Looking to Contribute

A Guide to the UN Force Generation System for Prospective Troop Contributors

Claes Nilsson & Cecilia Hull Wiklund

Claes Nilsson & Cecilia Hull Wiklund

Looking to Contribute

A Guide to the UN Force Generation System for Prospective

Troop Contributors

Cover: UN Photo/ Albert Gonzáles Farran

Titel	FN:s styrkegenerering: En guide för bidragarländer till FN:s fredsfrämjande insatser
Title	Looking to Contribute: A guide to the UN Force Generation system for prospective troop contributors
Rapportnr/Report no	FOI-R—3893--SE
Månad/Month	Juni/June
Utgivningsår/Year	2014
Antal sidor/Pages	37 p
ISSN	1650-1942
Kund/Customer	Försvarsdepartementet/Ministry of defence
Forskningsområde	8. Säkerhetspolitik
Projektnr/Project no	A14106
Godkänd av/Approved by	Maria Lignell Jakobsson
Ansvarig avdelning	Försvarsanalys

Sammanfattning

Styrkegenerering är den process genom vilken militär och polisiär personal samt utrustning till internationella insatser rekryteras, roteras och dras tillbaka. Många europeiska länder, inklusive Sverige, har aktuell erfarenhet av styrkegenerering ifrån EU och Nato. Styrkegenereringen inom FN skiljer sig dock avsevärt från den inom Nato och även EU. Allt eftersom Natos insats i Afghanistan avvecklas frigörs fler västerländska styrkor för andra uppgifter, inklusive deltagande i FN:s fredsfrämjande insatser. Föreliggande rapport beskriver och analyserar FN:s styrkegenereringsprocess i syfte att underlätta för potentiella truppbidragare att navigera i FN-systemet. Rapporten beskriver styrkegenereringsprocessens formella och informella steg, lyfter fram några viktiga och vanligt förekommande utmaningar som truppbidragare kan förväntas stöta på och ger förslag på strategier för att hantera dessa utmaningar. Bland annat diskuteras vikten av koordinering i styrkegenereringsprocessen och strategier för att samarbeta så effektivt som möjligt med de olika aktörerna som är involverade i processen, liksom de svårigheter som kan uppstå när ett medlemslands förmågor inte stämmer överens med FN:s kravspecifikationer. Rapporten är främst baserad på intervjuer med FN-personal samt några utvalda medlemsstaters permanenta representationer vid FN.

Nyckelord: FN, fredsfrämjande insatser, styrkegenerering, truppbidragarländer

Summary

Force generation is the process by which military and police personnel and equipment are generated, rotated and repatriated. Although many western states have a lot of experience of European Union (EU) and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) force generation, the process in the United Nations (UN) is inherently different. As NATO's operation in Afghanistan comes to an end, many western countries are once again looking at UN peacekeeping missions as a viable option. This report describes and analyses the UN force generation system with the aim of enabling prospective Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) to successfully and efficiently navigate the force generation process. The report outlines the formal and informal steps in the process, highlights the key challenges for prospective TCCs and discusses some possible strategies to counter these. Among other things, the importance of coordination is highlighted and strategies for engaging with all the relevant actors in the process are discussed. In addition, the challenges that arise when a member state's contributions do not match the UN's force requirements are analysed. The findings of the report are primarily based on interviews with staff at the UN and at the permanent missions of its member states.

Table of contents

Acronyms and Abbreviations

ASG	Assistant-Secretary-General
CONOPS	Concept of Operations
COE	Contingent Owned Equipment
CMS	Chief Mission Support
DFS	Department of Field Support
DMS	Director Mission Support
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
EU	European Union
FGS	Force Generation Services (DPKO)
IOT	Integrated Operational Team
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force (NATO, Afghanistan)
LSD	Logistics Support Division (DFS)
LoA	Letter of Assist
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MilAd	Military Adviser
MINUSMA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OO	Office of Operations (DPKO)
OMA	Office of Military Affairs (DPKO)
OROLSI	Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions (DPKO)
RoE	Rules of Engagement
SRSG	Special-representative of the Secretary-General
SFR	Statement of Force Requirements
SUR	Statement of Unit Requirement

SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
TAM	Technical Assessment Mission
TCC	Troop Contributing Country
PCC	Police Contributing Country
UN	United Nations
UNSAS	United Nations Standby Arrangements System
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
USG	Under-Secretary-General

1 Introduction

As NATO's operation in Afghanistan comes to an end, many countries are evaluating their international engagements. This has opened up a window of opportunity for participation in UN-led peacekeeping. After several years of participating in international operations led by the EU or NATO, countries such as Sweden have developed a solid understanding of these organisations' processes for planning and generating forces for stabilisation missions. The force generation process within the UN, however, is unique. For any country returning, or simply turning, to participation in UN peacekeeping, understanding how this system works is key. This applies to both new and old providers of peacekeepers, because institutional memory regarding the force generation system may have been lost and the reforms undertaken within the UN over the past decade have changed the way the organisation plans and implements its missions.

A key difference between force generation in the EU or NATO and in the UN is that the first two rely on so-called force generation conferences while the latter does not. A force generation conference is a gathering of all member states at which the countries "bid" on the required positions in the missions. Usually, these occur on a regular basis at the start of a mission or when significant changes are being made to an ongoing operation. They often recur once or twice a year. Force generation conferences allow member states to go in and out of operations on a regular basis, as the decision to continue to participate is often renewed at each conference. Because pledges are made in an open forum, force generation conferences also allow transparency when it comes to the intentions of other member states to contribute. This can inform not only mission planning, but also the planning of individual Troop Contributing Countries. In addition, this open process can increase peer pressure among member states to contribute.[1]

In contrast, the UN relies on a force generation system in which contributions are negotiated individually with each TCC. The UN's force generation process is less dynamic, and the organisation relies to a much larger degree on a few big TCCs that consistently supply large numbers of troops, often throughout the lifetime of a mission. The UN process has been criticised for being too ad hoc and too focused on numbers, and therefore lacking a strategic approach to force generation.[2] For the member states, all these factors pose challenges that are unique to the UN system. While these can be overcome relatively easily, doing so requires a good understanding of why the challenges occur and what can be done to mitigate their effects.

---

[1] Smith, A and Boutellis, A. 2013. 'Rethinking Force Generation: Filling the Capability Gaps in UN Peace-keeping'. *Providing for Peacekeeping No. 2*, New York: International Peace Institute, p. 14.
[2] Ibid.

A thorough understanding of the UN force generation system is important for explaining why UN missions look and perform the way they do. Nonetheless, the subject is relatively understudied, especially when looked at from the perspective of the member states. Outside of the UN's own guidelines, which do not always provide the depth required, there is little guidance on the UN force generation process available for TCCs. By analysing UN force generation from a member state perspective, this report seeks to support TCCs, and in the longer run the UN, to become more effective and efficient at generating the right resources at the right time for UN peacekeeping missions.

1.1 Aim of the Report

The aim of this report is to describe and analyse the UN force generation process in order to enable those UN member states wishing to deploy UN peacekeepers to successfully and efficiently navigate the process. The report primarily aims to support member states that are new to the system or have contributed to UN peacekeeping in the past but lack recent experience of the process.[3]

The report describes the relationship between the UN Secretariat in New York and the member states, focusing on how expectations, needs and requirements related to force generation in UN peacekeeping can be most effectively communicated between these entities.

1.2 Method and Delimitations

The study is primarily based on interviews with personnel in the UN, principally the *Department of Peacekeeping Operations* (DPKO) and the *Department of Field Support* (DFS), and in the permanent missions to the UN of the member states. Member states were asked about their experiences of force generation processes, the challenges they had encountered and what lessons, if any, they had drawn from these. Representatives from the UN Secretariat were asked to describe the formal and informal steps in the force generation process, including common pitfalls and obstacles.

The member states interviewed were chosen on the basis of their relative similarity to Sweden (European countries, previous contributors to UN peacekeeping, not a permanent member of the Security Council) and recent experience of UN force generation.[4]

---

[3] A study by the authors on UN force generation was originally published in Swedish in April 2014. This report builds on that work but takes a wider approach. Both studies were commissioned by the Swedish Ministry of Defence.

[4] The interviewees are listed in full in the reference section of the report.

The study focuses on military contributions to UN-led peacekeeping and does not therefore cover issues related to UN police, formed police units or civilian contributions, even though some of the report's conclusions might also be valuable to member states involved in such processes. The study is also limited to the generation of troop contingents and does not specifically address force generation for military observers or individual staff officers.

Force generation is the process by which military and police personnel and equipment for missions are generated, rotated and repatriated. While there is much to say about the UN's procedures on monitoring, and the performance and quality of the contributions made by member states, including the adjustment of reimbursements to TCCs, this study focuses merely on the force generation process up until the deployment of the troops.

The study analyses the force generation process primarily from the perspective of the TCCs. This means that it aims to guide TCCs rather than the UN Secretariat, to which much of the information in this report is already known. The study does not look at what the UN force generation system *should* be, but rather discusses what it *is* and thereby helps new and prospective TCCs to overcome some of the current hurdles.

1.3 Structure of the Report

Chapter 2 discusses the status of UN force generation. It touches on some of the system's main challenges, such as the diverging interests between those who pay for peacekeeping and those who contribute troops, as well as the difficulties in generating enabling capabilities for the missions. Chapter 3 outlines the force generation process and discusses its formal and informal steps. Among other things, it highlights that planning and force generation are closely interlinked, and the importance of the early, informal stages of force generation. Chapter 4 outlines the key challenges that member states could face when they engage in the UN's force generation. The chapter also discusses some possible strategies to counter these challenges. Chapter 5 presents the report's concluding remarks.

1.4 Acknowledgements

The authors would like to express their gratitude to the interviewees listed in full in the list of references. Their knowledge was invaluable to the study. Thank you also to Carina Lamont at FOI who reviewed the report. It should be emphasised that the views expressed are solely those of the authors.

2 The Status of UN Force Generation

In April 2014, UN peacekeeping had 98,058 uniformed personnel deployed in 15 peacekeeping missions. Troop contributions were made by 122 states with the top ten TCCs and police-contributing countries (PCCs) providing 56 percent of the uniformed personnel – an average contribution of 5453 per country. Of the 122 TCCs/PCCs, only about 20 are considered *persistent major contributors*, continuously providing contributions of more than 2000 peacekeepers. The 95 countries outside the top 20 provide the remaining uniformed personnel, at an average of 236 persons per country.[5] Even though these countries are less regular contributors, statistics show that once a country has decided to contribute troops to a UN mission, most of these – reportedly 82 to 87 percent – are prepared to maintain their contribution for the duration of the mission.[6]

While the number of countries willing to contribute to UN peacekeeping is currently at an all-time high, most of these provide what is usually referred to as *token* contributions. This means sending fewer than 40 uniformed personnel to a mission, where these do not make up a specialised unit. Bellamy and Williams refer to research stating that in August 2011, 68 percent of the contributions made to UN missions were considered token contributions.[7] In fact, 55 percent constituted less than ten people. The authors state that token contributions should not be seen as simply a product of resource constraints in the contributing country, since the vast majority of those TCCs contribute to multiple missions – often with a series of token contributions.[8] While doing so may be in the interests of the contributing states, 'tokenism' is a major challenge for the UN force generation system, consuming energy and resources.

Specialised contributions, on the other hand, may also be small but add capabilities of particular value, often enhancing the overall capacity of the mission. Specialised contributions are made in the areas of communications, engineering, information-gathering and analysis, logistics, mobility (aerial or surface), medicine, mine clearance or units capable of high-intensity operations.[9] The UN often struggles to generate sufficient specialised capabilities, partly because those states which possess such capabilities have chosen to participate in

---

[5] United Nations, 'Peacekeeping Fact Sheet, 28 February 2014'. Available online at: http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/resources/statistics/factsheet.shtml and United Nations. '2016-2018 Operational environment'. Power point presentation made by ASG DPKO Edmund Mulet to the EU delegation CONUN meeting, Saturday 28 September 2013.

[6] Bellamy, A and Williams, P. 2012. 'Broadening the Base of United Nations Troop- and Police-Contributing Countries'. *Providing for Peacekeeping* No. 1, New York: International Peace Institute.

[7] Ibid, pp. 34-35.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid.

operations led by regional organisations such as the EU or NATO, or to act unilaterally.[10]

Several Asian countries, such as India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, have long been and continue to be key contributors to the UN, although there has been a slight decline recently in contributions from Asia. Some African countries, on the other hand, have been increasing their engagement. These countries primarily contribute infantry units. The countries of Latin America continuously provide small numbers of peacekeepers, also primarily infantry. Large European contributions have been rare since the 1990s. In 2013, European countries provided around 6 percent of the troops in UN missions, focused primarily on missions in the Middle East.[11] When European states do contribute, they primarily provide the above-mentioned specialised capacities, even though some still provide infantry troops. In 2014, the UN is envisaging a possible increase in European participation. In particular, the European countries have made significant specialised contributions to the UN mission in Mali (MINUSMA).[12]

Certain types of peacekeeping assets are relatively easy to come by for the UN. These include infantry battalions, staff officers and military observers. More often than not, however, the UN struggles to find the capabilities required to meet the ambitious mandates given by the Security Council.[13] Among the critical capability gaps most frequently identified by the UN are air assets, including helicopters (attack and utility) and fixed-wing tactical air craft.[14] Other critical capabilities include level II and level III hospitals, and medical and casualty evacuation capabilities.[15] In general, engineering units are in short supply, particularly demining units and horizontal and construction capabilities. Since new UN missions tend to be deployed to areas where the missions might be directly targeted by spoilers or other groups, the need for information-gathering and information-fusion centre capabilities, including the provision of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and other technologies, is also increasing.[16] Should UN peacekeeping missions move towards the development of more offensive engagements, such as those exemplified by the Force Intervention Brigade in

---

[10] Bellamy, A and Williams, P. 2012.

[11] International Peace Institute (IPI), Pearson Centre, Centre for International Peace Operations (ZIF). 2013. 'Enhancing European Military and Police Contributions to UN Peacekeeping Missions' Meeting note from *Enhancing European Military and Police Contributions to UN Peacekeeping: Being a Peacekeeper regional roundtable* October 24-25 2012.

[12] United Nations. 2013. '2016-2018 Operational environment'.

[13] Interview, UN Secretariat, New York, February, 2014.

[14] Smith and Boutellis. 2013.

[15] Nilsson, C and Zetterlund, K. 2014. *Ready or Not? – Revamping UN Peacekeeping for the 21st Century.* FOI: Stockholm, p 32.

[16] Ladsous, H. 2013. *Letter from Hervé Ladsous, UN Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, to the Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations and the Deputy Secretary-General of the European External Action Services*, dated 19 December 2013.

MONUSCO in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), specialised capabilities will become even more critical as such missions are heavily reliant on mobility, information, high-tech equipment and units capable of high-intensity operations, among other things.[17]

The departure of many western TCCs from UN peacekeeping at the end of the 1990s led to new dynamics in its organisation. Broadly speaking, a division of labour has developed in which some countries, mainly Asian and African, provide the manpower for peacekeeping missions (about 87 percent of the troops) while the EU member states, the US, Canada, Australia and New Zeeland provide the finances (about 87 percent of total funding). No country is currently in both the top ten of TCCs and the top ten of funding contributing countries, although China comes closest ranked six in funding and 13 as a force contributor.[18]

This division of labour greatly affects discussions about the future of UN peacekeeping, as well as the effectiveness of peacekeeping missions. With some countries paying the bill and other countries supplying the troops, difficult issues, including discussions on reimbursement rates and more robust approaches to missions, are hard to take forward. The missions suffer because those countries which possess the specialised capabilities and enablers that the UN is in great need of rarely make them available to the UN. If western countries renewed their engagement with UN peacekeeping, it would boost the resource side of the missions substantially. At the same time, there is a concern among some of the current TCCs and PCCs that western states returning to peacekeeping might result in a loss of influence and prestige, as well as the financial compensation that comes from contributing to UN peacekeeping.[19] Unlike EU or NATO operations, where those who contribute also foot the bill, the UN reimburses TCCs and PCCs at fixed rates.[20] For western states with more expensive armed forces, the reimbursement rate rarely covers the expenses. In contrast, for some states, contributing to UN peacekeeping helps to sustain their large military forces. Several major contributors use UN peacekeeping partly as a training ground and income generator for their armed forces.[21]

While there are indications that countries are returning to UN peacekeeping, their return, as experience so far indicates, is not without challenges. Many potential TCCs and PCCs are unfamiliar with the formal and informal procedures and the bureaucracy of the UN force generation system, which present extra obstacles in

---

[17] Nilsson and Zetterlund. 2014, p. 32.

[18] United Nations. 2013. '2016-2018 Operational environment'.

[19] Smith and Boutellis. 2013.

[20] The reimbursement levels have remained unchanged for the past decade, although over the past two financial years the UN has added supplementary payments. The reimbursement rates are under review.

[21] Bellamy and Williams. 2013, p. 9.

an already complex process. In addition, Smith and Boutellis highlight the legal and political hurdles that these countries may bring along, including domestic laws that restrict how their armed forces can be used abroad, which can result in significant caveats and delays in deployment.[22] The UN's force generation process has been accused of being slow and chaotic, resulting in the slow deployment of new peacekeeping missions. The conclusions drawn from a series of inspections and evaluations of UN missions, however, show that such delays can be linked as much to delays in the political processes and the military hierarchies of the member states as to the UN system itself.[23]

Countries with recent experience of NATO or EU force generation are likely to find the UN system difficult and sometimes frustrating. It will be a steep learning curve for both new TCCs and the Secretariat should member states with advanced military capabilities, used to a certain way of planning and preparing operations, return to UN peacekeeping. Increased engagement in UN peacekeeping is nonetheless likely to greatly enhance what the UN's peacekeeping missions can hope to achieve in terms of the effectiveness of missions.

---

[22] Smith and Boutellis. 2013.
[23] Ulving, S. 2010. *Final report as the EUMS Liaison Officer to the UN*, 19 November 2010; Office of Internal Oversight. 2010. *Office of Military Affairs. Audit Report* 28 May 2010. United Nations: New York

3 UN Force Generation Process

The UN force generation process is both time-intensive and complex, with several formal and informal phases and procedures. The UN has formulated several documents and presentations depicting the process. These are, however, rather generic and do not sufficiently describe its dynamics. They also give the impression that the process is linear, consisting of a series of logical steps, when in reality several phases occur in parallel and can vary from case to case. Existing descriptions of the process are thus insufficient to guide countries that are new to the system, or countries that have not been engaged in UN peacekeeping for some time. This chapter describes the UN's force generation process, focusing on the formal and informal steps and decision points as well as common irregularities. The chapter is primarily based on interviews and UN documentation.[24]

3.1 Planning and Selection of Troop Contributing Countries

Force generation in UN peacekeeping occurs as new missions are established, but also as ongoing missions rotate, downsize or reconfigure. The generation of forces is thus intrinsically linked to mission planning.

Mission planning, including military planning, for a new peacekeeping mission formally starts when the Security Council adopts a mission mandate. Informal mission planning, however, starts well before this and is a vital part of informing the process of drafting a Security Council resolution. Mission planning is led by so-called Integrated Operational Teams (IOTs), which are headed by staff from the DPKO Office of Operations and consist of representatives from DPKO, DFS and other UN entities as appropriate.

---

[24] E.g. United Nations. *The Force Generation Process.* Word document available on UN Force Link, https://cc.unlb.org/default.aspx >UNSAS documents > ForceGenerationProcess, and United Nations General Assembly. 2011. 'Manual on Policies and Procedures Concerning the Reimbursement and Control of Contingent – Owned Equipment of Troop/Police Contributors Participating in Peacekeeping Missions (CoE Manual)'. A/C.5/66/8, 27 October 2011.
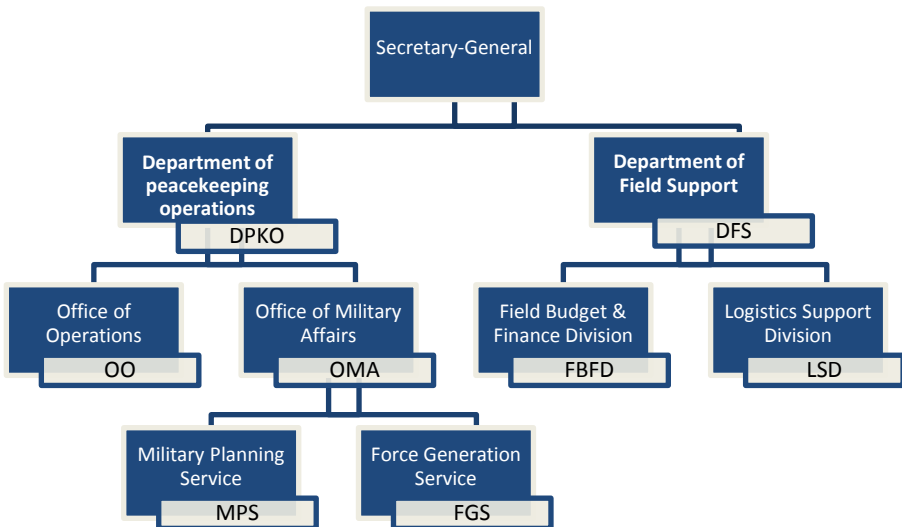
Figure 1. The Secretariat's Departments and offices most relevant to the military force generation process (some offices and divisions have intentionally been omitted)

The most important activity in the pre-resolution phase is the conduct of a so-called Technical Assessment Mission (TAM) in the intended area of operations. The TAM is conducted jointly by DPKO and DFS. The results of the TAM are presented in a report by the Secretary-General to the Security Council, which lays down the factual circumstances and needs of a new mission. The report forms the foundation on which a Security Council resolution is based.

Once the resolution has been adopted, formal mission planning, including military planning, starts. Military mission planning is carried out at the DPKO's Military Planning Services (MPS). Based on a mission concept formulated from specific requirements expressed in the resolution and the results of the TAM, the MPS develops a military Concept of Operations (CONOPS). The CONOPS specifies the military composition of the mission – contingents, staff officers and individual military observers. The CONOPS is then translated into a list of specific requirements, the so-called Statement of Force Requirement (SFR). The SFR describes the overall type and number of units and enabling capabilities required, the total number of personnel required for each type of unit/capability and makes remarks, where applicable, on particular equipment requirements or tasks.[25] The SFR does not specify how the units should be trained or what competencies are required of the personnel. It is only after the SFR has been established that the UN fully knows what types of forces are required and the force generation process can formally start. Detailed requirements for each

---

[25] Interview, UN Secretariat, New York, February 2014.

individual unit in the mission (including tasks, specific capabilities, organisation, major equipment and self-sustainment needs, etc.), a so-called Statement of Unit Requirements (SUR), is also produced.

Both the Force Generation Service (FGS), the entity primarily responsible for generating forces for UN peacekeeping missions, and relevant sections from the DFS participate in the military planning process. While FGS can provide information on possible troop contributions, DFS gives advice on requirements for issues such as logistics, mission support and, importantly, *enablers*. Enablers are the capabilities that are necessary to build up and support the mission, such as transport and engineering. Generating enablers continues to be one of the biggest challenges in peacekeeping missions, and TCCs that are able to provide such assets can count on a lot of goodwill from the UN throughout the force generation process. DFS is also responsible for procuring and leasing services, such as air and ground transportation, from civilian contractors. The use of contractors is often dependent on the security situation in the area of operations. In especially dangerous or demanding areas, the UN may have no choice but to rely on member state resources, while contractors are often considered a better option in more secure areas.

Force generation is also normally initiated before a Security Council resolution has been adopted. This involves informal contacts between FGS and prospective TCCs when a new mission is being discussed.[26] Potential TCCs can also be invited by the IOT to meetings that serve to inform TCCs of the status of mission planning, and the Secretariat may share draft CONOPS and force requirements as a way of facilitating potential TCC's decision-making. Pre-resolution force generation may also include specific requests from FGS to individual member states for potential troop contributions.[27]

For a member state interested in participating in a UN mission, an indication of interest at an early stage is very useful to inform the planning and force generation processes. Many member states find it difficult to make an early indication due to a lack of information – resulting from unclear timelines and the fact that important documents such as the CONOPS are still only at the draft stage – as well as the need for national political authorisation. The UN, however, is aware that all such indications are subject to political processes, and interviewees in the Secretariat stated that the organisation has the ability to manage these indications of interest pragmatically.[28] For member states, the overlap between the planning and force generation processes provides an opportunity to influence mission design, as they are involved before the

---

[26] Interview, UN Secretariat, New York, February 2014; interview, Stockholm, February 2014.

[27] Interview, UN Secretariat, New York, February 2014

[28] Interviews, UN Secretariat, New York, February 2014.

documents are finalised. When member states are contributing new or highly sought after capabilities, they carry additional weight in the planning phase.

Once the Security Council has agreed on a mission mandate the force generation process can formally begin. The FGS's knowledge of which countries might be interested in or able to contribute to a specific mission comes from two main sources. The first is the desk officers' personal knowledge of member states' military capabilities and strategic interests, as well as personal relations with representatives of the TCCs. The second is the United Nations Standby Arrangements System (UNSAS), a database in which member states can indicate what resources could be made available to the UN. However, the information provided by many member states on UNSAS is often incomplete or out of date, meaning that the pledged troops are often unavailable. Therefore, the UN Secretariat currently has no well-functioning database on the assets available for peacekeeping.

After the force requirement for a particular mission has been established, it is presented to the General Assembly. For ongoing missions, the requirements are presented to a select group of TCCs which include already contributing states (regardless of the size of the contribution), member states that have already indicated an interest in contributing and those member states which the Secretariat would particularly like to see contribute.[29]

For new and ongoing missions, DPKO compiles a list of potential TCCs that will be approached for contributions. The list is approved by the Assistant-Secretary-General in the Office of Operations.[30] The selection is based on known or presumed assets and willingness to contribute, the likelihood of being accepted by the host nation, regional proximity to the host nation or other political considerations that may make a contribution more or less appropriate.[31]

The Secretariat usually has informal discussions with potential contributors before formally asking a member state for a contribution. When FGS initiates a more formal dialogue, a so-called *note verbale* is sent, usually by fax, to the permanent mission requesting participation from that country in a given mission. The note might be aimed at a specific contribution, which usually only occurs after an informal dialogue, or refer generally to the overall force requirement of the mission. General *notes verbales* are often sent to a large number of member states in cases where the FGS has not been able to find a sufficient number of potential TCCs through informal dialogue. This may also happen in the pre-resolution phase in order to get a sense of the general willingness to contribute, inform planning and initiate the force generation process as early as possible. The CONOPS and the force requirement, final or draft versions, are included

---

[29] Interview, Stockholm, February 2014; Interview, UN Secretariat, February 2014
[30] Smith and Boutellis. 2013.
[31] Ibid

with the *note verbale* whenever available. If not, they can usually be obtained from DPKO on request. If unit requirements have been developed they will also be attached to the *note verbale* so that TCCs get a better understanding of the details of the request.

The member states that receive a *note verbale* are expected to respond to the request, stating whether they will be able to contribute. Alongside a pledge to contribute, the UN wants the TCC to specify the content and status of the contribution, including when it will be ready for deployment and any operational caveats that may be applicable. The pledges are rarely as specific as the UN would like them to be.[32] The TCC will nonetheless be asked to specify the tasks for which the unit is organised, equipped and trained, and to provide a list of Contingent Owned Equipment (COE) and personnel, a so-called Table of Organisation and Equipment (TOE).[33]

Once a pledge has been received, the head of DPKO makes a final decision on which offers to accept. The decision is made based on recommendations from the military adviser that heads the Office of Military Affairs (OMA).[34] Input can also be given by the IOT and DFS, for example, and sometimes the field mission. A detailed response from the prospective TCC to the *note verbale* helps inform this decision. An offer that deviates too far from the needs expressed in the unit requirements may not be accepted. In rare cases, different countries pledge similar resources and DPKO must decide which offer to accept. There are no Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for choosing or prioritising between pledges, which makes the process highly unpredictable.[35] The TCC offer and the note from DPKO accepting the pledge is considered a binding contract between the UN and a TCC.[36] Once a pledge has been accepted, the UN cannot withdraw the invitation to participate even if other, more suitable resources become available.[37]

---

[32] Interview, UN Secretariat, New York, February 2014.
[33] United Nations. *The Force Generation Process*.
[34] Smith and Boutellis. 2013.
[35] Ibid, p. 11-12.
[36] Interview, UN Secretariat, New York, February 2014.
[37] Smith and Boutellis. 2013, p. 11.

	Field	OO	DFS	OMA

TAM (Technical Assessment Mission) (DFPKO/DFS and field mission) Field visit to determine mission factors affecting CoE and troop costs. Provides input to SG report to the UNSC

Key financial contributors may influence planning, esp. on troop ceilings

Planning

UNSC approves mission mandate, sets troop ceilings

LSD (input till MPS on enablers

MPS (Develops CONOPS, SFR, RoE)

Host nation may give input on final TCC list

FGS gives TCC list to IOT & OO. ASG OO approves final list

FGS identifies available TCC capacities. Principal DPKO liaison with TCCs on all FG matters

FGS FGS requests pledges by faxing *Note Verbale* to TCCs

TCC submits pledge

OO, IOT, DFS and SRSG may give input to OMA on TCC selection

OMA accepts pledge, provides SUR

TCC selection

TCC may make field recce visit

TCC submits CoE & capability document equipment list (ToE)

CoE negotiation team (FGS, FBFD, LSD, MovCon) Drafts, negotiates and finalises MoUs and LoAs and conducts PDV (led by FGS)

MoU negotiations start

PDV conducted and PDV report agreed. CoE adjustments

MoU adaptation and finalisation

Pre-deployment

TCC supplies DFS with *Loading List* and deployment timeline

MovCon (with FGS, LSD, field mission and TCC) Plans and coordinates transportation of personnel and CoE cargo

Movement of personnel and CoE to mission

Deployment
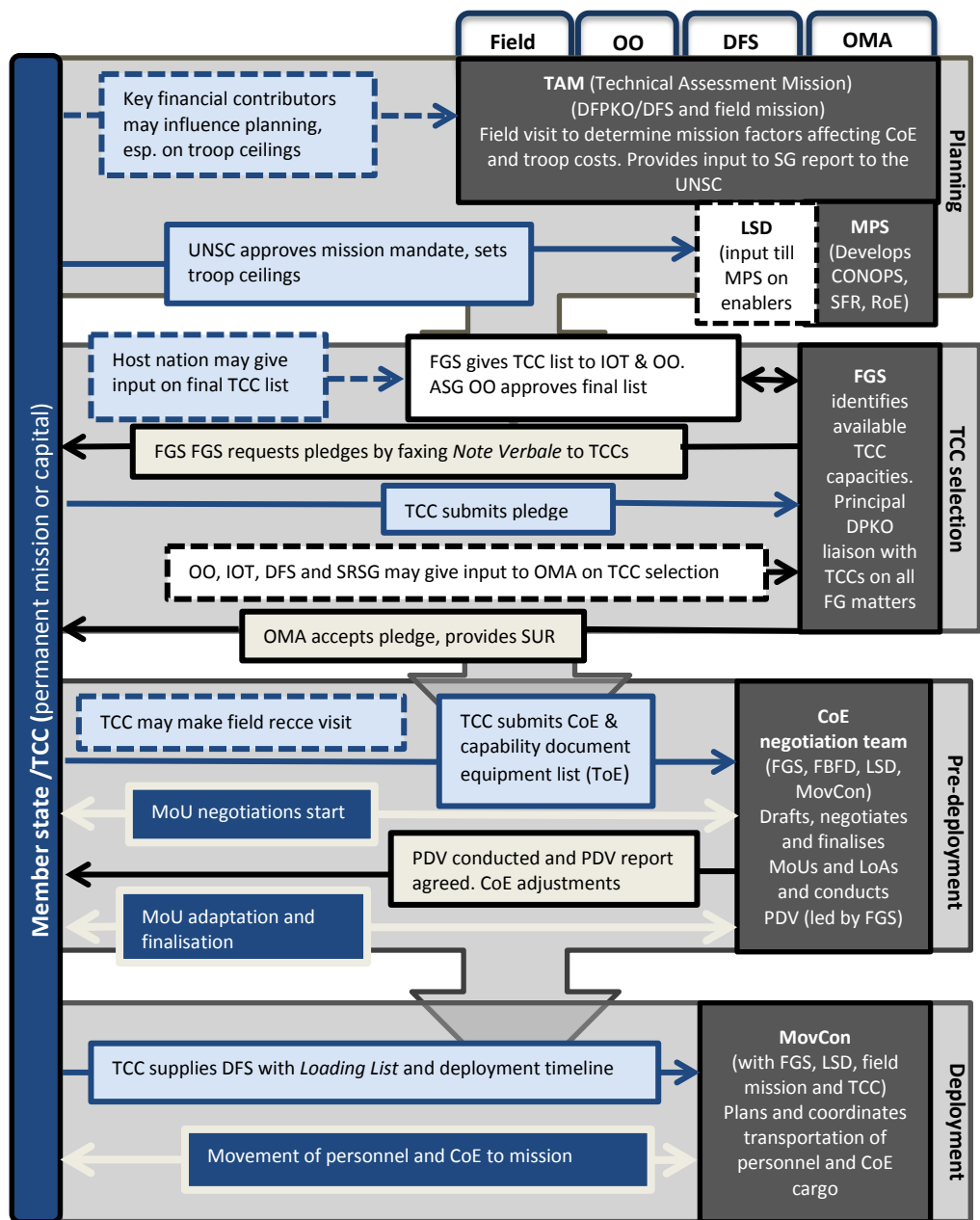
Member state /TCC (permanent mission or capital)

Figure 2 The UN's formal force generation process, based on Smith and Boutellis, p. 8. Light blue boxes indicate action taken by the TCC. Dark blue boxes indicate joint action by the TCC and the UN. Other boxes indicate action taken by the UN vis-à-vis the TCC or internal UN processes.

3.2 Negotiations and Agreements

Once the UN and a member state have agreed on a contribution, the UN approves a reconnaissance visit (recce) to the area of operations. The purpose of the recce is to determine how the mission environment will affect the military contingent's ability to undertake the tasks of the mission CONOPS.[38] Many countries also carry out similar fact finding visits in the early stages of the force generation process in order to provide a more detailed response to the *note verbale*. The expenses for the formal recce are reimbursed by the UN, but the other visits are funded by the member state concerned. There is a policy directive and an SOP to guide the recce.[39]

The organisation of and equipment for the units offered by the TCCs are fine-tuned after the recce. A recce report documenting the findings must be agreed by the TCC and the field mission.[40] The report is then submitted to the FGS along with a final list of COE. The findings form the basis for the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), which is negotiated between the secretariat and the TCCs as the final step in the force generation process. The MoU is a formal agreement that is primarily focused on outlining the reimbursements that each TCC receives once the mission has deployed. It sets the troop numbers and settles issues concerning COE. The UN COE system, in brief, means that the TCCs provide and maintain major equipment (wet lease) and are subsequently reimbursed by the UN. If the TCC for some reason cannot undertake maintenance, the UN will do so (dry lease). The reimbursement rate is fixed in accordance with a decision taken by the General Assembly.[41] Accordingly, the UN COE manual is an important reference for MOU negotiations and negotiation teams should be familiar with it.[42]

The MoU negotiations are led by the Field Budget and Finance Division (FBFD) in DFS, supported by a broader negotiation team from DPKO and DFS. Experts from other parts of the Secretariat may also be invited to participate in the negotiations when required. Doctors and mine experts may for example be included when the contribution concerns field hospitals or mine clearance.[43]

---

[38] DPKO/Force Generation Services. 2008. 'Generic guidelines for troop contributing countries deploying military units to the United Nations peacekeeping missions', United Nations: New York.

[39] DPKO Policy Directive. 2005. 'Contributing Country Reconnaissance Visit'. United Nations: New York.

[40] United Nations. *The Force Generation Process*.

[41] Interview, UN Secretariat, New York, February 2014; United Nations General Assembly. 2011. 'Manual on Policies and Procedures Concerning the Reimbursement and Control of Contingent – Owned Equipment of Troop/Police Contributors Participating in Peacekeeping Missions (CoE Manual)'. A/C.5/66/8, 27 October 2011.

[42] United Nations. *The Force Generation Process*.

[43] United Nations. *The Force Generation Process*.

Participation by the TCCs varies, and can range from just the military adviser at the permanent mission to large delegations, sent from the home capital, with expertise in a range of MoU-related areas. The UN proposes that member states' delegations should include a senior military officer, preferably a commanding officer of the contingent unit, a logistics officer familiar with national equipment and other relevant officers such as an engineer for an Engineering Unit.[44] For more complex contributions it is important for the TCC to ensure that people with the relevant technical expertise and understanding of the MoU process take part in the negotiations in order to avoid mistakes and delays. The negotiations usually take place in New York and generally take between a day and a week. It is unusual for a TCC to offer a unit that fully matches the needs expressed in the unit requirement. The negotiations are therefore about agreeing on a contribution that matches the identified requirements to the greatest extent possible and deciding how it will be reimbursed. The UN notes in its directives that "forbearance and patience" are essential in the negotiation process.[45]

The MoU process starts with the first negotiation meeting in New York and ends with a finalised and signed MoU. In many cases this occurs only after deployment.[46] The actual MoU consists of a main body and seven annexes detailing the number of troops, the quantity and type of major equipment, the areas in which the TCC is expected to be self-sustaining, the originating locations and ports of entry and exit for the purpose of transportation and the date on which the MoU enters into force.[47]

The FBFD also negotiates so-called Letters of Assist (LoA), which regulate reimbursements that fall outside the MoU. These include compensation for flight hours and hours at sea when the contribution is an aircraft, helicopter or ship. An LoA is also signed when TCCs deploy their own troops rather than relying on the UN for the transportation of troops and equipment.

Before the MoU is finalised, UN procedures call for a so-called pre-deployment visit (PDV) to the TCC to verify that the major equipment to be deployed is in accordance with the MoU, and that the unit can meet the demands in the unit requirements.[48] The PDV is also undertaken to ensure that the deployment can take place within the planned timeframe.[49] In addition, the UN can offer to

---

[44] Department of Field Support. 'Briefing on COE, MoU, Claims'. Power point presentation available on UN Force Link, https://cc.unlb.org/default.aspx >UNSAS documents > MoU Presentation

[45] United Nations. *The Force Generation Process*.

[46] United Nations. *The Force Generation Process*.

[47] United Nations. *The Force Generation Process*.

[48] Interview, UN Secretariat, New York, February 2014.

[49] Department of Peacekeeping Operations. 2008. *Generic guidelines for troop contributing countries deploying military units to the United Nations peacekeeping missions*. DPKO Force Generation Services: New York

provide 'in-country' pre-deployment training for new TCC's units.[50] The PDV is undertaken by the FGS with support from other relevant sections from DPKO and DFS. There is a Policy Directive[51] and an SOP[52] outlining the PDV process. The policy states that PDVs should be the rule rather than an exception, particularly in cases where contingents from a non-UN peacekeeping mission are being transferred to a UN mission, where contingents are from emerging TCCs or include specialist capabilities being contributed for the first time, or where the TCC has had a long break from peacekeeping operations.[53] In practice, financial constraints in the UN only allow for PDVs to be undertaken in prioritised cases, that is, with new contributors or where there are doubts about the quality and availability of a certain pledge.[54] The UN can highlight gaps and deficiencies in the troops' training and equipment, and demand improvements. However, as alternatives are scarce and the timelines usually pressing, contributions that do not meet the standards are often deployed anyway.[55] The PDV does allow for penalties by reducing reimbursement rates when troops do not meet the force requirements, such as deficiencies in equipment or numbers. A range of solutions may also be applied to help a country that is struggling with such problems, including the use of UN Owned Equipment, the use of UN strategic Deployment Stocks or bilateral support from another TCC.[56]

The MoU can be finalised once the PDV has been carried out, or a decision not to undertake a PDV has been taken. If, as is usual, the TCC and the Secretariat have been meeting regularly throughout the process, this final step should be short and painless. Once the MoU has been agreed it is circulated within the Secretariat and two copies are signed by the Assistant-Secretary-General (ASG) of DFS and the ASG of the Office of Operations, DPKO. The documents are then signed by the Ambassador at the TCC's permanent representation. The TCC is reimbursed for troop costs on a monthly basis with effect from its contingent's arrival in the mission, regardless of whether the MOU has been signed by the TCC. Reimbursement for major equipment, however, only occurs once both parties have signed the MoU.[57] The MoU might need to be revised in cases of a

---

[50] Smith and Boutellis. 2013.

[51] Department of Peacekeeping Operations. 2005. *Predeployment Visits*. Policy directive 5 October 2005. United Nations: New York

[52] Department of Peacekeeping Operations. 2005. *Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) on Planning and Implementing Pre-deployment Visits (PDV)*. 5 October 2005. United Nations: New York

[53] Office of Internal Oversight. 2010. *Office of Military Affairs*. Audit Report 28 May 2010. United Nations: New York

[54] Interview, UN Secretariat, New York, February 2014.

[55] Interview, UN Secretariat, New York, February 2014; interview, UN member state, New York, February 2014.

[56] United Nations. *The Force Generation Process*.

[57] United Nations. *The Force Generation Process*.

change in the CONOPS or other major revisions in the mission. Such amendments require new negotiations.[58]

The UN offers assistance for the deployment of troops and equipment to the field missions. Troops are usually deployed by air and equipment by sea. If the TCC chooses to deploy on its own, it is reimbursed based on the amount that the deployment would have cost if arranged by the UN.[59] This is regulated through an LoA. When the UN deploys the troops, the Movement Control Section (MovCon) in DFS must use international best practices and seek bids in order to secure freighters and contract aircraft to carry out the transportation. The contracting process takes a minimum of six weeks and can only be initiated once the TCC has submitted a cargo load list and a list of dangerous goods.[60] A common cause of delay in deployment is member states failing to provide accurate and timely load lists.[61] However, MovCon is usually willing to provide assistance with determining load lists whenever required.

---

[58] United Nations. *The Force Generation Process*.
[59] Department of Peacekeeping Operations. 2008. Generic guidelines for troop contributing countries.
[60] United Nations. *The Force Generation Process*.
[61] Interview, UN Secretariat, New York, February 2014.

4 Key Challenges for Troop Contributing Countries

The UN force generation process presents challenges for both the UN Secretariat and the member states. The Secretariat struggles to provide the missions with the right volume of personnel and capabilities at the right time. It has only a limited role in the mandating process, but the Secretariat is expected to generate the necessary forces without a clear picture of the capabilities that member states actually have, or what capabilities they are willing to contribute to the mission. For the member states, and especially new troop contributors, the force generation process can be difficult to navigate. Since there are no force generation conferences, member states do not approach force generation collectively, as is done in NATO or the EU. The process lacks transparency because the Secretariat deals bilaterally with the TCCs.

This chapter highlights four themes that have been identified in this study as particularly challenging when engaging with the UN force generation process. The chapter also proposes some strategies that could help new and returning member states to address these challenges and assist the complex business of UN force generation.

4.1 Challenges in Inter-Secretariat Coordination

The complexity of UN force generation is partly due to the many UN sections and departments involved in the process, some of which may have different interests. FGS is formally the Secretariat's focal point for force generation but several other entities, such as other DPKO sections, DFS and the Security Council, play important roles in the process, including through the identification of and communication with possible TCCs.[62] The interests of the field missions can also have an impact, not least because they manage the missions' budgets and thus may have opinions on the economic viability of different force generation options.[63]

The large number of actors with a stake in force generation highlights the need for effective coordination. Coordination is often a major challenge in the UN system and force generation is no exception.[64] Different interests pull in different directions, meaning that DPKO and DFS, or even sections within the departments, may have different opinions on which resources are most desirable

---

[62] Interviews, UN Secretariat, New York, February 2014.
[63] Interviews, UN Secretariat, New York, February 2014.
[64] Interview, UN Secretariat, New York, February 2014; interview, Stockholm, February 2014; Smith and Boutellis. 2013.

for the missions, and how these should be generated. In general terms, DPKO may for example be more driven by political relations with member states or a long-term strategic interest, while DFS and the field missions may take a more technical standpoint and be more driven by the budgetary constraints of the missions.

The IOTs have been developed specifically to help facilitate coordination and integrate the interests of various UN entities early in mission planning. However, these have reportedly often failed to sufficiently incorporate the views and positions of DFS and OMA.[65] According to Smith and Boutellis, as a result of these disconnects, important assumptions regarding for instance logistics are not taken into account in planning, and this has led to delays in deployments or to contingents being deployed to unprepared sites.[66] DFS is also responsible for negotiating the financial agreements (MoUs and LoAs). The decision to accept a pledge, however, which has significant financial implications, is made by DPKO/OMA. Even though the acceptance of a pledge by OMA is considered a formal contract between the UN and the TCC, the later financial discussions between the TCC and DFS could lead to a situation in which either the TCC or DFS comes to see the contribution as unfeasible due to financial or technical disagreements.

Accordingly, TCCs need to approach force generation in the knowledge that the UN may not always act as a single, coherent entity on force generation. Rather, different UN sections engaged at various times in the force generation process may have different interests. The challenges that arise due to fundamental organisational differences should not be overestimated, however, as it seems that poor communication is sometimes the reason for mistakes rather than different players pulling in different directions. TCCs can overcome some of the challenges by making sure to communicate regularly and effectively with all relevant UN entities. Aside from FGS, close cooperation with DFS can be particularly important for TCCs, especially when considering contributing enablers to a mission. Networks in both DPKO and DFS are important, to facilitate a member state's contribution and to ensure that force and unit requirements are understood correctly. It is also useful to consider the interests of the field missions. Heads of missions and other actors in the field can influence the force generation process in New York, especially when it concerns an ongoing mission, and it is thus wise to open up dialogues with the missions.

---

[65] Smith and Boutellis, 2013, p. 7, 9, 11.
[66] Ibid, p. 9

4.2 Managing the Lack of Strategic Outreach

The overstretch of Secretariat personnel[67] in combination with the usual urgency with which each mission needs to be deployed limits the UN's ability to look beyond the most immediate force generation tasks. As a result, FGS is rarely able to engage in anything other than meeting current demands on force generation.[68] The capacity to approach force generation strategically or reach out to emerging contributors is particularly limited.[69] Since UNSAS has not been able to meet the needs of FGS, and there is no database of past and current contributions or even of how TCCs have responded to previous requests from FGS, force generation in the UN tends to be ad hoc and reactive. Strategic knowledge of TCCs does exist, but rests with individual desk officers – mainly those within FGS or the IOTs – rather than being institutionalised.[70] This is further complicated by the fact that desk officers at the FGS are seconded from member states and rotate every two or three years.

Interviews for this study confirmed that the Secretariat lacks the resources and capacity to proactively engage with potential TCCs.[71] As a result, there is very limited strategic outreach to generate a better understanding of the capabilities that member states have to offer or to proactively secure critical capabilities that are likely to be in short supply in the future.[72] Given the resource limitations, the Secretariat's reliance on traditional TCCs is understandable. Not only are these more likely to deliver quickly and require no time to get used to the system, but traditional contributors are already known in the UN force generation system and have established informal communications channels with the Secretariat.[73] Smith and Boutellis argue that returning contributors, despite their modern and sophisticated military forces, also pose challenges as they often require longer time-horizons for military planning and/or government approval and are therefore less likely to respond favourably to time-sensitive requests.[74] Interviews, however, confirm that the UN nonetheless looks favourably at engaging European states, for example, in UN peacekeeping[75] as critical gaps remain in force generation.

---

[67] DPKO and DFS have less than 1,000 staff managing peacekeeping missions with over 100,000 deployed military, police and civilian experts. This can be compared to NATO headquarters, which in 2012 had approximately 4,000 staff managing 140,000 deployed personnel.
[68] Interview, UN Secretariat, New York, 2014; Interview, New York, February 2014.
[69] Smith and Boutellis. 2013.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Interviews UN Secretariat and Member States, New York and Stockholm, 2014.
[72] Smith and Boutellis. 2013.
[73] Nilsson and Zetterlund. 2014, p. 30
[74] Smith and Boutellis. 2013.
[75] Interview, UN Secretariat, New York, February 2014

Discussions are currently ongoing within the UN regarding the need to reform the current force generation system, particularly concerning the need for a strategy to broaden the base of the TCCs contributing to peacekeeping.[76] Until this is resolved, the current situation will still require a highly proactive approach from member states interested in contributing troops. Above all, member states need to engage the Secretariat to make sure that they are being considered for a new mission. For new and returning contributors it is primarily up to the member state to get the attention of OMA and indicate a willingness to contribute. Information on planning and force generation is not regularly shared with member states if they are not known to have a strong interest in a certain mission, so member states need to stay in close contact with the Secretariat to make sure that they are in the loop on such issues.

Furthermore, the nature of the UN's force generation process means that mission plans are developed by the Secretariat without knowing what capabilities will be available. Thus, mission plans are partly based on guesswork and experience-based assumptions. This risks missing potentially available resources as well as designing force requirements that do not adequately reflect the needs on the ground.[77] Where a member state is willing to contribute critical resources, usually found on the UN's so-called *gap list*, it is important to signal this to FGS to ensure that such resources are taken into consideration in mission planning.

One way to indicate willingness to contribute is through UNSAS. Although many countries today do not use UNSAS as it was envisaged, FGS still uses it to get an indication of possible contributions.[78] If countries used UNSAS strategically, it could be a useful tool for both the UN and member states in identifying and developing new partnerships. This would require member states to regularly update their UNSAS pledges. Where possible, a member state could also use the different levels of preparedness that exist in UNSAS to indicate deployment timelines.[79] Troops that can be deployed quickly are highly prized in the UN, and UNSAS could be an effective way of highlighting their availability. It can also be used more long-term and strategically, by pledging forces that will be available at certain times in the future. Pledges in UNSAS are not binding and the member states still have the final say on if and when to deploy their forces.

As is discussed above, UNSAS is something of a defunct system. The UNSAS database has recently become web-based and is part of the new *UN Force Link,* a UN website that functions as a knowledge centre for strategic movements and

---

[76] Interview, New York, February 2014; interview, UN Secretariat, New York, February 2014.

[77] Interview, New York, February 2014; Smith and Boutellis. 2013; interview, UN Secretariat, New York, February 2014.

[78] Interview, UN Secretariat, New York, February 2014.

[79] There are three levels of availability in UNSAS: general pledges (without specified deployment times), 90 days and 30-day readiness.

force generation.[80] The creation of a UN Force Link to enable improved information flows as regards force generation, both within the UN and in relation to member states, and improving the UNSAS system will require a change in attitude by many member states. In the meantime, to rely solely on pledges made in the database would be a mistake. Instead, pledges in UNSAS should be followed by dialogue with the Secretariat in order to make available the resources known to the UN. These dialogues could focus on a certain mission or, when possible, include more strategic issues and long-term engagements.

For the member states, the position of the Military Adviser (MilAd) at the permanent representation is key. The MilAd is the link between the UN and the member states. The fact that personal relationships matter a great deal in the force generation process makes this a very important position. The force generation process lacks transparency, which means that the MilAds need to actively seek out information on mission planning in order to inform decision-making in the capitals. A broad network throughout the Secretariat would provide access to information and greatly help the member states planning to contribute to a certain mission. Generally, political pressure is also used by member states to push their countries' contributions. While this is far from ideal, it gives the Secretariat an indication of the seriousness of a pledge. Contacts are common between senior officials in national governments and senior levels in the Secretariat.[81] For countries that prefer to contribute to UN peacekeeping together with partner countries, dialogue with other TCCs is also important at an early stage in the process – not least because the UN tends to discuss bilaterally with TCCs.

4.3 Meeting UN Numerical Standards

UN force generation is in many ways focused on numbers rather than capabilities, which means that force generation is geared towards providing the missions with the right numbers rather than planning for the desired effects or results from the missions.[82] Although discussions on a "capability-driven approach" to force generation are under way in the UN, the process is slow, and it will require the support of member states if today's focus on numbers is to change.

The UN bases planning and force generation to a high degree on a set of well-known templates that have grown out of common practice in the field missions. For Sweden and other countries that have transformed their military into more

---

[80] Department of Peacekeeping Operations. 2013. *United Nations Stand-By Arrangements System (UNSAS) Website – UN FORCE LINK: Informal TCC Training 26 February 2013*. Power point Presentation by the Office of Military Affairs to the Swedish Ministry of Defence.

[81] Interviews, UN Secretariat, New York, February 2014.

[82] Smith and Boutellis. 2013.

mobile, technologically advanced forces, this presents a big challenge as their forces often do not fit these UN standards. Pledges can be either too big or too small. For instance, a UN battalion consists of around 850 soldiers. Thanks to the quality of their troops, equipment and other resources, many European countries today deploy considerably smaller battalions that are able to perform the same tasks and often considerably more with fewer people than traditional peacekeeping battalions. In the UN, however, force and unit requirements are often expressed in terms of numbers rather than the tasks to be achieved. A "shortage" in numbers risks giving the impression that a contribution is not meeting UN requirements. This can make the MoU-negotiations unnecessarily difficult. In a worst-case scenario, the UN would hesitate to accept a contribution that was perceived as not living up to its requirements. Several countries interviewed for the report had struggled with this issue in negotiations with the UN Secretariat.[83]

Although resolvable, such misunderstandings can take a lot of energy and delay the force generation process. It is crucial that the member state, as early as possible, highlights discrepancies and clearly explains how the contribution will be able to carry out the tasks set it in the CONOPS with troops that do not fit the templates exactly.

Contributions can also be too big from the UN's point of view, not least when it comes to enablers or smaller, specialised contributions. Maintenance and security requirements in some countries' armed forces lead to larger units when contributing many military capabilities. These contributions often fall outside the numerical standards of the UN's unit requirements, and can thus cause problems and lead to difficult MoU and LoA discussions. The issue primarily concerns reimbursements, as the UN does not want to pay for more troops than it has asked for or needs (according to the unit requirement). As mission budgets have already been set when countries enter MoU negotiations, the UN may also be unable to finance extra troops, even if it were willing to do so.

The UN is thus unlikely to pay for troop numbers or equipment that goes beyond the requirements. If the member state is willing to bear the extra cost, the willingness to do so should be clearly communicated to the Secretariat early on in the process. However, even if the member state is willing to deploy the "extra" troops or resources without reimbursement from the UN, challenges remain. For one, there would almost certainly be costs for housing and mission support which DFS or the field mission might oppose. Second, the UN is constrained by the troop ceilings expressed in mission mandates. As the mandate sets a maximum for troop levels, an increase in one unit would force the UN to look for possible reductions in others. One way to address this is for a member state to propose the deployment of a so-called *National Support Element* that would formally stand

---

[83] Interviews, UN Member States, New York, 2014.

outside the UN force but be closely linked to the national contingent. This would resolve most of the financial issues and the limits on mission numbers. However, troops outside of the mission could not rely on access to mission resources and would not formally be recognised as UN veterans.[84]

Member states' experiences highlight the need for a clear strategy on how to "sell" a contribution that does not fully fit the numerical requirements. When a member state knows that its units do not fully match the unit requirements, it should clearly indicate how the units can make up for lower numbers, for example, and still deliver the results envisaged in the mandate and CONOPS. This should be done as early as possible, preferably when responding to the *note verbale* and before the MoU process has started. If a member state is willing to bear the costs of a bigger contribution, this should also be indicated. The COE manual is an important instrument in the MoU/LoA negotiations and could be a big help for member states as they communicate with the Secretariat on possible discrepancies.

4.4 Meeting National Standards

When discussing general standards for UN contingents and mission support in UN peacekeeping, the focal area of the discussion is often the challenge of enabling traditional TCCs to live up to the relatively high UN requirements. For the type of TCC that this report is primarily concerned with, the challenge tends to be the opposite. Often, UN standards do not meet the requirements for mission support, for example, in many western states. An often cited concern is access to medical care, including access to evacuation resources. The UN is currently updating its standards for medical support. Despite the need to find a middle way between member states' requirements and capacities, some countries are still likely to require higher standards for their troops. Other important areas where UN standards may not live up to TCCs' expectations include command and control, logistics and communications. While some of these latter areas might have as much to do with member states' unwillingness to contribute the resources needed as shortcomings on the side of UN regulations, the challenges remain.

TCCs concerned about UN standards have a number of options. One is to provide their national contingents with enough resources so that they are not reliant on UN-provided support. Another strategy is to make sure that other TCCs with relevant resources deploy to the same area of operations. Countries or groups of countries could assume responsibility for specific components within the missions, such as medical, civil-military coordination (CIMIC) or intelligence. This modular solution might increase interoperability and help to

---

[84] Interview, UN Secretariat, New York, February 2014.

ease some countries' fears of poor standards in the missions. Interviews indicated that the UN is willing to accommodate such innovative contributions from member states.[85] Modular solutions raise difficult issues about inequalities within and between missions. Nonetheless, in comparison to the alternative in which a contribution is not made due to required national standards not being met, the modular solution is preferable, not least in order to broaden the base of TCCs. In any case, a thorough analysis is crucial, as early as possible, of the mission environment and the resources that will be available to the mission. Concerned member states should meanwhile support the UN to develop better standards and give the Secretariat the tools to oversee their implementation.

---

[85] Interviews, UN Secretariat, New York, February 2014.

5 Concluding Remarks

The UN's ideal TCC is prepared and knowledgeable about the UN system.[86] Many countries that left UN peacekeeping in the 1990s have lost their institutional memory of UN procedures – as is often evident when they re-engage with UN force generation. A general recommendation for member states is therefore to systematically learn more about the UN peacekeeping system in general, and the force generation process in particular, when considering sending troops to UN-led missions. This report, as well as previous reports in FOI's study series on UN peacekeeping,[87] can help build such knowledge and understanding. Other essential documents for building knowledge and helping to navigate the UN force generation process include the UN's Contingent Owned Equipment Manual, templates of force requirements and unit requirements, as well as MoUs, LoAs and other guidelines and SOPs on UN force generation processes. The COE manual is an extensive document which is available online.[88] As knowledge of the manual is of the essence in the MoU process, it is also recommended that relevant individuals within prospective TCC governments attend the COE courses that are held in various institutions worldwide. Templates and other relevant documents can be obtained from the UN – in particular FGS or DFS. Some of these, alongside other relevant resources, are also available online at the newly established website UN Force Link: *https://cc.unlb.org*.

This knowledge, however, will only take member states so far. To succeed as a TCC, communication is essential. Above all, increasing and maintaining regular contact with DPKO, in particular OMA and FGS, as well as DFS will be crucial for any prospective TCC. As is explained in chapter 4, the UN force generation system requires proactive engagement by member states. Prospective TCCs are required to provide information about available assets, and they also need to keep themselves informed about existing and future capability gaps.

The UN's gap list is important for TCCs seeking to re-engage in UN peacekeeping. While the UN struggles with many aspects of generating forces for its missions, some capabilities are more easily obtained than others. Infantry battalions have long been and remain the backbone of most UN missions. The UN continues to rely on a few big troop contributors to provide the bulk of these troops. The major gaps are found in areas such as communications, command and control, medical resources and engineering (see chapter 2). Most enablers are also in high demand, as are rapidly deployable capabilities. When possible,

---

[86] Interview, UN Secretariat, New York, February 2014; Department of Peacekeeping Operations. 2013. *UN Force Generation Process*. Power point Presentation by the Office of Military Affairs to the Swedish Ministry of Defence, 20 September 2013.

[87] See Nilsson and Zetterlund. 2014.

[88] Available at: www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/sites/coe/.../COE_manual_2011.pdf.

providing these highly sought after resources provides a great opportunity for TCCs seeking to re-engage with UN peacekeeping. Filling critical gaps can have a great impact on a mission's effectiveness and therefore generates political goodwill from the UN and other member states. The force generation process is also likely to be made smoother, as the Secretariat will be as accommodating as possible.

If approached with the right expectations and sufficient knowledge, the UN force generation process does not have to be overly complex. However, unfamiliarity with the system may lead to frustration and friction. This report has sought to help prospective TCCs overcome some important challenges in navigating the force generation system.

References

Bellamy, A and Williams, P.D. 2012. 'Broadening the Base of United Nations Troop - and Police Contributing Countries'. *Providing for Peacekeeping* No. 1, New York: International Peace Institute.

Bellamy, A and Williams, P.D. 2013. *Providing Peacekeepers: The Politics, Challenges, and Future of United Nations Peacekeeping Contributions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Department of Field Support. *Briefing on COE, MoU, Claims*. Power point presentation available on UN Force Link, https://cc.unlb.org/default.aspx >UNSAS documents > MoU Presentation

Department of Peacekeeping Operations. 2008. *Generic guidelines for troop contributing countries deploying military units to the United Nations peacekeeping missions*. DPKO Force Generation Services: New York

Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Policy Directive. 2005. *Contributing Country Reconnaissance Visit*. United Nations: New York

Department of Peacekeeping Operations. 2005. *Predeployment Visits*. Policy directive 5 October 2005. United Nations: New York

Department of Peacekeeping Operations. 2005. *Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) on Planning and Implementing Pre-deployment Visits (PDV)*. 5 October 2005. United Nations: New York

Department of Peacekeeping Operations. 2013. *United Nations Stand-By Arrangements System (UNSAS) Website – UN FORCE LINK: Informal TCC Training*. Power point Presentation by the Office of Military Affairs to the Swedish Ministry of Defence 26 February 2013.

Department of Peacekeeping Operations. 2013. *UN Force Generation Process*. Power point Presentation by the Office of Military Affairs to the Swedish Ministry of Defence, 20 September 2013.

Ladsous, H. 2013. *Letter from Hervé Ladsous, UN Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, to the Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations and the Deputy Secretary-General of the European External Action Services*, dated 19 December 2013

Nilsson, C and Zetterlund, K. 2014. *Ready or Not? – Revamping UN Peacekeeping for the 21st Century*. FOI: Stockholm

Office of Internal Oversight. 2010. *Office of Military Affairs*. Audit Report 28 May 2010. United Nations: New York

Smith, A and Boutellis, A. 2013. 'Rethinking Force Generation: Filling the Capability Gaps in UN Peace – keeping'. *Providing for Peacekeeping* No. 2, New York: International Peace Institute

Ulving, S. 2010. *Final report as the EUMS Liaison Officer to the UN*, 19 November 2010

United Nations. *Peacekeeping Fact Sheet, 28 February 2014*. Available online at: http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/resources/statistics/factsheet.shtml

United Nations. 2013. *2016-2018 Operational environment*. Power point presentation made by ASG DPKO Mr Edmund Mulet to the EU delegation CONUN meeting, Saturday 28 September 2013.

United Nations. *The Force Generation Process*. Word document available on UN Force Link, https://cc.unlb.org/default.aspx >UNSAS documents > ForceGenerationProcess

United Nations General Assembly. 2011. *Manual on Policies and Procedures Concerning the Reimbursement and Control of Contingent – Owned Equipment of Troop/Police Contributors Participating in Peacekeeping Missions (CoE Manual)*. A/C.5/66/8, 27 October 2011

International Peace Institute (IPI), Pearson Centre, Centre for International Peace Operations (ZIF). 2013. 'Enhancing European Military and Police Contributions to UN Peacekeeping Missions' Meeting note from *Enhancing European Military and Police Contributions to UN Peacekeeping: Being a Peacekeeper regional roundtable* October 24-25 2012.

Interviews

Conducted in New York and Stockholm in February 2014

David Barr, UN, Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Military Planning Service

Xavier de Chambord, UN, Department of Field Support, Office of the Assistant-Secretary-General, Director Operational Support Team

Anna Lisa Gazzola, UN, Department of Field Support, Logistics Support Division, Logistics Operations Section

Richard Grey, UN, Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Force Generation Services

Gérard Hauy, UN, Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Office of Military Affairs, Deputy Chief Force Generation Service

Alex Jansen, Deputy Military Adviser, Permanent Mission of the Netherlands to the United Nations

Rakish Malik, UN, Department of Field Support, Officer-in-Charge, Logistics Support Division

Seamus McDermott, Military Adviser, Permanent Mission of Ireland to the United Nations

Claes Naréus, Military Adviser, Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations

Alessandro Picchio, Military Adviser, Permanent Mission of Italy to the United Nations

Rob de Rave, Military Adviser, Permanent Mission of the Netherlands to the United Nations

Per Erik Rönning, Military Adviser, Permanent Mission of Norway to the United Nations

Adam Smith, Research Fellow and Manager, Peace Operations Program, International Peace Institute (IPI)

Anders B Svensson, Swedish Armed Forces, Former Military Adviser at the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations

Mario Sumatra, Deputy Military adviser, Permanent Mission of Italy to the United Nations

Oliver Ulich, UN, Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Field Support, Division of Policy, Evaluation and Training, Head Partnership Team

Sverker Ulving, Swedish Armed Forces, Former Military Adviser at the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations

Esa Vanonen, Military Adviser, Finish Permanent Mission to the United Nations

Force generation is the process by which military and police personnel and equipment are generated, rotated and repatriated. Although many western states have a lot of experience of European Union (EU) and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) force generation, the process in the United Nations (UN) is inherently different.

As NATO's operation in Afghanistan comes to an end, many western countries are once again looking at UN peacekeeping missions as a viable option. This report describes and analyses the UN force generation system with the aim of enabling prospective Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) to successfully and efficiently navigate the force generation process. The report outlines the formal and informal steps in the process, highlights the key challenges for prospective TCCs and discusses some possible strategies to counter these. Among other things, the importance of coordination is highlighted and strategies for engaging with all the relevant actors in the process are discussed. In addition, the challenges that arise when a member state's contributions do not match the UN's force requirements are analysed.