Peacekeeping operations have expanded and diversified rapidly since the Cold War. Among the new features of peacekeeping is the increasing importance of civilian operations, ranging from the posting of election observers and human-rights observers to the provision of humanitarian aid and back-up of national police. Indeed many operations launched since the end of the Cold War have been motivated by humanitarian objectives. Some of these 'enhanced peacekeeping operations' have been launched without the full endorsement of the main conflicting parties, with the result that the use of force has been steadily though cautiously extended, chiefly in situations where this has been warranted in order to ensure the security of humanitarian aid operations and the safety of aid transports.

Finland and the other Nordic countries have provided their undivided support to United Nations efforts to alleviate world conflict. Since 1956, more than 31,000 Finns have served in UN peacekeeping forces. To date Finland has participated in 16 of the UN's 34 peacekeeping operations. From the outset Finland has also consistently contributed to improving the peacekeeping capability of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

Most of Finland's thousand-odd peacekeepers are currently serving in our battalions in Southern Lebanon and Macedonia. Finnish observers are also stationed in the Middle East, the Balkans, Kashmir and Kuwait. We have systematically supported efforts to solve the Cypriot crisis by keeping a small group of Finnish staff officers stationed in Cyprus. Civilian police from Finland are at present taking part in the UNPROFOR operation in the Balkans. In all, more than 50,000 people are currently involved in UN peacekeeping operations, whether in peacekeeping forces, as military observers or as civilian police. A large number of UN nations (75 in all) supply personnel for UN operations.
A reputation for specialized expertise

The interest that other nations have shown in our specialized expertise is testimony to Finland's extensive experience in peacekeeping.

As a token of the confidence we enjoy, Finland was offered four commanding positions in UN operations over a six-month period in 1994-1995. In August 1994, Brigadier Ahti Vartiainen was appointed commander of the UN's longest-standing peacekeeping operation, UNFICYP in Cyprus. Last December, Major-General Heikki Vilen was made commander of an OSCE preparatory mission in Nagorno-Karabakh. In January 1995, Brigadier Tauno Nieminen was appointed commander of a civilian observer operation controlling the borders between Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro under the peace conference of the former Yugoslavia (ICFY). In mid-February 1995, Brigadier Juha Engström took over as commander of UN peacekeeping forces in Macedonia.

UNPREDEP is the first pre-emptive peacekeeping operation launched by the UN. A joint Nordic battalion was deployed for this operation in 1992. Finland took charge of the Nordic battalion last autumn after the other Nordic countries sent their troops to Bosnia-Herzegovina. A US contingent joined this operation in 1993.

Finland has also made a significant contribution to training and its development. In the late '60s, Finland was the first country to establish a separate unit purely for the training of peacekeepers. Almost all Nordic military observers have been trained at the UN Training Centre in Niinisalo. Since 1984, the centre's courses have also been attended by officers from various NATO and CEE countries, the Baltic States and Asian and South American countries. In June 1995, a special course for the training of instructors was arranged for NATO and NACC/PfP countries. Finland also hosts frequent visits by foreign experts. We are currently collaborating with the other Nordic countries and the UK in a project designed to improve the peacekeeping capability of the Baltic countries. The Netherlands, France, Germany and the United States are also involved in this project. Peacekeeper training has become a fast-growing sector as a result of NATO's Partnership for Peace programme and cooperation between OSCE countries. Participation in peacekeeping exercises under the PfP programme is among the new forms of training that have been adopted recently.
Finnish peacekeeping forces are deployed in accordance with the provisions of a special Act issued for this purpose (Act on Finland's participation in the peacekeeping activities of the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, 517/84, later known as the Peacekeeping Act). The decision to participate in UN operations is taken under special deliberation. The decision is made by the President of the Republic upon submission of the government. Before the peacekeeping force is deployed, the government is under obligation to hear the opinion of the Cabinet Foreign Affairs Committee.

Finland's peacekeeping organization is under the operative command of the UN (or OSCE), and otherwise answerable to the Ministry of Defence. Finnish peacekeepers are officially enlisted in the service of the State, their employer being the Ministry of Defence.

- The peacekeeping organization has a military hierarchy.
- The peacekeeping organization does not belong to the Defence Forces.
- There is a statutory limit of 2,000 for Finnish personnel participating in peacekeeping operations.
- The role of the Defence Forces in the coordination of peacekeeping operations is set forth in the Act on the Defence Forces.

Key concepts related to Finnish participation in peacekeeping operations are as follows: Standby Force is the term used in the Peacekeeping Act for a military unit under the Ministry of Defence which is sent abroad to carry out an operative assignment set by the UN (or OSCE). In recent years, this term has become synonymous with peacekeeping force, which is more representative of the various units involved in peacekeeping missions, such as the engineering battalion stationed in Croatia in 1992-1993. Officers may also be stationed as non-armed military observers by the UN and OSCE. Finland's mobilization capability is based on a rapid-deployment force, comprising both personnel and materiel on standby for rapid deployment at the request of the UN (or OSCE) should Finland decide to participate in one of its peacekeeping operations. Crisis-response force is a new term referring to a corps that is to be set up under the Defence Forces which would be available for peacekeeping operations, either at full strength or in smaller contingents, should Finland decide to take part in a UN mission.

**Finland’s Contribution to Peacekeeping**

**Annual contribution FIM 200 million (1,000 in personnel)**

Finland's peacekeeping operations are funded by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defence. The funds contributed by the former cover payroll expenses and Finland's annual assessment to the UN peacekeeping budget. Funding provided by the Ministry of Defence covers materiel expenses and the participation of military
Finland’s rapid-deployment force

Every year, some 5000-7000 men and 2000-3000 women apply for service in peacekeeping forces, a few thousand of whom are placed on call for active duty for a period of twelve months. During this time, they are expected to report for training or service at seven days' notice. Recruits are selected from among reserves who have signed an undertaking to be ready for active duty. The most suitable recruits for the mission are selected on the basis of their existing military or civilian expertise. Recruits reporting for active duty are trained for 4-5 weeks. The aim of this training is to refresh and standardise their readiness for action and to brief them on the operation and conditions at destination.

Peacekeepers are also prepared mentally for their mission and provided with specialized training in their area of expertise. Finland has adopted a system of rotation whereby only one-third of personnel on active duty are replaced in turn. The training provided to new recruits in Finland can thus be followed up without interruption after they are stationed abroad. No other country has a similar system; usually the entire force is sent home and replaced by an entirely new set of recruits.

Materiel is a vital component of the rapid-deployment force. It currently consists of the UN Training Centre's reserve supplies and the back-up resources of the Defence Forces. Supplies are also readily available from the civilian sector and purchased on short notice when a new force is deployed.

Under its present system, Finland is capable of deploying a fully trained and equipped peacekeeping force at 4-5 weeks' notice for specialized UN or OCSE assignments, a speed that compares favourably with that of many professional armies. The rapid-deployment system has been upgraded systematically, and intensively so since 1993. Finland has communicated its readiness to make its various units available for UN operations. The largest unit in the rapid-deployment force is the motorized infantry battalion, the others being the engineers' battalion and staff.

Finland's rapid-deployment force enables units to be tailored for individual operations with special attention to conditions at destination and the UN's requests concerning expertise and resources.
Amendment of peacekeeping legislation

The present Peacekeeping Act was formulated at a time when peacekeeping referred to operations in which troops were stationed on assignments with the mutual consent of all parties (e.g. enforcement of a ceasefire). The law thus precludes participation in operations which are not based on the mutual consent of all parties in the conflict, or which involve the use of force, armed or otherwise, against a certain party.

In July 1993, the Ministry of Defence appointed a working group to investigate future tasks related to preserving international peace and security and the cost and legislative provisions this would entail. Chaired by Under-secretary of State Jaakko Blomberg (Ministry for Foreign Affairs), the working group submitted its report to the Government Foreign Affairs Committee in September 1993.

The working group concluded that recent trends in peacekeeping operations emphasize the need for us to prepare for tasks and situations in which no explicit agreement exists between the parties concerned. In fact, not all parties have given their full consent to UN operations in the past. Finland should therefore make legislative provisions to allow participation in 'enhanced peacekeeping operations', i.e. participation in operations in which limited use of armed force is authorized to achieve the stated goals of the operation, or if the operation has not received the full consent of all parties. The decision to participate in a peacekeeping operation would still be made on grounds related to foreign policy and with due consideration to financial imperatives. The law would make no provisions for peace enforcement, i.e. use of military force against a certain nation.

Finland’s Contribution to Peacekeeping

The distinction between peacekeeping and peace enforcement

When the United Nations was founded, it was originally to have its own armed forces. Chapter VII of the UN Charter lays down a model for collective action to suppress acts of aggression and for securing and upholding international peace and security. Peacekeeping as we know it today is effectively a concept which came about during the Cold War, and is consequently not mentioned in the UN Charter.

Peacekeeping initially arose from the need to resolve conflicts in situations where the Security Council could not embark on the military sanctions described in Chapter VII owing to constraints imposed by the Cold War. Peacekeeping is therefore based on a system whereby member states place troops at the disposal of the UN for specific
The key principles of conventional peacekeeping are as follows:

1. consent from all parties,
2. neutrality of the peacekeeping unit,
3. non-interference in internal affairs,
4. minimal use of force,
5. the UN secretary-general is directly responsible for all operations.

In conventional peacekeeping missions, troops are authorized to use armed force only if so warranted for the purpose of self-defence. Since 1973, the meaning of self-defence in provisions concerning rules of engagement has been expanded to include use of armed force that is warranted for the purpose of completing a mission. In practice, however, the UN has been reluctant to resort to this extended interpretation of self-defence, since most operations have been carried out with the mutual consent of all parties.

The secretary-general's Agenda for Peace consists of various components: preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping and post-conflict peacebuilding. The secretary-general defines preventive diplomacy as an operation launched for the purpose of preventing a crisis or its escalation into open conflict, as well as efforts to mitigate the consequences of conflicts. Peacemaking refers to a UN presence aimed at achieving a settlement between conflicting parties, primarily by the peaceable means described in chapter VI of the UN Charter. The secretary-general defines peacekeeping as a UN presence in a specific region, generally with the consent of all parties. The much-discussed concept of peace enforcement comes under the concept of peacemaking.

The UN Agenda for Peace effectively means that UN operations fall into two separate categories: peacekeeping or peace enforcement. The term peacekeeping also includes peacemaking, peacebuilding and preventive action.

Recent missions have generally been described as 'enhanced' peacekeeping operations, their typical hallmarks being:

1. the situation or its perpetuation poses a threat to international peace and security;
2. use of force is authorized in the UN resolution, whereas in conventional peacekeeping this authorization is expressly given by the secretary-general and endorsed by the Security Council;
3. use of force is authorized under chapter VII of the UN Charter, without particular emphasis on self-defence.
4. one or more of the conflicting parties has not given its consent or active commitment to fulfilling the goals of the operation.

The distinction between peacekeeping and peace enforcement is made on the basis of the Security Council's mandate and the rules of engagement for the operation. Military sanctions undertaken to avert or repel an attack are not classed as
peacekeeping. Neither are operations involving action specifically targeted against one party or extensive use of armed force.

Operations involving use of armed force thus fail to meet the basic criteria of conventional peacekeeping. For one thing, operations of this kind are typically undertaken fully without the consent of all parties. Secondly, troops are authorized to use as much force as is warranted for the successful completion of the mission (e.g. Operation Desert Storm).

**Finland’s Contribution to Peacekeeping**

**Augmentation of crisis-management capability**

It is vital that we continue to improve our peacekeeping capability. Measures embarked on by the UN and regional organizations to improve their crisis-management capability also have beneficial effects on national defence. We should in turn make a committed contribution to improving the UN's planning capacity, to upgrading OSCE peacekeeping operations, to sharing our training expertise and to active participation in operations. Active and fully committed participation in international peacekeeping operations calls for systematic and flexible upgrading of administration and for improvement in the preparedness of troops. Drawing on our past experience in peacekeeping, Finland is in every respect well prepared for collaborating in crisis management and its development.

Finland also has excellent potential for promoting cooperation between civilian personnel and military units both in pre-emptive crisis management and in post-conflict reconstruction. It is vital that Finland should continue to do its part to alleviate international conflicts.

In its report on Finnish security policy, the government proposes that our crisis preparedness should be upgraded as part of Finland's Defence Forces. The new crisis-management force will back up our existing system of defence while also being available for peacekeeping and crisis-management operations abroad. The crisis-response force will eventually provide the Finnish Defence Forces with an important avenue for contributing to international peacekeeping operations within the scope of its mandate. A crisis-response force would furthermore broaden our options for participating in the settlement of international conflict.

The decision to participate in international operations would continue to be made separately in each individual instance, and the maximum limit of 2,000 participating personnel prescribed in the Peacekeeping Act would still apply. Finland has neither the obligation nor the capability to make a larger contribution. Furthermore, the crisis-response force would not be engaged in any form of enforcement. This is an option firmly ruled out by Finland. Nevertheless, if and when the new crisis-response force is established, we should still continue improving our existing rapid-deployment force.
Finland’s Contribution to Peacekeeping

Please send comments to webmaster@formin.fi
(indicate the URL of the page you are referring to)

(c)1998
Virtual Finland

Last update: November 04, 1998