network of 14 branches (including four in Quebec) representing thousands of members and donors across Canada. Canadian corporations, foundations and government agencies also support UNA-Canada's programmes. UNA-Canada supplies information about the UN to Canadians, holds seminars and conferences on UN-related themes and supports an active Canadian role in the United Nations. Key outreach programmes work directly with young people, schools, and the broad educational community. Programmes focus on UN issues such as human rights, sustainable development, environment, and peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

If you would like more information about peacekeepers, the UN, or UNA-Canada, or you would like to become a member of UNA-Canada, please contact us at:

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