**Course Code 1POLTC0401**

**3.4 Role of United Nations Peace Keeping Forces (Sri Lanka and Cambodia)**

**1. Introduction**

**United Nations Peace Keeping**

United Nations as an international organization was created after the end of the Second World War. It was established to save the succeeding generations from the scourge of war. One of the main purposes of United Nations was to ensure peace and security. Peace keeping is one of the effective tools to assist most countries to move from the path of conflict to that of peace. Now there are several strengths of peace keeping operations. It has legitimacy as it is an international body the peace keeping operations undertaken always carry greater legitimacy than any unilateral action of a country. It has burden sharing, there is an ability to deploy and sustain troops and police from around the globe and most importantly it integrates with the civilian force in order to advance multi-dimensional mandates.

**Principles of the Peace Keeping Operations**- Now there are principles behind working of the peace keeping operations. There are mainly three principals:

1. Consent of the parties is very necessary.

2. Impartiality in the working of the peace keeping operations and

3. Non-use of force except in self-defense, and defense of the mandate.

1. Consent of the parties is very much necessary. And it is very much necessary that these parties should have commitment to the political process. Without the commitment to the political process the peace keeping operators not get the necessary freedom of action. Without the consent of the parties the peace keeping operations risk becoming a party to the conflict, maybe drawn towards enforcement action and it will move away from the fundamental role of keeping peace.

2. Impartiality is crucial in proper work of the peace keeping process. One thing it has to be remembered impartiality should not be confused with neutrality of inactivity. Just like in a game a good referee is impartial but whenever he or she sees a wrong happening in front of him or her, he or she will point it and penalize the wrong doer. Similarly in peace keeping operations also the peace keepers have to be firm; have to be impartial. But whenever there are wrongs happening they have to point it out and penalize them. The peace keeper should not take sides. It is very necessary that the person who is working as the United Nation peace keeping operation messenger should not compromise the image of impartiality. The moment a person or a peace keeper becomes partial it would lead to retaliation. This will lead to the undermining of the credibility not only of the peace keeper, but also of the UN. Maybe the consent of the parties, maybe withdrawn, if it is found that the peace keeper is acting partially.

3. Third important principle of peace keeping is non use of force except in self defense and defense of the mandate. UN peace keeping operations, it is not an enforcement tool. It may use force at the tactical level only when Security Council authorizes it. In certain volatile situations Security Council provides some robust mandates and authorizes United Nations peace keeping operations to use all necessary means in order to deter forceful attempts to disrupt the political process.

**2. Peace Keeping: Purpose, Mandates and the Legal Basis**

There are multi dimensional peace keeping operations which are taking place. Which are aiming at maintaining peace and security, facilitating political process, protecting civilians, assisting in disarmament, demobilization and re-integration of the former combatants, supporting organization of elections, protecting and promoting human rights and assisting and restoring the rule of law in the conflict affected areas.

Now in peace keeping operations success is not always guaranteed because every time the peace keeping operations have to face new challenges and the physical and political environment also changes with every operation. In this work the peace keeping operation of United Nations has made a commendable impact. It has won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1988. Peace keeping is highly dynamic and at every step there are challenges waiting for the military personnel, police personnel and the civilian personnel who are working in difficult foreign terrains.

There is lot of difference between robust peace keeping and peace enforcement as provided under **Chapter 7** of the United Nations Charter. Robust peace keeping involves use of force at the tactical level with authorization of the Security Council. Moreover the consent of the host nation or the parties to the conflict is necessary. Peace enforcement does not require consent of the parties. It also does not involve use of military force at strategic or international level.

In peace keeping force is used at the last resort because when force is used it has political implication and it may lead to several unforeseen circumstances which may create really difficult situations for the peace keepers in the long run. Use of force has been based on judgments based on a combination of factors. These factors are mission capability, public perception, humanitarian impact, force protection, safety and security of personnel and affect of the use of force that will have on the national and the local consent for the mission.

**Mandates and the Legal Basis For Peace Keeping**- In peace keeping, mandate of the Security Council is very necessary. Peace keeping has not been explicitly provided by the UN charter. It has evolved as one of the main tools of the United Nations to establish peace.

Security Council is mainly responsible for developing and establishing peace and security. Peace keeping operations mainly work according to 3 chapters - Chapter 6, 7 and 8. Chapter 6 deals with the pacific settlement of disputes. Traditionally peace keeping operations were associated with chapter 6. Security Council however need not refer to a specific charter in any resolution regarding peace keeping operations. Chapter 7 deals with the action with respect to the peace, breaches of the peace and acts of aggression. Recent years chapter 7 has been invoked by the Security Council for the peace keeping operations taking place around the globe.

It has been found that volatile post conflict settings are taking place in several peace keeping operations. Now the Security Council is taking on this chapter 7 because it is a statement of firm resolve reminding the parties and the United Nations members regarding the obligations to the Security Council decisions. Chapter 8 of the charter provides for involvement of the regional arrangements and agencies in the maintenance of international peace and security. In such activities the regional organization should work according to the principles of chapter 1 of the UN charter.

**3. History Part I**

It was in 1948 that UN peace keeping operations took its birth. It started off in the Middle East when military observers were sent in order to monitor the Armistice Agreement between Israel and its Arab neighbors. Now this operation was called United Nations Truce Supervision Organization. Since 1948 more than 65 operations have taken place under the UN. In it were involved military personnel, police personnel and civilians from more than 12 countries including India, Bangladesh.

Here I would like to mention that the peace keepers from India and Bangladesh especially women peace keepers have been really appreciated in countries of Africa where they had gone in order to support the peace keeping operations happening. There are more than 3326 peace keepers who have died while serving under the United Nations flag.

The early years when peace keeping started it was a period of Cold War and the Cold War had paralyzed the Security Council. Peace keeping was limited to maintaining cease fires, stabilizing situations on ground, providing crucial support in political efforts, to resolve conflicts by peaceful means.

The military observers were mainly unarmed or lightly armed. The first 2 peace keeping operations deployed by the United Nations were United Nation Truce Supervision Organization and United Nation Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan.

Now the earliest armed peace keeping operation was the first United Nation Emergency Force which was deployed successfully in 1956 to address the Suez crisis. UN operation in Congo which was launched in 1960 was the first large scale mission having more than 20000 military personnel. It has to be remembered here that more than 250 personnel died in Congo including the Secretary General Dag Hammerskjold

**4. History Part II**

1960s and 1970s this was a period of short term missions and it included Dominican Republic, West New Guinea and Yemen. In 1988 Nobel Peace Prize was won by the United Nations peace keeping operations. At that time the Nobel committee sited that the peace keeping forces through the efforts have made contributions towards the realization of one of the fundamental tenets of United Nations. Thus the world organization has come to play a more central role in the world affairs and it has been infected with increase trust.

This trust is very important while functioning because if the parties do not have trust in the United Nations peace keeping operations functionaries, then peace cannot be established in the long run. With the end of the Cold War there was this change happening. United Nations shifted and expanded its field operations from traditional missions to multidimensional enterprises. Now these multidimensional missions tried to implement peace agreements and tried to provide a foundation for sustainable peace for the warring parties.

The nature of the conflicts changed. Earlier peace keeping operations dealt with interstate conflicts. Now more of intra state conflicts were being dealt by the United Nations peace keeping operations. Now the tasks included were complex and it tried to monitor human rights, tried to bring in reforms in security, bring in disarmament, demobilization, reintegration of the former combatants.

The military remained the back bone of United Nations peace keeping operations. However there were many other faces which were becoming important. They were including administrators, economists, police officers, legal experts, D minors, electoral observers, human rights monitors, civil affairs, governance specialist, humanitarian workers, communication and public information experts.

The period of 1989 to 1994, this is a period when Cold War was coming to an end and a new consensus, a new common sense of purpose was being found in the United Nations. 20 new operations started in this period of 1989 to 94. The number of people involved with peace keeping operations increased from 11000 to more than 75000. Peace keeping operations were established in countries like Angola, Cambodia, El Salvador, Mozambique, and Namibia.

**5. Period of Reassessment**

Success in mission led to increase in expectations from the United Nations peace keeping operations. Now during the mid 90s the Security Council failed to provide adequate forces. It failed to authorize sufficiently robust mandates. It was found that where the missions were taking place or the peace keeping operations were going on, guns were still hot. This was the situation in former Yugoslavia, Rwanda, and Somalia. In these 3 high profile peace-keeping operation areas there was lots of criticism going on against the peace-keeping operators. The peace-keeping operators faced situations of warring parties who were not ready to go by the peace agreements. The peace-keepers themselves were not getting adequate resources or political support. So in these 3 peace-keeping operations like in UN Protection Force, UN Assistance Mission for Rwanda and UN Operations in Somalia II, civil casualty rose, hostility continued and the reputation of the UN peace-keeping functionaries suffered.

When we go back to the set-backs of early mid 1990s we are finding that the Security Council started limiting the number of peace-keeping missions. It was a process of self reflection. The Security Council tried to realize what went wrong, what were the problems and the challenges which needed to be tackled so that the peace-keeping operations could be successful. We find that the Secretary General took on a very positive role. He commissioned independent enquiry into the actions of the UN during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. At the request of the General Assembly he provided a comprehensive assessment on 1993 to 1995 events since Febrenica in former Yugoslavia and examined the circumstances, the situations that had led to the UN withdrawal from Somalia.

This was a period where we find that the UN peace-keepers were actually continuing their positive role in the operations in the Middle East, in Asia and in Cyprus. With the continuous crisis going on in different parts of the world and the demand for more and more peace-keeping operations, the role of the UN was reaffirmed. Actually the peace keeping operations were working and in many cases they were being successful in bringing in long-term peace.

**6. Second Half of the 1990s and the 21st Century**

The Security Council authorized new UN operations in Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, former Yugoslavia, Republic of Macedonia, Guatemala and Haiti. The 21st century new operations coming in, new challenges are also coming in.

The Security Council started examining the challenges to peace keeping operations in a better manner. It started introducing reforms. The aim was to strengthen capacity to effectively manage and sustain field operations. The Security Council was trying to get a greater understanding of the limits and the potentialities of the peace keeping operations. Peace keeping operations is always a complex task. It became more difficult since 1999 when UN served as the administrator of Kosovo in former Yugoslavia in the form of UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo. In East Timor, now Timor Leste in the form of UN Transitional Administration in East Timor which was in the process of gaining independence from Indonesia.

In the following years Security Council also started large and complex peace keeping operations in several parts of Africa. It included Burundi, Chad and Central African Republic, Cote d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea or Ethiopia, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Sudan and Syria. Peace keepers returned to resume vital peace keeping and peace building operations where there was fragile peace because the aim was to have long-term, continuous peace and there should have been an end to the conflict between the intrastate groups in different parts of the countries of Africa.

**Peace Keeping in the 21st Century**- The first decade of the 21st century saw peace keeping operations being stretched to its limits and maybe beyond at times. Increasingly it was being found that the peace keeping operations had to be conducted in very remote, very uncertain environments where the political surrounding was not at all supportive to the peace keeping operation functionaries. Challenges were coming in; Challenges were to deliver on to this largest and expensive, nearly complex missions.

The transition strategies had to be built to prepare for an uncertain future. By May 2010 UN peace keeping operations had more than 1 lakh, 24 thousand military, police and civilians staff. Consolidation had started; number of peace keeping operation staff was reduced, challenges started coming in. But the peace keeping operators also started acting in unique manners. There was continuous demand for field missions. Political complexities continued to go on. The most complex operational task had to be dealt multi-dimensionally.

Peace keeping operation is dynamic. It is evolving. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon has established a 17 member, high level independent panel on UN peace operations in order to make a comprehensive assessment of the state of UN peace operations of the day. In fine it can be said UN peace keeping operations have been successful. There have been failures but these failures can be seen as opportunities to learn so that they can serve the world in a better way in the future and establish permanent peace all over the world.

**The Case Of Cambodia**

UN peacekeepers from around the world were deployed to Cambodia between February 1992 and September 1993 as part of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) established to ensure implementation of a political settlement of the conflict in the south-east Asian country. United Nations operation in Cambodia considers the factors that produce success and failure in multidimensional peacekeeping operations. The 1991 Paris Peace Agreement on Cambodia under the Security Council organized the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC). The United Nations was charged for the first time in its history with changing the political structure of one of its member states in order to bring about peace and reconciliation. UNTAC's presence marked the end of large‐scale civil war and the prospect of true independence for Cambodia. Although UNTAC peacefully repatriated and resettled over 350,000 refugees, and organized a successful election in a country with a shattered infrastructure, it failed in two major respects. It did not establish control over vital functions of civil administration and also failed to canton, demobilize and disarm 70 per cent of the military forces of the four main factions, as the agreement demanded. A key source of UNTAC's success lay in its capacity to implement and avoid dependence on the positive cooperation of the parties. But a variety of contributory factors also played an important role. UNTAC offers valuable lessons for complex peacekeeping operations.

**The Case of Sri Lanka**

Sri Lanka, from the early 1980s, was facing increasingly violent ethnic strife in the [Sri Lankan Civil War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sri_Lankan_Civil_War). The [origins of the Sri Lankan Civil War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Origins_of_the_Sri_Lankan_Civil_War) can be traced to the [independence of Sri Lanka](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sri_Lankan_independence_movement) in 1948, after the end of [British rule](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_Ceylon). At the time, a [Sinhalese](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sinhalese_people) majority government was instituted. This government, which included the Tamil Congress, passed legislation deemed discriminatory by some against the [Tamil](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tamils_of_Sri_Lanka) minority in Sri Lanka. In the 1970s, two major Tamil [parties](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_political_parties_in_Sri_Lanka), the [Tamil Congress](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tamil_Congress) and a split, the [Federal Party](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Illankai_Tamil_Arasu_Kachchi) united to form the [Tamil United Liberation Front](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tamil_United_Liberation_Front) (TULF), a [separatist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Separatism) Tamil nationalist group that agitated for a separate state of [Tamil Eelam](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tamil_Eelam) in north and eastern Sri Lanka that would grant the Tamils greater autonomy within the [federal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federalism) structure.

However, the Sixth Amendment to the [Constitution of Sri Lanka](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constitution_of_Sri_Lanka), enacted in August 1983, classified all separatist movements as unconstitutional,Outside the TULF, Tamil factions advocating more militant courses of action soon emerged, and the ethnic divisions eventually led to violent civil war. This led to the deployment of the Indian Peace‐Keeping Force (IPKF) in Sri Lanka, between 1987 and 1990, that peacekeeping is conducted impartially, by consent, with minimum force, and on a multilateral basis frequently under the authority of the United Nations.