

# Strategic Guidance Framework for International Police Peacekeeping—Framing the Framework<sup>1</sup>

The Challenges Forum research seminar on Strategic Guidance Framework for International Police Peacekeeping: Framing the Framework and UN Police Division Thematic Meeting on Capacity-Building and Development took place at an important point of time in the development of UN police peacekeeping guidance. In development since 2009, with feedback provided through a comprehensive consultative process open to all 193 UN Member States and involving five regional meetings, the DPKO/DFS Policy on United Nations Police<sup>2</sup> in Peacekeeping Operations and Special Political Missions (UN Police Policy) was approved and took effect in February 2014. This document set the scene and the agenda for the discussions at the Oslo joint event, as the overarching policy document that henceforth governs UN police peacekeeping.

The Oslo meetings marked the first event in a multi-year doctrinal process which will see the development of a cascading architecture of guidance composed of policy documents, thematic guidance, technical manuals and training materials. As noted by Dmitry Titov, Assistant Secretary-General for the Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions in DPKO, a new era in police peacekeeping has commenced through the Strategic Guidance Framework for International Police Peacekeeping (SGF) and the development of a common reference framework for United Nations Police (UNPOL) officers in four core areas of UN policing; namely: Police Command; Police Operations; Police Administration; and Police Capacity-Building & Development. This constitutes a vital step towards improving performance of UN police officers through the articulation of a clear and crystalized vision of what UN policing wants to achieve on the ground, how it needs to be done as well as a common professional language.

<sup>1</sup> This paper is a policy brief, on the findings from the workshop, written for the International Forum for the Challenges of Peace Operations. The views expressed are not necessarily those of the Challenges Forum Partnership or the Host.

<sup>2</sup> The usage of police is meant to include police and other law enforcement agencies such as gendarmerie, customs, immigration and border services, as well as related oversight bodies, such as ministries of the interior or justice.

## Framing the Framework

The research seminar on Strategic Guidance Framework for International Police Peacekeeping—Framing the Framework set out the UN Police Policy and guidance development process in the wider context of multi-dimensional integrated peace operations and rule of law and peacebuilding tasks.

## Capacity-Building and Development

The thematic meeting focused specifically on the issue of police capacity-building and development, and sought to discuss and garner input for the development of more specific guidance on the themes and principles pertaining to this issue in the UN Police Policy.

The two meetings were held in Oslo on 18–21 March 2014. The research seminar was hosted by the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI) as a Partner of the Challenges Forum in association with the UN Police Division. The thematic meeting was hosted jointly by the UN Police Division and NUPI as a Challenges Forum partner.



## Challenges Forum Research Seminar on Framing the Framework

In the opening session on the role of police in a changing peace operations environment, several speakers underscored the ways in which UN policing differs from domestic policing. UN police work in conflict-affected environments and draw on officers provided by almost 90 police-contributing countries. These officers are asked to mentor, monitor, and train host-state police. In addition, UNPOL plays an important institution building role in these environments. The complex range of tasks facing UNPOL today requires new mind-sets and technical tools, as well as more consistency and harmonized approaches, underpinned by more sophisticated systems of recruiting staff with the needed skill sets and professional experience at the appropriate level of seniority.

Another theme that emerged early in discussion was the need to broaden the pool of police-contributing countries. The dramatic decline in western state contributions to UN police peacekeeping and the discrepancy in contributions between western and southern states were noted. As of February 2014, EU member states provided 203 police to UN peacekeeping operations, constituting only 1.3% of total UN police officers, making their collective contribution comparable in size to that of Yemen. At the same time, more specialized assistance is also increasingly needed in recipient countries, and the objective is that the UN will deploy teams of pre-trained specialists coming initially from a particular region or country to ensure a common and consistent approach for benefit of host-counterparts.

There are a number of key challenges facing UNPOL. Reviewing the evolution of UNPOL over the last two decades, it is clear that the complexity and ambitions of mandates are greater now even compared to the 1990s. Secondly, operational environments have also changed and become more challenging, which has made the implementation of mandates more difficult over time. This affects UNPOL, which traditionally expected relatively stable operating environments to succeed. Related to this is the difference between the police and the military and their respective mandates. The analogy of a surgeon's scalpel compared to their bone-saw can be used; police are a relatively refined instrument compared to the large-scale of kinetic force available from military operations. Thirdly there is a need to professionalize UNPOL and police peacekeeping; the development and implementation of the SGF offers an opportunity to meet this specific challenge.

Experiences from UNMISS have shown that the role of UNPOL may change overnight. With the recent emergence of conflict in South Sudan, it was noted that while some South Sudan police officers are alleged to have committed human rights violations, the police service has not disintegrated along ethnic lines and continues to function as a cohesive

organization at the HQ level and in several provinces . Institution-building of the South Sudan National Police Service must therefore continue to ensure that it is the police that imposes the rule of law, not the army. UNMISS had already achieved significant progress by screening and removed so called ghost officers<sup>3</sup> from the pay rolls of the South Sudan police, and implementing appropriate legal frameworks and training programmes underpinned by a strong transformation plan based on a comprehensive needs assessment. South Sudan is also a reminder that the police-military relationship in stabilization contexts must be continuously understood and refined. While the military must now take the lead role in view of ongoing insecurity, police are needed to re-establish rule of law and make community-oriented policing work. There needs to be better means for the police to work with the military, including by sharing the use of early warning systems.

The second session concerned serious and organised crime on and the role of international police on peace operations. Serious and organised crime is not a side issue, and many host States are affected by this problem, as it is often a key means by which many former combatants make a living. The long-term chances for success of the mission are limited if efforts are not made to limit the influence of serious and organised crime. Yet manifestations of serious and organised crime differ between contexts, and one must consider the context carefully. Moreover, often neglected is the role of demand in destination countries, as a key enabling factor for the growth of serious and organised crime.

In many post-conflict states where international missions are taking place, security and justice are provided not only or even mainly by state institutions but by a diversity of customary and traditional non-state actors. Local leadership was acknowledged as important, but also the need to understand their sources of legitimacy and roles during the conflict. In many conflict-affected states, the formal sector as a whole has collapsed and people move towards the informal sector in the economic sphere but also in the political and social realms.

In the third session, attention turned towards police capacity-building and development. Some of the challenges encountered include the fundamentally political nature of policing and police reform, ensuring that capacity-building reflects the safety and security needs of local populations and enjoys local ownership, and the need to work with hybridity – i.e., coexisting state and informal justice and security systems in many states. Capacity-building is an enabler not the objective, it is about more than just technical skills, and is highly context-dependent. In this sense it is useful to think in terms of the social contract, the governance deal struck between people and the state, and hence what

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<sup>3</sup> Police officers who are not performing any work for the organization but still generate pay which is received by another person. The named police officer can be a fictitious person, deceased, or existing but not actively employed by the organization.

people expect from public institutions. Building public confidence in police through fair treatment, communication with the public, and policing by consent should be built into the state-building approach to policing. Lessons learned from UN police reform in Haiti in the perspective of a host-state representative include:

- Local ownership makes police development more likely;
- Quality is more important than quantity of UNPOL;
- A strong coordination element is needed;
- Rule of Law must be improved also or the effects of improvements in the police will be limited;
- A safe and secure environment is necessary for development to take place; and
- Periodic assessments are necessary to monitor progress.

Discussion focused on the link between the local and international, the importance of local context and locals setting the priorities, but also the necessity of international support in order for progress to be made. It also touched on the challenges of donor coordination and the challenges inherent in donor-recipient relations.



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