United Nations and International Peacekeeping

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The Charter of the United Nations is a document that devotes its robust chapters to strong collective measures to prevent or end interstate wars and violent conflicts while central issues like human rights or economic and social development are discussed rather programmatically and left to sometimes yet-to-be-created special organs. The reason for this focus is understandable; the Charter was created in a Second World War context. At the same time, it was obvious that the states intended to limit their handover of sovereign rights to the new world organization to a manageable minimum. While human rights and development became a political mainstay of the UN only much later, the basic concept of a global collective security system was, at its conception, firmly established in the Charter. In practice, however, the global collective security system has not been implemented in exact accordance with the Charter but rather, as in most cases, based on sometimes creative interpretations by member states.

Core principle of Collective Security

The history of international relations has been defined by states using military power and waging wars in order to enforce interests. For centuries this discretionary right to resort to war (liberum ius ad bellum) was seen by states as an essential sign of their sovereignty. As a result of growing interdependency in the modern state system attempts have been made time and again to prevent war and thus minimize trouble and disruption in the international system by holding power conferences, establishing treaty systems and creating alliances. This was exemplified by the 1878 Congress of Berlin discussions about the Balkans or by the balanced treaty diplomacy of the German Chancellor Bismarck as well as by the Triple Entente between France, Britain and Russia prior to World War I. The catastrophes of the two World Wars in the first half of the 20th century demonstrated to the international community how fragile and inadequate these attempts had been. Since there was no internationally accepted instrument that could prohibit the use of force or implement and enforce such a prohibition, states were allowed to start war again and again.

That is when the idea of collective security came into play. In international politics it was introduced for the first time, albeit not very successfully, by the League of Nations, and later it was embraced and further developed by the United Nations. Collective security proceeds from the assumption that states are willing to subordinate individual interests and sovereign rights to a higher common goal, e.g. peace in international relations assuming that the states are ready to participate in creating a global peacekeeping system that will effectively keep its members from using force or waging war against each other. Contrary to NATO being a collective defense system directed against external enemies, a collective security system places its members under obligation and may use sanctions against them. Ideally, such an institution would be designed as a world government - a utopian dream to this day – so any system of this nature is dependent on the voluntary self-commitment of states bound by an international treaty that:

• permanently takes away from the states the right to use force and obliges member states to settle conflicts in a peaceful manner
• creates an institution to monitor established peace norms
• provides for agreed measures in case of violation of established norms.

Such a system, however, can only function properly if certain requirements are met: agreed norms and mechanisms must be clearly established and universally binding, and all member states must be confident that the states (possibly all or at least the majority of them) will adhere to the established rules. Furthermore, each peaceful state must be confident that in case of aggression the system will come to its rescue and that in such a case impartiality and effectiveness of central decision-making authorities will be guaranteed to a very high extent.

It is exactly these high expectations that give rise to criticism of the basic idea of collective security. Proponents of Realism claim that decisions at the international level are driven by competitive self-interest and actors are never completely impartial. In complex conflict situations it is difficult to clearly distinguish between aggressor and victim and hence, decision-making capabilities within the system are limited. But even in relatively clear cases of aggression states may fear risks and costs and shy away from collective action. Naturally, risks and costs increase with the power of the peace-breaker. So collective security seems to be a promising mechanism first and foremost vis-à-vis smaller states, while larger powers will continue on a more classic path of providing for their own security either independently or by way of alliances. These arguments are valid and point to the fundamental question: is collective security virtually impossible?

A great deal of criticism is due to collective security understood in ideal terms. But collective security seen in less utopian and more humble terms is a rule-based framework for shaping international politics. The objective of such a framework is to create conditions that make peaceful conflict settlement more likely than it would be in conditions of global anarchy. It provides alternative mechanisms for conflict management by engaging institutions that might not be fully impartial but that apply norms and rules of procedures to urge states and powers towards balancing interests and seeking compromise. At a minimum, the regulatory framework reduces arbitrary behavior and decisions tend to be more acceptable to the community of states. On this basis, a more comprehensive system of cooperative security can be established in which states consult with each other and create a broad range of organizations, institutions, treaties or informal regimes, which in turn provide guidance for state behavior in various fields of state activity.

The UN Collective Security System

The provisions in the UN Charter relating to the prohibition on the use of force have been accepted globally as fundamental norm. Article 24 confers primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace to the Security Council; a potentially strong and capable organ. However, for many decades due to the East-West conflict, the Security Council was paralyzed since the Soviet Union and the United States would regularly use their power of veto. Under such conditions the collective security system foreseen in the Charter could not be realized. Instead, the most important instruments and mechanisms for peacekeeping were developed based on a much broader interpretation of the provisions in the Charter as explained below.

Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes
Article 2, para. 3 of the Charter requires states to settle their disputes by peaceful means. This obligation is further developed and specified in Chapter VI. For instance, according to Article 33 “the parties to any dispute, the continuance of which is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security,” shall, first of all, seek a solution by negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement or other peaceful means of their own choice. The Security Council may be called upon to act by any member or it may act on its own initiative when deemed necessary. It has the right to investigate any dispute (Article 34) and to recommend appropriate procedures or methods of adjustment (Article 36). However, the Security Council does not have the right to issue directives. Even a formal mediation proposal according to Article 38 can only be made if all the parties to a dispute so request. Chapter VI thus gives priority to state sovereignty over collective action, and the choice of means and the extent to which states are seriously willing to employ them is up to the states and their governments. Such a gentle approach on sovereignty is certainly appropriate for a community of equal states but it is also a major weakness in peaceful conflict settlement. States often lack the will to use preventive strategies. If the Security Council were to have stronger enforcement powers below the use of force-threshold, for example by being able to demand arbitration, Chapter VI would be strengthened and more effective preventive solutions would be facilitated.

**Actions regarding Peace-Breaking**

According to Chapter VII, if international peace and security cannot be maintained or restored by peaceful means the Security Council may take coercive action including the use of military force against the state or states responsible for the aggression. Article 39 stipulates that the Security Council shall first determine the existence of any threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression. If the Security Council comes to the conclusion that one of these three cases is occurring (up to now almost always termed “threat to the peace”), the Security Council may issue (nonbinding) recommendations to restore peace or call upon the parties concerned to comply with provisional measures like an appeal to stop combat operations. In such cases the Security Council has considerable power of definition. Until 1990 interventions in internal conflicts were practically excluded. Since the UN Operation in Somalia (1993), however, internal conflicts have almost become the norm for triggering collective action. Almost all UN peacekeeping mandates ever since have been dealing with internal issues: from Afghanistan to the Central African Republic.

If the threat to the peace continues, then the Security Council may -- even against the will of the conflict party or conflict parties and without the approval of the other UN members -- take coercive enforcement measures. This means that enforcement measures are part of a narrow and limited field of action within which the UN holds supranational authority vis-à-vis its member states. Enforcement measures are not forms of punishments but collective means of exerting pressure to make a state change its peace-breaking behavior. When peace is restored, the measures must be lifted.

We distinguish between two types of enforcement measures: measures that do not involve the use of armed forces (Article 41) and military measures (Article 42). Article 41 describes possible sanctions -- from the interruption of economic relations or lines of communication and transportation to the severance of diplomatic relations. Other nonviolent measures deemed appropriate or necessary by the Security Council may be added as well like the establishment of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda or the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. In addition, “tailored” sanctions like confiscation of property or travel bans for individuals or members of groups that, for instance, have been
accused of terrorism or serious international crimes, may be imposed as well (*smart sanctions*). It is important to note that sanctions imposed by the Security Council are binding to all states -- also states that are not involved in the conflict. No member state is allowed, for instance, to supply goods to a state under embargo even though this may lead to considerable economic loss. Up to now 23 sanctions (eleven of which are ongoing) have been imposed. This number is an indication that in a consensus-oriented organization like the United Nations the instrument of sanctions is rarely employed. Historically, sanctions were first imposed in the 1960s and 1970s in the form of trade restrictions and boycotts against the racist regimes in Southern Rhodesia (today Zimbabwe) and in apartheid South Africa. In the 1990s the extensive trade embargoes against Iraq considerably worsened living conditions for the civilian population. Since then, apart from weapons embargoes and bans on technology transfers, attempts have been made to target the elites responsible for policies threatening to peace by imposing travel bans or by freezing bank accounts. Such measures have, for instance, been employed against the rulers in Sudan and North Korea.

In case of military enforcement actions the Security Council may determine whether it will carry out an operation itself, or according to Article 48 authorize member states; or according to Chapter VIII authorize regional arrangements or agencies (for example the OSCE or the African Union) to carry out an operation. In reality, the Security Council has never carried out a single military operation itself since the member states have not been willing to even enter into negotiations on the required special agreement or agreements (Article 43) that would govern the forces to be provided to the Security Council. As a result, the Military Staff Committee (Article 47) envisioned for such an operation has never been established.

Since states have refused to provide forces on a reliable basis, the United Nations has lacked the centerpiece of a functioning security system that would be capable of generating action. This does not mean that military actions are impossible. The sheer number of peace missions and the Gulf War in 1990/91 prove the contrary. But in all peacekeeping procedures, and in the way these procedures have developed over the course of time, the United Nations has been dependent on the support of the member states. And this support is given on a case by case basis depending on state interests and weighing state choices. As a result, a decision for or against a certain measure is not taken based on the conflict itself but rather based on the extent to which especially powerful states have an interest in resolving this conflict. This approach affects the nature and quality of peacekeeping decisions and may lead to a lowering or partial loss of the effectiveness and legitimacy of decisions adopted by the central authority of this system, the Security Council.

**The Security Council and World Peace**

According to the Charter, the Security Council provides the centerpiece of the UN collective security system. The Security Council has been given the unique authority to make decisions in order to maintain peace and international security and all UN members have to accept and carry out these decisions (Article 25). As a result, the Security Council is the most powerful organ in this world organization.

The Security Council consists of five permanent members (China, France, Russia, USA and United Kingdom) and ten non-permanent members that are elected for a two-year term. It can discuss any issue that the Security Council itself considers potentially threatening to peace or that the Secretary-General or member states bring to its attention.

The Security Council is not an international court but a political organ that makes assessments and decisions essentially based on political self-interest of the five permanent
members. Since each one of the “Big Five” can prevent a Security Council decision by vetoing it, the P5 (Permanent Five) relies on consultations and workable compromises, which in theory could serve as proper mechanism to reduce arbitrary exercise of power. However -- due to the pursuance of state interests or the protection of allies -- in political practice, the Security Council has time and again been blocked on a sometimes long-term basis and has thus not been capable or only very restrictedly capable of fulfilling its primary responsibility as guardian of the peace. In recent history, sometimes measures have been initiated without the participation of the Security Council, for example, NATO air strikes in Kosovo in 1999 or the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. Although the causes and circumstances of these two situations were different, in both cases the collective security system of the United Nations was disregarded and severely damaged.

The end of the East-West conflict led to improved cooperation between the members of the Security Council and allowed for substantial changes, especially in peacekeeping. But it also brought new challenges in an increasingly turbulent world order since all continents experienced newly emerging or re-emerging conflicts. While the peacekeeping system established in the Charter sought first and foremost to prevent any threats to world peace due to classic interstate war, new conflicts and wars were now increasingly fought internally. But intervention in domestic conflicts was impeded by Article 2, paragraph 7 of the Charter, which bars the United Nations from intervening in domestic state matters. The Security Council started to make use of the leeway in interpretation provided in Article 39 when determining the existence of any threat to the peace and thus gradually expanded its authority to internal conflicts, human rights violations and humanitarian catastrophes. Since the intervention in Somalia in 1992 the Security Council has repeatedly taken action based on intrastate conflicts; since 1992, the majority of peacekeeping missions have dealt with conflicts in completely or partly failed states. By establishing the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (1993) and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (1994), and by developing their respective statutes, the Security Council has made sure that serious international crimes like genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes will be prosecuted. The creation of the International Criminal Court was thus considerably advanced. Following the attacks of 11 September 2001, the Security Council began obligating the international community to adopt numerous legal measures, for instance to eliminate terrorism financing. It has turned itself into a sort of global lawmaker, even though this can be very problematic considering that the Security Council does not have the necessary democratic legitimacy to do so. At the same time, by issuing resolutions, the Security Council has directly implemented international treaties that had not been ratified in due course by the member states. In exercising its responsibility for maintaining peace the Security Council has now considerably expanded its radius of operation in order to better meet new requirements.

Despite adjustment efforts the P5 composition of the Security Council is still mirroring power relations at the end of the Second World War, and the composition of the non-permanent members reflects the middle of the 1960s. The Council’s method of operation is still following provisional 1940’s rules of procedures that lack transparency in decision-making. Even though the power of veto is no longer exercised very often (more than 1300 resolutions have been adopted since 1990 in comparison with a little over 600 in the previous 45 years), the threat to block a decision in order to influence negotiations for one’s own benefit remains a critical power instrument in the hands of the Permanent Five. The current constellation of the Security Council is less and less fitting for a 21st century world and has kept a 15 year-debate on fundamental reform on the international agenda.
UN Peacekeeping in a State of Change

The peacekeeping system of the United Nations could not develop as foreseen in the Charter. So the organization had to develop alternative forms of peacekeeping that, on the one hand, met the requirements of changing forms of war and conflict and, on the other hand, did not run counter to the interests and sovereignty claims of member states. A specific form of UN measure still called peacekeeping was developed in the 1940s with observer missions monitoring ceasefires for example in Palestine (UNTSO) or in the region of Kashmir between India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) and then in the middle of the 1950s with peacekeeping forces named after the color of their head gear – Blue Berets. This meant that essentially an addition to the Charter, “Chapter VI and a half” if you will, was informally included and put somewhere between peaceful measures of conflict settlement and the use of force. In over 60 years of peacekeeping a whole series of different instruments and types of operations have been flexibly created. They are often categorized in the so-called “generation model”.

The classic form of peacekeeping that has defined subsequent generations is a military procedure of securing peace without the use of force. In accordance with the maxim “there is no peacekeeping if there is no peace to keep” this approach requires a ceasefire or peace agreement that is being monitored by peacekeepers. Such missions always include at least four characteristics that developed after the Suez War of 1956 during the first large Blue Beret mission called the UN Emergency Force (UNEF I). Back then, when the Suez Canal was blockaded by the Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser, France, Great Britain and Israel intervened military and occupied the entire Sinai Peninsula. Subsequently, the ceasefire included a demilitarized Sinai Peninsula that was monitored by UN peacekeepers.

The four characteristics are:

- Consensus of conflicting parties on a Blue Berets UN mission; thus greater acceptance of peacekeepers.
- Impartiality; the Blue Berets act as a buffer between disentangled conflict forces to prevent a resumption of fights but they do not have enforcement powers themselves.
- The use of light small arms for self-defense although principally observer missions are unarmed.
- The UN has responsibility for the mission based on a mandate by the Security Council (until the beginning of the 1960s also based on a mandate by the General Assembly). The Secretary-General has operational responsibility and appoints both a special political representative and a troop commander to lead the mission. The mission is organized and supported by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and the Department of Field Support (DFS) in the Secretariat.

The phase of classic peacekeeping lasted for about 40 years from 1948 to 1988. During this period 14 peace missions were initiated and some of them like in Israel/Palestine, in Kashmir, on the Golan Heights, and on Cyprus are still ongoing.

Towards the end of the East-West conflict, after a longer pause, the rapprochement of the major powers led to a resumption of peacekeeping in the second half of the 1980s. In 1988 the UN Blue Berets received the Nobel Peace Prize. Since then the number of UN peacekeeping missions as of 1948 has risen to 64 with 15 peacekeeping operations still ongoing (current as of March 2011, see fig.1).

International peacekeeping missions have changed in terms of quantity as well as in terms of quality. The Security Council has gradually expanded its authority and responsibility in
order to be able to intervene in internal conflicts, which has led to a new generation of international peacekeeping operations. The idea behind the new operations was provided in 1992 by the former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali in his “Agenda for Peace”. In it he defined “family of peace” terms that are still in use today: preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace consolidation (see fig. 2).

In addition to serving as a buffer, the “second generation” peace missions -- as carried out in Latin America, Africa and Asia -- had to accomplish a much broader range of tasks: such as helping states in transition or during national reconciliation, supporting democratic development, disarming and reintegrating combatants and civil war factions, repatriating refugees, all the way to taking over quasi-official state functions for entire countries like in 1989/90 in Namibia or in 1992/93 in Cambodia. While in classic peace operations the military was dominant, “second generation” peace operations required increasingly more civilian expert support from police, judiciary, public administration and humanitarian aid organizations. In general, the main focus of peace missions shifted towards post-conflict consolidation and reconstruction. These missions laid the foundation for subsequent large-scale multidimensional peacebuilding operations that became the norm almost a decade later.

While these gradual developments in the concept of peacekeeping were still based on Blue Beret principles and took place in post-conflict scenarios, e.g. in a relatively peaceful environment, “third generation” missions conflicted with these very established principles. In 1992 the Blue Beret mandate for operation UNOSOM II in Somalia was based, for the first time in decades, on Chapter VII allowing the use of military force. UNOSOM II was a failure not least because of the following contradiction; instead of protecting the peace that the conflict parties had agreed upon, the Blue Berets were supposed to enforce peace (peace enforcement) and thus became entangled in the conflict and were withdrawn after considerable losses. When genocide was imminent in Rwanda, the Security Council refused (not least because of the debacle in Somalia) to provide the Force Commander with additional troops to increase the Blue Berets contingent stationed in Rwanda (spring 1994) and failed to issue a robust mandate. After the outbreak of violence, a number of troop providing states withdrew their contingents. Within a few weeks almost a million people were killed by acts of genocide unparalleled since the Second World War. The hesitant approach of the Security Council, due to a lack of willingness to intervene among leading Security Council members like the USA, was a tragic failure on an unprecedented scale. In former Yugoslavia the UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) started out as an attempt at classic peacekeeping. However, it turned out very quickly how a proven instrument can be inadequate in a context for which it was not made. The deployment of Blue Berets was not based on a solid agreement between the two conflict parties. The UN troops became caught in the middle not knowing clearly whether they were dealing with regular forces or marauding gangs. Blue Berets were taken hostage, and in events like the Srebrenica massacre in July 1995, UNPROFOR was powerless to intervene.

The “third generation” peacekeeping operations were like the writing on the wall for the UN in terms of its ability to execute demanding peace missions. Enforcement missions were often inadequately prepared and revealed major leadership problems within the UN. Granted, the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) neither had the personnel, means or procedures required for the sheer number and complexity of the new missions. Furthermore, in Rwanda and especially in the Balkans, it became clear that crucial member states adhered – at best very loosely -- to mandates or country-specific requirements. Although it was the member states that had refused consistent support, the catastrophes in Rwanda and in Bosnia-Herzegovina were counted first and foremost against the UN and thus reduced the willingness of many western states to deploy their soldiers in UN missions. In 1995, NATO
took on the responsibility for military peace enforcement in Bosnia-Herzegovina, which marked the beginning of a new tendency, ergo to hand over responsibility from the UN to regional organizations. The United Nations experienced a deep crisis of credibility in its self-defined field of responsibility.

Complexities of Peace Consolidation

With the war in Kosovo in 1999 the UN returned to its peacekeeping calling. In a joint effort with NATO, the EU and the OSCE, the UN established a new type of peace operation in the form of the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). This approach was designed to be multidimensional. Cooperation between different international organizations and states was reinforced through greater differentiation of functions at the working and expert level with an increased number of civilian policemen, administrative experts, lawyers, infrastructure experts and development workers involved. In addition, numerous non-governmental organizations were in the region and worked in a more or less coordinated way with or alongside state actors.

The core mission of these types of integrated “fourth generation” peace operations is sustainable structural (re)construction in order to prevent a recurrence of violence after a destructive conflict. The term post-conflict peacebuilding has been established in UN terminology for this endeavor. It starts out with a robust military mandate issued by the Security Council in order to protect an agreed peace settlement. The operation is led either by the United Nations itself (East Timor) or by regional organizations like NATO (Kosovo, Bosnia-Herzegovina), the EU (since the end of 2004 in Bosnia-Herzegovina), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS, Liberia), the African Union (AU, Sudan), or by ad-hoc coalitions (Afghanistan 2001/02).

The many and varied civilian dimensions of such complex peace operations also require many different capabilities from various organizations. The United Nations provides capabilities in the field of humanitarian aid (World Food Program, UNICEF) or aid to refugees (UNHCR); the EU in the sphere of economics; and the OSCE in the field of organizing elections or building democratic institutions. In UNMIK these organizations are cooperating under the umbrella of the UN while military security is provided by NATO. In the case of the UN Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) all civilian tasks as well as military security are provided by the UN itself. In Afghanistan, it is the national political leadership that is responsible for state-building, supported by the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and the political UN Assistance Mission (UNAMA).

Peacekeeping and peacebuilding are now increasingly integrated in international comprehensive “fourth generation” peace missions. The most important criterion probably is that there is no uniform concept pertaining to all operations. Rather, each mission requires an individual mandate and a tailored force composition to allow flexible integration of previous generation peacekeeping elements and, above all, to develop new instruments with each operation. Illustration 2 provides an overview of the multitude of tasks required by complex peace operations.

For the longest time, the United Nations did not have sufficient institutional or operational capacities to meet the expanding range of requirements. As a result, countries emerging from civil war like Angola, Rwanda, Burundi and Sierra Leone either did not at all receive the required international aid for reconstruction or it was given too late or in an uncoordinated way, which meant that within a few years these countries fell back into civil war.
In the end of 2005, the *UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC)* was established in order to bridge this institutional gap. The PBC is an intergovernmental advisory body bringing together all of the crucial actors for sustainable peace consolidation, including states, international financial institutions as well as aid and development organizations. The work agenda for the PBC includes peacebuilding strategies and best practices which are developed by the Organizational Committee that consists of 31 states and represents the diversity of UN member states. Country-specific configurations include additional actors, first and foremost the country under consideration, but also neighboring states, regional organizations, troop contributors and donors. The *UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF)* comprises voluntary contributions by member states of about $250 Million and provides initial funds for immediate humanitarian or security-related post-conflict peacebuilding initiatives in order to support countries emerging from conflict until international donors can take over. The *Peacebuilding Support Office (PSO)* established within the Secretariat assists and supports the PBC.

Since 2006 the UN Peacebuilding Commission has received four mandates: Burundi, Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau, and Central African Republic. In Sierra Leone a country-specific strategy was not only developed but also successfully implemented in various areas. The results so far give reason to hope that the PBC will be capable of coordinating complex peace consolidation processes, provided that the political will of all actors is guaranteed.

**Challenges and Problems**

After having overcome a deep 15 year-crisis of confidence, the United Nations is now once again one of the most important actors in global peacekeeping. In the beginning of 2011 approximately 123,000 peacekeepers (one fifth of which were civilian experts from various fields of activity) worked in 15 operations that covered all tasks and capabilities of four generations of peacekeeping missions. Based on recommendations in the Brahimi Report, named for the chairman of the high-level commission that produced the Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (2000), the United Nations started to take measures to adapt their institutional structures and procedures to meet complex peace mission requirements and to develop realistic mandates to reflect the often poor security environment in deployment zones. Within the Secretariat, integrated operational planning capabilities were created in order to mainstream the activities of different actors into a coordinated framework. The *UN DPKO Best Practices Unit* has been strengthened over the past several years and analyzes and evaluates mission progress lessons and develops policy and doctrine as well as standardized training. In the UN Standby Arrangement System (UNSAS) member states can make on call forces and capabilities available to the organization (at least in concept) in order to streamline planning and gain required member state support in a more reliable way. The United Nations has demonstrated that with its very limited leadership capabilities (only 400 staff members in DPKO), as well as with flat hierarchies, it is capable of implementing even large-scale operations like MONUSCO in the Democratic Republic of the Congo with approximately 18,000 soldiers and 5,300 civilians involved. The large number of missions has proven that the UN has regained considerable trust by the community of states in its capability to carry out difficult operations.

The United Nations is faced with ever-growing challenges due to increasing quantitative and qualitative obligations in peacekeeping. To accomplish difficult missions the UN has to make do with predominantly poorly equipped and partly also poorly trained soldiers from developing countries. For years Pakistan, India and Bangladesh have been at the top of the list of troop providers for UN missions and their large contingents have considerably
contributed to the functioning of the UN-based collective security system. However, these contingents lack more expensive equipment in the field of transportation and logistics (for example helicopters) as well as high-end equipment in the field of communication and reconnaissance. Since the middle of the 1990s, the industrialized nations, first and foremost the United States and European countries have sought Security Council authorization and then taken direct control of their military, crisis management, or peacekeeping missions. The advantage, on the one hand, is that the United Nations does not have to bear the burden of difficult and expensive missions. On the other hand, these missions tie up forces and capabilities that are then not available to the UN for other UN operations. This has turned international peacekeeping into a problematic two class system; in some regions expensive high-tech missions led by industrialized nations and in other regions poorly equipped UN missions. Support missions, for example by the EU in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2003 and 2006 or in the Central African Republic and in Chad in 2008/09, do help overcome bottlenecks in personnel and technical equipment. But these support missions are EU-led and they follow EU operational logic which differentiates from UN guidance in terms of duration, intensity, force strength and scope of action. As a rule, EU forces are withdrawn according to schedule with no regard for the situation on the ground. Capable industrialized states have by and large escaped UN command in UN-led peacekeeping missions and have thus contributed to the establishment of a two class system in peacekeeping: high-tech NATO and EU operations on the one hand and poorly equipped UN missions on the other.

If this trend towards divided responsibility for peacekeeping continues, then the UN will be left with only residual competence for conflicts that are of low interest to industrial states. This would be in contrast to the Charter which has given responsibility for world peace to the United Nations and has put demands on all states equally. In fact, pursuing one’s own security interests seems inappropriate and against the requirements of an increasingly interconnected world. There are no isolated oases of stability and ramifications of conflicts in one region can be felt quickly in every other region. At the same time, Afghanistan has shown that even the capabilities of the most powerful military alliance in the world are limited when it comes to carrying out complex mission. In the future, the United Nations will continue to bear responsibility for international peacekeeping and will have to work towards practical implementation of this responsibility in consensus with its member states. The industrial states should increase their support for the UN umbrella. After all, it is them that profit from international stability. The United Nations offers a base and a framework for peacekeeping and has developed actor qualities in many areas. It is up to the states to make use of these opportunities.