Findings and Recommendations

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> " It is the duty of an individual, moreover a soldier and a peace-
> keeper, to ensure the protection of a defenceless civilian popu-
> lation under imminent threat of physical violence. Avoiding this
> responsibility is to avoid one's obligation to go to the assistance
> of someone whose life is under threat."
>
> *—Former Force Commander, UN peacekeeping mission*[1]

Overview

Interest in enhancing the protection of civilians by UN peacekeeping operations runs deep. The research team found extraordinary resonance within the communities interviewed for this project. Whether working in New York or Nyala, serving as a uniformed peacekeeper or as a humanitarian worker, or acting as a member of the UN Security Council or as a planner in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), those interviewed believed that peacekeeping operations must better protect civilians.

This study goes beyond demonstrating interest in protection of civilians, however, and offers a clear picture of the challenges facing peacekeeping missions in doing so. First, this conclusion identifies fundamental concepts and findings about addressing the protection of civilians in UN peacekeeping operations. Second, based on these fundamental points, this chapter identifies the practical challenges and offers recommendations to meet them, drawing together the major analysis and points from each chapter into a broader framework.

Fundamental concepts and findings

Core to this report are the actions of the Security Council to establish the protection of civilians (POC) as a central tenet of peacekeeping operations,

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[1]   Confidential end-of-tour report, 2003.

thus forging a direct link to the legitimacy and credibility of the United Nations. As described in Chapter 2, the Council's attention to the protection of civilians has grown since the late 1990s, as demonstrated by thematic resolutions and regular reporting by the Secretary-General on POC. More directly, the Council has mandated peacekeeping missions to protect civilians, making it an operational requirement. As discussed at length in Chapter 3, the United Nations lacks a system of support in planning, policy, and preparedness for UN peacekeeping missions to support this mandate. In turn, as is discussed in Chapter 4, strategies to protect civilians are primarily designed in the field, both on a daily basis and as part of a potential crisis response. The results are explored in most detail for the UN peacekeeping missions in Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI), Sudan (UNMIS), Darfur, Sudan (UNAMID), and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), which the authors visited.

From the chapters, core points about the protection of civilians by peacekeeping missions are evident. They include:

1. **The protection of civilians is intrinsic to UN peacekeeping missions**. Missions are presumed to deploy to protect civilians, which is an enduring, implicit goal of operations, even as the host state retains primary responsibility. History has repeatedly demonstrated that the fundamental legitimacy and credibility of UN peacekeeping missions, as well as of the Security Council and the United Nations more broadly, is undermined by inaction in the face of wide-scale or systemic violence against the population in a mission area. Persistent civilian insecurity also erodes the basis for the political peace process that missions deploy to support.

2. **UN peacekeeping missions have a unique responsibility and role to play in the protection of civilians**. The nature of multi-dimensional peacekeeping missions is aimed at providing support for a stable peace, which includes an ability to apply its political and security tools to impact those who threaten civilians, as well as to build towards a positive peace and a stronger, effective state that upholds its own responsibilities to the population. Such missions, through their civilian, military, and police resources, bring certain unique capabilities:

   ■ the provision of physical security to the civilian population;

   ■ the provision of security to the UN mission, sites, and actors, including humanitarian activities;

- implementation of strategies that eliminate the ability of armed groups to threaten the population;

- the authority carried by a Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) and other senior mission leaders;

- the engagement of the UN Security Council; and

- technical expertise within substantive civilian components, including human rights, child protection, and civil and political affairs.

UN peacekeeping missions do not and cannot, however, 'own' the concept of protection. They bring their skills and assets to operational arenas in which other protection actors are present, including the host government, mandated UN protection agencies, non-governmental organizations, and the International Committee of the Red Cross. It is essential that a holistic solution be sought and that the actions be coherent and mutually reinforcing where possible.

3. **UN peacekeeping missions must do more to protect civilians**. Even with the inherent limitations of UN operations, all missions must assess the threats and risks to the population and develop mission-wide strategies that take into account those vulnerabilities. Where necessary, such strategies should include a full range of measures to support and provide physical protection, ensure security, and to support actions that eliminate the ability of perpetrators, or potential perpetrators, to threaten the population. The development and implementation of such strategies require that missions be willing to do so and perceive that they have the necessary authority; that personnel have adequate capacity and knowledge of how to achieve their strategic aims; and that each mission have the appropriate leadership.

4. **Peacekeeping operations cannot 'protect everyone from everything' —and they need to manage expectations**. Where missions have no viable strategy in the face of a failed or belligerent state, their actions will risk exhausting mission resources and abilities.

If the requisite political commitment to support the mission by either the Security Council or the parties to the peace is missing, it will undermine a peacekeeping mission's legitimate role in supporting the protection of civilians, as seen in Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Peacekeepers cannot address all the vulnerabilities of a society, operate without some semblance of a 'peace to keep' or halt determined belligerents wholly backed by a state.

If conflict ignites, missions should be prepared to provide short-term or limited security, but they are not designed to substitute for a stronger political intervention or national military capacity. Missions need to be backed up before potential crises, which history demonstrates have struck operations regularly.

Thus, the **Council's caveats in peacekeeping mandates should help peacekeepers to protect civilians, rather than exclude such actions**. As urged by the Council, mandates to protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence 'within capabilities and areas of deployment' and with 'respect to the responsibilities' of the host state is an ambitious call, and one that missions should assume is their role. The current vagueness in the meaning and definition of POC for peacekeeping operations impedes their ability to achieve more in this regard.

5. **The role of peacekeeping missions as protection actors must be defined for operational purposes** to clarify what missions do and what individual actors in peacekeeping missions do. This is of particular importance for those who are not technical specialists in protection, especially senior mission leaders and military officers and contingents. The lack of an operational definition and the confusion over concepts of protection undermine operations at the core level. After a decade of Council resolutions and nearly a dozen peacekeeping missions with mandates to protect civilians, inattention to the operational impact of these mandates reaches across the system.

6. **The lack of follow-up to Security Council peacekeeping mandates to protect civilians is widespread across the UN system**.

The Security Council has not demonstrated what kinds of actions or approaches it expects protection mandates to drive. The Council has not demanded clarity about the interpretation and implementation of its mandates in any consistent way, nor has it held the Secretary-General or missions accountable for their efforts (or lack thereof) to address these mandates. At the same time, the Council has used the same mandate language without concurrent and regular attention to the results and impact on populations, peacekeepers, or the missions overall. Most attention is refocused when crises strike in the field, which leaves little time to respond effectively. This approach by the Council suggests that its attention to the protection of civilians has been divided and that it does not have a clear basis by which to assess success or failure regarding its own direction to protect civilians.

After ten years of missions with POC mandates, **DPKO has not yet elaborated guidance on protection of civilians and most missions are designed without consideration of this aspect of the mandate**. DPKO further lacks a survey of UN mission leaders and uniformed peacekeepers on how they have addressed this aspect of the mission. DPKO itself has not provided consistent and candid reporting on protection of civilians within reports to the Council.

For **police- and troop-contributing countries** (**PCCs** and **TCCs**), peacekeeping tasks have grown dramatically since the late 1990s; expectations for what missions can achieve have also increased. The operational experience and national guidance adhered to by PCCs and TCCs that participate regularly in these missions has not been tapped for reflection on missions directed to protect civilians; what strategies they used; and what they found worked and did not work as part of a mission-wide approach. This knowledge needs to be applied, and the challenges faced by the more than 100 countries providing personnel must be understood.

Clearly, these gaps are indicative of the fact that moving from concept to operations is difficult. If it were easy, the Secretariat and mission leaders would have provided both policy guidance and an operational approach for each mission and its components.

7. **Leadership matters at all levels. Across the system, in the field, within the UN Member States, and on the Security Council, leadership makes a substantive difference in how these mandates to protect are perceived and implemented**. Mission leaders need to be carefully selected and better prepared; they also need to be held accountable for the production of mission-wide strategies and for reporting on their results. When leaders do not ask for results, it reduces the ability and chances for missions to achieve their aims. The Secretary-General is ultimately accountable and should also hold UN leaders accountable for securing support for the implementation of protection of civilians mandates.

Findings and recommendations

The findings and recommendations of this study address the whole system—from the considerations of the Security Council, to the planning and management of missions by the Secretariat, to the role of Member

States that provide personnel, to the peacekeeping missions and their leaders, which work to conduct successful operations in the field, and to the humanitarian and human rights communities, which participate alongside every aspect of this work. This report makes recommendations across four themes to improve the effectiveness of UN peacekeeping missions in protecting civilians:

1. Linking the Security Council to the field
2. Mission-wide strategy and crisis planning
3. Improving the role of uniformed personnel
4. Political follow-up: achieving mission aims

The recommendations under these themes are directed at the full range of actors that influence the creation, interpretation, and implementation of POC mandates for peacekeeping missions. These actors include Member States, the Security Council, the Secretary-General, DPKO, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), PCCs and TCCs, and peacekeeping missions. As described in Chapter 1, key issues cut across the POC discussion, including the political environment and policy debates that impact any UN operation.[2]

1. Linking the Security Council to the field

The 'chain' of events that lead from the Security Council to the field for delivering protection to civilians in peacekeeping missions is broken.[3]

This overarching conclusion builds from the recognition of **gaps in policy, planning, and preparedness**[4] (detailed in Chapters 2 and 3). The result is that the translation of UN mandates on protection into operational strategies is not reflected in policy guidance, nor is it built into mission planning or preparedness. Evidence also demonstrates that prior to deployment, uniformed personnel receive extremely limited training on protection of civilians from imminent threat of physical violence. Senior mission leaders and contingent commanders become the primary source of guidance and responsible for all decisions on strategies, approaches,

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tactics, and techniques. While it is their role to make decisions on strategy and tactics of the mission, they are being asked to do so for mandates that are not adequately supported by the Security Council, the Secretariat, Member States, or the Special Committee/C-34 with reference to overall guidance, resources, or backup. Senior leaders are subject to the same issues of preparedness as other staff. Chapter 4 illustrates that senior mission leaders do not consistently identify the protection of civilians as a priority. Gaps are also evident in the mechanisms by which missions report back to the Council.

The policy gap

This research finds that the Security Council has used the language 'to protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence' consistently since the Sierra Leone mandate in 1999. The Council's intent was initially clear: 'to prevent large-scale, systematic violence against the civilian population', with explicit caveats designed to temper expectations. Over time, the language to protect 'under imminent threat' has become standard for missions, and its relative prioritization, in some missions, has been strengthened. Yet no consistent understanding of what the Council *means* by protection mandates has emerged.

Further, as described in Chapter 2, the Council has implicitly used the terms of protection in a variety of ways—ranging from reference to a broad normative framework to the narrower concept of 'physical' protection offered by the peacekeeping mission's military and police assets. The Council has also employed protection in mandates to describe mission objectives or to identify specific mission tasks. At the same time, the Council has often provided direction to protect vulnerable populations, women and children, humanitarian activities, and the mission itself—instructions which have not engendered as much confusion as the 'imminent threat' language.

Despite generally consistent mandate language over time, **there is no consistent perception of Council intent among senior mission staff, either within the UN Secretariat or within UN field missions**. **Nor,** as stated earlier, **is there any operational UN policy guidance regarding interpretation of these mandates for peacekeeping missions**. A basic premise for this study was an open acknowledgement from DPKO that it did not provide adequate guidance to missions on the issue of protection of civilians. The study finds that this lack of guidance has had a major

impact on the mission planning process and in the field; this issue is indeed more than a small, technical matter.

The absence of an operational definition also reflects a major policy gap that impedes the translation of mandates into guidance, planning, and preparedness, while such a definition is needed to operationalize mandates to protect, prepare leaders, and create a baseline understanding of expectations and capacities for missions. Further, DPKO has been removed geographically and intellectually from discussions on the protection of civilians among Geneva-based protection actors and forums. While certain policy discussions have taken place between DPKO and humanitarian actors for specific contexts, there is little or no policy guidance for humanitarian actors as to how to engage proactively with peacekeeping missions and, in particular, armed peacekeepers.

Recommendations on policy

- **DPKO** should lead the development, in consultation with humanitarian and human rights actors, of an operational concept of protection of civilians to assist with development of planning, preparedness, and guidance for future peacekeeping missions. That concept should be based on the aim of the peacekeeping operation to prevent systematic and widespread physical harm to the civilian population, and supported by the anticipation, prevention, and interruption of such violence with the tools for the mission, including use of the political, military, police, and other mission resources. This concept should be developed for missions to have day-to-day strategies as well as to plan to address potential crises that put civilians at risk.

- **OCHA** should initiate a policy discussion at the global level among relevant bodies: the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), the Global Protection Cluster, and DPKO on proactive approaches to working with peacekeepers.

- **DPKO and OCHA** need to have more integrated policy discussions concerning the protection of civilians.

- **DPKO** should seize upon the recent interest and positive language from the C-34 Committee to build a wider constituency of Member States in support of policy development and effective tools.

- **DPKO** should identify POC aspects to be addressed within ongoing doctrinal development. This should include protection as a 'cross-

cutting' approach, and address the roles of civilian, police, and military as protection actors and strategies.

■ **OCHA and the humanitarian community** should cooperate more closely with DPKO on planning for the protection of civilians at United Nations and mission headquarters, respectively.

■ The **Security Council** should be clearer about the use of Chapter VII authority to support the protection of civilians for mandates otherwise issued under Chapter VI authority. Such 'split' mandates have created significant confusion at the field level and undermined clarity within missions regarding the role in halting violence against civilians.

The preparedness gap

When missions deploy, their leaders, staff, and seconded personnel typically arrive without prior preparation to implement mandates with a range of protection aims. Part of the preparedness gap is rooted in the 'conceptual' challenge that impedes effective planning to operationalize POC mandates. A gap in advanced preparation for non-specialist staff, including the most senior mission leadership, could also be remedied through mission training and preparation. In terms of general preparedness, a particular issue for military personnel is that the concept of protection of civilians:

■ does not relate directly to standard military parlance, doctrine, or training, either from TCCs or by states that train personnel for peacekeeping.

■ is not raised as an operational role specifically in UN doctrine or guidance beyond traditional training in international humanitarian law, protection of the mission and its personnel, and liaising with civilian leaders and mission components.

■ is not addressed as a component (nor an objective) of UN peacekeeping operations as part of pre-deployment training for missions with protection of civilians mandates.

Nevertheless, common sense plays a useful role in sorting out the challenges of language confusion. Many of those interviewed in today's peacekeeping operations understand, in general, that the mission is there to support a range of activities to reduce violence against the civilian population. The debate is what role the mission can play, and how active a role it can take on, especially when the host government either fails to take action or is itself a cause of violence. For peacekeepers, however, it is

imperative that more clarity be brought to bear in missions. At the very least, uniformed actors need to know who is to be protected from what or whom, and with what means and what backup.

Chapter 4 recognizes a gap in the accumulation and use of knowledge and understanding of both individual mission histories and past experiences with the protection of civilians, as well as an institutional knowledge within the United Nations system of these issues more broadly. Many operations visited exhibited little understanding of what had happened in the mission areas in earlier years, including what strategies and tactics had been used and with what result. Likewise, knowledge at UN Headquarters of such protection strategies and efforts is limited, as is the ability of DPKO to catalogue and analyse the disparate data that is provided through code cables, Joint Mission Analysis Cell reports, after-action reviews, end-of-mission reports, Technical Assessment Mission reports, Inspector General's reports, and other documents produced by the mission. Too much knowledge is being lost at a time when it is sorely needed.

Recommendations on preparedness
Working with TCCs and PCCs

- **DPKO** should survey TCCs and PCCs about what they use for guidance when preparing their military and police personnel to deploy to missions with POC mandates.

- **Member States (especially contributing countries) and DPKO** should develop a matrix of existing policy, guidance, training, and doctrine that is used by TCCs and PCCs prior to deployment or is used to assist policy-makers for missions with POC mandates under Chapter VII.[5]

- **DPKO** should survey leading TCCs and the Permanent Members of the Security Council regarding their doctrinal and training views on how missions mandated to protect civilians should be carried out at all levels of leadership—mission leadership, brigade commanders, and junior officers—and of approach, such as working with other actors, command relationships, and capabilities in UN peacekeeping opera-

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[5] A working group of Member States and relevant parts of the Secretariat should assist DPKO to start developing elements for doctrine, policy, and training for use to prepare for missions with Chapter VII and POC mandates. DPKO and the Military and Police Advisers of the permanent missions of TCCs and PCCs are a useful basis for such a working group; they could form a working group to further identify and engage with contingent commanders who have faced POC challenges in UN operations, conducting debriefings to capture their knowledge and experiences.

tions. The assembled material should be used in a formal process of drafting recommendations for doctrine and pre-deployment training.

■ **The Under-Secretary-General (USG) for Peacekeeping and the Office of the Military Adviser in DPKO** should issue guidance on the use of force directly to the Force Commanders, police commissioners, and senior civilian leadership of all peacekeeping missions. This guidance should address outstanding issues, use anecdotes as examples of the principles laid out, and relate this guidance to the protection of civilians under imminent threat of physical violence.

■ **Member States** should be clear regarding national caveats. All too often, the unexpected invocation of 'national' caveats can interfere with command and control of missions in the field, a hazard when violence escalates and peacekeepers face challenges. There needs to be greater clarity about national caveats, and **TCCs and PCCs** should have a candid conversation with **DPKO**, particularly with regard to what influences them and how they can be mitigated or avoided altogether.

Training

■ **DPKO Integrated Training Service** should:

i.   identify and draft baseline elements for pre-deployment training that can be used generally to brief TCCs on missions mandated to protect civilians. Training should be administered to incoming staff officers, contingent commanders and their troops as well as those rotating to other missions, to impart how POC can impact tactics and strategies.

ii. in concert with PCCs, ensure 'upstream' familiarization with the direct physical protection roles of police by emphasizing POC during pre-deployment and academy training. In addition, individual police and Formed Police Units (FPUs) should receive mission-specific training that addresses their role in physical protection (if such a role exists according to the mandate). This is essential since the protection role of police is dictated more by the mandate and its interpretation by the Secretariat than by pre-existing doctrine, policy, or previous training.

iii. check the modules used in major training centres on the issue of the use of force, use of rules of engagement (ROE) and the implementation of Security Council mandates including tasks related to POC and sexual and gender-based violence.

■ **DPKO** should establish a joint team at headquarters level for education and outreach. Teams could visit capitals of major contributing countries to inform senior political and military leadership and staff colleges and commanders to explain scenario training modules on the use of force and conduct of missions, including robust operations, under Chapter VII. SRSGs, Deputy SRSGs (DSRSGs), Humanitarian Coordinators, and Force Commanders should be given explicit predeployment training on issues related to the protection of civilians in armed conflict and mandate issues.

■ **DPKO** should produce a clear operational requirement for protection-related tasks for units involved in implementing the POC mandate in support of TCC pre-deployment training. This requirement should be developed as early as possible and disseminated by DPKO to all participating TCCs as early as possible; any adjustments should be notified formally.

■ Linked to the above point, newly arriving units deploying to undertake POC tasks should be reviewed by **Force Headquarters** against the same operational requirement provided to the TCC for pre-deployment training, and any deficiencies should be addressed. The ability to meet this requirement should be critical to a determination that units are operationally ready to undertake its assigned function.

■ **TCCs and DPKO**, when negotiating memoranda of understanding (MOUs) to provide peacekeepers for missions with POC mandates, should ensure that the MOU reflects the demands of protection-related functions in the specific mission context, including, for example, high levels of mobility and self-sustainment or night-vision equipment.

■ **TCCs** should ensure that deploying units are able to operate the equipment and to function at the required operational tempo described in operational requirements developed by missions and issued by DPKO.

■ **PCCs and DPKO** should ensure that FPUs deploying to missions have the appropriate equipment, training, and language skills to conduct operations assigned to them by the mandate, which may include the protection of civilians under imminent threat.

Knowledge base

■ **DPKO** should ensure the collection and collation of institutional knowledge of mission approach(es) to the protection of civilians. This

could include an official history of incidents and crisis responses by missions, with an evaluation of impacts and consequences, and oral histories of senior leaders with professional interviews on key topics.

- **DPKO** should develop a lessons-learned interview technique to interview former leaders on their mission experience, particularly with regard to the protection of civilians.

- **The Secretary-General and the USGs of OCHA and DPKO** should ensure that the end-of-mission report format include a section on POC for all senior staff.

- **TCCs** should make experienced contingent commanders available for debriefings on their field experiences to support the development of useful guidance or training materials, including for UN political leadership.

The planning gap

The research found that the UN mission planning process, as a system for establishing UN peacekeeping operations, is generally silent on operationalizing the protection of civilians. Police and civilian planning capacity within DPKO is limited, which also impacts how mission strategies are developed. The dearth of civilian planning capacity in particular impacts on the integration of protection strategies within the overall approach.

In general, therefore, the planning process reflects the lack of clarity over what is being planned regarding protection—as an objective or outcome of the mission, or as a day-to-day task of the operation. There is generally more support for other specific protection issues, such as child protection, given their separate substantive offices and dedicated Council resolutions, such as resolution 1261 (1999) on children in armed conflict. Overall, and for the majority of cases reviewed in this volume, little attention is devoted to the following aspects during mission planning:

- assessing and anticipating ways to address the insecurity of civilians as part of the design of new peacekeeping operations;

- recognizing that protection might require specific capacities, budgets, or personnel requirements for missions;

- revising headquarters' concepts of operations (CONOPS), MOUs with troop and police contributors, and other resource tools when protection mandates are added or changed, given the likely impact on personnel requirements, strategy, and mission assets;

■ providing guidance and training for both new and experienced PCCs and TCCs, given that most states are not yet addressing this in nationally based preparation.

Chapter 3 identifies critical junctures in the planning process: **'pivot points' at which the protection of civilians needs to be better addressed in planning and preparation for individual missions**. Further, these points can be used to consider more effective planning with respect to a) overall preparedness of DPKO; b) interaction with TCCs, PCCs, and member states; and c) interaction with humanitarian actors (see recommendations on mission planning, and mission-wide strategies and crisis planning below).

Chapter 3 concludes that the Integrated Mission Planning Process, implemented for UNAMID, has not resolved how different parts of the mission should be working together with regard to the protection of civilians. There remains a lack of a mechanical 'reflex' needed to coordinate different protection actors within missions under the leadership of the SRSG with the support of UN Headquarters.

In addition, the role of the police must be better developed and addressed throughout the planning process. Consultations with the PCCs, for example, prior to and following development of a police CONOPS and the elaboration of a new mandate would be especially useful if police are to play a more direct role in protection—as suggested for UNAMID, the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), and the UN Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT). Likewise, the current Standing Police Capacity, a cadre of law enforcement experts who contribute to pre-mission planning and mission start-up, could be better engaged in considering the police role in missions with POC mandates.

Recommendations on planning

■ **DPKO** should ensure that full attention be paid to the protection of civilians at the earliest stages of planning, especially at key pivot points in the process, including:

■ the Strategic Assessment, where mission planning begins;

■ the USG's Planning Directive, which forms the bridge from the strategic objectives identified by the Secretary-General to subsequent operational planning;

- ■ the Technical Assessment Mission report, in which draft plans can be checked against the realities on the ground first-hand, and the Secretary-General's Report to the Council, which shapes the mission mandate and structure in its core document;

- ■ the military CONOPS, which shapes all aspects of the military component, from resources to logistics to ROE, and the Police CONOPS; and

- ■ the briefings to TCCs, as a means to ensure the contingents deployed to the mission are able, willing, and prepared to implement the POC mandate.

■ **DPKO** should be provided with additional dedicated civilian planning staff to improve civilian participation in and contributions to the planning process for peacekeeping missions.

2. Mission-wide strategy and crisis planning
Strategies and crisis planning

Current operations do not usually have mission-wide strategies that address the protection of civilians. Missions need strategies that include both an ongoing approach to the mission's protection of civilians and crisis response planning and strategy to address a potential escalation of violence against the population.

Chapter 2 notes that in 1999 the Security Council called for missions to adopt a joined-up approach to protection. Thematic protection resolution 1674 reiterated this language. Not until Council resolution 1870 of May 2009, renewing UNMIS's mandate, however, was there a specific suggestion for a mission to develop a comprehensive mission-wide strategy for protection of civilians. While such strategies are not yet standard practice, there is evidence that some missions are beginning to develop elements of strategies, and that this practice has accelerated since the start of this study.

Mission-wide strategies are essential. Since the host state retains primary responsibility for the protection of its population, peacekeeping missions are usually directed to work with the 'organs' of the state. At the same time, the operation works alongside humanitarian protection actors, including UN agencies and NGOs. This mix of actors requires that missions establish how to work towards complementarity and coherence with other protection actors. Where operations do not have a highly cooperative

relationship with the host state, and where that country fails to protect the population or where the mission will need to take action to provide protection to civilians, a mission cannot operate without a strategy that defines its roles and responsibilities.

After a number of years of policy-level work and negotiation in the context of humanitarian reform (detailed in Chapter 2), field-based Protection Clusters are promoting protection coordination and dialogue. Substantive civilian sections in peacekeeping missions have a strong sense of purpose, often derived from their own thematic mandates from the Security Council (in addition to mission-specific mandates). In each of the case study countries, the Protection Cluster acts, at a minimum, as an information-sharing platform and as a natural entry point for the mission to engage on protection.

Recommendations on mission-wide strategies and crisis planning
Produce a strategy

SRSGs should ensure the production of mission-wide strategies, in conjunction with the mission and the UN Country Team, in keeping with the proposed operational concept of protection of civilians for UN missions. Such strategies require two elements:

1. an **ongoing mission-wide approach** that considers day-to-day operations and how violence against civilians can be anticipated, addressed, and reduced; and

2. **crisis planning and response**, which entails an assessment of potential causes of escalations of violence and related scenarios, and a strategy for assessing and planning to address them, including through mission crisis response options.

For the ongoing mission-wide approach, a mission should identify how its overall strategy to achieve its objectives will address the protection of civilians and its relationship to other POC actors. This presumes that protection is one component of its many aims; as such, it should be incorporated into broad mission strategies to support a stable peace, and traditional activities such as the holding of elections; disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration; creating conditions for and/or facilitating the voluntary return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees; political dialogue; building good governance; and training of police and rule of law institutions.

Should perfect mission integration be possible, a fully joint protection strategy with the humanitarian protection community might be envisaged. In a stable, post-conflict scenario, a fully integrated strategy with the host government may also be possible. In the environments into which UN peacekeeping operations are deployed, however, the most likely scenario is one in which relationships are in a state of continuous renegotiation, information is shared on the basis of trust, and strategies are coherent where possible. As stressed in Chapters 1 and 4, if **consent** for a mission has been undermined—especially if mission staff question the basic **impartiality** of their role—relationships with both humanitarian actors and with the host state are particularly challenging.

For the crisis planning and response, the mission needs a comprehensive and updated picture of threats and vulnerabilities to plan for potential crises (see Chapter 4). This mission-wide approach should consider possible changes in the environment, including triggers of an escalation of violence against the population, and develop appropriate contingencies to address the protection of the mission itself (always a priority) as well as the population. The approach will thus identify where the mission is prepared to provide protection and where additional resources and political engagement is needed to sustain the it and to meet its objectives.

An understanding of the military component's role (including who is to be protected, from what kind of actors and threats, and by what means) is needed to develop mission-wide strategies. Further, such clarity will enable military planners to more effectively use planning tools—such as CONOPS—to link intended outcomes with specific operations, tasks, and the resources required to support the protection of civilians.

Conceptual clarity and guidance is also needed for the entire UN Police (UNPOL) component if mission-specific strategies are to use police (especially FPUs) in direct protection activities. An improved understanding of their role will inform the use of police CONOPS and anticipated FPU doctrine, which tends to include protection as a potential general task, but with little further elaboration.

Provide basic elements

During mission planning and deployment, **SRSGs and DPKO** should ensure the provision of the following four basic elements in each peacekeeping mission, as required for mission-wide delivery on protection of civilian mandates:

1. one senior mission leader designated to develop and 'drive' the strategy.

2. a systematic approach to building an ongoing analysis of the threats and vulnerabilities of the civilian population.

3. a mission structure that drives the collection of such data, its analysis, and its distribution to relevant actors, and capacity within the mission to play the technical, secretariat, and reporting functions.

4. a specific methodology to anticipate, plan, and run scenarios for up-surges in violence and other protection crises.

Each of these elements requires the full collaboration of all sub-stantive mission sections and the UN Country Teams. The special roles of the DSRSG or the Humanitarian Coordinator and the head of the Protection Cluster are recognized here. Specific recommendations are detailed below.

The first theme—'Linking the Security Council to the field'—looked at the fundamental gaps in mission policy, planning, and preparedness. If progress is made in addressing the gaps in those basic prerequisites, missions will develop and implement their protection of civilians strategies as integral aspects of the overall mission and its configuration, using the combined skills of the military and civilian substantive sections. However, while those gaps persist, a dedicated focal point—a **senior mission leader**—is required to develop and drive a mission strategy.

While current operations were not found to have mission-wide POC strategies, each mission visited offered ideas about different models for managing the issue (as detailed in Chapter 4). The Protection of Civilians section in UNMIS was focused on aspects of protection but not perceived to drive a mission-wide strategy. In MONUC, there were numerous ap-proaches built around senior leaders, including the DSRSG, the executive office, and the Force Commander, all offering aspects of policies, guidance, and tactics. In MONUC, a senior adviser on sexual and gender-based violence played a role in developing policy for the mission. Other sugges-tions with merit are the civilian Chief of Staff in the SRSG's office, although issues here could include capacity and perceived seniority.

The research team consciously avoids offering a 'one size fits all' approach, acknowledging that each mission's specific structure evolves in its own context. It is clear, however, that the direct engagement of senior mission leadership is a critical factor.

Ensure leadership and accountability

- **The Secretary-General and DPKO** should require the SRSG to produce and report on a cross-mission protection strategy and call for such a strategy to be led by a senior focal point with sufficient status within the mission structure and a position that straddles the mission pillars.

- **The Secretary-General and DPKO** should ensure that clear protection of civilians responsibilities are detailed in the Secretary-General's directives to SRSGs and in compacts between the Secretary-General and SRSGs.

- The **budgetary committees** should support reasonable requests for resources to support POC-related activities above and beyond the normal functioning of a mission—for example, enhanced mobility assets or a small contingency reserve for a crisis.

This study recommends a **systematic approach to developing an analysis of the threats and vulnerabilities of the civilian population in real time.** A number of models and methods describe how to elaborate a protection strategy (see Chapter 4). The humanitarian community uses certain approaches while the armed forces have their own methodologies for threat analysis. The basic premise of such a system is straightforward, **beginning with an assessment of threats to the civilian population, types and patterns of violence, and motives and modus operandi of perpetrators**. In order to put together such an assessment, the mission needs to generate information from multiple sources and analyse it. Currently, **such information and analysis capacity is limited**.

Field-level data and analysis is perhaps the biggest reported gap. Mission substantive civilian sections hold pieces of this information 'puzzle'—in particular the human rights, child protection, civil and political affairs sections. The humanitarian protection actors often hold the largest collection of information on protection of civilians since they collect and collate information on the protection situation within their areas of operation. This information can be obtained piecemeal, however, and humanitarian actors and human rights staff, irrespective of context, have different views on information sharing. It is imperative to note that in the varied contexts of integrated missions, it is impossible to presume what level of information sharing will be possible. Humanitarian agencies need to retain a clearly neutral and impartial stance. OCHA and or the Protection Cluster

are the appropriate conduits for information to the mission and are currently playing this role in many contexts. However, in some circumstances, humanitarian actors will take a stance, based on principle, and be less willing to share information with UN missions.

In many locations where uniformed peacekeepers are based, the security environment is not favourable to independent, non-armed actors. Notwithstanding some excellent work done by UN military observers and some contingents, interviews frequently revealed **a lack of basic ability among uniformed contingents to communicate with local populations and, therefore, to understand local contexts**. In particular, the lack of uniformed personnel with either a common language or the backup of adequate numbers of translators was raised as a serious issue. In many instances there is a severe shortage of any civilian staff at the field level.

Much of the available analytical capacity, such as the field-based Joint Mission Analysis Cell (see Chapter 4), is predominantly utilized as a tool for senior management to analyse specific aspects of the political context. The Department of Safety and Security analysis tends to look at threats and vulnerabilities of the mission and its staff. Field-level information collection and analysis is a constant gap.

The use of Joint Protection Teams in MONUC is, in essence, designed to fill these gaps. Notwithstanding the excellent innovation of these teams, a more mission-wide and permanent approach is required.

Although protection requires a 'field-up' approach, regular consideration of threats and vulnerabilities for the civilian population must also be regularized at the senior leadership level within the mission, as the basis for planning and crisis anticipation and as the basis for a serious conversation with the humanitarian and human rights community, the government, and TCCs and PCCs.

Ensure effective analysis of threats and vulnerabilities

■ In refocusing and expanding existing mission structures where possible, **DPKO, the Department of Field Support, and missions** should consider the development of a 'local' Joint Mission Analysis Cell for regional peacekeeping offices. The Cell would distribute analysis and information to UN field offices about current and anticipated situations, rather than just provide threat-level information to the UN Mission itself. A mechanism that also supports tactical assessments (not just strategic) should be considered.

■ The terms of reference for any such mechanism should include consideration of:

1. the causes of potential violence, especially physical violence, and the nature of the belligerents—whether as criminal, political, retribution-oriented, or resource-driven—and how violence is perpetrated on civilians.

2. analysis of the measures available to the peacekeeping missions to anticipate, mitigate, and prevent such violence and, as necessary, halt such actions or defend the population against such threats.

3. the role of the government in mitigating, preventing, and halting violence, as well as the ability of civilians and their communities to do the same or protect themselves.

4. the nature of potential violence. This involves assessing the likelihood of extreme violence, mass atrocities, or ethnic cleansing (largely based on pattern recognition) as well as the possibility of resumed violence or societal violence that may not be mass, targeted, or ethnically driven.

A mission structure must support the 'strategy leader' and play the technical, secretariat, and reporting functions for protection. A number of functions are required on the civilian side of a mission with respect to protection strategies: data collection, ongoing analysis, and possible technical, secretariat, and reporting functions. The case study missions offer different models for housing these functions. Such functions have not, however, been routinely considered at the mission planning stage.

As above, the research team consciously avoids offering a 'one size fits all' approach. It is clear however, that the direct engagement of senior mission leadership and attention during mission planning are critical factors in building such analysis capacity.

Ensure mission support

■ The **DSRSG/HC** should provide the requisite leadership for humanitarian agencies in full engagement with the mission with respect to the protection of civilians.

■ In addition to Protection Cluster and information sharing meetings, the **DSRSG/HC** should ensure dialogue between humanitarian actors and the mission over threats and vulnerabilities to the civilian popu-

lations. This should include contextual, in-country training on the most common violations.

This study recommends a **specific methodology to anticipate, plan, and run scenarios for upsurges in violence and other protection crises**. Related to all of the issues above, missions need to undertake a constant process of reviewing potential outbreaks of violence or other issues of significant scale that require a protection response, such as facilitating humanitarian access. Conflicts can re-emerge or emerge in new ways and go beyond what the operation can anticipate, prevent, and halt. Missions can take action and present a robust stance, but there is a limit to their capacities. UN peacekeeping operations are rarely equipped or prepared to back up preventive or deterrent POC strategies to provide protection of civilians from imminent threat with swift reactions to crises; responses against armed actors; or full domination of an area where civilians are threatened on a regular basis.

While there is debate about how robust missions can be, a key capacity question is what back-up is offered and available if peacekeepers do take a strong stance to protect civilians. Examples from the field demonstrate an often reasonable fear that is no quick response capacity to support peacekeepers who face danger or are caught in an insecure position. There are also numerous examples of peacekeepers experiencing failure of equipment and transportation, which hinders even their own defence. The lack of air mobility can compound this problem. Finally, an added concern was of the medical facilities offered to peacekeepers, which are sometimes cited as inadequate. Especially for missions that come under attack—as has been the case in Sudan, DRC, and Côte d'Ivoire—these fears are easy to understand and demand a response.

Each operation needs crisis planning to assess potential scenarios of situations based on the specific elements within the mission areas, the prior conflict, and the aims of the operation. An assessment model seemed to be used in designing the Enhanced Rapidly Deployable Capacity (ERDC), which DPKO and Member States developed in 2007 in concert with peacekeeping missions. The Enhanced Rapidly Deployable Capacity was an effort to identify the unique crises the mission could face and to identify in advance what kinds of support and resources were needed to address such an escalation of violence and prevent it from leading to a crisis that the mission could not address by itself.

Implement crisis scenario planning

Missions need to identify the baseline capacity and strategy for crisis response in mission areas where civilians may face systematic or extreme violence. Two elements are essential here: preparedness and coherence. Those responsible for cross-mission protection strategies should:

- **Develop and institute a table-top exercise for peacekeeping mission leaders with potential crisis scenarios** to a) build dialogue between senior leaders in a mission area soon after deployment; b) identify potential strategies and their operational requirements prior to crises for the mission; and c) identify differing approaches within the mission prior to a crisis, as well as a baseline need for back-up support to the mission.

- **Establish crisis planning** in which each peacekeeping mission with a Chapter VII mandate for POC anticipates potentially likely or significant events and prepares plans in concert with other actors and with UN Headquarters to prepare for potential crises. Such plans may require support from a strategic reserve, regional forces, or other kinds of backup to the mission to protect civilians. Such planning should be supported by DPKO and Member States as well, as proposed in the Enhanced Rapidly Deployable Capacity.

- The **DSRSG/HC** should ensure that the mission and humanitarian actors establish lines of communication for emergency or crisis situations. This should include clarification of a division of labour and clarification of respective roles and responsibilities.

3. Improving the role of uniformed personnel

This research features a particular focus on the military and police components and their role in implementing protection of civilians mandates. Military leaders serving in UN missions interviewed for this study explained that they are trained to support outcomes defined by political leaders and help achieve those outcomes by developing and implementing strategies. Thus, to support the outcome, they need a definition of their objective—namely whom to protect from what—and an understanding of how to ensure that civilians are protected. The commander of a company or a battalion, for example, may not know what 'protect civilians' means at the unit level or what specific actions it entails.

This study finds that the Security Council's original intent in providing explicit mandates to UN peacekeeping missions to protect civilians from imminent threat was to prevent paralysis in the face of the threat or commission of atrocities, such as was evident in Rwanda and Srebrenica. In the context of UN missions, the role of the mission as a whole, and the military and police components in particular, must therefore include a means to prevent mass or systematic violence against civilians. As emphasized throughout this report, addressing such threats requires comprehensive, integrated action across the entire mission. The more acute the threat, the larger the potential role for uniformed peacekeepers. The question turns to the willingness of peacekeepers to use the threat of force if needed to prevent mass violence from occurring, even as other solutions are sought.

For uniformed peacekeepers, addressing such threats may involve a broad range of information, liaison, and training operations to influence potential perpetrators; information gathering operations to identify and describe potential threats to civilians; defensive operations to protect population centres; patrolling to dominate roads and key areas; and operations to disrupt the ability of perpetrators to attack civilians. Determining the optimal balance between these activities will depend upon the mission's mandate, its context, and its capacity.

The concept of the protection of civilians usually is focused on lesser challenges than mass or systematic violence. The military and police components have roles to play in facilitating humanitarian relief and human rights and conflict resolution responses, primarily in support of the activities of other components, through ensuring security and access, providing logistical support, and indicating a commitment by the mission to respond to any attempt to resort to violence. However, the responsibility of military and police components to support the peace-building activities of other mission components should not undermine their preparedness and capacity to deal with the higher-order threats of mass or systematic violence against civilians. Peace-building activities are likely to help prevent such violence, but it can erupt or persist despite the best efforts of the mission.

The issue of ROE and the appropriate use of force also impact the mission. During interviews, contingents and mission officials frequently offered divergent views of the same ROE language, demonstrating a variety of interpretations within the same mission and even by different contingents

from the same country over time. There is very little evidence of any use of coercive action in current missions to protect civilians.

There are also major deterrents to contingents' ability or authority to use force. For example, the requirement to use of a warning shot prior to using force to protect civilians. Other officials pointed to major deterrents against UN personnel using any force to protect civilians if they themselves are not directly attacked by an armed actor. Further, even when authorized, some contingents are immediately investigated and suspended as the result of any use of force. This is a strong deterrent to such action. Additional concerns identified included the humanitarian implications of such actions, the question of whether the equipment would work, the fear of drawing fire in future, and the potential to reduce one's career advancement.

The military component

Some of the ways to protect civilians (such as distributing troops thinly in small groups over a wide area) run directly counter to normal military practice. The small size of the sites can increase their risks of being challenged by determined belligerents and may increase the proportion of troops devoted to mission protection at the site, as opposed to the surrounding population. At the same time, the thin dispersion of those bases means that military personnel cannot cover all insecure areas at the same time. Missions may make personnel temporary (as in MONUC) and, as the threat in the area becomes less acute, relocate them to new areas where the threat is higher. However, in the absence of a strategy to consolidate the medium- to long-term security in the first area of deployment, the threat often intensifies after they are relocated. One former military officer described this as 'a game of cat and mouse'. At best, such an approach temporarily mitigates the threat to civilians in some areas, but it does not offer a way to reduce or eliminate the threat.

Forces often deploy in configurations that are not highly mobile and lack integrated logistical, medical, and other assets necessary to operate independently of larger units. Command issues arise when they are directed to redeploy and contingents resist changing their formations (usually based on MOUs between the UN and TCCs). The basic capabilities of some UN peacekeeping operations are insufficient, with issues ranging from insufficient high-quality personnel; inadequate equipment; sub-standard living conditions; and a lack of enabling units, communications systems, equip-

ment, and other standard capacities that most well-developed militaries expect. This reduces their ability to operate.

Recommendations for the military

- **Build knowledge.** For those preparing for missions that may involve protection of civilians from imminent threat of physical violence, preparation for military (and civilian) leadership should include education on the specific implications of POC mandates for operations and tactics at the brigade, battalion, and company levels. Commanders and troops must understand, for example, what is different about conducting a patrol in a mission mandated to protect civilians than one mandated to monitor a ceasefire or line of control.

- **Set standards.** New units arriving in a mission to undertake POC tasks should be reviewed by the Force Headquarters against the same operational requirement provided to the TCC for pre-deployment training, and any deficiencies should be addressed. The ability to meet this requirement should be critical to a determination that units are operationally ready to undertake an assigned function.

- **Strengthen support capacity.** Mission support planners (such as logistics and administration) should budget for small contingency lines where a POC mandate is issued and where the threat of violence is real so that additional security measures (such as lights, concertina wire, and water) may be provided in extremis to populations sheltering in or near a UN camp.

- **Enhance reaction capacity.** Missions with POC mandates that risk or anticipate potential larger-scale violence will require mobility and support, which may well include air assets, a rapid reaction force, strategic reserve within the mission area, or other operational support. Reaction capacity also calls for information and analysis beyond that of traditional peacekeeping missions and may require external backup capacity for the mission.

- **Engage in dialogue and reach agreements with the host state.** Advance discussions must be held with the host government regarding the role of the mission and that of the uniformed personnel in the case of an increase in violence; these discussions must include the state's role in preventing or responding to such violence.

■ **Clarify defensive to offensive action.** Identify how far the impartial support to protection of civilians can go in taking action against belligerents—in a range from presence, to active patrolling, to site defence, to control of freedom of movement, to coercive actions to halt belligerents, to direct offensive action against those who are hostile or have demonstrated hostile intent. A related aspect is to identify how far NGOs and humanitarians can go in providing information about what is happening among populations with vulnerable civilians; whether and how they will need to be separated from actions taken by peacekeeping missions; and any repercussions for the civilian population (such as retaliation against civilian sites and IDP camps).

The police component

The role of UN Police is a key area where new thinking is needed to consider their future role in the protection of civilians. Certainly the role of police in peacekeeping is especially unique. On the one hand, deploying police seems to offer a great opportunity to benefit from personnel trained to 'protect' civilians, as police are used to support civil society and to reduce danger for the population. Yet the role of police—either as individual UNPOL or as FPUs—in UN missions is quite counterintuitive, as it tends to focus more on longer-term preventative measures and capacity building than direct support to civilians. When deployed as individual police officers, UNPOL are unarmed and sent not to act as police officers themselves within the society, but tasked with monitoring, supporting, and training local police and rule of law personnel to uphold the host state's ability to support the rule of law. In short, they are not acting as beat cops or even investigators, but mentors and advisers (with the exception of missions with executive authority, such as in Kosovo and the former East Timor).

FPUs, on the other hand, are armed but are often meant to support crowd control and protect mission personnel. Their (relatively) new role in peacekeeping missions is still being defined, but to date, little suggests they have been prepared for a role in the direct protection of civilians. That said, **the discrepancy between FPU operational guidance (DPKO policy and draft doctrine) and the use of FPUs in practice needs to be addressed**. The most recently mandated UN peacekeeping missions, MINURCAT and UNAMID, have had the most direct implications for FPUs in the protection of civilians, with the existence of very large IDP camps.

If FPUs are to be tasked with activities linked to direct protection of civilians, the conceptual confusion regarding their role must be addressed. It is unlikely that the protection role of FPUs will be further clarified by the anticipated FPU doctrine beyond a clearer definition of FPU core tasks. In the absence of broader DPKO protection guidance for all of UNPOL, the role of FPUs in the protection of civilians will continue to depend on individual mandates and the interpretation of those mandates.

The considerable gap between unarmed civilian police and heavily armed military needs to be addressed, especially for IDP camps. FPUs could potentially play a role in filling this gap, but many of their members are still ill-trained, ill-equipped (lacking language skills and in one instance armed with Kalashnikovs), and too often militarized. This leaves some FPUs ill-suited for crowd control, protection of the mission, and deterrence through presence (patrols).

Recommendations for the police

- The role of police in peacekeeping missions is currently undergoing transformation. While the **UN Police Division** is small and without sufficient capacity to meet the high demands already placed upon it, the division should take advantage of the opportunity to increase and improve its role in supporting the protection of civilians. This work will require a commitment to reconceiving how police are recruited, trained, vetted, and compensated for their work in UN missions; how their primary tasks are identified and assessed; and how senior police leaders are given the resources and support they need to address the protection of civilians as part of their other responsibilities—as well as how they are held accountable for the results. The planned expansion of the Police Division in the coming year offers an opportunity to better recruit, train, and plan for protection issues, which should be accompanied by broader strategic guidance on the role for UNPOL in protecting civilians.

- Conceptual work is necessary for this shift. Together with DPKO, **PCCs** could help identify examples of good practice from domestic policing techniques to identify and monitor threats to the population, and to select techniques that reduce and defuse violence in urban and rural settings.

■ A serious effort is needed for a professionalized UN police force to help fill the gap between external military actors and UN individual police who help train the local police of host states.

■ **FPUs** could fill this role but many are currently not 'fit for purpose' as they are often ill-trained, ill-equipped, and incorporate military personnel.

■ A paramilitary police force might be able to fill the gap but should not replace serious efforts at non-militarized police training for the host nation. Any move toward a more robust force to fill the existing gap must be accompanied by a better understanding of (a) the risks involved (and backup necessary) when using more heavily armed forces; (b) potential protection tasks; and (c) the varying degrees and types of threats to civilians.

4. Political follow-up: achieving mission aims

As noted above, this study finds that while the Security Council is actively engaged in developing the mandates for missions, there is limited or inconsistent follow-up once a protection of civilians mandate has been established. Moreover, the Secretariat is inconsistent in its briefings of the Council, whether through reports of the Secretary-General and or presentations by SRSGs and Force Commanders. The Council needs to be kept candidly informed about challenges a mission may be facing or opportunities on the protection of civilians so that it can take informed decisions and facilitate mission efforts in support of a given POC mandate.

Recommendations

■ The **Council** must provide the necessary political support to SRSGs and Force Commanders in the field when they seek to fulfil protection of civilian mandates.

■ The **Council** should ensure more consistent monitoring of the implementation of its mandates, including through field visits.

■ The **Secretariat** should be fearless in its advice to the Council through reports of the Secretary-General and in briefings. It should also be steadfast in their implementation.

Looking forward

Peacekeepers have contributed to peace worldwide. Presence is still a deterrent. What this report argues, however, is that more than presence is often needed, and that the logical approach is to build on the existing tasks and strategies employed by the United Nations to improve success for the next generation of missions. Peacekeeping missions that are ill-prepared to address large-scale violence directed against civilians will falter and even collapse. While all peacekeeping operations innately face risks—it is the nature of the enterprise—modern missions must understand the vulnerability of the population in conflict and post-conflict environments, and realize that a failure to protect civilians can undermine the mission's efforts in short order. If civilians are at risk of serious harm, the mission's ability to respond effectively will directly impact its legitimacy and credibility, and reflect on any peace deal and a government's ability to govern.

In many respects, UN peacekeeping protection strategies have not failed—yet they have not been tried. The majority of peacekeeping missions do not have explicit plans for the protection of civilians at the mission-wide level. This gap should be viewed as an opportunity for the talent and ingenuity of the UN family to address breaks in the 'chain' identified in this study—starting with policy, planning, and preparedness; it is a call to consider how to develop effective strategies and anticipate potential crises where civilian insecurity may have grown or grow beyond that which missions can address. Applying additional elements of leadership, authority, willingness, capacity, knowledge and strategy to the pre-existing talent and resources within the UN will strengthen the work that is already underway in many missions.

Some building blocks for improving the protection of civilians by peacekeeping operations are in place. Missions have more modern and professional structures for planning and preparedness and to support effective field operations. Efforts to improve civil–military dialogue are underway, and humanitarian and human rights leaders have opened dialogue with military, police, and civilian peacekeepers. Similarly, efforts to improve pre-deployment training, to increase leadership talent, and to better support analysis are identified as areas to expand and improve. In addition, the system-wide efforts towards greater strategic coherence within the UN, including joint planning and analysis, should contribute to improvements in the POC area.

In fact, since the study team's field visits, the protection of civilians has begun to be addressed in a number of encouraging ways, as in MONUC's establishment of Joint Protection Teams and the Rapid Response and Early Warning Cell to bring together relevant mission components to discuss POC issues on a weekly basis. In other missions, leaders are also using or considering innovative approaches, such as floodlights and cameras to increase the perimeter security of IDP camps, and the creation of task forces within missions to take robust action against spoilers above and beyond the capabilities of the rest of the mission. It is also important to highlight the *UNMIS POC Strategy – Security Concept Paper*, which provides a uniquely clear and coherent approach.

Serious gaps remain, however. It is likely that missions will be asked to take on difficult roles. That consideration is an opportunity not just for the UN Secretariat and for UN missions and humanitarian actors in the field, but for a broader conversation with and between the Security Council, Member States, PCCs and TCCs, and states that support these missions in the field with personnel, political efforts, and financial backing. The world recognizes the role of UN peacekeeping missions—they are a visual reminder of the instinct for peace. This report aims to help that enterprise address a gap that is more inadvertent than purposeful; that is possible, not impossible, to fill; and that must be addressed for peacekeeping missions to meet their goals.

Successful missions are those that address the protection of civilians as an inherent part of their aims. Whether charged by the Council to support security and stability, to organize elections, to help build the rule of law, or to help implement a power-sharing accord, the mission's ability to understand the threats and vulnerabilities facing the civilian population will strengthen its ability to deliver on the mandated tasks. Elections will be supported if people are free and safe to travel to vote; stability will be enhanced if areas of insecurity are quelled; the rule of law will be more easily promoted if human rights are not systematically violated; and power-sharing will work best where stakeholders do not have to fear for their lives. Mission leaders should welcome the direction to do what is intrinsic to their mission's success, and to open up a dialogue with the host state, UN agencies, past and potential belligerents, and local leaders, to discuss what roles they all should play in bringing about the end to conflict.

Finally, there is no more compelling and credible stance for the mission than to advocate for the most vulnerable. That role is the basis of the

United Nations' moral core, and a powerful tool in winning over reluctant peacemakers, in speaking truth to the abusive, and in building credibility with both the local population and people worldwide who will give their support to those who speak for civilians caught in conflict. Such moral suasion can have a tangible result: this unbiased but firm stance will help deliver credence to the mission's authority and determination to use its impartiality against those who challenge its efforts. While this approach does not guarantee success, actions taken by peacekeeping missions to protect civilians will engender respect for the United Nations, and help deter violence against the most vulnerable in the future.