

Lesson 1

WHAT IS PEACEKEEPING? A CANADIAN INNOVATION

Overview:

Students will gain a general understanding of the United Nations and the role of Canada in the creation of modern peacekeeping during the Suez Crisis. They will review the essential conditions to the deployment of successful peacekeeping missions as well as the main challenges. Students will be encouraged to discuss the role of Canada in the United Nations and in the foundation of peacekeeping.

Objectives/Expectations:

By the end of this lesson, students will:

- Have a general understanding of the United Nations' role
- Understand the main characteristics of the Security Council and the role it plays in the creation of peacekeeping forces
- Have analyzed the events that prompted the creation of the first peacekeeping force
- Understand how Canada contributed to the creation of UNEF I
- Have analyzed the conditions for success and the challenges faced by the UN when deploying a peacekeeping mission

Duration:

One or two class periods

Materials required:

Photocopies of Students' handout for the Activity 1 and Timeline (if assigned)

Video *The Peacekeepers* (2005) or *Shake Hands with the Devil* (2004) and DVD player or tape recorder for Activity 2 (if assigned)

Key Terms (defined within the lesson itself or in the glossary):

- United Nations
- Security Council
- General Assembly
- Secretary-General
- Peacekeeping
- Legitimacy

Content:

The United Nations



The United Nations is an international organization that was created at the end of the Second World War by the Allies. The Charter was signed on June 26th, 1945 in San Francisco, at the conclusion of the United Nations Conference on International Organization. The purpose of the organization was to “maintain international peace and security, develop friendly relations among nations, achieve international cooperation in solving international problems, and be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends” (UN Charter: Chapter 1, Article 1).

The Charter of the United Nations determined the characteristics of the United Nations’ main bodies: The General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Trusteeship Council, the International Court of Justice and the Secretariat. It also established the conditions for membership and asserted the goals and principles of the organization. The Charter was originally signed by 51 original members: the five permanent members of the Security Council (France, the United Kingdom, China, the USSR and the United States) and 46 other States including Canada, Norway, Australia, etc. As of 2007, it consists of 192 Member States.

The Security Council

The Security Council is the body that was established to “ensure prompt and effective action by the UN and to take primary responsibility for the maintenance of peace and security” (UN Charter: Chapter 5, Article 23). It is constituted of 5 permanent members (France, the United Kingdom, China, the USSR and the United States) and 10 non-permanent members elected by the General Assembly for a period of 2 years. One of the important characteristics of the Security Council is that resolutions are adopted by an affirmative vote (or abstention) from 9 of the 15 members, including the 5 permanent members (UN Charter: Chapter 5, Article 27). This is commonly known as veto power.

The Security Council is in charge of requesting pacific settlement of disputes that could endanger the maintenance of international peace and security. In the case where pacific settlement cannot be reached, the Security Council can impose an interruption of economic relations, the severance of diplomatic relations, blockades or the use of force against the parties concerned (UN Charter: Chapters 6 and 7).

Current Members of the Security Council

Permanent Members: France, Great Britain, Peoples Republic of China, Russia, United States

Non-Permanent Members (2007): Belgium, Republic of the Congo, Ghana, Indonesia, Italy, Panama, Peru, Qatar, Slovakia, South Africa



THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

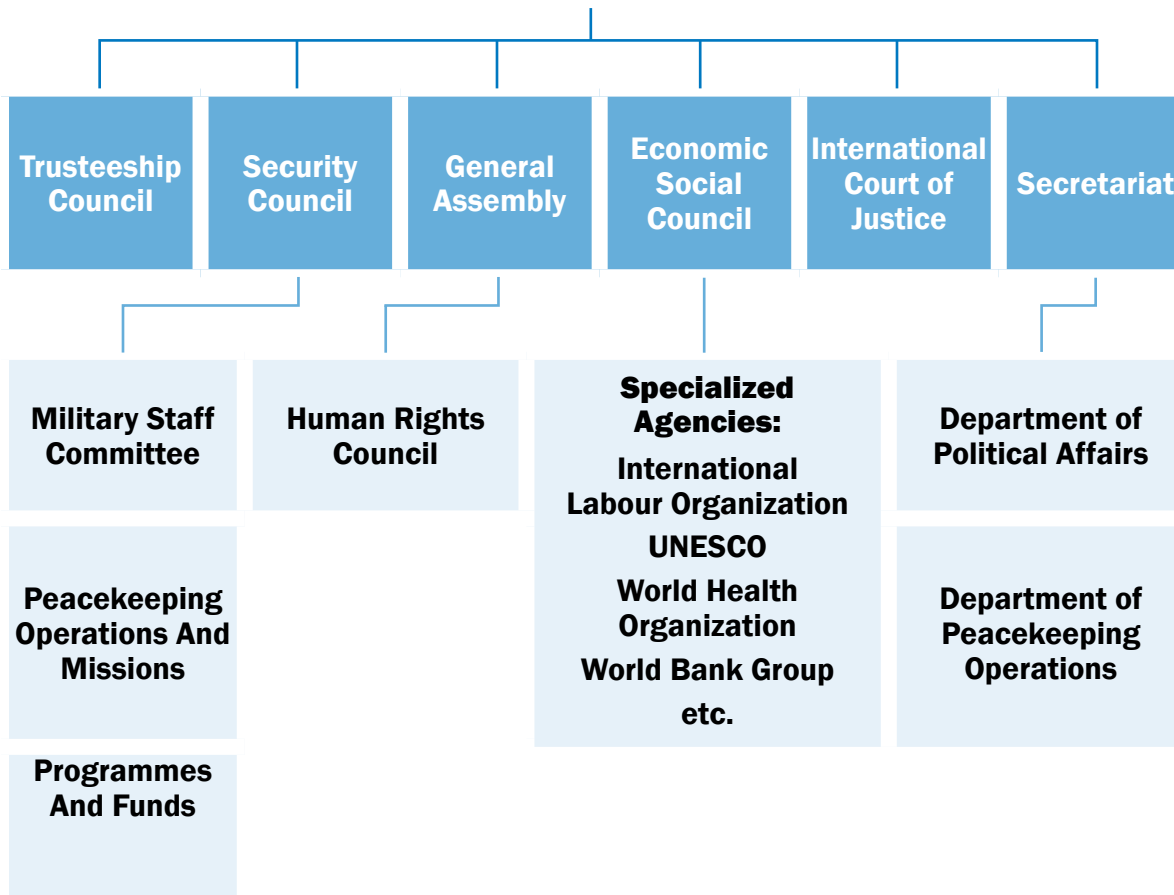


Figure 1: Structure of the United Nations

Source: United Nations. Available at: <http://www.un.org/aboutun/chartpdf/unsyschart.pdf>

Need for peacekeeping

The United Nations defines peacekeeping as “the deployment of international military and civilian personnel to a conflict area with the consent of the parties to the conflict in order to: stop or contain hostilities or supervise the carrying out of a peace agreement”. While this definition serves as a useful reference point, no single definition of peacekeeping exists. Peacekeeping continues to evolve as new conflicts arise and demands to resolve them are increasingly placed on the UN.

While not specifically envisaged in the United Nations Charter, the UN pioneered military observation and supervision in 1948 with the establishment of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization in the Middle East (UNTSO). A similar observation mission was established in India and Pakistan the same year to monitor the cease-fire over Kashmir and investigate complaints related to breach of the cease-fire by both sides. Both missions were observation missions by unarmed personnel and are still active today.



Helicopter landing at a UNTSO observation post in Kham, Lebanon, March 2003 (UNTSO Photo)

Source: Canadian Department of National Defence (DND); Description: United Nations Truce Supervision Organization in the Middle East and United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan

The Suez Crisis

In October 1956, the UN faced a major crisis threatening the stability of the Middle East. A few months earlier, the United States, followed by the United Kingdom, had decided to withdraw their financial aid to Egypt for the Aswan Dam project on the Nile River. Subsequent to this decision, Nasser retaliated by nationalizing the Suez Canal and stated that all revenues from the Canal would be used to finance the project. The French and British reacted strongly, condemning the actions. Israel, for its part, was denouncing Egypt’s growing incursions into Israel from Gaza.

On October 29th, Israeli forces launched an attack on Egypt, occupying the Sinai and Gaza Strip. British and French troops landed in the Suez Canal Zone a few days later, prompting the UN to call an emergency session to discuss the state of affairs. While the Security Council discussed the situation, no consensus on collective action could be reached due to the vetoes of France and the United Kingdom. The matter was thus referred to the General Assembly under the “Uniting for Peace” resolution, calling for a cease-fire and the withdrawal of all foreign forces from occupied territories. The Assembly also called upon the establishment of

the first United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF I), on the premise that the mission's mandate be deemed neutral with respect to any political objectives other than international peace and security. The mandate of UNEF I was to "secure and supervise the cessation of hostilities," and the withdrawal of the French, British, and Israeli armed forces from Egypt (UN DPKO, First United Nations Emergency Force). By late December, French and British forces had completely retired from the Suez Canal Zone, and by early March 1957, all Israeli forces were gone. Once the withdrawal was complete, UNEF I served as a buffer between Egypt and Israel and supervised the cease-fire.

UN Peace Operations

Peacekeeping operations and their deployment are authorized by the Security Council, with the consent of the host government and usually the other parties involved in the conflict. The military personnel of peacekeeping operations are voluntarily provided by Member States and are financed by the international community. Participating countries are compensated at a standard rate from a special peacekeeping budget. The budget and troops come from many countries: this "burden-sharing" can offer extraordinary efficiency in human, financial and political terms. The following graph indicates the cost of a mission.

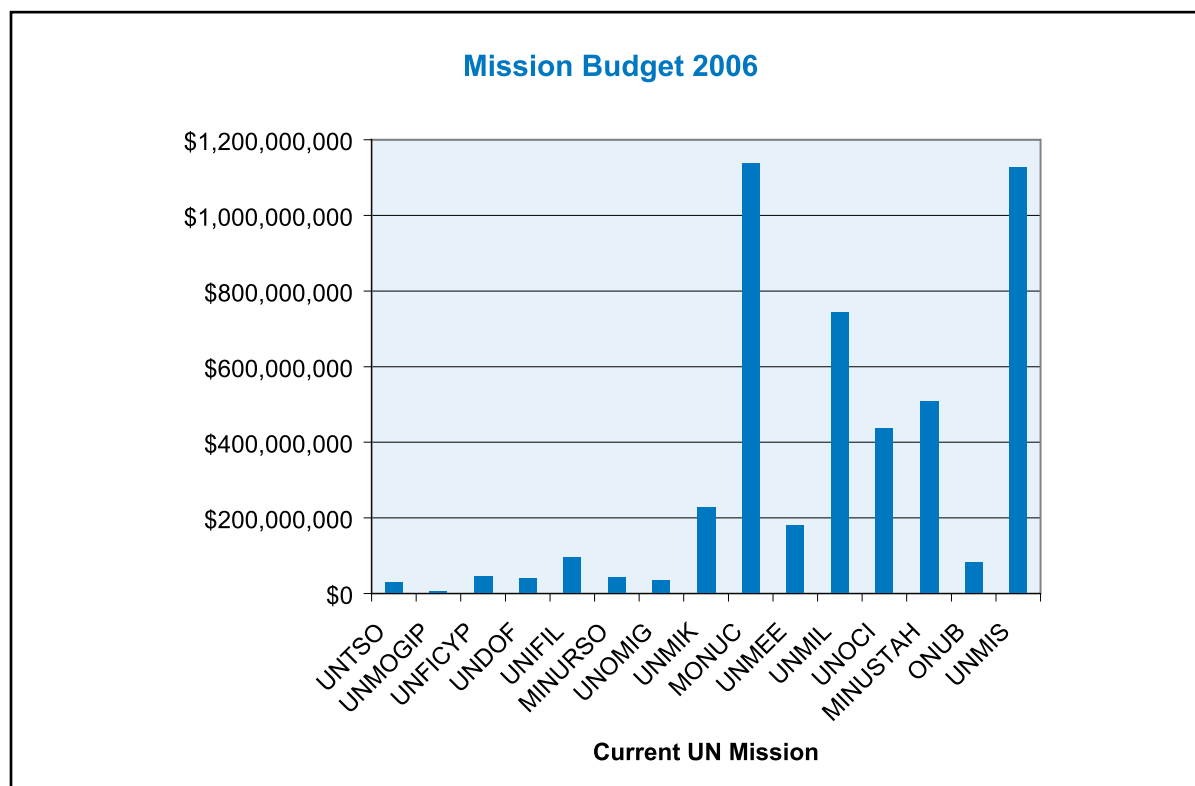


Figure 2: Mission Budget, 2006

Source: UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/bnote.htm>

For a list of peacekeeping mission's acronyms: see pages 14 – 16.

United Nations operations, because of their universality, offer unique advantages as a means to address conflicts. Their universality adds to their legitimacy and limits the implications for the host country's sovereignty. Peacekeepers from outside a conflict can foster discussion among warring parties while focusing global attention upon local concerns, opening doors that would otherwise remain closed for collective peace efforts. Peacekeeping is also faced by several challenges. Slow deployment, poor coordination and ineffective actions on the ground can delay the resolution of a conflict. The use of veto power by the permanent members of the Security Council can also impede action in certain countries where they have economic or political interests. The cases of Rwanda and Somalia are examples where peacekeeping was faced with such challenges.

Conditions for Success and Challenges

Certain prerequisites for the success of an operation have become increasingly clear. These include a genuine desire on the part of combatants to resolve their differences peacefully, a clear mandate, strong political support by the international community, and the provision of the resources necessary to achieve the operation's objectives. The success of a peacekeeping mission depends on the cooperation of the parties in conflict. A peacekeeping mandate does not include imposing a 'solution' on unwilling parties.

Peacekeeping Missions

Conditions for Success: ✓ Commitment to peace ✓ Clear mandate
✓ Strong political support ✓ Sufficient resources

Main Challenges: ✓ Sufficient number of troops ✓ Appropriate materials and equipment
✓ Coordination between contingents ✓ Communication ✓ Rapidity to deploy

There are also major challenges to peacekeeping. The United Nations, being an international organization with no standing force, depends totally on the support of its members for troops and materials. For every mission deployed, the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) has to find countries willing to contribute troops, but also money and materials. It also has to coordinate the mission to ensure an efficient response. The fear of committing troops to a mission that could suffer casualties prevents many western countries from contributing large numbers of needed soldiers. Discrepancies among countries in terms of military training, equipment, language used, and best practices can make it a challenge to act as a unifying force and can reduce the effectiveness of the force.



SEE WHAT OTHER STUDENTS THINK ABOUT PEACEKEEPING.

Watch the a compilation of the videos submitted to *UNA-Canada's Peacekeeping Video Challenge* in 2006 (90 seconds).

The video is available on the CD attached at the end of the handbook.

Discussion questions:

- What was the United Nations designed to do?
- Which role does it play nowadays?
- Which crisis prompted the establishment of the first armed peacekeeping force?
- What are the key characteristics of peacekeeping?
- When can the UN intervene in a country affected by war?
- Is it more important for the UN to protect civilians affected by war or to respect the concept of State sovereignty?
- What are the conditions for success?
- What are some of the most important challenges to peacekeeping forces?
- How are the 5 permanent members of the UN Security Council responsible for the decision of whether or not to intervene in a conflict?
- How could the economic interests of the 5 permanent members influence the decision to deploy a UN mission in a country affected by war?
- What are the alternative to UN peacekeeping?
- Why were the United States unable to secure a UN mandate for the intervention in Iraq?
- What should the UN do if a country is not willing to have a peacekeeping mission on its territory?

Suggested Activities:

Class Discussion (Page 12)

Video (Page 18)

Poster Presentation (Page 20)

Bibliography

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<http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/info/page3.htm>

History of the United Nations. Available at: <http://www.un.org/aboutun/unhistory/>

Lester B. Pearson, The Nobel Prize 1957. Available at:

http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1957/

Peacekeeping Operations over the Years and Canada's Contribution. Available at:

<http://www.international.gc.ca/peacekeeping/missions-en.asp>

UNEF I. Available at: http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/co_mission/unefi.htm

United Nations Charter. Available at: <http://www.un.org/aboutun/charter/>

United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO). Available at:

<http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/missions/untso/>

Activity 1:

CLASS DISCUSSION

Objectives

Students will:

- Develop a general understanding of the United Nations and peacekeeping
- Analyse information
- Prepare a group presentation
- Share knowledge with the class and discuss variance among their answers

Requirements

Hand-out: Timeline: United Nations Peacekeeping Missions

Blackboard or flip chart

Procedure

1. Provide the background information about the United Nations and traditional peacekeeping to your students.
2. Give them the timeline of all UN missions.
3. Ask them to form groups of 3–4 students.
4. Provide them with the hand-out which includes the following list of questions and ask them to prepare key points that they will later write on the blackboard and present to the class.

Questions to address

1. Which articles of the UN charter justify the deployment of peacekeeping missions?
2. Which countries must agree on, or refrain from opposing, a mission to be deployed? Why do you think that this article was included in the Charter?
3. What are the alternatives to UN peacekeeping missions? What are other conflict management tools?
4. Why were only a few missions deployed during the 1960s and 1970s?
5. Which continent has had the most UN missions and what are some of the reasons explaining this fact?
6. Why do some countries have more than one mission?
7. Which countries could the UN deploy a mission to in the near future?

Answer key

1. The deployment of peacekeeping missions is not directly addressed in the UN charter. Article 41 and 42 are now used to justify the deployment of peacekeeping missions.

Article 41: The Security Council may decide what measures not involving the use of armed force are to be employed to give effect to its decisions, and it may call upon the Members of the United Nations to apply such measures. These may include complete or partial interruption of economic relations and of rail, sea, air, postal, telegraphic, radio, and other means of communication, and the severance of diplomatic relations.

Article 42: Should the Security Council consider that measures provided for in Article 41 would be inadequate or have proved to be inadequate, it may take such action by air, sea, or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security. Such action may include demonstrations, blockade, and other operations by air, sea, or land forces of Members of the United Nations.

2. 9 countries of the Security Council including the Permanent Members (USA, France, Great Britain, Russia and China) must agree or abstain from voting in order for a peacekeeping mission to be deployed.
3. Regional organizations can also deploy peacekeeping missions according to Chapter 8 of the UN charter. Organizations such as NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) and ECOWAS have deployed to Kosovo and Liberia, for example.
4. The Cold War prevented the Security Council from acting in many instances because the USA or the USSR opposed many of the resolutions presented by the other. These two countries were also involved in many of the civil wars and regional conflicts in Africa, Asia and Latin America.
5. Africa has received the larger number of missions in part because of the arbitrary drawing of international borders in Africa by the colonial power and in part because of the disputes that arose following decolonisation.
6. Conflicts that are only partially settled often erupt a second time and necessitate a second intervention.
7. Missions could be deployed to Darfur in Sudan, Chad, Sri Lanka, Fiji, or any other country currently experiencing conflict.

Variation

Ask your students to answer the questions individually in oral or written form. Use the questions to conduct a class discussion in which you ask the questions and students answer spontaneously.

Timeline: United Nations Peacekeeping Missions

1940s:

UNTSO (Middle East) *United Nations Truce Supervision Organization* **May 1948–present**

UNMOGIP *United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan* **January 1949–present**

1950s:

UNEF I (Suez) *First United Nations Emergency Force* **November 1956–June 1967**

UNOGIL *United Nations Observation Group in Lebanon* **June 1958–December 1958**

1960s:

ONUC *United Nations Operation in the Congo* **July 1960–June 1964**

UNSF *United Nations Security Force in West New Guinea* **October 1962–April 1963**

UNYOM *United Nations Yemen Observation Mission* **July 1963–September 1964**

UNFICYP *United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus* **March 1964–present**

DOMREP *Mission of the Representative of the SG in the Dominican Republic* **May 1965–October 1966**

UNIPOM *United Nations India-Pakistan Observation Mission* **September 1965–March 1966**

1970s:

UNEF II (Suez) *Second United Nations Emergency Force* **October 1973–July 1979**

UNDOF (Golan Heights) *United Nations Disengagement Force* **June 1974–present**

UNIFIL *United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon* **March 1978–present**

1980s:

UNGOMAP *United Nations Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan* **May 1988–March 1990**

UNIIMOG *United Nations Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group* **August 1988–February 1991**

UNAVEM I *United Nations Angola Verification Mission I* **January 1989–June 1991**

UNTAG (Namibia) *United Nations Transition Assistance Group* **April 1989–March 1990**

ONUSCA *United Nations Observer Group in Central America* **November 1989–January 1992**

1990S:

UNIKOM *United Nations Iraq - Kuwait Observation Mission* **April 1991–October 2003**
 MINURSO *United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara* **April 1991–present**
 UNAVEM II *United Nations Angola Verification Mission II* **June 1991–February 1995**
 ONUSAL *United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador* **July 1991–April 1995**
 UNAMIC *United Nations Advance Mission in Cambodia* **October 1991–March 1992**
 UNPROFOR (Former Yugoslavia) *United Nations Protection Force* **February 1992–December 1995**
 UNTAC *United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia* **March 1992–September 1993**
 UNOSOM I *United Nations Operation in Somalia I* **April 1992–March 1993**
 ONUMOZ *United Nations Operation in Mozambique* **December 1992–December 1994**
 UNOSOM II *United Nations Operation in Somalia II* **March 1993–March 1995**
 UNOMUR *United Nations Observer Mission Uganda-Rwanda* **June 1993–September 1994**
 UNOMIG *United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia* **August 1993–present**
 UNOMIL *United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia* **September 1993–September 1997**
 UNMIH *United Nations Mission in Haiti* **September 1993–June 1996**
 UNAMIR *United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda* **October 1993–March 1996**
 UNASOG (Chad and Libya) *United Nations Aouzou Strip Observer Group* **May 1994–June 1994**
 UNMOT *United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan* **December 1994–May 2000**
 UNAVEM III *United Nations Angola Verification Mission III* **February 1995–June 1997**
 UNCRO *United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia* **May 1995–January 1996**
 UNPREDEP (Macedonia) *United Nations Preventive Deployment Force* **March 1995–February 1999**
 UNMIBH *United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina* **December 1995–December 2002**
 UNTAES *United Nations transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium*
January 1996–January 1998
 UNMOP (Croatia and Serbia) *United Nations Mission of Observers in Prevlaka*
January 1996–December 2002
 UNSMIH *United Nations Support Mission in Haiti* **July 1996–July 1997**
 MINUGUA *United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala* **January 1997–May 1997**
 MONUA *United Nations Observer Mission in Angola* **June 1997–February 1999**
 UNTMIH *United Nations Transition Mission in Haiti* **August 1997–November 1997**
 MINOPUH *UN Civilian Police Mission in Haiti* **December 1997–March 2000**
 MINURCA *United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic* **April 1998–February 2000**
 UNOMSIL *United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone* **July 1998–October 1999**
 UNMIK *UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo* **June 1999–present**
 UNAMSIL *United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone* **October 1999–December 2005**
 UNTAET *United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor* **October 1999–May 2002**
 MONUC *UN Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo* **November 1999–present**

2000s:

UNMEE *United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea* July 2000–present

UNMISET *United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor* May 2002–May 2005

UNMIL *United Nations Mission in Liberia* September 2003–present

UNOCI *United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire* April 2004–present

MINUSTAH *United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti* June 2004–present

ONUB *United Nations Operation in Burundi* June 2004–present

UNMIS *United Nations Mission in the Sudan* March 2005–present

UNMIT *United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste* August 2006–present

Questions–Activity 1

1. Which articles of the UN charter justify the deployment of peacekeeping missions?

2. Which countries must agree on, or refrain from opposing, a mission to be deployed? Why do you think that this article was included in the Charter?

3. What are the alternatives to UN peacekeeping missions? What are other conflict management tools?

4. Why were only a few missions deployed during the 1960s and 1970s?

5. Which continent has received the most UN missions and why?

6. Why do some countries have more than one mission?

7. To which countries could the UN deploy a mission in the near future?

Activity 2:

VIDEO – UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING LOGISTICS

Objectives

Students will:

- Learn practical knowledge about the functioning of a peacekeeping mission
- Reflect on the operational requirement of a peacekeeping mission and the challenges faced by the United Nations
- Role-play different situations that they have seen in the movie

Requirements

Movie *The Peacekeepers* (2005) directed by Paul Cowan (167 minutes)

(Can be borrowed from most public libraries or ordered on the National Film Board of Canada website at: www.nfb.ca)

See also *The Peacekeepers* Study guide:

<http://www.onf.ca/webextension/peace/en/pdf/peaceuserguide.pdf>

or

Movie *Shake Hands with the Devil* (2004) directed by Peter Raymond (56 minutes)

(Can be borrowed from most public libraries or ordered on the National Film Board of Canada website at: www.nfb.ca)

A tape recorder or DVD player

Procedures

1. Give the background about the United Nations and traditional peacekeeping to your students.
2. Show the video about the UN mission in the Congo (MONUC).
3. Ask them to divide into 6 groups.
4. Give them each one playing card with one of the following challenges faced by the UN mission during the mission in the Congo.
5. Ask them to discuss the importance and consequences of the challenge that they have been given and to prepare a skit to illustrate their answer.
6. Ask them to role-play their answer in front of the class.

Challenges

Team 1: Difficulty to obtain troops

Team 2: Difficulty to obtain equipment and financial support

Team 3: Presence of spoilers (groups wanting to continue the war and attacking the UN)

Team 4: Attack on UN personnel

Team 5: Presence of child soldiers

Team 6: Lack of interest from UN member States

Variation:

Ask your students to write a short essay on one of the specific challenges.

Ask your students to do a short presentation for the class instead of role-playing their answers.

Other movie suggestions:

Ghost of Rwanda (From PBS. Can be purchased from:
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/ghosts/>)

Hotel Rwanda, 2005 (Directed by Terry George)

A Sunday in Kigali, 2006 (Directed by Robert Favreau)

The Syrian Bride, 2004 (Directed by Eran Riklis)

Themes for Role-playing Activity (Activity 2)

TEAM 1	TEAM 2	TEAM 3
Difficulty obtaining troops	Difficulty obtaining equipment and financial contributions	Presence of spoilers (groups wanting to continue the war, attacking the UN)
TEAM 4	TEAM 5	TEAM 6
Attack on UN personnel	Presence of child soldiers	Lack of interest from UN member States

Activity 3:

POSTER EXHIBIT – UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING

Objectives

Students will:

- Conduct independent research about peacekeeping in general
- Summarize their findings with the help of representative images
- Prepare a short presentation to explain the main components of their poster to the class

Requirements

Students will need newspapers, journals, pictures or images from the internet

Procedures

1. Ask your students to prepare a poster about Canada's role in peacekeeping.
2. Ask them to form teams of 4 and to present the poster to their classmates at the beginning of the first lesson on peacekeeping.
3. At the end of the presentations, summarize the main ideas presented by the students.
4. Contrast these ideas with the content of the first lesson presented in this guide. Correct any mistaken perceptions and explain where the misunderstandings come from.
5. Proceed to the discussion and other activities.

Variation

Give students the background information on UN peacekeeping beforehand and ask them to do their poster as a conclusion of the first lesson, instead of as an introduction.

Have them create a poster on a more specific theme, such as a mission of their choice or a related theme (peacekeeping before and after, the logistics of peacekeeping, peacebuilding etc.).

Ask them to create a Power Point presentation instead of a poster and to present it in class.

