

DEVELOPING NATIONAL POLICY GUIDELINES ON UNITED NATIONS PEACE OPERATIONS

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Introduction

Bangladesh (BD) has engaged in a spectrum of UN peace operation since 1988 and is considered as one of the key players in the peace operations context. International peace and stability are indispensable foundations laid in the constitution and foreign policy of BD. BD's contribution so far did not follow through a national policy or strategy. As such, it is very important for BD to dedicate its national efforts proactively through well-articulated national policy guidelines on UN Peace Operations. Through the policy guidelines, BD would focus different dimension of peace operations. In addition, peace operations have become increasingly multidisciplinary, encompassing civilian, police and military tasks. Improving the effectiveness of peace operations can only be achieved by working together. BD's support for peace operations can yield valuable benefits as part of economic diplomacy too. Despite, being one of the top troop contributors in global peacekeeping initiative the gain in economic and diplomatic field is insignificant. Absence of concerted efforts by all stakeholders is depriving BD from extracting enormous potentials in the field of economic as well as diplomacy in the host countries where military establishes its footprint. BD peacekeepers created ground for subsequent diplomatic as well as economic opportunities in different countries. But absence of policy directive and missing of 'agenda setting' remain as a 'stumbling block' for a possible collective gain of the country.

BD peacekeepers created ground for opportunities in number of countries through participation in UN peace operations. There are no concerted efforts with respect to decision- making, assessment, sharing of resources, knowledge sharing, expertise development, training, budget management, logistics, procurement, diplomacy vis-à-vis military diplomacy and other fields in the context of issues related to UN peace operations. Besides, there is absence of established coordination mechanism between stakeholders resulting to duplication of efforts and missing of comprehensive approach for a collective gain. Though Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) is developing National Policy on UN Peace Support Operations by taking comments from different stakeholders, but this is not based on a research.

UN Policy Guidelines for Member States on Peace Operations

The UN Peace Operations

The term “UN peace operations” cover instruments ranging from special envoys and mediators; political missions, including peacebuilding missions; regional preventive diplomacy offices; observation missions; to small, technical-specialist missions such as electoral support missions; multidisciplinary operations both large and small drawing on civilian, military and police personnel to support peace process implementation, and that have included even transitional authorities with governance functions; as well as advance missions for planning (UN High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, 2015).

Consultation with Troops Contributing Countries (TCCs)/ Police Contributing Countries (PCCs)

Consultations with TCCs/ PCCs at all stages of the planning and decision-making process are critical to the success of any UN peace operation (UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support, 2008). Effective dialogue between the Security Council, TCCs/ PCCs and the UN Secretariat is the key to keep all stakeholders onboard in different phases of peace operations (UN Secretary-General, 2015). These discussions would also accompany memorandum of understanding (MOU) negotiations including Statement of Unit Requirement (SUR) for peace operations. Such consultations are domain of experts for TCCs/ PCCs both at the strategic and operational level.

Protection of Civilians (POC)

POC is one of the key responsibilities of TCCs/ PCCs deployed under UN mandate, which needs to be done at any cost. As such, each and every peacekeeper-military, police and civilian-must be willing and able to pass that test to protect civilian at any cost (UN Security Council Resolution 2222, 2015).

Operational, Training, Logistics Requirement, Leadership, National Caveats, and Selection of Peacekeepers

Member States bear responsibility to ensure personnel operating in high-risk environments have the necessary tactics, techniques and procedures to do so effectively (UN Security Council Resolution 2150, 2014). All personnel deployed must be therefore, trained, equipped and commanded to protect civilians, defend mandate as well as meeting threats to peace. Leadership at different tiers must be selected on the basis of merit and the specific requirements of each situation which will be reflected in tailored post profiles and competencies. (UN Secretary General, 2015).

National caveats become issue while dealing with operational matters in multi-national environment. Any national caveats beyond the national restrictions expressly accepted by the Secretariat at the outset will be treated as disobedience of lawful command. The Secretariat will immediately inform the concerned Member State and, on a regular basis, the Security Council and, where no remedial action is forthcoming, will repatriate the unit concerned (UN Secretary General, 2015). A very high standard should be maintained for the selection and conduct of personnel. Member States and the UN have a clear responsibility not to allow those responsible for acts of gross misconduct to go unpunished. UN peacekeeping personnel should act in accordance with international human rights law and understand how the implementation of their tasks intersects with human rights (UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support, 2008).

UN Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System (PCRS)

UN PCRS came in to effect in July 2015 (UN PCRS, 2015). The PCRS aims Member States for ensuring readiness and timely deployment of quality peacekeeping capabilities. The levels of commitments include three levels for a TCC to pledge and prepare for rapid deployment in forthcoming UN peace operations.

Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, Women, Peace and Security

UN prohibits and is committed to zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA). Member States should support victim assistance programme to support individual victims and children born as a result of SEA (UN Secretary General, 2015). Member States to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-

making levels. Side by side in resolution of conflict including involving women in all peacekeeping and peacebuilding measures (UN Security Council Resolution 1325, 2000).

Achievements and Challenges of BD's Contribution in UN Peace Operations

BD's Achievement through Contribution

BD has contributed a total of 140,028 personnel in UN peace operation. Total fatalities include 126 death cases and 172 injured personnel (Armed Forces Division, 2016). BD receives reimbursement against its contribution like any other member state. The reimbursement is received from contribution of personnel, equipment and services. Through such contribution, the Armed Forces and Police Force has also contributed to national economy by earning foreign currency. However, these contribution need to be viewed as operational achievement and sacrifice to world peace.

Operational Challenges and Achievements

BD is widely known as, 'Humanitarian Peacekeepers'. It has always maintained deployment timeline indicated by the UN Security Council Resolution. In Mali and Eastern Congo, BD was first to deploy infantry unit under blue helmet. In Cambodia, Sierra Leone and Democratic Republic of Congo, when no other countries were willing to enter into rebel held territory, BD peacekeepers were the pioneers to negotiate, enter into rebel held territory and maintained peace. In Central African Republic, BD demonstrated rapid deployment and is tasked to maintain security over 600 kilometers plus main supply route, which is a lifeline for the landlocked country.

In 2014, BD took leadership role in COE Working Groups Meeting with one of the issue papers titled, 'Rotation of equipment under UN expense'. During the meeting, BD could ensure consensus amongst all member states to bear expense of rotation of essential equipment by UN. In 2015, BD organised regional consultation on 'UN High Level Panel on Peace Operations'. During the consultation meeting BD proposed a good number of recommendations to face current as well as future challenges in peace operations. Most of the recommendations were later became part of the report of the High Level Panel.

BD is contributing a good number of female peacekeepers. Two ‘female only’ units from Police are deployed in Haiti and Congo. Besides, female officers from Armed Forces are deployed in different missions. A female officer is also given the command responsibility of a medical unit by BD Army in 2015.

BD military works with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) too. Through initiative of BD Army, BD Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) got its footprint in South Sudan. A good number of projects in the field of health, education and agriculture sectors were jointly undertaken by BD Army units and BRAC. Through this initiative sustainment and local ownership of the projects have been ensured in absence of peacekeepers.

While performing operational responsibility, BD had challenges and setback too. An ambush in Eastern Congo, killed nine peacekeepers in 2005. BD had to withdraw camp under intense pressure of a rebel group in Ivory Coast drawing criticism in 2006. In Rwanda, BD was blamed for being ill equipped to perform the mandated tasks in 1994 (Anyidoho, 1998). But BD deployed as per MOU and other requirements set by the UN and the equipment was still onboard ship for the mission area through UN contracted shipment. However, BD took lessons out of these incidents for preparing subsequent contributions through appropriate approach.

Training Related Achievements

BIPSOT has trained over 10,000 personnel including 1420 overseas participants from 39 countries since inception (BIPSOT, 2016). BIPSOT is a member of International Association of Peacekeeping Training Centre and organized two Annual Conferences. BIPSOT is also a member of Association of Asia Pacific Peacekeeping Training Centre, its secretariat is located in BIPSOT. But the secretariat is not vibrant at all. BD contributed significantly to prepare UN Military Unit Manual in different fields along with other member states, which are considered well-structured roll-out manuals.

Logistics Challenges and Achievements

BD maintains a ‘Force Structure’ for contribution in UN peace operations. Through the ‘Force Structure’, the Armed Forces and Police Force keep ready for deploying different type of contingents in terms of logistics preparation. However, provisioning and procurement of major equipment, major self-sustainment

items including consumables remain as major challenge. Procurement difficulties remain as a nightmare and time consuming due to non-availability of adequate time for procurement, need for procuring new items following the lengthy system especially procuring from foreign countries.

Logistics challenges for new deployment include: ascertaining correct type of major equipment and self-sustainment items both in MOU and SUR; absence of professionalism during reconnaissance in mission area as well as in MOU negotiation; lack of knowledge and experts on SUR, MOU, COE Manual and other UN related policies and documents. Despite all challenges and difficulties, BD Armed Forces has attempted to reduce dependency on UN by providing prefabricated accommodations for all its personnel in UN missions.

Human Rights and Peacebuilding Issues

BD became member of UN Human Rights Council for consecutive third time in 2015 and contributed significantly to international human rights issues (MOFA, 2015). Besides, BD was the Chairman of UN Peace Building Commission (PBC) in 2012 and played leadership role in promoting peacebuilding as part of sustained peace operations.

BD Peace Building Centre (BPC) has been established in January 2016 under MOFA. Its objective are: to train pool of human resources; engage stakeholders in the effort of peacebuilding; facilitate implementation of peacebuilding activities globally; policy formulation; and creating awareness about peacebuilding activities among the mass people (MOFA, 2016).

Budgetary Issues

UN reimbursement through contribution of personnel and equipment are received directly in the Government exchequer. BD Armed Forces and Police Force receive yearly budget on UN peace operations from respective ministries. Through the allotted budget expenditure related to procurement of equipment, pay and allowances, and operational contingencies are met.

Research and Development

Research and Development (R&D) needs comprehensive approach by different stakeholders. R&D is a grey area for BD. BIPSOT also gives less attention in this field. Different public and private universities undertake Peace and Conflict higher studies, which are not adequate considering the global need. By now, BD has produced a good number of experts in different fields of UN peace operations. These experts can contribute a lot through institutionalized approach of R&D.

Approach of Different Countries on UN Peace Operations

China

China is the largest contributor among the permanent members of the UN Security Council. “China will join the new UN PCRS, and has thus decided to lead in setting up a permanent peacekeeping police squad and build a peacekeeping standby force of 8,000 troops,” Chinese President Xi Jinping said in his speech during UN Peacekeeping Summit in 2015.

India

Indian Armed Forces have practical experience based on the conduct of counter insurgency operations in some parts of own country and thus have advantage over most other forces from other parts of the world (Permanent Mission of India in UN, 2016). Centre for UN Peacekeeping was set up in September 2000 under the aegis of the United Service Institution of India to exploit expertise and experience in peace operations.

Indonesia

Indonesia pledged deployment of 4,000 peacekeepers worldwide as part of UN forces by 2019 during the UN Peacekeeping Summit in 2015. To realize the vision of 4,000 peacekeepers, Indonesia established a security and peacekeeping centre to train future peacekeepers.

Japan

Japan is the second largest financial contributor (1.8% of annual UN budget) to UN peace operation. Its intellectual contributions are through: contribution to the discussions in UN; hosting seminars and symposiums regarding UN Peace Operation, program for human resource development in Asia for peacebuilding; senior mission leaders' course; support to training centres.

Malaysia

Malaysia's participation in the UN peace operations is derived from Defence Policy. Its policy covers need for individual and family support system through pre-deployment support, family support, post-deployment care, psychological adjustment and financial management.

Nepal

In Nepal, "Law on Participation in the UN Peace Operations" is under consideration. The law would cover key aspects of troop's deployment including establishing standing forces, parliamentary approval procedures for dispatching forces, extension of operation period, etc.

Nigeria (Nigeria Armed Force, 2007)

The operational relationship between the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and the MOFA is maintained to ensure better flow of logistics, information and coordination for troops participating in peace operations. Nigeria establishes National Support Element (NSE) to serve as a coordinating headquarters for the force. Nigerian contingent commanders have several specialist advisers: Political Adviser (MOFA official), Legal Adviser with international law and legal affairs experience, Humanitarian Adviser appointed from relevant Ministry or agency, and Police Adviser.

Pakistan

Pakistan's national strategy focuses on the Peacekeeping Troops understanding on different dimensions related to peace operations. A proposal is under

consideration to establish Peacekeeping Operations Brigade, which would be dedicated to integrate, train and arrange all formalities of departure/arrivals.

United States

The United States (US) will seek to become a leading “technology contributing country” to UN peace operations. The US would seek to assist the UN, regional organizations, TCCs, and PCCs to integrate technologies into, and apply innovative concepts to address operational requirements and capability gaps.

Proposed National Policy Guidelines on UN Peace Operations

Objectives of the National Policy

To continue, be proactive in engaging with greater and more coordinated responsibility in the UN peace operations considering future trends and challenges.

To strengthen BD’s diplomatic and strategic engagement with concerned stakeholders for enhancing national image as well as ensuring sustained peace (MOFA, 2015).

Compliance with International Law

It is mandatory for BD to participate in UN peace operations under international law. Government may consider enacting “Law on Participation in the UN Peace Operations” to cover key aspects of troop’s deployment including establishing standing forces, parliamentary approval procedures for dispatching forces, extension of operation period, etc.

Diplomatic Engagements and Opportunities in Other Multilateral Platforms

BD may have to go along with the reforms in the UN at the strategic and operational level time to time. Efforts may be directed to ensure more participation in UN peace operations through diplomatic engagements by the PMBNY. Additionally, BD may support the Peacebuilding Commission at the strategic level as well as at the field level. Diplomatic efforts may also be directed to get leadership and

appropriate key positions considering the ratio of contribution in the UN peace operations. The Government of BD may consider exploring diplomatic relations by opening up embassies in those countries, where BD troops and police has had an effective role in maintaining peace and stability. BD may aim to further increase the extent of cooperation, for instance by examining the option of collaboration among friendly nations, especially rising troop and police contributors for UN operations.

Rapid Deployment Strategy

BD Armed and Police Forces may always put PCRS as the top priority to be proactive, equipped, trained and maintain forces for call of world peace. All concerned government machineries may as well be directed to ensure the highest state of readiness in this regard. If necessary, bilateral arrangement may be signed with friendly country (ies) to get special equipment which is normally not readily available.

Decision-Making Process

The President, as the Supreme Commander of the Forces has the authority to take ultimate decisions for the participation under the UN based on Security Council resolution. PMBNY receives this request on behalf of the MOFA and examines it in light of BD's broader foreign policy priorities and existing international commitments. Requests relating to troops are directed to the AFD. The Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA) receives requests related to the deployment of the police personnel for the UN missions (MOFA, 2015).

National Committee on UN Peace Operations

The Government of BD may form a national committee that shall be responsible for giving broad policy directives for effective implementation of the national peace operation policy (Bangladesh Army Headquarters, 2015). The National Committee may be chaired by the Prime Minister, Government of the People's Republic of BD with following members: Minister from Ministry of Defence, Finance, Foreign Affairs and Home Affairs; Chiefs of Army, Navy and Air Force; and Inspector General of Police. Following personnel may remain in attendance: Secretaries from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Public Administration, Home Affairs, Foreign Affairs, Defence, Finance; Principle Staff Officer, AFD;

Commandant BIPSOT; Director General BD Peacebuilding Centre (when appointed). Member Secretary will be Director General of UN Desk, MOFA.

Establishment of 'UN Peace Operations Wing' under the MOFA. This wing will be established, where all relevant stakeholders will be absorbed through a separate organisational structure. 'UN Peace Operations Wing' will be the best option to deal with peace operation related matters. Upon establishment, its functioning will become routine affairs. And matters related to peace operations will always be in focus. It then becomes secretariat to the National Committee. The 'UN Peace Operations Wing' may be composed as under:

- Secretary (an expert on UN Peace Operations)
- Additional/ Joint Secretary (one each from Army, Navy, Air Force, Police)
- Joint Secretary (one each on Operations, Training, Logistics, Finance, R&D)
- Required number of officials and staffs to support the wing

Roles and Responsibilities of Stakeholders (MOFA, 2015)

The prime stakeholders for UN peace operations are: MOFA, MOD, AFD with BD Armed Forces, MOHA and BD Police. MOFA may form a pool of civilian experts who shall contribute in such operations. MOFA may perform diplomatic endeavours and shall convey and coordinate any request of troops and police to the concerned authority in the shortest possible time. AFD may facilitate the promulgation of policies and Government approval for the acceptance of offer and deployment of troops from BD Army, Navy and Air Force in the UN missions. AFD may also coordinate all the operational and administrative activities regarding UN related tasks among the three HQ. BD Police may formulate its respective policy document for force generation, training and deployment.

Resources and Capabilities of BD Armed Forces and Police (MOFA, 2015)

BD Armed Forces and Police may have the rapid-response capability cooperation. In this regard, logistics preparation with state-of-the art technologies will be the key. Thus a comprehensive planning with adequate budget allotment, timely procurement of equipment, etc needs to be kept in mind by different stakeholders. There may be necessity to share national resources of different stakeholders in order to accept an offer of contribution in the UN Mission.

The forces may be logistically prepared in all aspects. The HQ of the forces may pursue 100 percent reimbursement of the equipment and services provided as per agreed MOU. Resource sharing in mission area may be required to attain collective gain. A pool of experts may be developed by concerned forces to deal with logistics issues as well as provide institutional memory.

Training, Capacity Development and R&D (MOFA, 2015)

The Government may regularize the development process of all training facilities of the Armed Forces and BD Police. Universities may introduce research and academic study programmes in the relevant areas of peacekeeping. Academic collaborations may be explored among universities and research institutes at home and abroad to expedite academic discussions that enrich BD's contribution to UN peace operations. By now, BD has produced a good number of experts in different fields of UN peace operations. These experts can contribute a lot through institutionalized approach of R&D.

Regional Cooperation (MOFA, 2015)

The Government may promote constructive engagement with regional and sub-regional forums that would enhance its participation in the UN-led operations. BD may support a joint role of South Asian countries in the UN Peacebuilding Commission. Government may consider to assisting the rising TCCs/ PCCs to train and organise to perform effectively in peace operations.

Efforts to Enhance Future Involvement in Peacebuilding Endeavours (MOFA, 2015)

BD may take necessary steps to develop trade infrastructure and contribute in the foreign direct investments in the countries where forces establish footprint. Thus, BD may aspire to play a crucial role in the sustaining peace through economic development. MOFA may arrange regular dialogue with the business communities to set a separate policy on trade promotion, especially in African nations.

National Support Elements and Non-Governmental Organization for Sustained Development

BD may consider deployment of NSE along with the contingents (United Nations, 2015). The Government may also consider forming JICA, CIDA, KOICA or DFID type organization(s) in mission area for economic diplomacy as well as for development work in the host country (Country Director DFID, 2016) and (Department for International Development of UK, 2016). By establishing such type of organisation (other than providing aid), BD can gradually play a role in geo-economics and exert power in world economics as a 'soft power' (Rahman, 2016).

Death, Disability and Family Welfare

The peacekeepers are sacrificing lives for the world peace. Their family(ies) may be given appropriate lifelong welfare as a special consideration. Besides, injured peacekeepers may be supported lifelong through a welfare programme.

International Forum on UN Peace Operations

There are a number of international meetings that take place on UN peace operations like C34, COE Working Group, and 5th Committee at the General Assembly. BD needs to attend these meetings through appropriate representation with experts having institutional memory in order to get a better dividend as well as image building.

Budgetary Issues

The present system of receipt of UN reimbursement to the Government exchequer needs to continue. The Government may consider separate allocation of budget for PCRS to allow timely procurement of equipment as well as preparation of different types of contingents well in time.

Conclusion

BD has become one of the key actors in UN peace operations context. It's armed and police forces, not only contributed personnel but had a significant contribution to national economy through participating in world peace. BD Armed and Police forces have gained rare experience in multidimensional operational

tasks and through the process had setbacks as well as logistics difficulties. Now BD needs to consolidate gains, continue greater contribution to world peace as well as focus on sustained peace in the host mission areas. An approach can be to establish organisation like DFID/ JICA/ CIDA (with extended mandate to operate like NGOs) which will operate along with military or police forces in the mission areas in order to carry forward foot print of peacekeepers for economic development. Besides, the Government may focus on diplomacy in the countries where peacekeepers are deployed. Establishments like BIPSOT and BPC may be proactive to meet the future requirements of training to prepare next generation. BD may also develop institutional memory to retain achievements and develop experts to remain as a key actor in world peace.

National policy guidelines on UN peace operations set the agenda with well-articulated farsighted objectives. It needs to comply with international law, consider the diplomatic engagements with opportunities, deployment including rapid deployment strategy to expose state of readiness, workable decision making process through a national committee, roles, and responsibilities including capabilities to share and optimize resources. BD may form an organisation to get engaged in the mission areas for development through bilateral engagement.

Through the national policy, BD will have the opportunity to ensure greater and more coordinated roles in the UN peace operations. Besides, it will provide different stakeholders' the opportunities to engage more effectively utilising platform of peace operation in strengthening sustained peace.

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Brigadier General Saleem Ahmad Khan has wide range of 29 years' experience in the military including international peacekeeping experience with the UN Mission in Sierra Leone and Sudan. General Saleem participated in Contingent Owned Equipment (COE) Working Group 2004 meeting held in the UNHQ. Brigadier General Saleem facilitated the UN Integrated Mission Staff Officers' Course, conducted by Pearson Peacekeeping Centre, Ottawa, Canada in 2010 and enlisted as Community of Expert. In 2012, he was a facilitator in a seminar on UN Peace Support Operations (PSO) organised by Canadian Defence Academy (CDA) in Uruguay. He served in the Election Commission Bangladesh as Director General National Identity Wing and Project Director of Identification System. In military he has undergone Armed Forces War Course and National Defence Course. He earned his Bachelor of Technology from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India and became a telecom engineer. General Saleem was commissioned in the Corps of Signals. He served in three tiers of Army, in an infantry brigade as operations officer, in an infantry division as operations, planning & training officer and in the Army HQ as Staff Officer of joint operations, overseas deployment and the United Nations Peacekeeping Affairs Officer. He has command experience in an infantry division communication unit in peace and counter insurgency operations and number of field communications companies. While serving in the Army Training and Doctrinal Command, he developed training doctrine and field formation training system of Bangladesh Army. He also served as the Director Overseas Operations of Bangladesh Army. He was a faculty member in the Armed Forces War Course Wing of National Defence College and served as an instructor in Signal Training Centre and School and Bangladesh Military Academy. He served as the Dean of Faculty of Technical and Engineering Studies in Bangladesh University of Professionals (BUP).