Force Generation in the United Nations

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I am the Deputy of the Force Generation Service, in the Military Division in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Key elements in DPKO include the Office of Operations (Africa Division, Asia and Middle East Division, Europe and Latin America Division, and the Situation Centre), the Office of Mission Support (Logistics Support Division and Administrative Support Division), and the Police Division. Other elements of DPKO include the Mine Action Service, the Director of Change Management, the Peacekeeping Best Practices Section, and the Integrated Training Service.
There are about 700 people in DPKO, and a total of 64 civilian and military personnel in the Military Division. Please keep this total of 64 personnel in mind when I describe all that is expected from the Military Division.

The office of the Military Adviser is led by Lieutenant General Randhir Kumar Mehta, from India; and the Deputy Military Adviser will soon be Major General Per Arne Five, from Norway. The Office of the Military Adviser also includes a small Policy and Liaison Cell. The Military Adviser provides advice on all military matters, as requested by the Secretary General, provides technical advice to the heads of the military components of field missions, and provides an immediate establishment capacity to newly authorized missions.

The Current Military Operations Service (CMOS) tracks the daily operations of the military components of ongoing field missions, monitors implementation of plans and provides advice and support to the headquarters of the military component. CMOS conducts analysis and reports developments of note to the Military Adviser.

The Military Planning Service (MPS) produces all concepts and plans for the military component of potential and actual United Nations peace operations. This involves action from the early contingency options phase, through production of detailed concepts and plans for mission that are authorized by the Security Council, updating plans to cover potential or actual changes in existing missions, to planning to close a mission. Based on the work of the Service, the Military Adviser provides information that can be integrated into multi-dimensional planning that is the responsibility of the Office of
Operations. The Service comprises a number of geographically based planning teams.

The Force Generation Service (FGS) manages the force generation, rotation and repatriation process for both formed units and individuals deployed as part of the military component of United Nations peace operations. This includes operation of the United Nations Standby Arrangements System. The Service provides personnel policy regarding the appointment, employment and conditions of service for units and individuals. This includes policy advice and staff action regarding honors and awards, in particular medals. The Service maintains records relating to individual service and statistics related to contributions. The Force Generation Service is the focal point for liaison with Member states for the generation of formed military units, and individuals, rotations, replacements and repatriations of all military personnel.

Each of the Services is involved throughout the life of a mission. The Military Planning Service provides the Concept of Operations (and Force Requirements), The Force Generation Service generates the force, and the Current Military Operations Service monitors day to day operations.

Authority for United Nations peacekeeping operations is derived from the Security Council that gives authorization for all international peacekeeping operations through Security Council Resolutions. Security Council Resolutions can authorize a United Nations run (Blue Helmet) peacekeeping mission, or a
United Nations mandated national or multinational peacekeeping operation.

The United Nations Security Council mandate usually specifies the Chapter of the United Nations Charter under which the mission is authorized. Chapter VI refers to the pacific settlement of disputes, Chapter VII to action with respect to threats to the peace, breaches of the peace, and acts of aggression, and Chapter VIII deals with regional arrangements.

The United Nations first Peacekeeping mission was UNTSO, in 1948. At its peak, the United Nations had 78,744 personnel deployed in July 1993. Currently DPKO has 18 missions, with a total deployed military strength of 71,832. This does not include the Department of Political Affairs missions that DPKO supports, such as UNAMI in Iraq. The largest contributions to United Nations peacekeeping, as of 31 March 2006, are: Bangladesh (10,255), Pakistan (9,638) and India (9,061).

Since my topic is Force Generation, I will describe the Force Generation Service (FGS). The Service is headed by Colonel Jahanzeb Raja, from Pakistan, and I am his deputy. The Service consists of three teams. The Force Generation Team is responsible for the generation of all military personnel; formed units and individuals. Formed units are typically infantry battalions, and enablers such as logistics, aviation, engineer or medical units. The individuals include Staff Officers, and “Experts on Mission”, such as United Nations Military Observers, Military Advisers, and Military Liaison Officers. FGS also coordinates the selection of senior appointments,
such as Force Commanders, and Chief Military Observers. The Force Generation Service is the primary point of contact with the Permanent Missions of the Troop Contributing Countries for negotiations.

It is important to note that contingent members, and experts on mission (such as UNMOs) are distinctly separate, and different references apply. For contingents, the main reference is the “Contingent Owned Equipment (COE) manual”; as updated on 22 December 2005; and the Troop Contributing Country Guidelines that are produced by the Force Generation Service, for each mission. For United Nations Military Observers (and other experts on mission) the reference is the “Guidelines for the selection deployment, rotation extension, transfer, and repatriation of Military Observers in United Nations Peacekeeping Missions”.

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The Force Generation Team is supported by the Military Personnel Team. The Personnel Team arranges the rotation of individuals, such as UNMOs and Staff Officers, and maintains records and statistics relating to Member State contributions. In addition, the Personnel Team coordinates the issue of all United Nations medals. Gender is a significant issue for the Force Generation Service, and our short term aim is that a minimum of 2% of Peacekeepers be female, and we actively pursue a higher number of female Staff Officers and UNMOs.

The United Nations Stand-by Arrangements System (UNSAS) is based on conditional pledges by Member States to contribute specific resources within agreed response times and restrictions into United Nations Peacekeeping Operations. The Stand-by Arrangements Team (SAT) maintains the details of the pledges, in the three conventional levels, and the Rapid Deployment Level. There are currently 83 Member States in the UNSAS. The SAT also maintains details of Regional and International Organizations; such as ECOWAS and SHIRBRIG.

Before I describe the planning and generation process, I should note that the total strength of the Force Generation Service is 22 personnel.

The planning process begins with the strategic guidance which is given to the Military Adviser, and the Military Planning Service, and is developed into a Concept of Operations, and the specific force requirements for each required unit. The appropriate Security Council Resolution provides an outline of the tasks, and the number ceiling.
The Force Generation Service will be aware of the state of planning throughout the process. The actual generation process begins with the Concept of Operations, and the force requirements. FGS will clear the list of potential Troop Contributing Countries with the Office of Operations; and as a first step see what assets might have been pledged in the Standby Arrangements System. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) negotiations then begin with the Permanent Missions of the Member States, and the DPKO team includes a planning officer from the Force Generation Service, and representatives from the Financial Management and Support Service, and a Logistics Operations planning officer. Other experts, such as medical, aviation, and engineer, are included where needed. It is critical that the MOU negotiation team be able to present a clear picture the Troop Contributing Counties of the actual military capability required.
As the MOU negotiations progress, Member States will conduct a reconnaissance of the mission area. This Troop Contributing Country reconnaissance will be followed up by a Pre Deployment Visit (PDV) to the actual unit to be provided by the MOU team. PDVs are arranged by the Force Generation Service. Adjustments are made as required, and the final product is a Memorandum of Understanding, which in addition to the main document, contains Annexes with all of the specific details concerning Personnel, Major Equipment, and Self Sustainment. Successful negotiations are a team effort, and coordination is continuous with all concerned, including the Office of Operations, and the Office of Mission Support.

The two greatest challenges to force generation are the limited availability of assets such as aviation, medical and engineer units, and the time it takes to deploy by sea.
and air. In order to get the military capability required to where it is needed in the minimum amount of time, continuous coordination occurs with the Permanent Mission of the Troop Contributing Countries. The essential information needed includes, for example, the load lists necessary in order that the Movement Control Unit can charter the correct air and sea transportation. A significant strength that the United Nations has that contributes to successful force generation is a clear system of reimbursement to Member States, the COE system.¹

The essential component for force generation, however, is strong support from the Member States.

¹ In the COE system, the UN has introduced a reimbursement system for COE, based on clearly defined leasing rates (annotation by the editor)