

# **MODERN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS: IMPLICATIONS ON PREPAREDNESS OF BANGLADESH ARMED FORCES**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Peacekeeping operations are challenging and indicating changing trend. Modern peacekeeping operations is shifting from ‘traditional’ missions involving only military tasks to complex ‘multidimensional’ involves military, police and civilian components. At present Bangladesh is the top most troops contributing countries (TCCs) in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKOs) among 123 TCCs and providing 8778 (about 9 % ) of total globally deployed 1,04,184 peacekeepers.<sup>1</sup> Contribution of Bangladesh for the peace, stability and security has been highly appreciated around the world and created hard positive image. It has enabled her to build up bilateral relationships with other countries and organizations and to earn huge reimbursement. It is important to keep the tempo to uphold the reputation and already earned image. However, the PKOs are facing multidimensional challenges in implementation of mission’s mandate that necessitate TCCs to be prepared accordingly. Troops contribution has become more competitive due to the upcoming interested Member States (MS) to contribute troops for UNPKOs and involvement of regional organizations like Africa Union (AU), European Union (EU) to promote interest of their MS. At this backdrop, it has become imperative for Bangladesh as one of the top ranking contributors to enhance preparedness of Armed Forces to the fullest to overcome the challenges.

In an attempt to suggest preparedness requirement for Bangladesh to meet those challenges, this paper has answered the question, what are the challenges of modern PKOs that Bangladesh is likely to face and which are the new areas where Bangladesh Armed Forces need to be prepared to meet those challenges of modern PKOs. The paper has also examined the present preparedness of Bangladesh to meet those challenges, and suggested ways how Bangladesh should respond to the challenges ahead. It has also identified new opportunities need to be explored while transitions took place from peacekeeping to peacebuilding. Finally this paper has concluded with few recommendations.

## **TREND OF UNPKOs - AN EVALUATION**

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<sup>1</sup> Peacekeeping Statistics Website, <<http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/resources/statistics/contributors.shtml>>, (accessed on 06 October 2014).

**Overview of Bangladesh's Participation in UNPKOs.** Bangladesh stepped into the family of 'Blue Helmet' through participation in UN Iran-Iraq Military Observation Group (UNIIMOG) in 1988. Since then she has participated in 52 UN missions in 40 war-torn countries to established peace. By and large Bangladesh is successful in UNPKO and emerged as topmost TCCs among 123 TCCs. This is signifying her credibility and ability to UN and has earned positive image worldwide and side by side earning huge reimbursement as shown in Figure 1 which is in increasing trend.

**Figure 1: State of Reimbursement Earning of Last of 5 Years**

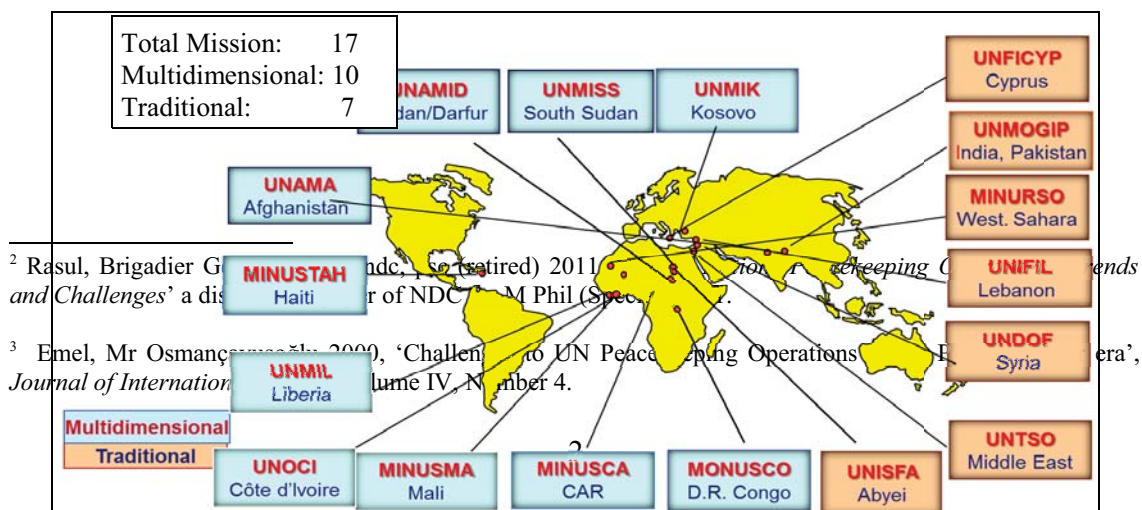
**Year**

Source: Prepared by the Author with Data from Foreign Affairs and Protocol Section, Armed Forces Division (FAP Sec, AFD) 2014.

**Changing Trends in PKO: Traditional to Multidimensional.** In last six decades, UNPKOs had different tasks to meet the requirement of changing security and political scenario.<sup>2</sup> Those can be categorized into different generation, based on the tasks as discussed in subsequent paragraphs:

- a. First Generation Peacekeeping Missions (1945-1987) - Traditional Peacekeeping.
- b. Second Generation Peacekeeping Missions (1988-1996) - Multidimensional Peacekeeping.
- c. **Third Generation Peacekeeping Missions (1997 – Present) - Peace Support Operations.** Third generation missions are complex, multidimensional and were largely enforcement operations under Chapter VII of the Charter.<sup>3</sup> Current traditional and multidimensional missions are shown in Figure 2.

**Figure 2: Current Traditional and Multidimensional Mission**



Source: Prepared by the Author with Data from Fact Sheet of UNPKOs, 31 August 2014.

## **CHALLENGES OF MODERN UNPKOs – EVOLVING AND COMPLEX**

### **General**

As already discussed, changing trend of UNPKOs from traditional to multidimensional have invited number of challenges. Those identified challenges of modern UNPKOs faced by Bangladesh can be categorised as operational, multidimensional and logistic challenges.

### **Operational Challenges**

#### **Challenges of Robust Peacekeeping and Protection of Civilians (POC).**

Performance of the Bangladeshi peacekeepers as traditional peacekeeper under Chapter VI is good.<sup>4</sup> But in missions under Chapter VII, some of the incidents have severely degraded image of the Bangladeshi peacekeepers in robust peacekeeping. Bangladeshi troops criticised in UN Assistance Mission of Rwanda (UNAMIR) for not participating in POC.<sup>5</sup> In Cote d'Ivoire on the face of attacked on the Guiglo Camp in January 2006, Bangladeshi peacekeepers could not respond to the situation and abandoned the camp. Setback from number of incidents shows that robust peacekeeping remains as a challenge to the Bangladesh contingents which is directly related to POC - another major challenges in the present context. At present 95% of total globally deployed peacekeepers have mandate for POC.<sup>6</sup> But it is not possible to 'protect everyone from everything' with usual population versus the peacekeepers ratio deployed in the missions.<sup>7</sup>

**Lack of Cohesion in the Contingent.** Lack of cohesion was evident and it was prominent in the face of crisis. Comradeship was also missing in the patrol, as a result members of patrol left others in the face of rebels and escaped. Since most of the personnel of a contingent come from different units, it becomes difficult to build cohesion in the unit within short period of time.<sup>8</sup> In most of the cases, participation from parent unit is less than

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<sup>4</sup> Alam, Lieutenant General ATM Zahirul (retired), rcds, psc, deliberation as Guest Speaker on '*Leadership Challenges of Armed Forces in 21st Century*', on 10 September 2014.

<sup>5</sup> Zaman, Rashed and Biswas Niloy Ranjan 2012, '*Bangladesh Providing Peacekeepers*' edited by Alex J. Bellamy and Paul D. William, published by Oxford University Press, USA, p.185.

<sup>6</sup> Statement by USG, DPKO to the Special Committee on PKO, at New York, on 24 February 2014.

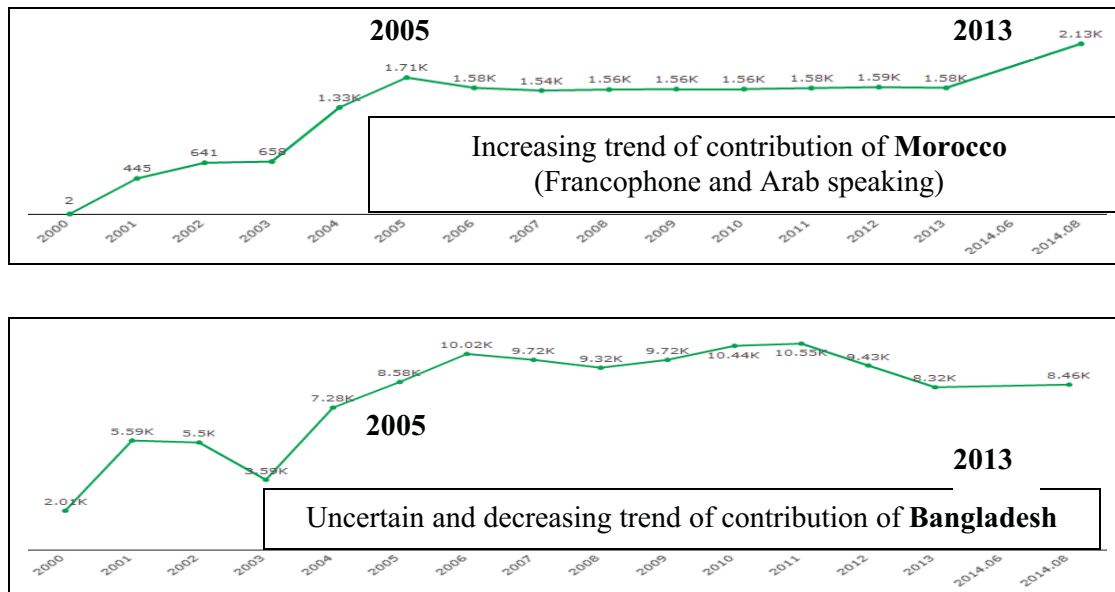
<sup>7</sup> Holt, Victoria and Taylor, Glyn 2009, '*Protecting Civilians in the Context of UN PKOs-Success, Setbacks and the remaining Challenges*', published by UNDPKO, New York, USA. p. 23.

<sup>8</sup> Hafiz, Lieutenant General Abdul, ndc, psc, Former FC, UNOCI (Cote d'Ivoire ) and FC MINURSO (Western Sahara). He also served as DFC and Chief Military Observer in UNOCI, interviewed by author on 23 August 2014.

50%.<sup>9</sup> The tendency of delay in joining to the contingent does not allow time to have training and grow cohesion.

**Language Barrier.** Seven large UN peacekeeping missions (out of seventeen) are going in Francophone countries ( in Central African Republic (CAR), Mali, Haiti, Lebanon, West Sahara, DR Congo and Cote d'Ivoire).<sup>10</sup> In those omissions Bangladesh is a major contributor.<sup>11</sup> Bangladesh also contributes to UNAMID and UNMISS in Sudan and South Sudan respectively where the local language is Arabic. Despite the fact of having sufficient number of troops from Bangladesh, proportionately military observers and staff officers are not taken; rather those are taken from Francophone/Arabic speaking countries. The classic example of Morocco that speaks both French and Arabic may be taken in this regard. Figure 3 shows a comparison between Bangladesh and Morocco reveals how linguistic advantages assisted Morocco to contribute more than Bangladesh. Though officers' skill in English is good but troops yet to attain minimum required level skill. The levels of communication of both officers and troops lack tremendously in the requisite skill in French and Arabic.<sup>12</sup>

**Figure 3: A Comparison between Bangladesh and Morocco based on Linguistic Advantages (Total Contribution shown in thousand)**



<sup>9</sup> Faruque, Colonel Md Omar, afwc, psc, Colonel Staff, OO Dte, AHQ, interviewed by author on 7 July 2014.

<sup>10</sup> Gaye, Op.Cit. p.6.

<sup>11</sup> Websites of all the missions in Francophone Countries: MINURSO, MINUSTAH, MONUSCO, ONUCI, UNIFIL, MINUSMA and MINUSCA, < <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/minurso/>>,(accessed on 1 September 2014).

<sup>12</sup> Rasul, Brigadier General Ilyas Iftekhar, ndc, psc (retired), 'Bangladesh's Contribution to UN Peacekeeping Missions in Africa' - a paper for the National Seminar on "Look Africa: An Emerging Foreign Policy Option for Bangladesh" on 2 December 2010 at BIIS Auditorium. p. 5-6.

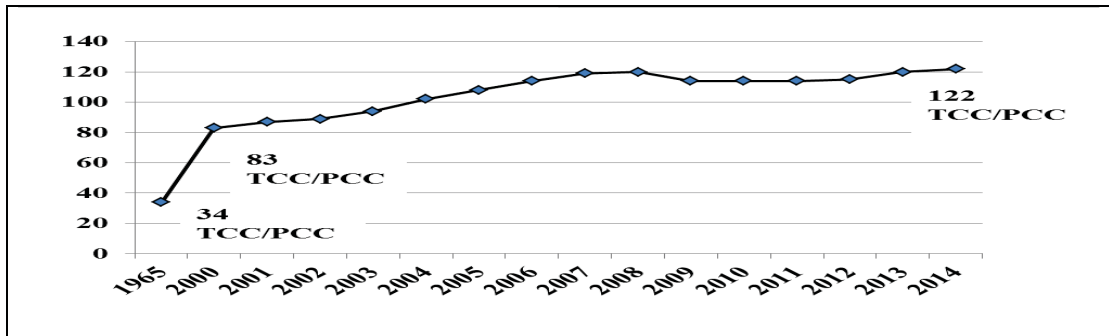
Source: Prepared by the Author with Data from Peacekeeping Statistics Website.<sup>13</sup>

Besides, approximately 1500 serving and 2500 retired Armed Forces personnel participating in ‘Operation Kuwait Punorgothon’ as part of bilateral agreement between two governments that also demands skill in Arabic.

### Multidimensional Challenges

**Increase of Contributors and Decrease in Contribution by TCCs.** Figure 4 shows increase of TCCs and Police Contributing Countries (PCCs)) from 1965 to 2014.

**Figure 4: Increase of New Contributors and Decreasing in Contribution**



Source: Prepared by the Author with Data from Peacekeeping Statistics Website.<sup>14</sup>

Currently out of 122 contributors, 67 contributors provide less than 100 troops/police and about 25 contributors provide less than 10 peacekeepers each. UN is persuading more countries to move beyond ‘tokenism’ and to become major contributors.<sup>15</sup> The impact is as the topmost TCC, in 2010-11 Bangladesh contributed about 10,654 peacekeepers whereas in 2014, contributing only 8455 as top most TCC. Contribution reduced by 2000 (approximately 20%) within a span of 3 years.

**Growing Partnership of UN with Regional Organizations.** Now a days UN is promoting peace effort of regional organization such as AU, EU and NATO under UN Chapter VIII.<sup>16</sup> Due to influence of AU, African contribution has increased rapidly. Figure 5 shows how MS of AU has increased their contribution of troops to UNPKOs, leaving behind Asian countries.

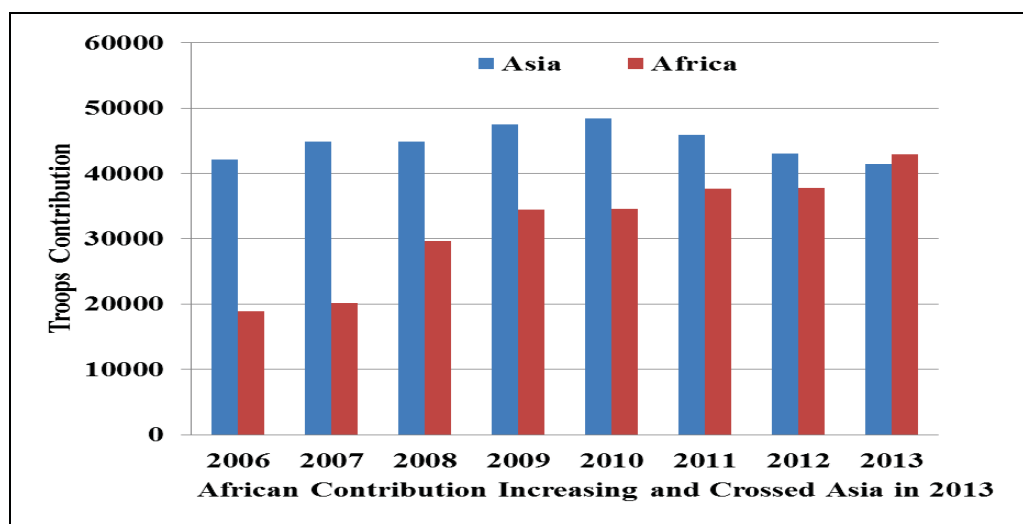
**Figure 5: Comparison of Contribution of AU and Asian Countries**

<sup>13</sup> Peacekeeping Statistics Website, < <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/resources/statistics/archive.shtml>>, (accessed on 25 August 2014).

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> ‘Token’ contribution can be defined as contributions of fewer than forty uniformed personnel to a mission, where these personnel do not make a specialized unit.

<sup>16</sup> UNSC Resolution 2086 (2013), adopted at 6903rd meeting, on 21 January 2013.



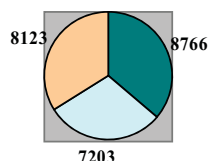
Source: Prepared by the Author with Data from Peacekeeping Statistics Website.<sup>17</sup>

**Lack of Representation at Higher Level Post.** Though Bangladesh is the highest TCC for long but could not get appropriate share of the higher posts at UN Secretariat and also in the field. India and Pakistan with similar number of deployed troops had Military Adviser (the highest military post) at the DPKO but Bangladesh had none. Similarly, in the both the countries on an average have at least one or two Force Commanders (FC) all the time. On the other hand, in last 26 years Bangladesh had only 11 FCs/senior appointments to UN mission making an average of one senior appointment in every 2 years. Being at 21<sup>st</sup> position Brazil has three FC/ Senior appointments but Bangladesh does not have any FC since 2012. As the DPKO and DFS in the UN Secretariat direct and monitor field missions, appropriate representation from military as well as civilian should be pursued. Figure 6 shows the comparative state of contribution of Bangladesh, India and Pakistan in DPKO and in the Field Missions. Figure 9 clearly shows that Bangladesh has highest contribution at field but least representation in DPKO, New York compared to Pakistan and India.

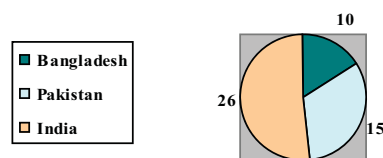
**Figure 6: Comparative Study of Troops Contribution at Field and Representation at DPKO, New York**

<sup>17</sup> Peacekeeping Statistics Website, < <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/resources/statistics/archive.shtml>>, (accessed on 25 August 2014).

## In the Field Mission



## At DPKO, New York (Officers)



Source: Prepared by the Author with Data from ‘Annual review of Global Peace Operations 2013’<sup>18</sup>

## Logistics Challenge.

**Difficulties in Logistics Support.** To maintain several contingents with thousands of troops far away from home is a huge logistic challenge. The shipment of spare parts and other equipment are most of the cases do not reach in time. Moreover, due to shortages of the storage facilities Bangladesh yet to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in UN Standby Arrangement System (UNSAS) to upgrade to Rapid Deployment Level, which require equipment to be ready for deployment within 30 days of request by UN.<sup>19</sup>

## REQUISITE PREPAREDNESS TO RESPOND TO THE CHALLENGES

### General

A concerted effort is required to overcome those challenges of modern peacekeeping. With vast experience and enormous capability developed by Bangladesh Armed Forces over last two decades, should view these challenges as positive obstacles. Subsequent paragraphs examined present capabilities of Armed Forces to face those challenges and identify the areas need improvement.

### Strategy for Bangladesh on UNPSOs

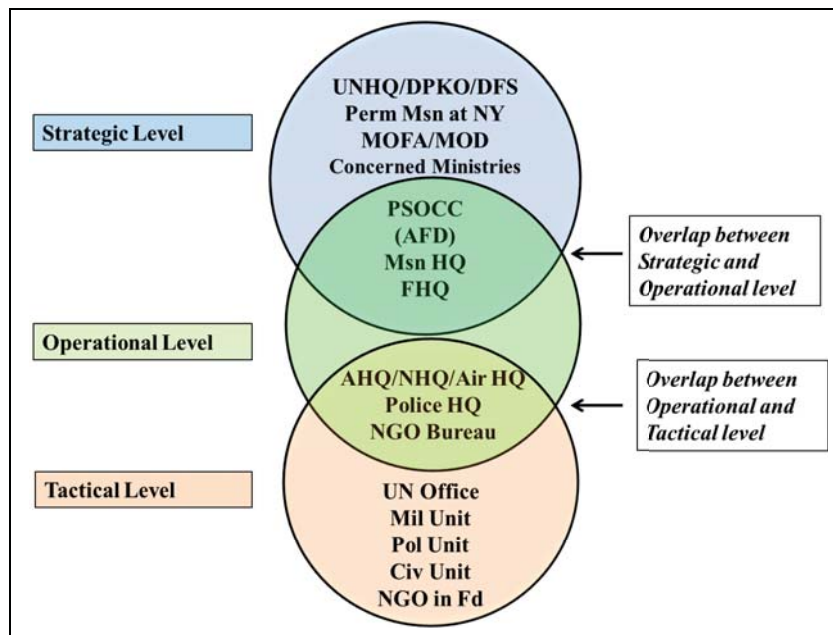
<sup>18</sup> Annual Review of Global Peace Operations 2013, ‘*Global Statistics on UN Missions*’, Center of International Cooperation, Lynne Rienner Publishers, Boulder, London, p. 173.

<sup>19</sup> Hossain, Lieutenant Colonel Md Sheikh Mohammad Sarwar, psc, Planning Officer, Force Generation Service, DPKO, UNHQ, New York, USA, interviewed by author, on 3 September 2014.



**Understanding the Whole Process and Appropriate Level.** There are many internal and external bodies involved in the process of contribution and successful implementation of mandate. For persuading national interests, it is very important to understand the level and involved bodies in UNPSOs as shown in figure 8.

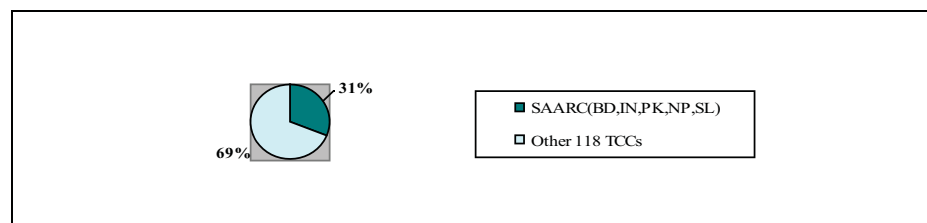
**Figure 7 : Level of Involved Bodies in UNPSOs**



Source: Prepared by the Author from his Experience of Working in DPKO, UN Secretariat.

**Revamping Regional Organization - South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).** Regional partnership strategy in modern UNPSOs is receiving top priority under UN Chapter VIII. Regional organizations like AU, EU, ECOWAS, NATO, Canada – Australia - New Zealand (CANZ), ASIAN and are taking part in peacekeeping operations.<sup>20</sup> MS of SAARC like Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, and Nepal are the top contributors. Figure 9 shows that 31% of total deployed force is contributed by the member of SAARC.

**Figure 8: Companies on of Contribution among SAARC Countries other TCCs**



<sup>20</sup> UNSC Resolution 2086 (2013), adopted by the Security Council at its 6903rd meeting, on 21 January 2013.



Source: Prepared by the Author with Data from Peacekeeping Statistics Website.

Taking the example of AU, these countries should make the SAARC active to promote the interest of its MS and interest of the region. Otherwise it will be difficult for a single TCCs to maintain its current position in the wake of increasing competition of new TCCs and influence of regional organizations.

### **Preparation at Strategic Level**

**Enhancing Diplomatic Capacity.** High level diplomatic engagement and support are needed for successful UNPSOs as well as to ensure that Bangladesh is getting appropriate slice to participate in future peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities. New diplomatic missions should be sent to host countries in Africa to pursue participation in post conflict peacebuilding activities. Diplomatic relations should be established with AU, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), EU, Arab League, NATO and CANZ. Former FC may also be assigned to accompany the diplomatic missions to utilise their expertise in the field of peacekeeping. Permanent Mission of Bangladesh at New York (PMBNY) also acts as a diplomat and should be strengthened by more officers to pursue diplomacy.

**Establishing Think Tank Cell.** By now, Bangladesh has good number of resource personalities on peacekeeping issues. For their optimal utilisation, Bangladesh should establish a dedicated Think-Tank Cell comprising retired and serving military officers, DGs of UN Cell from MOFA and other experts on the field. The Cell should carry out study on strategic matters on UNPSOs and recommend formulation of policies. The body may be housed at proposed Peacebuilding Training Centre. This will also reduce additional load of BIPSOT, who should concentrate on training of the potential peacekeepers and peacebuilders. BIPSOT may continue to deal with operational and tactical issues.<sup>21</sup>

**Pursuit for Higher Post in Field Missions and UN Secretariat.** There are total 322 and 243 professional (P) staffs in DPKO and DFS has<sup>22</sup>. About 15% of DPKO professional are uniformed personnel deputed from MS and they rotate after 2/3 years but almost all the professional of DFS are civilian permanent staffs. Recently uniformed personnel representation has at DPKO, New York has increased to 8 at mid-level posts but there is no higher post.<sup>23</sup> Bangladesh representation in the civilian staffs is also negligible in DFS. A

<sup>21</sup> Rasul, 'United Nations Peacekeeping Operation: Trends and Challenges', Op Cit. p.43

<sup>22</sup> Annual Review of Global Peace Operations 2013, Op. Cit. p. 175.

<sup>23</sup> Letter of Permanent of Mission of Bangladesh to the UN, New York to AHQ, dated April 2014.

concerted effort by MOFA, AFD, Police HQ and PMBNY is essential. Besides, government's initiative individual candidate should give due attention while preparing Personal History Profile (PHP) as it is the only available means to project a candidate's credential to UN. All the relevant experiences should be described under 'Description of Duties' which is the most important part of PHP. The interview system of UN is different and is known as 'Competency-Based Interview' (CBI). CBI implies that 'Past performance is the best indicator of future performance'.<sup>24</sup> Keeping that in mind the candidate should reply the questions during interview with appropriate example from past. However, an institutional patronization to interested and suitable candidates is necessary to occupy desired number of posts. Training may be arranged for the applicants at BIPSOT. While nominating candidates, experienced candidate on UN environment should get priority.

**Upgrading to Rapid Deployment Level.** At present, Bangladesh maintains Level III of conventional UN Standby Arrangement System (UNSAS). Bangladesh will be able to deploy more than a brigade size force in 90 days. There are many TCCs at Level III. Bangladesh should sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to upgrade in Rapid Deployment Level at least with the provision of a battalion size force to draw attention of UN to be able to deploy force within 30 days. This is that Bangladesh one step ahead of other TCCs as UNSAS is the fast hand Database to UN, while looking for new deployment.

**Language Proficiency.** Learning French and Arabic language should get top priority for effective UNPSOs. BIPSOT's modern Language Lab with provision of imparting English and French language training may be utilised limited scale.<sup>25</sup> To fulfil the requirement, a dedicated Language Centre may be established for potential peacekeepers for their continuous practice as it takes time to build up the proficiency and skill on languages.<sup>26</sup> There should be plan to develop skill on French and Arabic languages to the officers at a reasonable number during elementary training as the training period have increased to 4 years. Selected troops may also undergo training on French and Arabic languages. Skill on French and Arabic language will help candidates of Bangladesh to get selected for posts in UN secretariat and field mission. This is a major concern and the government needs to pay attention to this aspect.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Participant Guide on 'Effective Job Interviewing for the Applicants' published by UN Learning and Development, Office of Human Resource Management.

<sup>25</sup> Bhuiyan, Op.Cit. p.59.

<sup>26</sup> Rasul, '*United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Trends and Challenges*', Op. Cit. p.38.

<sup>27</sup> Bhuiyan, Op. Cit. p. 48.

**Modernization of Armed Forces.** The contingents are now undertaking complex and multidimensional tasks that include POC and robust peacekeeping. For the ensuing tasks, the Armed Forces need to be modernised to meet the challenges of the UNPKOs. The TCCs with better equipment is likely to have edge over other TCC's and Bangladesh is trying to make the contingent fully equipped before deployment.<sup>28</sup> Bangladesh Armed Forces will procure Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) to moralise the contingents.

**Gender Mainstreaming.** Bangladesh has already established her credibility by providing all-female contingent FPU to Haiti (MINUSTAH) and DR Congo (MONUSCO). The tempo should be continued and inclusion of female soldiers in Army likely to bring dividend in future. In case of nominating candidate for strategic posts at UN Secretariat and field missions female candidate should get priority.

### **Building Logistics Capacities.**

Bangladesh provides better logistic support in comparison to other TCCs and a preferred TCC to UN.<sup>29</sup> Over the years, a system has been developed but needs further refinements to ensure smooth delivery of logistics support. This can be addressed by developing more flexible policies on procurement, regular turnover of major equipment and through establishment of Defense Wings in the embassies within the region.<sup>30</sup> For last 24 years Bangladeshi contingents are participating in Africa. For prolong sustenance, forward logistic base may be established in Africa region to make the logistic support easier and faster. This can reduce transportation cost by saving money and time. Since Bangladesh Army has huge number of peacekeepers deployed around the world, a separate logistic unit may be raised to deal with the logistic preparation and supply.<sup>31</sup> This will reduce the burden of contingent commander prior to going UN mission and retuning from deployment.

### **Summary**

With its past experience, Bangladesh Armed Forces would be able to overcome most of the challenges. However, diplomatic steps should be taken to enhance participation and regional organization SARRC should be activated (with modified charter) to raise collective voice for South Asian contributors. Side-by-side Bangladeshi contingent should be trained

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<sup>28</sup> Haq, Lieutenant General Abu Belal Muhammad Shafiul, ndc, psc, Principal Staff Officer, AFD, interview by author on 4 September 2014.

<sup>29</sup> Tripura, Commander Rajib, psc, Strategic Support Service, Logistic Support Division, DFS, UNHQ, New York, USA, interviewed by author on 25 June 2014.

<sup>30</sup> Rasul, 'Bangladesh's Contribution to UN Peacekeeping Missions in Africa', Op. Cit. p.8.

<sup>31</sup> Hossain, Lieutenant-Colonel Md Jamal, psc, Course Member, AWC 2014, NDC, interviewed by author. 13 August 2014.

and modernised and should have the mind-set to succeed in robust peacekeeping. Necessary step should be taken for teaching and French and Arabic languages. The logistic support should be more systematic and reliable.

## **POTENTIALS FOR PEACEBUILDING – NEW OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Peacebuilding – Strengthening Capacity of War-torn Nation**

**Bangladesh’s Potentiality for Peacebuilding.** The positive images of peacekeeping should be utilised for the scope when transition takes place from peacekeeping to peacebuilding. Based on the experience of frequent deployment in aid to civil power, pacification activities in Chittagong Hill Tracts, preparation of electoral roll etc, it seems that Bangladesh Armed Forces will be likely to perform better in peacebuilding effort. Peacebuilding is not only in the domain of military tasks rather needs support of civilian components.<sup>32</sup> Possible sectors and potential peacebuilders are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Possible Sectors and Potential Peacebuilders**

<b>Purpose (Different Fields)</b>	<b>Potential Peacebuilders (Actors)</b>
1. Security Sector Reform (SSR).	a. Serving and retired armed forces personnel (former Peacekeepers).
2. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of Combatant.	b. Serving and retired Police personnel, Prison (former Peacekeepers).
3. Rules of Law.	c. Administration personnel and Correction Officers. d. Judiciary and Legal Experts.
4. Electoral Assistance.	a. Election Commission personnel.
5. Support to the restoration and execution of States Authority.	b. Public Admin Officer.
6. Health and Hygiene.	Doctors and Laboratory/Operation theatre Assistants.
7. Basic Service (water supply, sanitation, reconstruction).	a. Engineers. b. Experts from different utility services.
8. Creating job/employment opportunities.	a. Agriculture Specialist/Farmer, Dairy and Poultry Farmer. b. Individuals with vocational training on various skill areas. c. IT experts.
9. Clearance of Mine Action.	a. Serving and retired armed forces personnel (Ammunition technician and engineers).

<sup>32</sup> Statement to Special Committee by USG, DPKO Mr. Hervé Ladsous, Op. Cit. p.5.

10. Providing Education.	a. Retired and serving teachers.
11. Socio-economic development Project.	a. NGOs (like BRAC, ASA etc.).

Source: Prepared by the Author.<sup>33</sup>

### **Challenges of Participating in Peacebuilding**

**Absence of Appropriate Coordinating Body.** Integration of all components is necessary for effective peacebuilding at all level. Inclusion of civilian components for peacebuilding effort will involve huge tasks and confusion may arise unless there is a coordinating body. MOFA should be the lead agency for coordination purpose.

**Non-availability of National Policy for UNPSOs.** There is no policy regarding participation to UNPSOs.<sup>34</sup> It is necessary to have a comprehensive national policy supporting UNPSOs to guide all civilian components who virtually do not have exposure to peacebuilding tasks under UN environment. Absence of policy will allow civilian components to work independently that might end up unsuccessful causing disastrous impact on overall participation in UNPSOs.

### **Exploring the Opportunities and Suggested Ways Ahead for Peacebuilding**

**Utilising Positive Image.** Bangladesh Armed Forces has earned very positive image in participating in 52 missions around the world in last 26 years. Despite having such positive images, Bangladesh only could continue bilateral military support to Kuwait.<sup>35</sup> Taking lessons Sierra Leone, it seems that with the repatriation of Bangladeshi peacekeepers from mission in Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Darfur (Sudan), DR Congo and South Sudan; Bangladesh may lose contact with those countries. MOFA should take all possible steps so that peacebuilding effort is continued to those countries under the umbrella of UN and also bilateral support continues. The government needs to explore this field for employment opportunities.<sup>36</sup>

**Peacebuilding in Sierra Leone and Takeaway for Bangladesh.** Bangladesh was the highest TCCs in Sierra Leone when other TCCs withdrew their contingent with the plea of security of own troops. In appreciation Sierra Leone recognised “Bangla” as their second

<sup>33</sup> Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding: Clarifying the Nexus, Op. Cit. p.1-4.

<sup>34</sup> Zaman, Op Cit. p. 4.

<sup>35</sup> Islam, Lieutenant General M Moinul, awc, psc, Chief of General Staff, AHQ, Bangladesh Army, interview by author, On 31 August 2014.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

language and President Ahmed Tajen Kabbah visited Bangladesh on 21-23 October 2003. Despite having positive images Bangladesh could not continue with peacebuilding effort and had to return by 2007, whereas British Armed Forces continued with peacebuilding and assisted SSR and trained Sierra Leone police till 2014. It has to be noted that peacekeeping ends earlier but peacebuilding continues for long time. To avoid similar situation, in other missions, Bangladesh should take lead in peacebuilding effort.

**High-level Foreign Delegation Visit.** From those countries, high-level delegations should be invited to visit Bangladesh. Different interested ministries and organisations like MOFA, Ministry of Commerce (Mincom), Ministry of Industry (MoInd), Ministry of Agriculture (MOA), the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI), Bangladesh Garment Manufacturing and Export Authority (BGMEA) etc, should brief the delegations to attract them keeping owning interest in mind. They may visit some of the factories of garments, medicine, and fertiliser etc. They may also visit military and police training institution like BIPSOT, NDC, DSCSC, and Police Staff College etc to extend training cooperation.<sup>37</sup> This will help to continue bilateral relation, even after the completion of mission. Recent policy of the government to consider Africa as a major region of huge economic potential (“Look Africa’ policy) will be also facilitated.<sup>38</sup>

**Opening up Temporary Mission of Foreign Ministry.** Foreign Ministry should open temporary mission in all old and matured missions in Côte d’Ivoire, Liberia, Sudan, D R Congo to establishing bilateral relation with host countries. MOFA should take advantages of deployed peacekeepers in creating favourable situation.<sup>39</sup> Deployed military/police personnel can assist in advisory role and coordinate logistics aspects. Bangladesh can send some additional manpower as National Support Element (NSE) with country’s own expenditure. Besides, senior Bangladeshi peacekeepers can maintain liaison with appropriate UN high officials in the field for getting due share in peacebuilding effort while government should pursue at UN Secretariat.

**Initiative of Peacebuilding Commission (PBC).** Bangladesh was elected as chairman of PBC for 2012 -13. Being leading TCCs, she is the member of PBC and Senior Advisor Group (SAG). Both of these played a vital role in selecting TCCs for peacebuilding

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<sup>37</sup> Islam, Lieutenant General M Moinul, awc, psc, Chief of General Staff, AHQ, Bangladesh Army, *Concept Paper on ‘Exercise Extended Horizon’*. (Not published yet).

<sup>38</sup> Kabir Mahfuz and Hassain Sharif M 2010, “*Why ‘Look Africa’? And Analyses of Economic Potential for Bangladesh*”, BIIS, Volume 31, Number 3, 2010.

<sup>39</sup> Momen Major General Anwarul, psc, Military Secretary, AHQ, interviewed by author on 3 April 2014. (He is the former Defence Adviser, Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the UN, York, USA).

activities. Bangladesh should utilise these opportunities in taking part in peace building activities.<sup>40</sup>

**Providing Training for Peacebuilders.** Peacebuilders should be trained properly before deployment. BIPSOT has the capability to conduct peacebuilding training with support of specialists from different fields.<sup>41</sup> Besides, officers should take part in online training conducted by UN for preparing themselves better in peacebuilding activities to have similar footprint like peacekeeping performance.

**Establishment of Peacebuilding Training Centre.** A separate institute for the purpose of developing skilled personnel for peacebuilding activities around the world is necessary. In this regard, Japan government has expressed their interest to assist Bangladesh in establishing a Peacebuilding Training Centre. Temporarily the centre will be established at Bangladesh International Institute for Strategic Studies (BIISS). The concept paper and necessary coordination has been made but the management structure is yet to be finalised. MOFA will coordinate with all stakeholders to finalise the management aspects of this institution.<sup>42</sup>

**Involvement of Women in Peacebuilding.** In many cases, women are better-placed to carry out a number of crucial peacekeeping tasks, including interviewing victims of sexual and gender-based violence, working in women's prisons, assisting female ex-combatants during the process of demobilizing and reintegration into civilian life.<sup>43</sup>

**Suggested Coordination Arrangement: Establishing Peace Support Operations Coordinating Committee (PSOCC).** PSOCC should be established under the arrangement of MOFA to coordinate all UNPSOs issues with all concerned civilian components including military and police. PSOCC should be considered as a strategic management tool to achieve greater coordination, effectiveness and efficiency. The Committee shall formulate policy and supervise planning process if needed. The present system of coordination with military and police may continue.<sup>44</sup> Suggested Chain of Coordination of is shown in Figure 10.

**Figure 9: Chain of Coordination of PSOCC (Under MOFA)**

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<sup>40</sup> Akhtaruzzaman Brigadier General AKM, ndc, psc, Defence Adviser, Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the UN, New York, USA, interviewed by author on 3 September 2014.

<sup>41</sup> Rahman, Major General Mohammad Maksudur, psc, Commandant, BIPSOT, interview by author on 6 October 2014

<sup>42</sup> Tasneem, Saida Muna, Director Ggeneral,(UN), MOFA, interview by author on 7 September 2014.

<sup>43</sup> Background Note, Op. Cit. p.2.

<sup>44</sup> Khan, Brigadier General Abu Sayeed, ndc, psc DG, (Ops and Plan), AFD, interviewed by author on 4 September 2014.





- c. **High-level Foreign Delegation Visit.** High-level delegations from the host countries of matured missions should be invited to visit Bangladesh. Briefing may be arranged for them by different interested ministries/organisations like MOHA, MOD, MOFA, MinCom, MoInd, MOA, FBCCI, BGMEA etc including military/police training institutions like NDC, BIPSOT, DSCSC, Police Staff College etc.
- d. **Establishment of PSOCC under MOFA.** POSCC may be established under the arrangement of MOFA. MOFA should be the lead coordinating agency for all peacebuilding and peacekeeping matters comprising representative of all concerned ministries/department.
- e. **Establishing Think-tank Cell.** A dedicated Think-Tank Cell may be established to conduct research and study on peace operations strategy of the nation. They should recommend formulation of policies, coordination and training aspects. They may be affiliated with proposed Peacebuilding Centre.
- f. **Persuading for Strategic Posts.** Bangladesh should take concerted effort by for securing post at the hierarchy especially in decision-making level the UN secretariat and in field missions.

**Recommendations for Operational Level.** Following recommendations may be implemented by operational level actors:

- a. **Learning French and Arabic Languages.** Learning French and Arabic language should get top priority.
- b. **Training and Modernisation of Peacekeepers.** Bangladesh Armed Forces should be trained for robust peacekeeping. They should be equipped with modern weapons, equipment and communication system.

## CONCLUSIONS

The roadmap of Bangladesh for a deep engagement with the global peace is firmly pronounced in the constitution. She has already participated in all the major peacekeeping operations since 1988 and emerged as the top TCCs. The contribution signifies her credibility and enabled to build up multilateral relationship with other countries and organisations.

Bangladesh has glorious success and earned very positive image for implementing peace in different troublesome part of the world. This hard earned image must be upheld.

In response to changing pattern of conflict, trend of modern peacekeeping has been shifted from ‘traditional’ to complex ‘multidimensional’ mission involving military, police, and civilian. Deployed peacekeepers are facing multidimensional operational and logistic challenges including barrier of French language. Bangladesh Armed Forces should be trained and modernized to meet the challenges. To enhance participation overcoming those challenges, the strategy for Bangladesh should be to respond quickly to UN’s requirement. Diplomatic enhancement and revamping SAARC are necessary to maintain and uphold desired position. Ministries at strategic level and Services HQs at operational level should take appropriate steps to enhance participation of Armed Forces for UNPKOs

Armed Forces have enormous peacebuilding potential for its vast experience of frequent deployment in assisting civil administrations, pacification activities, preparation of electoral roll etc. Bangladesh can take part in SSR, DDR, supporting electoral process, agricultural sector and socio economic development projects. An appropriate coordinating body ‘PSOCC’ should be established as strategic management tool to facilitate planning process of peacebuilding effort. To take the experienced of Armed Forces, close coordination between military and civilian will be needed A harmonised and prudent plan is needed to explore the peace building potential’s of Bangladesh.

Bangladesh has achieved laurels in many fields of which Armed Forces role in UN peacekeeping is noteworthy. Every effort should be made by all concerned so that the hard earned reputation is upheld and focus is more on qualitative representation and contribution to reap maximum benefits.

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