

**Statement by Acting Assistant Secretary for International Organization
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U.S. Department of State
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Democracy and Human Rights
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Mr. Chairman, thank you for inviting me to address this Subcommittee today on the topic of our support for United Nations peacekeeping operations and our efforts to help them become more effective instruments to promote peace, stability, and reconciliation in some of the world's most difficult conflicts. The Administration seeks to work in close partnership with Congress in addressing the many challenges the United Nations peacekeeping operations face today. In today's testimony, I will discuss trends in peacekeeping, the challenges of peacekeeping, and the lessons we have learned from them, and how our efforts to improve UN peacekeeping have led to significant, hard-won successes in countries such as Haiti, Liberia and the Democratic Republic of Congo. I will also discuss the many ongoing challenges that still hinder UN peacekeeping operations and impede them from becoming fully effective, most prominently the UNAMID operation in Darfur. But even when facing significant challenges, it is clear that UN peacekeeping operations not only contribute to the prevention or mitigation of conflict and the resulting protection of civilians, but also provide good value for the U.S. in sharing the burden to respond to peacekeeping needs and requirements around the globe.

United Nations peacekeeping serves the United States' national interest. While we have a stake in the outcome of events in virtually every region of the world, there are many conflicts in which our direct military intervention would not be appropriate or effective. United Nations peacekeeping provides an important alternative. UN peacekeeping missions engage and commit the international community to seek solutions to these conflicts. By partnering with the UN, we share the burden and the costs of peacekeeping missions, even as we continue to use our leadership in the Security Council to shape their mandates, and to strive to make them as effective as possible.

In recent years, peacekeeping operations have expanded rapidly in size, complexity and scope. Since 2001, the number of authorized peacekeepers has nearly tripled, from under 40,000 to almost 120,000, as the Security Council has authorized large missions in Liberia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti, Cote d'Ivoire, Lebanon, Southern Sudan and Darfur. Peacekeeping operations have taken on complex new tasks. Traditional peacekeeping operations, such as the longstanding operations in Cyprus or Kashmir, consist mainly of blue helmeted troops monitoring a green line or buffer zone between the parties to a conflict. In another example, part of the mandate of the UNIFIL operation in Lebanon, established in 2006 by resolution 1701, is to play such a role, but its mandate also includes other activities like facilitating humanitarian access, and assisting the Government of Lebanon to extend its control over its territory and to secure its borders.

In recent years, peacekeeping operations have tended to become more complex. In operations in Liberia, Haiti, East Timor, Cote d'Ivoire and the Democratic Republic of Congo, cease-fire implementation has been only the first of a peacekeeping mission's many tasks, which may also include: facilitating the demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration of ex-combatants; providing logistical and security support to elections; helping a post-conflict government reform its security sector and other governing institutions; even supporting operations by the national security forces against recalcitrant militia factions or criminal gangs. UN peacekeeping operations are increasingly multidimensional, integrating military and police components with expert civilian technical assistance. This dramatic expansion in peacekeeping efforts has presented new opportunities for the international community to assist local populations as they end dangerous conflicts, promote reconstruction, and build lasting reconciliation. However, we must also acknowledge that this expansion has resulted in unprecedented demands on the UN Secretariat, on troop contributing countries, and on the member states that share the cost of peacekeeping assessments.

We have learned some important lessons from our experience with peacekeeping. One lesson is simply that peacekeeping is challenging. Peacekeepers have always had to contend with shattered infrastructure and hostile operating environments. The new multidimensional operations have additional layers of complexity. For such operations to be successful, many military, police, and civilian components must work together effectively — in particular, the parties to a conflict must learn to cooperate with the

mission, however much they mistrust each other. In Sudan's Darfur province, the environment is not permissive and some of the parties to the conflict have not cooperated with the multidimensional operation UNAMID. This, and UNAMID's difficulty in coordinating among its own components have caused the operation to struggle.

Another lesson we have learned is that successful peacekeeping and reconciliation can take a long time and require a sustained commitment; setbacks are to be expected. The peacekeeping operation that began almost a decade ago in the Democratic Republic of Congo monitored an uneasy ceasefire among a plethora of foreign troops and domestic militias. Since that time, UN peacekeepers have assisted with the democratic election of the current government, the demobilization of ex-combatants, and the stabilization of much of the country. Even after so many years, however, the peacekeepers still must contend with armed groups that threaten to renew conflict in the eastern portion of the country.

By far the most important lesson is that peacekeeping can be an effective tool to help war-shattered countries make the transition from war to peace; peacekeeping can help traumatized people to rebuild their governing institutions, economies and futures. Liberia stands as an example of successful multidimensional peacekeeping. The conflict in Liberia caused devastation and chaos – a non-functioning government, shattered infrastructure, and no trace of law and order. The UNMIL peacekeeping operation and its predecessors provided a framework of security and technical assistance as Liberians rebuilt their country and their government from the ground up. Today, UNMIL continues to assist the democratically elected government of President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf to restore law and order and rebuild Liberia. Peacekeeping has also had successes in Haiti, where a multidimensional peacekeeping force has broken criminal gangs and helped train and mentor Haitian security forces, providing a security umbrella for the political process. While Haiti's political impasse is far from resolved, the dispute is now conducted peacefully through the political system. In Timor Leste and later in Kosovo, peacekeeping has sheltered newly independent countries while they built their own governing institutions from the ground up.

Peacekeeping may be difficult and fraught with challenges, but it is well worth our efforts to collaborate with our UN partners to make peacekeeping operations more effective and to make them work better.

Many people in countries such as Haiti, Liberia, Kosovo, Timor-Leste and Congo, who once feared the scourge of war, can now look forward to rebuilding their future. They surely would agree that it is worth the international community's efforts to make peacekeeping work.

While we can be pleased with the many successes of UN peacekeeping, we also must recognize and learn from the challenges that still hinder some peacekeeping operations, most notably the UNAMID operation in Darfur. UNAMID's difficulties in reaching full deployment and operational effectiveness are well-known, and exemplify many of the constraints facing the United Nations and African Union during this period of extraordinary growth in peacekeeping. Understanding these problems is the first step to working with our partners to improve the effectiveness of UNAMID and of other important peacekeeping operations.

One important constraint is cost. UN peacekeeping assessments have increased as peacekeeping has expanded, and all member states are feeling the strain. Our payments for UN peacekeeping assessments have escalated from \$1.022 billion in FY 06, to \$1.4 billion in FY 07. We estimate our FY 08 payments could reach \$2 billion. Assessments for UNAMID, a massive operation with major start up costs this year, will be a significant proportion of those costs. We are grateful for the supplemental funding that will enable us to make payments for UNAMID assessments during Fiscal Year 2008 and 2009.

Force generation has become another significant constraint to UN peacekeeping. With record numbers of blue helmeted personnel already in the field, troop contributors are struggling to meet the requirements for large new multidimensional operations such as UNAMID. Certain specialized units are in short supply. To date, no troop contributing country has come forward with pledges for force multipliers such as the helicopter units that UNAMID needs to be fully effective. Pledges for other key units, including heavy transportation, engineering units and especially formed police units have so far fallen short of UNAMID's needs. We are supporting the UN's effort to generate troop contributions for UNAMID with our own diplomatic outreach to countries that might pledge these important missing assets. We have active discussions underway with potential troop and formed police unit contributors as we explore options for U.S. assistance to upgrade their equipment so it meets UNAMID's requirements.

Many countries that are willing to participate in UNAMID need assistance in training and equipping their troops to a level that meets UN operational standards, with transporting their troops to the area of operations, or with sustaining their troops in the field once they arrive. The United States has extensive bilateral assistance programs to train and equip peacekeeping troops, especially African ones. We administer this assistance through programs such as the Global Peacekeeping Operations Initiative and its African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance program, commonly referred to as GPOI and ACOTA. Earlier this year President Bush announced a \$100 million plan to provide equipment and training to an additional 6,000 African soldiers for deployment to UNAMID. Since then we have initiated “train and equip” programs for three infantry battalions from Rwanda, and one infantry battalion each from Ethiopia and Senegal. When these programs are completed in August, we will launch a new round of train and equip programs for UNAMID participants, with troops from Burkina Faso and Tanzania. We continue to provide substantial bilateral military assistance to countries who contribute peacekeeping troops to UNAMID and to other peacekeeping operations worldwide. Over the past five years, the United States has spent over \$800 million in such direct and indirect support to multilateral peacekeeping.

UNAMID’s structure – to date unique -- as a hybrid UN –African Union operation has proven to be another constraint. Before the UN Security Council established UNAMID, the African Union multinational force AMIS had deployed to Darfur, with significant assistance from the US and other donors. In July 2007, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1769 to establish UNAMID. Resolution 1769 specified that UNAMID was to incorporate the AMIS troops, and deploy certain specialized logistical, engineering and transportation units that would lay the groundwork for deployment of a much larger UNAMID force prior to the final transfer of authority from the AU to the UN on December 31, 2007. However, the dual command structure proved cumbersome and difficult to manage in practice; furthermore, most of the specialized units were not ready to deploy in the timeframe specified. Sudan’s membership in the African Union gave it leverage over the terms of the hybrid operation’s deployment. Sudan used this leverage to insist that UNAMID be a predominantly African operation and that the African units deploy first, even when specialized and urgently needed non-African units were ready to deploy. This hybrid structure clearly impacted UNAMID’s effectiveness.

Increasingly, peacekeeping is constrained by the limited capacity of the UN Secretariat, which further complicates the problem of generating forces and deploying forces quickly to peacekeeping operation in the field. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations, which has traditionally coordinated peacekeeping has simply been unable to expand its personnel, planning and logistical capacity quickly enough to keep pace with the rapid growth in peacekeeping. We strongly support the ongoing restructuring of the UN Secretariat, including the establishment of a new “Department of Field Support” to help support peacekeeping, and authorization of over 400 new staff positions related to peacekeeping at UN Headquarters. The effort to reform the UN Secretariat and increase its capacity to deploy complex peacekeeping operations is still a work in progress. It will take time for the Secretariat to incorporate the new personnel and procedures. In the meantime, the United States will support force generation through its diplomatic efforts to rally troop contributors, and its assistance to train and equip them to an effective standard.

One additional constraint on effective UN peacekeeping bears particular mention, and we must continue to take the necessary measures to address and prevent it. Sexual exploitation and abuse of women and children is prevalent in far too many conflict situations in which UN peacekeepers are present. In most of these cases, regular troops, militias, and rebels are the perpetrators and use rape as a weapon of war. In some particularly shocking cases, UN peacekeepers are accused of perpetrating sexual exploitation and abuse, preying on the very people they are to protect. The United States has led international efforts to eliminate sexual abuse and exploitation by UN staff. With our strong encouragement, the United Nations has instituted a wide range of preventive and disciplinary actions to carry out its policy of zero tolerance towards sexual exploitation and abuse by military, police or civilian personnel. Sexual abuse is unacceptable; especially when the protectors become the perpetrators.

One of the greatest challenges for effective peacekeeping is matching a mandate, its authorities and its associated rules of engagement with the requirements in theater. Empowering a mission to respond appropriately and effectively to the conflict situation is critical. The mandate is potentially either the greatest constraint or the greatest contributor to an operation’s success. The United States uses its leadership in the UN Security Council to shape peacekeeping mandates that are clear, credible, and defined to what is

achievable. That said, there is no simple, one-size-fits-all formula for designing effective peacekeeping mandates.

As a case in point, we can look to the three peacekeeping operations established to deal with the inter-related conflicts in Chad and Sudan. The MINURCAT operation in Chad is primarily a police operation, charged with protecting vulnerable civilians who have fled from the sub-region's conflicts; troops from the European Union operation EUFOR provide force protection to MINURCAT, and secure a safe haven in eastern Chad. MINURCAT has no mandate to resolve the underlying conflicts in the region, but only to mitigate their effects. As MINURCAT deploys, it is on track to succeed in its limited, but vital goal of protecting vulnerable civilians. In Sudan, UNMIS is a complex multidimensional operation, charged with facilitating the implementation the Comprehensive Peace Agreement that ended two decades of civil war between the north and the south. The peace process is fragile. We can expect implementation of the Agreement's many provisions to be slow, and often contentious. Fostering reconciliation will be a long term effort. UNMIS has a distant goal, but with the continued support of the international community and of the parties themselves, it is achievable. The third operation is UNAMID, in Sudan's troubled Darfur province. Like MINURCAT, UNAMID has a mandate to protect vulnerable civilians, and, like UNMIS, it has a mandate to support a peace process. However, Darfur today is deeply factionalized and the Government of Sudan has not yet demonstrated its willingness to cooperate with UNAMID or to facilitate its objectives. These factors clearly complicate UNAMID's ability to carry out its mandate. Ideally, the peacekeeping operation would deploy only after a peace process is well underway, and all of the parties view the peacekeepers as welcomed partners in implementing a settlement. However, the brutal conflict in Darfur has caused appalling human suffering on a truly massive scale, with new fighting and displacements occurring regularly. Suffering people in such a desperate situation cannot wait for a political process to mature. For this reason, we support a two-pronged policy for Darfur – to facilitate UNAMID's rapid deployment, while simultaneously promoting the peace process.

Mr. Chairman, in my testimony, I have been able to touch only briefly on the many important dimensions of UN peacekeeping. These issues could be usefully explored in much greater depth. I stand ready to respond in detail to any further questions from the Committee.

Thank you.