# Demystifying Intelligence in UN Peace Operations: Toward an Organizational Doctrine

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# Abbreviations

| | |
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| ASIFU | All Sources Information Fusion Unit |
| DDR | Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration |
| DFS | UN Department of Field Support |
| DPA | UN Department of Political Affairs |
| DPKO | UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations |
| DRC | Democratic Republic of the Congo |
| DSS | UN Department of Safety and Security |
| EU | European Union |
| HIPPO | High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations |
| JCB | Joint Coordination Board |
| JMAC | Joint Mission Analysis Centre |
| JOC | Joint Operations Centre |
| MINUSCA | UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic |
| MINUSMA | UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali |
| NATO | North Atlantic Treaty Organization |
| OCHA | UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs |
| OMA | UN Office of Military Affairs |
| ORCI | UN Office for Research and Collection of Information |
| SRSG | Special Representative of the Secretary-General |
| TCC | Troop-Contributing Country |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNIFIL | UN Interim Force in Lebanon |
| UNOCC | UN Operations and Crisis Centre |
| UNSOM | UN Assistance Mission in Somalia |
| UUAV | Unarmed Unmanned Aerial Vehicle |

# Executive Summary

UN peace operations are involved in a spectrum of contexts across the globe, but each operation shares the need to better adapt to its dynamic environment through improved situational awareness and analysis. With peacekeepers and other UN staff deployed in increasingly volatile and dangerous situations, member states seem to be accepting that UN missions need greater capacity to produce intelligence, both to protect themselves and to fulfill their mandates more effectively.

Although intelligence is an important tool of all contemporary civilian and military operations, the concept has been controversial at the United Nations due to tension between the prescribed multilateral and transparent nature of the UN and the often covert and clandestine nature of intelligence. Nevertheless, the 2015 report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) and the secretary-general's follow-up report on *The Future of Peace Operations* called for strengthening of the analytical capabilities of peace operations to help them better deal with complex environments.

UN peace operations have developed approaches to fill the information gaps related to early warning and the protection of civilians and the mission itself. However, due to the lack of a clear UN-specific intelligence framework, mission responses have been ad hoc and context-specific. Intelligence in UN peace operations also lacks conceptual clarity. Demystifying this politically charged term demands that it be defined in the context of the UN by explaining its needs and requirements, existing structures, and limitations.

While intelligence traditionally focused on serving the national interest and operating against a clearly defined adversary, it has expanded, and actors such as private security companies, terrorist organizations, and commercial enterprises now also refer to intelligence. In the UN context, intelligence is better understood as "multidimensional situational analysis" shared on a need-to-know basis. It is distinct from knowledge development and situa-

tional awareness in its analytical quality, exclusive nature, and need for a certain degree of confidentiality. This does not, however, imply the need to engage in clandestine or covert operations, which a multilateral organization like the UN cannot undertake.

For intelligence to be effective at the UN, it requires processes and structures that ensure it can be shared and stored securely. These structures must favor common assessment, information sharing, and horizontal and vertical integration across the civilian, police, and military components of missions. They also need to be governed by strict rules and procedures, tasking, and guidance.

Intelligence is fundamentally important to the UN to give decision makers multidimensional situational awareness through coordinated analysis of information by the different components of a mission. Intelligence must be collected and used in a way that ensures operational efficiency without threatening the legitimacy and impartiality necessary for the UN to carry out its work effectively. Furthermore, it has to strike a balance between the need to ensure inclusiveness in the multilateral context and the need to protect sensitive information, methods, and sources.

However, most importantly, and in light of the recent discussions at UN headquarters on the need to strengthen intelligence capacities of field operations, it should be noted that intelligence is not a magic bullet for UN peace operations and faces systemic impediments to its optimal use. These include silos within both UN headquarters and field missions and the lack of analytical training and expertise across all levels, from units on the ground collecting information to the mission leadership making decisions. There is a need not for a revolution, but for improved and better coordinated mechanisms and structures, accompanied by a shift in mindset and culture. As such, the UN should prioritize developing a better and more comprehensive information-management system and strengthening existing analytical capabilities and structures rather than creating and adding new ones that could be challenging to integrate.

# Introduction[1]

With UN peace operations involved in increasingly volatile and dangerous situations, there appears to be growing acceptance among member states that UN missions need greater capacity to generate intelligence, both to protect themselves and to fulfill their mandates more effectively. As pointed out in a recent IPI report:

> Better situational awareness, which is enabled by a professional intelligence system, is critical both for mandate implementation and for ensuring the safety and security of UN peace operations. It is time for the organization to overcome political sensitivities and develop a professional intelligence system that stretches from the field to headquarters, is led and directed by a single entity, utilizes a common collation platform, leverages and joins up existing analysis capabilities, has unified processes and consistent products, and employs professional analysts and assessment methodologies.[2]

UN peace operations not only require better situational awareness to know where and how to intervene but also stronger capacity to analyze and understand the political dynamics of the operational environment and make decisions accordingly.

In the context of UN peace operations, the concept of intelligence has traditionally been controversial and taboo because it is so misunderstood. This is one of the reasons why the Brahimi Report's call in 2000 for UN forces to "be afforded the field intelligence and other capabilities needed to mount an effective defence against violent challengers" has not been sufficiently implemented.[3]

Nevertheless, there have been small developments over the years and several specific cases of the UN using different forms of intelligence, such as to launch robust operations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC, 2005–2013), proactively neutralize certain armed groups in the eastern DRC (2013–2016), carry out intelligence-led anti-gang operations in the slums of Cité Soleil in Haiti (2006), and operate safely and monitor violations south of the Litani River in Lebanon (2006–2007).[4] Furthermore, for almost four years (1995–1999), the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations' (DPKO) Situation Centre had an intelligence unit comprised of officers seconded from France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

Following increased pressure for UN peace operations to have greater ability to deal with the threat of targeted attacks from armed groups, in 2012 the Secretariat called on member states to help provide "intelligence capacity" to the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA).[5] In response, the Netherlands, jointly with other European countries, provided the All Sources Information Fusion Unit (ASIFU), which is the most robust intelligence structure put in a UN mission to date. This new structure, as well as the increasing number of casualties in MINUSMA, and calls from the Security Council to improve the mission's intelligence capacities, triggered a debate on intelligence, robustness, and force protection among UN member states.[6]

There have also been developments on the policy level in UN headquarters. In June 2015, the report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace

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1   This report is based on information gathered through several months of desk research and interviews conducted in person or by phone with senior UN mission leadership, mission staff, and headquarters staff in New York from November 2015 to March 2016, as well as with representatives of permanent missions and their supporting political and military staff, national staff of ministries of defense and foreign affairs, and representatives of nongovernmental and humanitarian organizations. In-person interviews were also conducted during field travel to Monrovia, Liberia, and Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, in January 2016 and to Bamako and Gao in Mali in March 2016. To protect the identity of our sources, the names and titles of interviewees, as well as the date of the interview, have been withheld.

2   Haidi Willmot, Scott Sheeran, and Lisa Sharland, "Safety and Security Challenges in UN Peace Operations," International Peace Institute, July 2015, p. 2. See also Lawrence E. Cline, "Operational Intelligence in Peace Enforcement and Stability Operations," *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence* 15, no. 2 (2002).

3   United Nations, *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations*, UN Doc. A/55/305–S/2000/809, August 21, 2000, para. 51.

4   On the intelligence-led operation in Haiti, see Michael Dziedzic and Robert Perito, "Haiti: Confronting the Gangs of Port-au-Prince," United States Institute of Peace, September 2008, available at www.usip.org/publications/haiti-confronting-the-gangs-of-port-au-prince ; and A. Walter Dorn "Intelligence-Led Peacekeeping: The United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), 2006–07," *Intelligence and National Security* 24, no. 6 (2009).

5   In a more recent speech, Hervé Ladsous referred to this as "the threat of direct, targeted attacks from capable armed groups." Speech at the Meeting of Experts on Intelligence in Peace Operations hosted by the UN Permanent Mission of the Netherlands, New York, June 21, 2016.

6   In June 2015, Security Council Resolution 2227 renewing MINUSMA's mandate also requested that the secretary-general "take all appropriate additional measures to enhance the safety and security of, and basic services for, MINUSMA's personnel, in particular uniformed personnel, including through enhancing MINUSMA's intelligence capacities, providing training and equipment to counter explosive devices, the generation of adequate military capabilities to secure MINUSMA's

Operations (HIPPO) acknowledged the debate over intelligence in peace operations. It recommended "more effective information management and significantly enhanced analytical capacities" to deal with environments where there is little or no peace to keep, including by establishing a strategic analysis and planning cell in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General.[7] The secretary-general's follow-up report on *The Future of Peace Operations* confirmed that "an effective system for the acquisition, analysis and operationalization of information for peace operations in complex environments is lacking." It tasked the Secretariat with "developing parameters for an information and intelligence framework that can support field missions in operating effectively and safely."[8] In March 2016, the UN General Assembly's Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C34) encouraged the Secretariat "to develop a more cohesive and integrated United Nations system for situational awareness that stretches from the field to the Headquarters."[9]

The UN Secretariat is engaged in a new endeavor, as the UN has never generated intelligence in an acknowledged or organized manner or with much clarity of purpose. "Intelligence" has rarely been spoken about, even if used in practice. At UN headquarters and field missions, there have been "islands of information" but never a systematic approach or guidelines for acquiring and analyzing information. And so far, there is no common definition of what intelligence is in the context of the UN. At present, the different actors involved define and perceive intelligence differently and disagree on how much intelligence is necessary, causing confusion and hesitation among member states.

This paper, therefore, strives to unpack the concept of intelligence in UN peace operations by explaining its needs and requirements, existing structures, and limitations and to clearly define the concept of intelligence within the limits of the UN's

fundamental principles and its multilateral and transparent nature.

The overall aim of this paper is to clarify and demystify the debate on intelligence in UN peace operations and to propose a specific UN approach. We argue that the UN definition of intelligence should be different than the traditional military definition, which focuses on serving the national interest and operating against a clearly defined adversary. In addition, we argue that the need to protect sensitive information, sources, and methods should make "UN intelligence" more than just situational awareness. UN intelligence should therefore have a limited scope and resemble more of a "multidimensional situational analysis" than traditional national intelligence.

This paper also looks at the UN's practical and realistic needs to develop such intelligence capabilities, including a combination of human and technological capabilities and a secure system to protect information and analysis. We argue that, in reforming its analytical capacities and capabilities, the UN should focus, first and foremost, on improving its current structures and on strengthening information analysis and sharing more than information collection. The UN should prioritize developing a comprehensive information-management system rather than new intelligence infrastructure, which most member states are likely to oppose for reasons of funding and politics.

This approach will enable the UN to improve its mission planning, mission management, decision-making processes, and force protection. It will not be possible, however, until the UN develops a conceptually clear approach to collecting and analyzing information in peace operations, initiates and supports cultural change at all levels, and improves its human resources system. Thus, the UN needs a doctrine and guidelines to frame a more structured process of information analysis and sharing, as well as effective and collective decision making. To develop such a system, the UN needs to

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logistical supply routes, as well as more effective casualty and medical evacuation procedures, to enable MINUSMA to execute effectively its mandate in a complex security environment that includes asymmetric threats." UN Security Council Resolution 2227 (June 29, 2015), UN Doc. S/RES/2227. In June 2016, the Security Council further requested in Resolution 2295 that the secretary-general improve "MINUSMA's intelligence capacities, including surveillance and monitoring capacities, within the limits of its mandate." UN Security Council Resolution 2295 (June 29, 2016), UN Doc. S/RES/2295.

7   United Nations Secretary-General, *The Future of United Nations Peace Operations: Implementation of the Recommendations of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations*, UN Doc. A/70/357–S/2015/682, September 2, 2015, para. 221.

8   Ibid., para. 94.

9   United Nations General Assembly, *Report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations*, UN Doc. A/70/19, March 15, 2016, para. 52.

rely more heavily on expertise, trained officers, and stronger, better prepared leadership.

These recommendations apply to all UN missions, whether or not they are operating in asymmetric environments, as all missions require proper intelligence to operate efficiently. These recommendations do not call for a revolution; they require improved coordination among existing mechanisms and structures and an accompanying shift in mindset and culture. This would contribute to the incremental professionalization of UN peace operations, methods and procedures, and instruments.[10]

## Defining Intelligence in UN Peace Operations

### INTELLIGENCE: TRADITIONALLY A NATIONAL PRODUCT?

One challenge to implementing an organizational approach to intelligence at the UN is the lack of clarity on the concept of intelligence in the context of the UN as an international organization. Given that intelligence is often associated with covert

means of collecting and sharing information and is thus considered incompatible with the UN's multilateral and impartial character and its standards of transparency, *information* rather than *intelligence* has long been the preferred term.[11] While it can be argued that not all methods of generating and sharing intelligence raise ethical questions, methods in the national domain are often restricted and covert, which many deem inappropriate for the UN.[12] It is thus important to clearly define what intelligence is and is not in the context of the UN.

It is important to note that intelligence is viewed differently in different contexts, and, more importantly, the term itself may be understood differently in different languages. For example, the English term *intelligence* is often applied to activities undertaken by a vast array of actors, including businesses and the private sector, as well as national governments. The French term *renseignement*, however, is more exclusively linked to the national sphere and more heavily associated with covert and clandestine methods of collecting information. This comparison does not exclude possible linguistic nuances for the other four UN official

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**Box 1. Key definitions**

**Data:** Factual knowledge collected from the operational environment that has not yet been processed or analyzed.

**Processing:** Management, structuring, and collation of raw data into information.

**Information:** Processed data of every description, which may be used to produce intelligence when subjected to evaluation and analysis.

**Analysis:** The methodical decomposition or breaking down of information into its component parts, examination of each part to find interrelationships, and application of reasoning to determine the meaning of the parts and the whole.

**Situational awareness:** Knowledge and understanding of a situation, enabled by information and analysis.

**Intelligence:** The product of processing data and analyzing information with the objective of supporting decision makers in making well-informed decisions. Distinguished from situational awareness in its analytical quality, potential to anticipate actions, exclusive nature, and requirement of a certain element of confidentiality.

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10  See Alexandra Novosseloff, "La professionnalisation du maintien de la paix des Nations Uniesou le travail de Sisyphe," *Global Peace Operations Review*, March 30, 2016, available at http://peaceoperationsreview.org/thematic-essays/la-professionnalisation-du-maintien-de-la-paix-des-nations-unies-ou-le-travail-de-sisyphe/ .

11  Frank Neisse, "Information/Renseignement," Réseau de recherche sur les opérations de paix, May 13, 2011, available at www.operationspaix.net/69-resources/details-lexique/information-renseignement.html .

12  According to David Chuter, covert methods mean "acquisition and use of information from another entity that that entity does not want you to have, and without them knowing that you have it." David Chuter, "Intelligence, Information and Peace Operations: Some Observations and Some Proposals" (unpublished policy paper, International Forum for the Challenges of Peace Operations, September 2012).

Figure 1. Relationship of data, information, and intelligence[13]



Operational Environment — Data — Information — Intelligence

Collection — Processing and Exploitation — Analysis and Production

Joint Chiefs of Staff, "Joint Publication 2-0: Joint Intelligence," October 22, 2013.
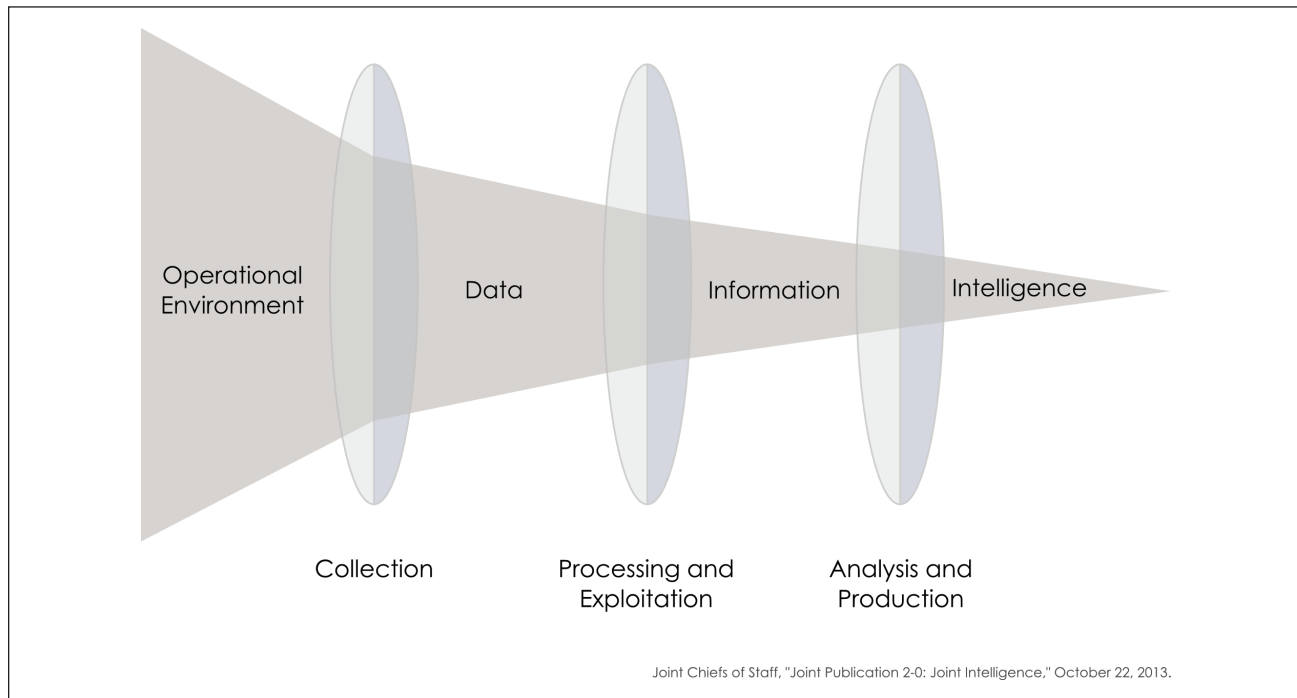
languages or for the many other languages spoken.

As a result, some UN member states use the term *intelligence* in a narrow sense as belonging to the national domain, with a particular objective and against a specified adversary or enemy in pursuit of national interests. Other member states view the range of actors engaged in intelligence collection more broadly, including not only national governments but also private security companies, terrorist organizations, and commercial enterprises. These different conceptions of the term *intelligence* have complicated discussions among UN member states. Only recently has there emerged a common understanding of intelligence as something necessary for the UN to ensure the safety and security of its staff.

Despite these linguistic differences, most literature defines intelligence as information subjected to analysis, often with a scope and distribution that is restricted and protected, emphasizing its sensitive nature. To have intelligence is to have access to a good analysis of a situation. Thus, producing intelligence requires the capacity to analyze and protect information.

Protection of information is needed at two different stages. First, some information may be derived from sensitive sources that require protection. Such a source could be a sensitive nationally owned technology whose function might be compromised if other actors or the public knew its technical specificities. It could also be an individual whose personal security might be threatened if their identity were revealed.

However, not all information derives from sources that need protection, and some sources might be openly available to the public. The second stage where protection might be needed is thus in the analysis resulting from information, which might reveal what course of action an actor is likely to pursue. In the context of the UN, for example, this might relate to how the leadership of a mission has chosen to intervene in the given conflict or crisis. Intelligence thus loses its value the more broadly it is shared, which is why it is shared on a "need-to-know" basis—that is, the recipients of information are carefully scrutinized to determine what value this information might add to the decisions they have to make.

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13  United States Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Intelligence*, Joint Publication 2-0, October 22, 2013.

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**Box 2. Intelligence cycle**[14]

The intelligence cycle is the sequence of activities whereby information is obtained, assembled, converted into intelligence, and made available to selected users. It comprises the following six phases (see Figure 2).

1. **Direction:** Determination of intelligence requirements, planning of the collection effort, issuance of orders and requests to collection agencies, and continuous checks on the productivity of these agencies.

2. **Collection:** Exploitation of sources by collection agencies and delivery of data and information obtained to the appropriate processing unit for use in the production of intelligence.

3. **Processing:** Management, structuring, and collation of raw data into information.

4. **Analysis:** Conversion of information into intelligence through evaluation, integration, and interpretation.

5. **Dissemination:** Timely conveyance of intelligence, in an appropriate form and by any suitable means, to those who need it.

6. **Feedback:** Evaluation of the worth of intelligence in terms of its contribution to a specific goal by decision makers and other consumers of intelligence.

The process of producing intelligence requires seamlessly linking the various activities, from requesting, managing, and tasking to production and distribution—referred to as "intelligence requirements management." Furthermore, it is dependent on matching the validated and structured intelligence requirements to the available collection assets—referred to as "collection management." This process must take into consideration factors such as the availability of assets, sensor coverage, and communications capabilities. The result is an intelligence collection plan.

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To be reliable, intelligence thus depends on a cyclical process with several different steps. Although this process may differ somewhat among member states, the "intelligence cycle" comprises six phases: (1) direction, to determine what intelligence is needed and whether it already exists; (2) collection of data; (3) processing and exploitation of data; (4) analysis of information to produce intelligence; (5) dissemination of intelligence to partners and decision makers; and (6) feedback to the top of the chain (i.e., decision makers who determine what intelligence is needed to ensure that intelligence requirements are answered and intelligence assets are available in a focused and prioritized way; see Box 2). In other words, the cycle consists of collecting and analyzing information—with proper tasking and guidance from the leadership—in order to know the actors in the environment, identify threats, and develop appropriate strategies to implement the mandate more efficiently. The objective of this process is to allow decision makers—both civilian and military—to make better informed decisions and carry out more targeted interventions.

## NEED FOR A UN-SPECIFIC APPROACH TO INTELLIGENCE

But what does intelligence mean in a multicultural, multilingual, multinational, and multidisciplinary context? Traditional perceptions of intelligence create challenges in the context of the UN, where up to 193 member states (or about 120 troop-contributing countries) can perceive themselves as having a stake in products issued by the UN Secretariat or missions in the field. Considering the different meanings of intelligence and its historical institutionalization as a national product shared only under carefully controlled circumstances, can the UN develop its own doctrine for intelligence?

For over two decades, academics have debated the limitations and moral implications of using intelligence in UN peace operations or at UN headquarters and how UN intelligence might differ from national intelligence.[15] The intelligence

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14  United States Government, *National Intelligence: A Consumer's Guide* (Damascus, MD: Penny Hill Press, 2015).

15  Hugh Smith, "Intelligence and UN Peacekeeping," in *Peacekeeping Intelligence: Emerging Concepts for the Future*, edited by Ben de Jong, Wies Platje, and Robert David Steele (Oakton, Virginia: OSS International Press, 2003); Robert David Steele, "Peacekeeping Intelligence and Information Peacekeeping," *International*

Figure 2. Intelligence cycle



domain has also in recent decades seen developments outside of the UN, particularly in multinational operations like those led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU). Faced with similar challenges as the UN in obtaining the shared situational awareness necessary to conduct effective multinational operations, NATO developed, over a period of time, the operational concept of "knowledge development." The objective of this concept was to develop a shared understanding of the environment for all actors engaged on the ground while overcoming limitations to sharing intelligence with a broader audience.[16] It thus stressed the need to share information among the cooperating actors with as much transparency as possible—the principle of "need to share." This contrasts with intelligence, which relies on secrecy and competition to gain a strategic advantage and is thus shared only with those for whom this knowledge would be essential—the principle of "need to know."

Whereas knowledge development is an analytical process to help decision makers understand their complex operational environment in a holistic way, intelligence does not focus on the whole environment but on specific information related to an identified actor as the basis for targeted operations and political strategies.

In the context of the UN, intelligence could be understood as "multidimensional situational awareness and analysis" shared on a need-to-know basis (see Box 3). It is thus situated somewhere between the above definitions of knowledge development and intelligence. Peacekeeping intelligence includes a broad range of information sources, partners, and objectives, emphasizing "open sources of information, multilateral sharing of intelligence at all levels, the use of intelligence to ensure force protection, and interoperability and commonality with coalition partners and non-governmental organizations."[17] One of the biggest challenges for intelligence in UN peace operations is striking the right balance between the need-to-

*Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence* 19, no. 3 (2006); Tiziano Diamanti, "The Peacekeeping Information at UN Level," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 6, no. 3 (2013); Cameron Graham and James D. Kiras, "Intelligence and Peacekeeping: Definitions and Limitations," *Peacekeeping and International Relations* 24, no. 6 (1995); and A. Walter Dorn, "The Cloak and the Blue Beret: Limitations on Intelligence in UN Peacekeeping," *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence* 12, no. 4 (1999).

16  Per Kristian Norheim, "Knowledge Development og etterretning som beslutningstøtte i NATO. Ambisjoner, endringer og resultater" (master's thesis, Norwegian Defense Academy, 2015).

17  David Carment and Martin Rudner, *Peacekeeping Intelligence: New Players, Extended Boundaries* (New York: Routledge, 2006), p. 1.

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**Box 3. Defining UN intelligence as "multidimensional situational analysis" shared on a need-to-know basis**

An intelligence system in the context of the UN uses processes and structures that favor common assessment, sharing, and integration of information, governed by strict rules and procedures, tasking, and guidance. UN intelligence is the processing and analysis of information—a multidimensional situational analysis—with the set political imperative of contributing to or implementing a peace process. It needs a clear, objective vision and approach. Furthermore, it is (1) maintained with a certain degree of confidentiality (protecting its sources), (2) targeted to a specific audience, (3) shared on a need-to-know basis, and (4) situated within a particular decision-making process. It is first and foremost a tool to support decision makers in the UN and is thus a way to bring the right information to the right people in a timely manner. UN intelligence is distinguished from situational awareness in that the latter is distributed on a need-to-share, rather than a need-to-know, basis. UN intelligence is also directed by a more centralized, top-down process, rather than the more bottom-up process directing situational awareness.

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share and need-to-know principles—between adequately sharing and effectively securing information.

UN "peacekeeping intelligence," therefore, "amounts, in practice, to the use of standard analytical methodologies applied to information from all sources except covert ones."[18] To generate such intelligence, the UN needs to improve its structures and procedures to collect and analyze information and develop a more secure system for handling information on a need-to-know basis. The objective of UN intelligence is to implement Security Council peacekeeping mandates more efficiently. In doing so, it also aims to help UN peace operations ensure the safety and security of all UN personnel and assets; improve risk management; prevent conflict and alert and protect populations; and ensure proper situational awareness and analysis to better understand the operational environment and make better decisions on where to intervene. Good information and analysis are not only used for taking particular actions but also indispensable for checking facts or sources. In short, intelligence is needed "to deal with current problems, to anticipate issues that may arise in the future, or to guide the formulation and implementation of policy."[19]

The UN's diversity and reach emphasizes the need for a multidimensional, UN-specific approach to intelligence. As one military officer put

it in an interview, "The UN has both a horizontal cover of the terrain and a vertical one with a diversity of experiences and profiles" throughout its military and civilian hierarchies. It possesses a "human richness" like no other international organization. With its personnel scattered across the world, the UN can be close to local populations and have a deep knowledge of the societies and traditions in the contexts where it intervenes. Independent groups of experts monitoring the implementation of sanctions or groups of mediators with acute negotiating skills and knowledge can further help some missions understand conflict dynamics. UN missions are also connected with a wide range of international actors (nongovernmental organizations and UN agencies, funds, and programs) with long-standing links to local populations.

Moreover, UN peace operations have the advantage of being composed of civilian, police, and military contingents of various origins, backgrounds, and experiences. In a UN mission, each branch (military; police; political; civil affairs; disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration [DDR]; humanitarian; human rights) collects information and often has its own specific ways of protecting it. The problem is that these different branches have taken an inconsistent approach to collecting and analyzing information and coordinating among the different branches of the field mission, as will be explained below.

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18  Chuter, "Intelligence, Information and Peace Operations."
19  Ibid.

## THREE LEVELS OF INTELLIGENCE IN UN PEACE OPERATIONS

The intelligence needs and requirements of UN peace operations must be understood by breaking down intelligence into its different modalities. A comprehensive intelligence system must be designed to collect, process, and disseminate information at three levels, (each with different objectives): strategic, operational/theater, and tactical.[20]

*Strategic intelligence* is "required for the formulation of policy, civil-military planning and the provision of indications and warning, at the national and/or international levels," according to NATO's definition. The UN collects strategic intelligence at its headquarters in New York (mainly at the Secretariat with input from member states). Special representatives of the secretary-general (SRSG), or heads of mission, are evolving at the strategic level in their interactions with UN headquarters, including with the Security Council, the General Assembly's Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, and the UN Secretariat.

*Operational and theater intelligence* is required at mission headquarters "to plan the most effective deployment of the UN resources in the various sectors and to be aware of the threat posed by parties to the conflict. This includes information about the intentions and capabilities of the warring parties and the character of the military activities (conventional, guerilla)."[21]

*Tactical intelligence* on the local situation is "required for the planning and execution of operations at the tactical level," according to a NATO definition. Tactical intelligence is required by all components of UN missions to carry out their functions and by unit commanders to be aware of shifts in local factions and to carry out military patrols in an effective manner.[22] This is the type of intelligence most missing from current UN multidisciplinary peace operations because there is no overall system for sharing information and analysis among mission components and because troops and police from different contingents have varying levels of experience and training in collecting information.

These levels, which were developed for military organizations, are applicable to the command-and-control structures of the UN (see Figure 3). The methods for collecting and analyzing information can differ among the three levels and depending on the actors involved—whether civilian, police, or military.

# Tools for Collecting Information

Once the priority information requirements are set based on political imperatives—facilitating a long-lasting political solution, in the case of the UN—the second phase of the intelligence process—collecting information—can begin. All the information collected should serve one purpose—to increase the quality of analysis: "Decisions require more than just knowledge. They also require understanding, and that understanding has to be collective if there is to be agreement on the nature of the crisis, and thus how to deal with it."[23]

The UN must use a holistic approach, collecting information from a range of sources (see Box 4). Different ways of collecting information correspond to different ways of working among civilians, police, and the military and to different time frames (short-, medium-, and longer-term). Some methods rely more on technology than others, but in the end, they should all be complementary. Targeted information collection depends on the senior mission leadership setting proper intelligence requirements. One of the main obstacles to a functioning intelligence cycle in UN peace operations is that the senior leadership is not fully aware of the intelligence capacities at its disposal, is not trained or practiced in giving intelligence direction, or is unwilling or unable to improve coordination among different structures.

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20  On the structures of "authority, command, and control," see United Nations, *United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines* ("Capstone Doctrine"), 2008, pp. 66–67, available at www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/documents/capstone_eng.pdf . For a critical assessment of the doctrine, see International Forum for the Challenges of Peace Operations, *Designing Mandates and Capabilities for Future Peace Operations*, chapter 4.

21  Bram Champagne, *The United Nations and Intelligence*, Peace Operations Training Institute, 2006, p. 9, available at http://cdn.peaceopstraining.org/theses/champagne.pdf .

22  Ibid.

23  Patrice Sartre, "The Direction, Command and Conduct of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations" (unpublished paper, Cercles Vitalis, 2012).

Figure 3. Authority, command, and control structures in multidimensional United Nations peacekeeping operations[24]
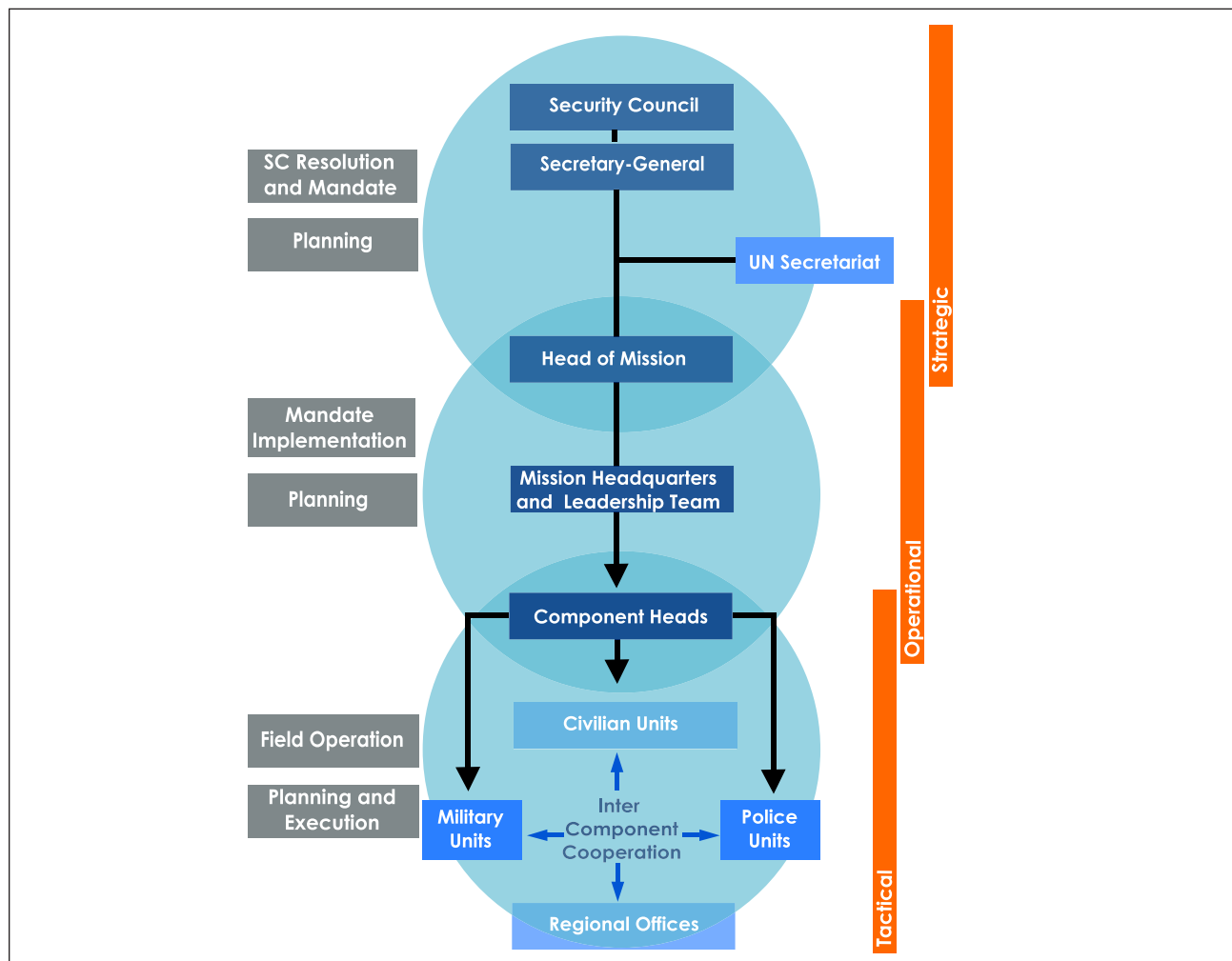


## THE PRIMACY OF OPEN SOURCES

Traditionally, open-source intelligence (OSINT)—collected from publicly available sources—has been undervalued because of its non-secretive nature. On the national level, "the intelligence community harbors some institutional prejudice against open-source intelligence, as it seems to run counter to the purposes for which the intelligence community was created."[25] Another major disadvantage of open sources has been the volume of information that has to be processed. Nevertheless, modern technology and new media are challenging these traditional notions.

The UN and its member states primarily collect information from open sources such as social networks and the media. Many interviewees considered that the UN, whether at headquarters or in the field, should be monitoring social media more systematically. In missions, the public information officers and analysts in Joint Operations Centres (JOCs) and Joint Mission Analysis Centres (JMACs) monitor daily news on local and regional television, radio, and newspapers. A growing part of their work consists of staying up-to-date with web-based news and social media, which represent "a rich source of informa-

24  This figure is based on the UN's 2008 Capstone Doctrine and is reproduced with permission from the International Forum for the Challenges of Peace Operations, which used it in its report *Designing Mandates and Capabilities for Future Peace Operations*, 2014, available at www.challengesforum.org/en/Reports--Publications/Designing-Mandates-and-Capabilities-for-Future-Peace-Operations/Designing-Mandates-and-Capabilities-for-Future-Peace-Operations/ .

25  Mark M. Lowenthal, *Intelligence: From Secrets to Policy*, 5th ed. (Los Angeles: CQ Press, 2011).

tion about social and cultural attitudes, intentions and behavior."[26] Social media provides crucial operational information on the profile and location of individuals, and sometimes on their intentions, as well as facilitating strategic communication. Peace practitioners also need to understand the new social media tactics used by peace process spoilers (particularly extremists) and "develop policies and mechanisms to better monitor and exploit the circular phenomenon of social media for the cause of peace."[27] However, missions are usually not staffed in accordance with these new demands. An exception is MINUSMA, where the ASIFU has a dedicated Open Source Intelligence Section including analysts trained in processing social media.

## HUMAN INTELLIGENCE: A KEY, UNDERDEVELOPED CAPABILITY

Human intelligence in UN peace operations is derived from information collected and provided by human sources. Collection of this information should be distinguished from the process of transforming it into intelligence, such as by grading and cross-checking information and sources. This way of processing the information can only be done by trained intelligence professionals— whether civilian or military—who are often in short supply in UN peace operations.

In the UN, civilians, police, and military contingents all have different methods and means of collecting human intelligence. Civilians rely on political and civil society contacts at the regional and national levels, as well as on contact with the local population, either directly or through language assistants or community liaison officers. Civilian staff, particularly national staff, are often present for longer periods of time than their military counterparts, who mostly rotate every six to twelve months, allowing them to establish relationships with the population and build trust. The UN also has local officers throughout its areas of operation (including political and civil affairs officers, human rights monitors, and other experts

on topics including elections, DDR, and the rule of law), which help further expand a network of trusted relationships and information sources. Like civilian staff, UN police are mobile and present in all field offices. They are also in close contact with national police officers when involved in training activities.

Similarly, UN military contingents have several ways of collecting human intelligence: through military observers (who are mobile); through patrols; and, when required, through special forces. A crucial step toward enhancing intelligence capabilities is to shift from a culture of undervaluing routine patrols for collecting information and interacting with the local population, to one where human intelligence is viewed as critical to protecting civilians and UN personnel. Many interviewees pointed out that, in general, and particularly in asymmetric threat environments, UN peacekeepers should stop conducting repetitive and predictable patrols on roads well known by the population and by peace process spoilers. Peacekeepers should move from passive to active patrolling, adopting specific objectives to collect information and gain trust among the local population. This is particularly needed in volatile environments where missions risk "bunkerization" for fear of casualties, instead of more proactively seeking information needed for their protection. But to achieve this, missions also need the necessary equipment and training.

In MINUSMA, for example, the need for tactical human intelligence was one of the key reasons for deploying a special forces unit provided by the Netherlands, which aimed to access areas where it was difficult to collect crucial information to protect against threats to the mission. The added value of such units still needs to be demonstrated. The effectiveness of the unit in MINUSMA may have been reduced by its limited operations outside of Gao, its lack of linguistic capabilities to interact with the populations it did reach, and its inability to blend into the environment.

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26  Robert Gordon and Peter Loge, "Strategic Communication: A Political and Operational Prerequisite for Successful Peace Operations," International Forum for the Challenges of Peace Operations, November 2015, p. 3, available at www.challengesforum.org/en/Reports--Publications/CF/Occasional-Paper-No-7/?retUrl=/Templates/Public/Pages/PublicReportList.aspx?id%3D962%26epslanguage%3Den .

27  Ibid., p. 19.

> **Box 4. Types of UN information collection**
>
> **UN open-source intelligence (UN-OSINT):** Intelligence derived from publicly available information, including unclassified information with limited public distribution or access.
>
> **UN human intelligence (UN-HUMINT):** Intelligence derived from information collected and provided by various human actors.
>
> **UN imagery intelligence (UN-IMINT):** Intelligence derived from information collected by a range of surveillance technologies, such as unarmed unmanned aerial vehicles (UUAVs).

## NEW TECHNOLOGIES: EMERGING ASSETS

Technology is an important tool for collecting information. As underlined by the recent report of the Expert Panel on Technology and Innovation in UN Peacekeeping, "Technology can enhance peacekeepers' abilities to do their jobs, but it cannot supplant the need for the human presence. Rather than serve as a simple substitute for manpower, technology and innovation are best thought of as ways to enhance peacekeepers' abilities to deliver across their mandates."[28] In short, technology supports and complements information analysis. In its latest report, the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations acknowledged "the need to improve situational awareness and to enhance the safety and security of peacekeepers, including through the use of modern technology as a complement to traditional methods, such as human-based information-gathering."[29]

In recent years, the UN has started using a range of surveillance technologies, including unarmed unmanned aerial vehicles (UUAVs, i.e., drones), helicopters (although this capacity is lacking in most missions[30]), mobile communications, geographic information systems (GIS), ground-based sensors, tethered balloons, satellites, and full-motion video.[31] All these instruments and means complement one another and need to be deployed with the appropriate expertise. Both the expertise and the technologies can be obtained through UN-contracted private companies or through specialist

units provided by contributing countries.[32]

Drones have become indispensable in collecting imagery intelligence (IMINT) in vast operational areas, such as eastern DRC and northern Mali, where they are the best tools for observing illicit movements. However, drones should be adapted to the terrain they are monitoring. Moreover, the use of drones is politically sensitive, raising important privacy questions and concerns among neighboring countries that see the potential for drones to breach their national sovereignty. Some member states have also resisted drones due to a perception that they are a more intrusive replacement for helicopters, which have, on rare occasions (due to their limited number), been used to collect image intelligence. In reality, however, the image intelligence technology of drones has a greater scope and precision than that of helicopters.

Other kinds of aerial equipment are increasingly being used to improve force protection and security. In January 2016, in Kidal in northern Mali, MINUSMA enhanced security by installing tethered balloons and surveillance equipment. Similar equipment is also planned for MINUSMA's Gao camp and is already being used by the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA). To date, however, missions lack the means to analyze the data collected by this equipment and often do not integrate it into operational planning.

All UN equipment for collecting imagery intelligence is visible and hard to overlook. It is painted

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28  United Nations, *Performance Peacekeeping: Final Report of the Expert Panel on Technology and Innovation in UN Peacekeeping*, December 22, 2014, p. 22, available at www.performancepeacekeeping.org/offline/download.pdf .

29  United Nations General Assembly, *Report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations*, UN Doc. A/70/19, March 15, 2016, para. 52.

30  See Jake Sherman, Alischa Kugel, and Andrew Sinclair, "Overcoming Helicopter Force Generation Challenges for UN Peacekeeping Operations," *International Peacekeeping* 19, no. 1 (2012).

31  Full-motion video enables viewing, organizing, and analyzing video from drones and video cameras.

32  See A. Walter Dorn, "Smart Peacekeeping: Toward Tech-Enabled UN Operations," New York: International Peace Institute, July 2016, available at www.ipinst.org/2016/07/smart-peacekeeping-tech-enabled .

white and branded with the UN logo in black. Using equipment that is so visibly prominent can help the UN dissociate its information-collection tools from the covert (sometimes illegal) mechanisms traditionally linked with intelligence, where actors collecting information intentionally conceal their identity.[33] The visibility of the equipment can also deter actors planning violent attacks,[34] in the same way that police forces use urban video cameras to deter criminal activity.

UN missions should also be careful about having electronic means to collect signals intelligence, such as sensors to detect radar or radio waves. For example, the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) was for some time provided with electronic instruments that proved too sensitive for a mission that feared their use might escalate tensions with either Hezbollah or Israel. Interception of radio waves does not obey national borders and could potentially be used to listen not only to peace process spoilers but also to the host government and other troop-contributing countries (TCCs) or mission personnel. This could open a Pandora's box and increase mistrust among TCCs. Therefore, many interviewees considered that the UN does not need to and should not enter into this area.

## Structures for Analyzing Information

Technological tools do not provide automatic answers or information; their proper use requires expertise. It is one thing to get raw data and quite another to properly analyze it in pursuit of a specific objective. So far, the UN has tended to over-focus on collecting information without giving sufficient attention to processing, exploiting, analyzing, and sharing it. The UN Expert Panel on Technology and Innovation in UN Peacekeeping noted that missions often find themselves caught up in the "fog of more," whereby an overload of information increases uncertainty about what to prioritize.[35] Some JMAC leaders argue that they have access to all the information they need but lack the capacity to analyze it and transform it into

plans. Improving the analytical capacity of missions has proven more difficult than improving their technological capacity. Trained analysts are not only expensive but also scarce in many contributing countries. Greater use of technology to collect information therefore comes with a greater need for analytical capabilities to transform this information into intelligence.

Several UN structures in New York and in the field provide information and analysis, though with varying degrees of coherence and coordination (see Appendix 1 for the history of UN information-analysis structures). DPKO, the Department of Political Affairs (DPA), and the Department of Safety and Security (DSS) all have designated units for information and analysis, but communication among them is inadequate, even though they are located on the same floor in the Secretariat building. There is no one system for sharing information and analysis among all stakeholders, and current arrangements are too dependent on personalities. Moreover, mechanisms to synchronize, coordinate, and de-conflict different analyses are generally lacking.

### WITHIN THE UN SECRETARIAT

The UN Secretariat has several structures dealing with situational awareness and analysis. Despite many failed attempts to institutionalize analytical capacity, the Secretariat has expanded this capacity significantly in the last couple of decades.

The UN Operations and Crisis Centre (UNOCC) emerged from DPKO's Peacekeeping Situation Centre in 2013. The UNOCC is a joint center linked with the secretary-general's office that provides integrated situational awareness to UN senior leadership on peace and security, human rights, and development issues. It aims to enable informed, coordinated, and timely decision making and strategic engagement on operational and crisis-related issues. The UNOCC is comprised of staff from DPKO, the Department of Field Support (DFS), DPA, DSS, the Department of Public Information (DPI), the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA),

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33  Bassey Ekpe, *The United Nations and the Rationale for Collective Intelligence* (Amherst, NY: Cambria Press, 2011), p. 135.

34  For example, see John Karlsrud and Frederik Rosén, "The MONUSCO Unmanned Aerial Vehicles: Opportunities and Challenges," *Conflict Trends*, no. 4 (2014); and John Karlsrud and Frederik Rosén, "In the Eye of the Beholder? UN and the Use of Drones to Protect Civilians," *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development* 2, no. 2 (2013).

35  United Nations, *Report of the Expert Panel on Technology and Innovation in UN Peacekeeping*, p. 61.

the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), and the UN Development Programme (UNDP). It is composed of a watch room, divided geographically and in contact 24/7 with the missions' JOCs, and a small analysis team (the Research and Liaison Unit), which has very limited capacity and is the point of contact for JMACs. The UNOCC produces a "peacekeeping briefing note" and a "restricted UNOCC daily," while also providing information on critical events between reporting cycles. It provides briefings to senior managers several times a week, provides ad hoc briefings upon request, maintains constant situation displays, and continuously monitors events using maps, statistics, and basic political, military, and humanitarian information.[36]

All UN departments dealing with peace operations also have their own small unit or cell dealing with information and analysis. In 2008, DPA established a Policy and Mediation Division, which has a small analytical unit that provides policy support to field missions. DPA also uses

DPKO's documents on situational awareness, information collection, crisis management, and information analysis. DSS has a Threat and Risk Assessment Service in charge of providing strategic intelligence through regional and country-specific threat assessments to support field duty stations and ensure the safety and security of all civilian personnel. OCHA functions in a different manner, where the desk officers collect all information concerning their region from OCHA's field offices to feed into a daily situation report ("sitrep").

Within DPKO, the Office of Military Affairs (OMA) has an Assessment Team, which, as of July 2016, comprised eleven trained intelligence officers. Some interviewees pointed out that this team conducts limited outreach, so its products are not widely used or even known outside the OMA. The team has struggled with its position within OMA, particularly because the office has focused more on force generation and military planning, leading it to underutilize the Assessment Team. The Assessment Team also has little interaction

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**Box 5. Joint Mission Analysis Centres (JMACs)**

Since their inception in 2005 in the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUC), JMACs have progressively become standard in all missions. The added value they bring is a political-military approach and the ability to fuse information from the different sections of the mission into a multidimensional and integrated analysis. According to the DPKO/DFS policy on JMACs of March 1, 2015, "Mission JMACs are joint entities established to support mission planning and decision-making through the provision of integrated analysis and predictive assessments." They are responsible for:

1. Managing information requirements from the Head of Mission and the Mission Leadership Team, including through the development of an information Collection Plan (CP) to support mission leadership decision-making;

2. Collecting and analyzing multi-source information, including intelligence-related material, to prepare integrated analysis and predictive assessments that are timely, accurate, comprehensive and relevant to support decision-making; mission strategic, operational and contingency planning; and crisis management; [and]

3. Identifying threats and challenges to mandate implementation.

In its latest report, the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations reaffirmed "the need for all mission components to ensure that information is shared with Joint Operations Centres and Joint Mission Analysis Centres in a timely fashion, and that the Centres make their product available to mission senior leadership with minimal delay, with the objective to ensure unity of purpose through a closer coordination of all components of missions."[37] Despite the original tasking of JMACs and JOCs, these entities do not always fulfill this objective, with results varying across missions.

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36  The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) opted out of the UNOCC when it was set up in 2012–2013. John Karlsrud, "Peacekeeping 4.0: Harnessing the Potential of Big Data, Social Media and Cyber Technology," in *Cyber Space and International Relations. Theory, Prospects and Challenges*, edited by J. F. Kremer and B. Müller (Berlin: Springer, 2014).

37  United Nations General Assembly, *Report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations*, UN Doc. A/70/19, March 15, 2016, para. 92.

with civilians working in DPKO's Integrated Operational Teams, which serve as the main mechanism to deliver strategic and operational guidance to field missions since the restructuring of DPKO in June 2007. This is the case despite the presence of a military liaison officer in each Integrated Operational Team.

Following the recommendations of the HIPPO report, the Executive Office of the Secretary-General created a three-person analysis and planning cell in March 2016. This cell has been tasked in particular with improving information exchange across the UN system, lifting the overall quality of analysis, and assisting lead departments in securing the resources and skills they need to plan effectively. However, the capacity of this cell seems to be very limited given the breadth of its tasks.

Although all these structures are receiving and producing information analysis, there is little coordination among them, and they are understaffed. But more than that, as one Secretariat official put it, "Mindset is our biggest challenge." There is a need "to create structures that force people to meet and share information" while respecting the particularities of each entity. There are significant potential benefits from sharing more information and analysis among all the Secretariat's analysis cells, including the UNOCC.

## AT THE MISSION LEVEL

The Joint Mission Analysis Centre (JMAC) of UN mission headquarters is, in principle, the main structure for collecting and analyzing information (see Box 5). The JMAC is mandated to provide medium- and long-term analysis by collecting and analyzing information from multiple sources and preparing integrated analysis and predictive assessments to support decision making, planning, and crisis management.[38] The Joint Operations Centre (JOC) is the structure for coordinating operations and crisis response and for sharing information among all components of a mission. The JOC is tasked with providing information on current operations and with round-the-clock monitoring and integrated or collated situation reporting, with contributions from the the civilian, police, and military component of the mission.[39] In special political missions, JOC-equivalent structures are called Integrated Information Hubs; JMAC-equivalent structures have different names: the Integrated Analysis Team in the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), Joint Analysis and Planning Unit in the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), and Joint Analysis Unit in the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI).

In parallel to these structures, the different components of missions have their own information and analysis cells. A mission's intelligence branch (U2) is tasked with providing tactical and operational military intelligence and reports to the force commander through his or her chief of staff.[40] When properly staffed and organized, it has the capability to receive all information collected by field sectors and battalions, analyze it, and send it to the JMAC via the JOC. The DSS also has an information analysis cell in missions (the Security Information Coordination Unit, or Security Information and Operations Centre), which supports decision makers by providing information and analysis related to operational logistics for specific security situations. The police component of a mission has a police information cell. These units at the mission headquarters have counterparts at the sector headquarters, each reporting through its chain of command, with overall coordination at the mission level.

The difficulty of producing military intelligence in UN missions does not necessarily come from the number of units involved; it comes from the lack of standardized procedures, reporting forms, and language.[41] It also comes from lack of coordination,[42] inadequate personnel,[43] and varying levels

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38  See Melanie Ramjoué, "Improving United Nations Intelligence: Lessons from the Field," Geneva Centre for Security Policy, policy paper no. 19, August 2011, available at www.files.ethz.ch/isn/132139/GCSP%20Policy%20Paper%2019.pdf ; Philip Shetler-Jones, "Intelligence in Integrated UN Peacekeeping Missions: The Joint Mission Analysis Centre," *International Peacekeeping* 15, no. 4 (2008).

39  According to the 2014 DPKO/DFS policy on JOCs, the JOC is an integrated entity (civilian and/or uniformed personnel) that serves as an information and operations hub in the mission to support decision makers in the mission and at headquarters. The JOC provides 24/7 situational awareness through integrated daily reporting on current operations, facilitates integrated operations coordination for coherence in operational activities in the country, and supports mission crisis management activities.

40  See United Nations, *United Nations Force Headquarters Handbook*, November 2014; and United Nations, *United Nations Military Force Headquarters Manual*.

41  To tackle that deficit, the policy unit of OMA is currently working on a *Military Intelligence Handbook*.

42  Claes Nilsson and Kristina Zetterlund, "Ready or Not? Revamping UN Peacekeeping for the 21st Century," Swedish Defence Research Agency, 2014.

43  For example, in MINUSMA's intelligence branch, 75 percent of staff are not trained military intelligence specialists.

## Figure 4. MINUSMA intelligence structure and the ASIFU

Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG)

Police Commissioner

Chief of Staff (CoS)

Dep. Special Repr. of the SG (DSRSG/P)**

Dep. Special Repr. of the SG (DSRSG/HC/UNDP-RR)*

Force Commander (FCOM)

Force Chief of Staff (FCoS)

Military operations branch (U3)

Intelligence branch (U2)

All Sources Information Fusion Unit (ASIFU)

*Joint Coordination Board (JCB)*

UNPOL

UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS)

Joint Mission Analysis Cell (JMAC)

Joint Observation Centre (JOC)

Analysis Fusion Cell (AFC) - Bamako

CCIRM***

Production

Liaison

Open Sources

Swedish ISR**** Task Force - Camp Nobel, Timbuktu

Dutch ISR**** Company - Camp Castor, Gao

G2***** West

G2***** East

Kidal*******

Gao

Mopti

Timbuktu

*Sector level*

* Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Humanitarian Affairs and the UN Resident Coordinator, Humanitarian Coordinator and Resident Representative of UNDP
** Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Political Affairs
*** CCIRM = Collection, Coordination and Intelligence Requirements Management
**** ISR = Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Unit
***** G2 = Equivalent of U2, intelligence unit, at sector level
****** Office not always staffed

| Box 6. ASIFU contributing countries, as of July 2016 | | |
|---|---|---|
| Austria | Estonia | Netherlands |
| Belgium | Finland | Norway |
| Czech Republic | Germany | Sweden |
| Denmark | Lithuania | Switzerland |

of training and lack of interoperability among troops from different contributing countries, which result in variations in the quality of and, even more fundamentally, the level of attention given to intelligence.

## NEW TOOL ON THE BLOCK? MINUSMA'S ALL SOURCES INFORMATION FUSION UNIT

MINUSMA was the first peace operation in history to include a stand-alone unit for collecting and analyzing information within the mission's military structure, called the All Sources Information Fusion Unit (ASIFU; see Figure 4). Upon the request of DPKO in 2012, several European member states contributed to this unit, which deployed in January 2014 (see Box 6). It included about eighty personnel, along with sophisticated information, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities and special forces located in Gao and Timbuktu.[44]

The ASIFU collects human, imagery, signals, and open-source intelligence. Its human intelligence units (i.e., special forces) have not been tasked with covert operations so far but are capable of these if required. Although few of their members speak French or any of the local languages, these units collect intelligence through traditional surveillance and reconnaissance missions, civil-military interaction, and liaising with partners in the broader UN mission, including its police and civilian components. The ASIFU produces a range of different products tailored to different require-ments, including emergency intelligence support, operational intelligence support, and focused intelligence operations.

The ASIFU compound has been located in Bamako near the airport, making it far from MINUSMA's headquarters (before the relocation of the mission's military headquarters from Hotel L'Amitié to a super camp at the airport). It operates at the theater level and is distinct from existing operational information structures, such as the intelligence branch (sixteen officers) and the JMAC (twenty-four staff). This separation generated tensions and misunderstandings within MINUSMA, especially because the ASIFU could only share its products through a highly secure Dutch system called "Titaan-Red." Based on NATO regulations, this system prohibited release of information outside of the organization's member states and structures. Other mission components and most TCCs therefore perceived the ASIFU as an outsider, particularly as some European units wanted a degree of independence from sector headquarters (90 percent of troops were from Africa and Asia.)[45]

Initially, the ASIFU's NATO procedures also rendered it unable to integrate with the mission's leadership, particularly with the force commander. While a force commander would be entitled to command the ASIFU regardless of his or her nationality, force commanders from NATO countries might have better access to its highly classified information. Furthermore, the assertive-ness and success of a force commander in exerting his or her authority over the ASIFU might depend on personal factors, such as leadership style, culture, and previous intelligence training relevant to the ASIFU's methodology and organization. As a result of these factors, the ASIFU may not always receive clear instructions from the top, which it depends on to function. As a result, the ASIFU does not provide mission leadership with all the

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44  Examples of these capabilities include an Apache attack helicopter, Chinook medevac helicopter, Dutch special forces unit, and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance task force (a "company" with high-end combat-recce vehicles, mine-protected armored jeeps, night-operating capacities, and high-end communi-cations and satellite equipment).(draft), n.d.

45  As of April 2016. See www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/contributors/2016/apr16_5.pdf .

required quantitative trend analyses, scenario-based documents, geospatial information-management tools, and network analysis, despite having the necessary tools to do so.

There have been hot-tempered discussions on how best to position the ASIFU in the mission's structure. The ASIFU's leadership initially complained that "there is no strategic guidance for how to harness intelligence" because the initial "direction" phase of the intelligence cycle was nonexistent. The ASIFU therefore had to task itself. The mission leadership failed not only to help define key intelligence requirements but also to gather and provide feedback. As a result, there has been a mismatch between the needs expressed by DPKO (tactical intelligence), what the ASIFU actually provided (strategic intelligence), and what it ended up being tasked to provide by the mission leadership (operational intelligence).

The functions of the ASIFU also overlapped with the mandates and tasks of the other information collection and analysis cells in the mission. The lack of information the ASIFU provided to units on the ground in order to prepare their patrols led some to further question its role within the mission. But ASIFU leadership has also been concerned by the lack of communication systems that would allow it to transfer information in a secure way to the sectors, and from the sectors to the battalions. Both the JMAC and the ASIFU have misleading names, with the words "joint" and "fusion" conveying the idea that they play a lead coordination role. But no clear division of labor has been established and no formal coordination

mechanisms have been put in place, leading to some duplication of work.

These initial tensions led to the introduction, in December 2014, of standard operating procedures regulating MINUSMA's intelligence cycle and establishment of the Joint Coordination Board (JCB), initially chaired by the JMAC and then by the deputy SRSG for political affairs (see Box 7). They also led DPKO to conduct a "lessons-learned" exercise involving the Office of Military Affairs, the Division of Policy, Evaluation and Training, and the Office of Operations' integrated operational team, in coordination with concerned contributing countries. This exercise led to the ASIFU being co-located with the MINUSMA's intelligence branch, bringing them closer together. Nonetheless, there will always be an inherent limit to what the ASIFU can share unless its classification system is downgraded, which would, in turn, make its contributing countries reluctant to share information. The lessons-learned exercise also showed that the model of the ASIFU was not optimal for MINUSMA—or for other peace operations in general—particularly because the unit's civilian staff and experts seemed to be duplicating existing components of the mission. This problem would remain even if the ASIFU were to fill its gaps in intelligence collection.

Member states staffing the ASIFU, which were all European, worked as though in a military-led NATO operation and initially had difficulty understanding that a UN mission is principally a political-civilian endeavor and requires working (and therefore sharing information) with African

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**Box 7. Joint Coordination Board**

MINUSMA's Joint Coordination Board (JCB) comprises members from the intelligence branch (U2), military operations branch (U3), ASIFU, JMAC, JOC, police information cell, DSS, and Office of the SRSG. After its creation in 2015, the JCB developed standard operating procedures to provide a framework for synchronization among its members. It sets up working groups with a designated lead agency to produce joint publications on issues ranging from terrorist attacks in Bamako to the Platform Group's potential course of action if a peace accord is signed. Those reports are then presented to MINUSMA's senior management three to four weeks later.

Over a year after its introduction, every intelligence entity in MINUSMA recognized the benefit of the JCB, in particular regarding the coordination between the ASIFU and the JMAC. The JCB meetings effectively improved the force commander's subsequent development and reshaping of priority intelligence requirements. In the future, the JCB should become the main actor overseeing the intelligence cycle by synchronizing requests and analysis, coordinating among all components, and de-conflicting requests and actions.

and Asian countries outside of NATO's protected system of information. This characteristic of the ASIFU undermined the trust needed between Western and other TCCs to ensure interoperability, as some TCCs saw the unit as "only taking care of white people in MINUSMA, while… African troops suffer the majority of casualties."[46] Keeping a structure like the ASIFU in MINUSMA depends, in practice, on having a NATO-compatible force commander, as the force commander decides what information can and needs to be shared with the lower levels of the mission.

# Limitations to Intelligence in UN Peace Operations

"UN intelligence" faces numerous limitations due to the organization's a priori transparent nature and the principle of impartiality that drives its peace operations. As a result, the weak system for protecting information hampers the UN from sharing or receiving it. The UN's particular relationship with the host country can also be a weakness. Moreover, UN peace operations also have to manage space for other actors, such as humanitarians (the "blue UN"), that have different cultures, principles, and procedures and that need to remain impartial in order to maintain their access and security.

## LEGAL AND ETHICAL LIMITATIONS TO INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION

Due to the UN's operational transparency and the basic principles on which all UN peace missions operate (impartiality, host-state consent, and non-use of force except in self-defense and defense of the mandate), "UN intelligence" has obvious legal limitations. The political, reputational, and legitimacy costs of the UN aggressively collecting intelligence through communication interception, covert action, and informant networks would be extremely high. Many of these methods are not only inconsistent with UN principles but are also

potentially illegal. They also tend to be difficult to control. The UN should avoid engaging in such intelligence activities as a basic principle. Any intelligence framework guiding UN action in the future should clearly state that the UN is not to engage in covert or clandestine methods of collecting intelligence that might require it to manipulate human sources, including blackmail, interrogations, payment for information, or operations planned and executed to conceal the identity of the actor collecting information.[47]

Nonetheless, peacekeepers have sometimes used informants and intercepted communications (the Swedish contingent in the UN Operation in the Congo in the 1960s, for example). However, they have only done so temporarily and for a particular or tactical objective.[48] The UN generally does not need covert information because it rarely conducts targeted operations (with the exception of the operations against the gangs of Cité Soleil in Haiti or against some armed groups in Eastern Congo, which were conducted in coordination with the host state).

The issue of establishing a network of informants is controversial for the UN, since its insecure methods for sharing information could put sources in danger. Informants are also likely to tell their interlocutors what they want to hear, making the information they provide of little value without background checks or filtering—capacities that UN peace operations lack. Although UN personnel have, at times, used paid informants on their own initiative and with their own money, interviewees had mixed feelings about doing so in a more systematic way. The UN would only proceed down this path very cautiously, as peacekeepers would run the risk of engaging in illegal activities and becoming another party to the conflict (which has legal implications) when the host country does not perceive them as impartial.[49]

To ensure the protection of its information and analysis, the UN has a system for classifying

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46   Interview with mission staff. As of May 31, 2016, 101 peacekeepers have died in MINUSMA, 68 of whom died due to "malicious acts." UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, "Fatalities by Mission and Incident Type," June 7, 2016, available at www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/fatalities/documents/stats_4.pdf .

47   Ekpe, *The United Nations and the Rationale for Collective Intelligence.*

48   See A. Walter Dorn, "United Nations Peacekeeping Intelligence," in *The Oxford Handbook of National Security Intelligence*, edited by Loch K. Johnson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); A. Walter Dorn and David J. H. Bell, "Intelligence and Peacekeeping: The UN Operation in the Congo 1960–64," *International Peacekeeping* 2, no. 1 (1995); and A. Walter Dorn, "Intelligence at UN Headquarters? The Information and Research Unit and the Intervention in Eastern Zaire 1996," *Intelligence and National Security* 20, no. 3 (2005).

49   Arthur Boutellis, "In Congo, UN Peacekeepers Are Becoming Party to the Conflict," interview with Marie O'Reilly, *Global Observatory*, August 29, 2013, available at https://theglobalobservatory.org/2013/08/interview-with-arthur-boutellis/ .

documents ("unclassified," "UN confidential," "UN strictly confidential").[50] This system, however, is not linked to any prosecution procedures, as in most countries, NATO, or the EU. Furthermore, there is little awareness of the parameters of this classification, and many interviewees reported that its usage is haphazard. While some sensitive documents and information are shared, this sharing is largely dependent on personal connections and face-to-face meetings, posing a challenge to senior management in missions. In its latest report, the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations requested "the Secretariat to issue guidance and develop procedures concerning the handling of any sensitive information to guarantee…confidentiality."[51] But without a proper system of sanctions, this confidentially can be breached without many consequences. There are exceptions in certain mission components, such as the human rights component, that have a strong management culture that prevents such breaches. Nevertheless, this weakness often prevents member states from sharing intelligence with the UN, except when they have an interest to do so.

## CHALLENGES OF INTELLIGENCE SHARING

UN peace operations need to receive intelligence from, and share it with, the many actors they interact with. Four kinds of actors have a particular need for or interest in sharing intelligence: member states, parallel forces, humanitarian actors, and host-country authorities. Each of these actors faces different challenges in sharing intelligence.

At headquarters in New York, the Secretariat and member states constantly share information and analysis at all stages of creating a peace operation or renewing its mandate. Some member states have an interest in influencing the Secretariat's analysis of the conflict and therefore give some of their confidential information to the heads of the units in charge of situational awareness. This is done mostly between people of the same nationality.

In the field, when deployed alongside a non-UN force (whether national, regional, or from another international organization), the UN mission needs to build a strong partnership with this force to benefit from its information and analysis. Sharing critical information, even to a limited degree, is critical in this regard. In the Central African Republic, MINUSCA needs to establish links with the EU mission in Bangui and, until October 2016, with the French Opération Sangaris. In Somalia, UNSOM receives some military intelligence from the United States, United Kingdom, and Italy. In Mali, good and appropriate military information relies on establishing links with the French Opération Barkhane and, to a lesser extent, with the EU Training Mission.

However, while UN missions and non-UN forces have a mutual interest in sharing intelligence to contribute to a shared situational awareness, the UN faces important limitations and risks. The UN needs to establish more clarity on the legal framework supporting or limiting intelligence sharing, particularly when this could be used to inform or enable action that could potentially be illegal, when it could contravene UN human rights standards or other ethical or moral obligations and considerations, and when it could have political implications for the mission's strategy or reputational implications for the mission.

In Mali, MINUSMA has been cautious not to be perceived as being too close to Opération Barkhane in its daily assessments and in the way it conducts its operations; the two mandates are, and should remain, very distinct. Otherwise, the mission could risk losing its impartiality and be asked by the host government to leave. Particularly in asymmetric threat environments, it is hard for missions to cooperate with a parallel force to improve the safety and security of UN personnel without having the host government and local population question their impartiality. Situations could occur where MINUSMA obtains intelligence that is crucial for Opération Barkhane to protect its personnel, and vice versa. In the end, separate and fundamentally different as they are, the two operations share the ultimate aim of helping the Malian government restore stability in the country.

Coordination with outside actors can also have consequences for the internal dynamics of missions. Unavoidable interaction with a coexist-

50  United Nations Secretariat, "Secretary-General's Bulletin: Information Sensitivity, Classification and Handling," UN Doc. ST/SGB/2007/6, February 12, 2007.

51  United Nations General Assembly, *Report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations*, UN Doc. A/70/19, March 15, 2016, para. 52.

ing parallel force might create challenges for civil-military coordination within the mission, where the civilian component might see the need to distance itself from the military component for fear of having the local population question its impartial status. These fears particularly extend to the human rights and DDR sections, which often have some of the best access to information from the communities they work with but are reluctant to share it with the mission's military component. This challenge must be approached carefully, as these actors need to protect their sources from possible reprisals in the face of the UN's inability to guard information securely. These actors fear that their independence, neutrality, or impartiality will be further eroded if they are seen as cooperating too closely with the military component.

Missions also risk distancing themselves from other actors on the ground—most importantly, humanitarian actors, which operate under specific principles (humanity, neutrality, impartiality) and are averse to compromising their independence or shrinking the humanitarian space. Sharing information with one actor, such as a parallel force, can affect the perception other actors have of the mission. This is particularly true when UN peace operations coexist with a parallel counterterrorism force, which makes maintaining relationships with humanitarian actors difficult. Historically, the humanitarian community has been averse to the "intelligence" label and, in some cases, to any close relationship with "militaristic" peacekeepers. Humanitarian actors fear that blurring humanitarian and political-military agendas could provoke increased attacks against aid workers and the population itself and restrict humanitarian access in complex emergencies. By more actively collecting information, missions could shrink the humanitarian space,[52] with some opponents criticizing missions of "over-militarization of operations."[53] Even without the presence of a parallel force, there is tension within UN missions between the so-called "black UN" (the vehicles belonging to the peacekeeping mission) and the "blue UN" (the vehicles of UN humanitarian actors) in sharing information.

Another limitation the UN faces in collecting, sharing, and protecting information is its relationship with the host-country government. The government may be keen on getting access to information collected by the mission for other purposes (including, potentially, for offensive military operations). The host-country government might also suspect the UN mission of "spying" on it or infringing on its sovereignty—especially when the mission has capacities such as drones and helicopters. That tension increases if host-country authorities become reluctant about the presence of the UN mission and interpret the UN's principle of impartiality as a way to favor one side over the other. The UN therefore has to work on protocols, such as status of forces agreements with host countries, to reassure them it will not conduct any covert actions against the government. Such agreements are hard to negotiate and harder to maintain but should be a priority to ensure that intelligence collection supports the UN mission's main objective of contributing to a long-term political solution in the host country.

The presence of national staff in a mission is an asset in collecting and analyzing information and, in particular, in better understanding the society of the host country. However, it can also be an issue when it comes to protecting the information circulating within the mission, as host countries may use these staff to gain access to this information. Therefore, specific protocols may have to be put in place so that national staff do not have access to certain sensitive information. The presence of national staff within UN missions, as well as the general lack of confidentiality, can be serious impediments to parallel forces sharing information with UN missions.

Intelligence and information sharing is about trust—trust among member states, between the Secretariat and member states, between UN headquarters and the missions in the field, and between the UN mission and the host country. Such trust is often lacking. As a result, the UN's assets—particularly its geographical reach and the diversity of its staff—are often underused or misused in missions and in headquarters, which

52  It is important to note that this does not support the existence of a space where the application of international humanitarian law is restricted. Rather, it refers to the potential agency of humanitarians in getting access to and serving populations in need.

53  A. Walter Dorn, *Keeping Watch: Monitoring, Technology and Innovation in UN Peace Operations* (New York: United Nations University Press, 2011), p. 187.

work in stovepipes. Information is also not adequately shared in the field among components of a mission and among the different categories of personnel (civilian, police, and military), and at headquarters among the various departments of the UN Secretariat. It takes enormous effort from individuals to break these stovepipes, and this is more easily done in the field than in the more politicized headquarters. In general, UN personnel lack the culture and mindset to build a network for collecting and analyzing information toward the common objectives of the mission they are deployed to or the organization they are working for. What is occurring within the UN is also happening in the governance and administrative structures of most member states. Such turf wars are usually solved by strong leadership urging coordination and information sharing.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

The UN needs to develop structures, security systems, rules and procedures, and a new organizational culture to ensure all mission components coordinate in properly analyzing information and providing their leadership with improved multidimensional situational awareness. The UN already has some of the right tools in place, whether at headquarters or in field missions, but it lacks the framework and mindset to use these tools in a cohesive and coordinated manner. To achieve this change, the UN needs a proper intelligence doctrine, not only for military components of missions but for UN missions as a whole. Such a doctrine could help the UN overcome the restrictions it faces and take advantage of opportunities for cooperation with other actors on the ground while retaining enough flexibility for each mission to react to its particular circumstances.

The UN does not need a revolution to improve its capacity to collect and analyze information; neither must—or should—the UN engage in controversial practices to protect its peacekeepers in dangerous environments or to implement mission mandates. However, improvements in the management and analysis of information are needed at various levels, both at headquarters and in the field. This paper advocates focusing on strengthening existing structures for information collection and analysis by developing procedures and guidelines, strengthening command and control, improving training, and recruiting adequate personnel.

### IMPROVE ANALYSIS AND EXPERTISE AT THE STRATEGIC LEVEL

Improved information analysis is essential throughout all UN missions and departments—not only for those involved in high-tempo operations or asymmetric threat environments but also for those making decisions about operations in such environments. To a certain extent, improved analysis comes from improved coordination, which can ensure that the UN capitalizes on its inherent strengths to provide an integrated, multidimensional analysis. At the headquarters level, UNOCC structures should be strengthened, particularly the staff of the Research and Liaison Unit. The DPKO's Integrated Operational Teams and relevant entities dealing with information analysis should also improve coordination. UN leadership should urge the various entities dealing with information analysis to share their products to overcome unfruitful turf wars. Another option to improve coordination could be to go back to the Brahimi Report's recommendation to collect all UN structures dealing with analysis on the thirty-eighth floor of the UN building.

### IMPROVE ANALYSIS AND EXPERTISE AT THE OPERATIONAL LEVEL

In the field, at the mission level, JMACs should be at the heart of information analysis to ensure a balanced, multidimensional civilian-military-police analysis, as envisaged in the DPKO's JMAC policy. Centralizing all information collected in one place in the mission would help clarify the division of labor and lessen the overflow of information senior leadership receives when different sources report different information with no clear connection. JMACs could coordinate not only military intelligence, police intelligence, humanitarian information, and political information but also information from social media monitoring, sanctions committees, groups of experts, and military observers who are mobile throughout the areas of operation.

To ensure a more comprehensive analysis, JMACs should be properly staffed, with representation from all components—civilian, military, and

police—and staff should be recruited accordingly. The UN should not accept officers without an intelligence or information analysis background to serve in JMACs. All staff officers deployed to military intelligence functions should be trained intelligence analysts, and all civilian and police staff deployed to JMACs should have experience in information analysis, as well as political-military experience or country/regional expertise. This requirement should also be built into the training of JMAC staff.

While political limitations will always influence how much independent analytical capacity the UN Secretariat can have, strengthening analytical structures in the field is less political, as its purpose is to ensure the safety and security of peacekeepers. Improving information analysis can also help to set priorities in a context where the mission cannot be present everywhere and to make those priorities evolve over time and with changing circumstances. Improvements in information collection and analysis must all be geared toward guiding the practical decision making and planning of the senior mission leadership. In order to facilitate these improvements, (civilian) chiefs of staff of missions could be provided with personnel who can transform the JMAC's information analysis into the mission leadership's decision making and ensure these decisions are properly implemented by the various mission components. Incumbent chiefs of staff should also be trained to perform this role.

## IMPROVE SITUATIONAL AWARENESS AND FORCE PROTECTION AT THE TACTICAL LEVEL

Although the UN has placed great emphasis on strategic information analysis, UN peacekeepers still lack robust analytical structures at the tactical level. Missions should therefore prioritize improving intelligence processes at the sector and battalion levels, as well as between these levels and the force headquarters. The elaboration of the Military Intelligence Framework undertaken by the OMA should help missions better collect and analyze tactical information. Incoming European and Western TCCs could look at how their capabilities could fill that gap, particularly through mentoring. Developing the proper means for collecting information in the context of the UN must also come with establishing limitations on

what activities the UN can engage in.

## CREATE A SECURE SYSTEM FOR INFORMATION SHARING AT ALL LEVELS

Some civilian mission components have equipped themselves with software handled by a very small number of persons on a "need-to-access" basis. Some of these methods could inspire wider protected networks to share information among components and with the structures that will analyze it. However, an essential aspect of setting up such a communication network is ensuring information security. While the UN has its own system of information classification, it has no real means to protect its information from the "outside world"—particularly from (host-country) governments that would wish to know more about its policy orientations, analysis, and operational decisions. The UN has no secure communications, as all its computers are connected to the open Internet (World Wide Web), both at the strategic and operational levels. The lack of an appropriate and secure UN system for sharing information undermines the protection of missions, especially in asymmetric threat environments, and makes partners reluctant to share some of their information.

A new or improved network should therefore be envisaged—one that is disconnected from the open Internet. This would be a first step toward a more professional way of sharing information. For example, there could be a network within the military component of missions (which the mission leadership could access) to handle information that is particularly sensitive or that requires rapid decision making. Indeed, each component would choose what information could be shared according to its own procedures. Sharing information through the establishment of regional databases to share information among missions in the same region (whether special political missions or peacekeeping missions) should also be considered.

The UN should thus install a separate secure system to handle sensitive information across different mission components. It should also develop guidelines for sharing information and protecting sources. Particularly, it must decide who will have access to what information—that is, how

to balance the "need to know" with open, transparent processes and a culture that incentivizes the "need to share."

## INSTILL A CULTURE OF INTELLIGENCE, PARTICULARLY IN THE LEADERSHIP

A cultural or administrative shift in the way most UN personnel operate is needed both at headquarters and in missions in order to overcome silos that prevent them from sharing or accessing information, analysis, and ideas. Intelligence is the product of collective thinking, which is rarely done at the UN. The UN therefore needs to create structures that force people to meet, share information, and develop common analysis.[54] It also needs to train staff at all levels—from senior mission leadership down to battalions, and across the mission's structure—on the requirements of information analysis. This training could help create a common understanding among the civilian, police, and military components of the needs and requirements of intelligence in a mission. Stronger leadership could also play a part in breaking silos.

It is particularly crucial that senior leadership is properly trained in managing intelligence. The senior leadership is responsible not only for directing strategic planning but also for identifying intelligence requirements. Currently, however, the leadership is not always fully aware of the intelligence and analytical capabilities at its disposal. In many missions, chiefs of analysis cells complain that there are no strategic questions to guide them in directing and harnessing intelligence. As intelligence relies on a process, it depends on all the phases of this process functioning properly—not only collection and analysis. Analysis cells are not

adequately tasked because the initial "requirement" phase of the intelligence cycle is nonexistent. Similarly, the mission leadership often fails to provide feedback.

The senior mission leadership has to be trained on what intelligence assets are at its disposal and how to set intelligence priorities, request information, and provide feedback. Therefore, "the SRSG and his or her senior officials need a properly organised induction to information and its use before they go on mission."[55] This could also be integrated into the senior mission leadership training course conducted yearly. Training is necessary not only for the SRSG, deputy SRSG, and chief of staff but at all levels within the mission and across all components, including the military contingent. Particular priority should be placed on reducing the widespread gap in basic reporting and analysis skills among UN staff. At the same time, some tasks, such as analysis of information gathered from drones, should remain with experts.

Mindset is perhaps the biggest challenge the UN faces in improving its current structures for processing data and analyzing information to produce the intelligence needed to implement mission mandates. There is a need to instill a "culture of intelligence" at all levels of the UN. This culture should encourage UN structures and staff to identify useful information, set requirements and priorities, analyze the information collected, and share it with key decision makers and actors. Creating such a culture of intelligence at headquarters and in the field will require changing some habits but, if achieved, would help UN peacekeepers deliver better on the ground.

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54  It should be noted that some of these silos also result from budget constraints imposed by member states.

55  Chuter, "Intelligence, Information and Peace Operations."

# Appendix:

# History of UN Structures Dealing with Information[56]

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|---|---|
| **1947–1948** | The Security Council fails to establish the structures of its Military Staff Committee (Article 47 of the UN Charter), which was meant to include an intelligence committee. |
| **1962** | The UK proposes creating a "Military Staff for the UN Secretariat" made of "intelligence staff": "The core of any military organisation is its staff. Without proper intelligence and pre-planning, military operations must inevitably start at a grave disadvantage. There must therefore be available to the Secretary-General, possibly in the Secretariat, a small staff whose sole duties would be the study of situations wherein the United Nations Organisation might become militarily involved, and to prepare contingency plans for these circumstances."[57] |
| **1965** | The Office of the Military Adviser to the Secretary-General is created. |
| **1987** | Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuellar creates the Office for Research and Collection of Information (ORCI) in the Office of Special Political Affairs. ORCI's mandate is to assess global trends, prepare profiles of various countries, regions, and conflicts, and provide early warning of emerging "situations," as well as to monitor refugee flows and emergencies. ORCI was the first serious attempt at "early warning" and analysis, but it never worked. |
| **1991** | An assistant secretary-general is appointed head of the Office for Research and the Collection of Information in the Office of the Secretary-General. |
| **1992** | Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali creates the Department for Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO). |
| **1993** | The Situation Centre is formed in DPKO to provide situation monitoring and to exchange information between UN headquarters and field missions worldwide. In 2013, the Situation Centre becomes part of the larger UN Operations and Crisis Centre (UNOCC). |
| **1993** | An Information and Research Unit made of officers seconded from France, Russia, the UK, and the United States is created within the Situation Centre. These officers are connected to the national intelligence services of their countries. They focus on peacekeeping but also provide assistance to other departments and to the secretary-general. In 1999, they are replaced by civilians who transform this unit into a resource center that mainly produces useful cross-cutting papers that DKPO's Integrated Operational Teams or DPA's sections do not have time to write. |
| **2000** | The Brahimi Report recommends the creation of an "Information and Strategic Analysis Secretariat" within the Office of the Secretary-General, noting that the Secretariat needs "a professional system for accumulating knowledge about conflict situations, distributing that knowledge efficiently to a wide user base, generating policy analyses and formulating long-term strategies." That recommendation is not supported by member states and is therefore never implemented. |
| **2005** | Joint Mission Analysis Centres (JMAC) are created within missions with a mandate to provide integrated analysis for the senior management in peacekeeping operations. They include civilian, police, and military analysts who report to the SRSG on the mission's long-term strategic priorities. |
| **2007** | Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon creates the Department of Field Support (DFS). |

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56  Thant Myint-U and Amy Scott, *The UN Secretariat: A Brief History* (New York, NY: International Peace Academy), 2007; Alexandra Novosseloff, *Le Comité d'état-major : Histoire d'un organe en sommeil* (Paris: Centre Thucydide and Sociological Association of the United Arab Emirates, 2008).

57  "A Military Staff for the UN Secretariat," Foreign Office Archives, FO Doc. 371/166872, January 31, 1962.

**2009**      An Assessment Unit is created within DPKO's Office of Military Affairs, building on the lessons learned from UNIFIL's Strategic Military Cell (2007–2010).

**2013**      A UN Operations and Crisis Centre (UNOCC) is established. Serving as an information and crisis hub at headquarters, the UNOCC supports senior leaders across the UN system to enable informed, coordinated, and timely decision making and strategic engagement on operational and crisis-related issues. The UNOCC provides a common operational picture of UN engagement in the field and acts as the common venue at headquarters to facilitate response to crises in the field in four core areas: situational awareness, crisis management facilitation, situational analysis, and executive communications.

**2015**      The High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) release its report, recommending that the UN Secretariat "overhaul the functioning of information and analysis structures and systems within missions to deliver significantly streamlined reporting, more effective information management and significantly enhanced analytical capacities." It notes that "timely, reliable and actionable information" is essential to ensure the protection of civilians. The report only specifically mentions "intelligence" once, in denouncing the use of military counterterrorism operations by UN peacekeeping missions, since "they lack the specific requirements, intelligence, logistics, capabilities and specialized military preparation."
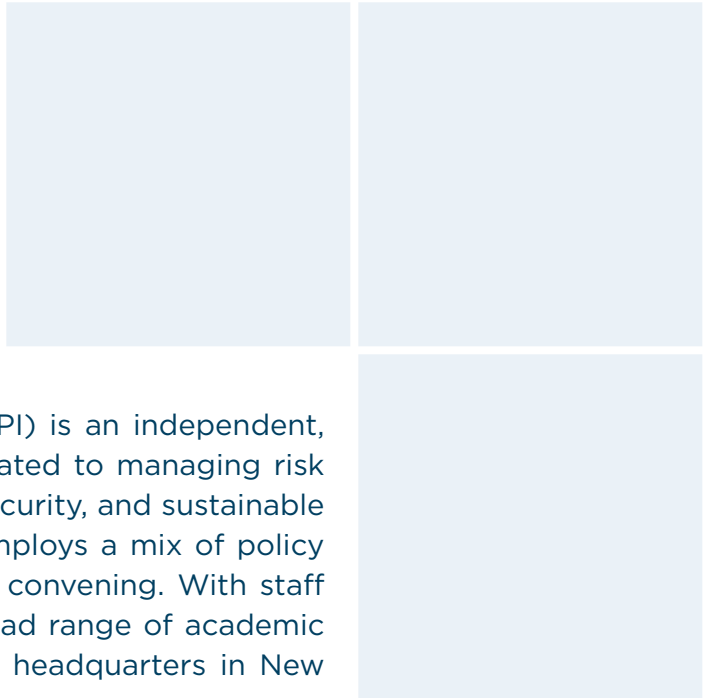
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