

UNITED NATIONS PEACE OPERATIONS

YEAR IN REVIEW

2006

*New challenges,
New horizons*



United Nations

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More UN peacekeepers called into action, even as conflicts continue

In the annals of United Nations peace operations, 2006 will go down as a record-breaker in terms of deployment, with just under 100,000 uniformed and civilian personnel serving in the field by the end of the year.

Behind this unprecedented growth was a series of peace agreements, ceasefires or cessations of hostilities accomplished with UN political and diplomatic support.

“A Chance for a Safer World” announced a January 2007 cover of *The Economist*, over a photo of Spanish UN peacekeepers grouped in Lebanon under a dozen UN-blue flags.

“Call it peacekeeping, peace-enforcement, stabilization or anything else, but one thing is clear: the world’s soldiers are busier than ever operating in the wide grey zone between war and peace,” began an article headlined “Peacekeeping: Call the Blue Helmets.”

Throughout the year, Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, raised other flags.

Would the UN be able to muster enough troops to meet the demands, which for current and possible future missions could reach 140,000 personnel? Was there a concomitant political will to make real peace? Were the Blue Helmets being called upon to keep peace where there is no peace to keep?

Both the outgoing Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, and the incoming, Ban Ki-moon, placed Darfur at the top of their agendas. But at the close of 2006, the agony of Darfur grew worse, and the pressure on the UN more intense to stop the fighting and protect the people. The Sudanese Government in Khartoum, holding out against concerted international pressure to accept a UN presence in Darfur, slowly seemed to be moving towards agreement that the UN could help beef up the 7,000 African Union troops there. In late 2006, the UN began deploying small numbers of civilians, police and troops in two phases of support that were expected to culminate in a unique UN-AU joint “hybrid” operation.

Pressure grew to send peacekeepers to the Chad/Central African Republic/Sudan border region where the Darfur conflict threatened to ignite regional war. Meanwhile the UN’s 10,000 troops deployed in South Sudan continued to shore up the 2005 North-South Comprehensive Peace Agreement as part of the UN mission in Khartoum (UNMIS).

Elsewhere, UN peace operations helped to protect a fragile peace and provide a measure of stability in a variety of complex, post-conflict situations.

The high point of the year was perhaps the surprisingly successful elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Commentary about the DRC’s prospects as a functioning country and the UN’s peacekeeping role there had long been pessimistic. But even cynics cheered both the Congolese and the UN when more than 20 million voted in the two rounds of polling.

In Lebanon, soldiers from almost 30 countries, including from Europe – donning Blue Helmets for the first time in significant numbers in more than 10 years – deployed in record time to the expanded UNIFIL, following the Israeli-Hezbollah conflict during the past summer.

On the other hand, the last peacekeepers of a two-year-old mission departed from Burundi on 31 December, having completed their mandate as scheduled and leaving behind democratically elected local and national structures. The peacekeeping operation has been succeeded by a UN integrated office which will continue to help the country move past the fragile post-conflict stage towards long-term stability.

In Haiti as well, while street violence continued in some neighbourhoods of Port-au-Prince, two rounds of UN-supervised elections were held and new Government structures established. The UN continues to assist Haiti in providing security for its people while seeking ways to promote continued international support for the beleaguered nation.

In Timor-Leste, however, a new peacekeeping operation began after violence in April and May threatened to undo the progress since independence. Many argued that the previous UN mission had left too soon; others believed the UN intervention had not been thorough enough to leave behind a stable Government and reconciled population. With the security situation stabilized for now, Timor-Leste looks towards national elections in mid-2007.

Also in the field, UN mediation efforts to seek political solutions to prevent new conflicts from breaking out and old ones from flaring up continued in 2006. UN political missions and peace envoys were active in nearly a dozen countries, including in the Middle East and Somalia.

Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Ibrahim Gambari travelled twice to Myanmar, becoming the only international figure to mediate between senior Government officials as well as opposition figures including Aung San Suu Kyi.

In November, the UN’s mediation capacity received further acknowledgment as the Maoists and the Government in Nepal reached a historic agreement to lock up arms and share political space and power. The parties requested the UN to further assist them in implementing key aspects of their agreement by means of a political mission authorized by the Security Council on 23 January 2007.

A major gap in the UN peace and security architecture was closed with the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission, which in 2006 decided to focus on Burundi and Sierra Leone as its first countries to support in the wake of completed peacekeeping operations.

As 2007 opened, the new Secretary-General had proposed a restructuring of the headquarters peace operations support structure in an effort to better meet the burgeoning demands on the UN to assist countries emerging from conflict. ■

2006: A year of hope for the Congolese people

For the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), 2006 was a pivotal year: the first democratic elections since the country's independence from Belgium more than 40 years ago were held. After two rounds of polling, the results were ultimately respected by the contenders. This was a success that Congo-watchers called miraculous, particularly since the DRC had been riven by years of conflict which in the past six years has cost some four million lives.

For the United Nations Organization Mission in the DRC (MONUC), 2006 was also a year of major challenges and achievements. MONUC assisted the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) in the organization of the largest and most complex election process ever supported by a UN mission, and probably the largest and most expensive in African history, costing some US\$500 million. Kudos came in from around the world for the UN force that peacekeeping officials had struggled to expand in 2004 – to its present strength of 18,300 uniformed personnel – and whose efficacy had been doubted in influencing the fate of a huge, devastated country of some 60 million people.

To ensure that the elections took place under safe and secure circumstances, MONUC conducted joint operations with the national armed forces. It also collaborated with the Congolese Government in reforming the security sector through the creation of an integrated national army and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programmes. The mission provided further security and assistance to local populations affected by the grave humanitarian situation in the country.

By their approval of the new Constitution on 18 December 2005, the Congolese people manifested their wish for democracy and development. In 2006 they came out in formidable numbers – over 70% of the 26 million registered cast votes in the presidential and national assembly elections held in July, as well as the presidential second round and provincial assembly elections in October. The elections were widely regarded by both international and national observers as being technically sound, transparent and credible. The inauguration on 6 December of Joseph Kabila as the new President ended the transitional process outlined by the

Global and All-Inclusive Agreement of 2002 which had established a transitional Government, headed by Joseph Kabila and four Vice-Presidents – two of them former rebel leaders.

With more than 17,000 peacekeepers and some 100 aircraft, MONUC was able to provide vital logistical and technical support to the country that matches Western Europe in size, but the Kalahari wilderness in infrastructure. MONUC supported the recruitment and training of over 250,000 polling agents, and transported over 3,500 tons of election material from four logistic bases to over 200 destinations around the country using aircraft, boats and other vehicles. Some local poll suppliers carried ballots by bicycle or by foot, walking for up to 10 days through the jungle.

MONUC's Radio Okapi, run with the support of the Swiss Fondation Hiron-delle, broadcast continuous elections-related programmes in five languages. Special publications were distributed to over one million readers, and dozens of elections-related video programmes aired on local TV stations.



*Congolese youth with their voting cards ahead of the first free elections held in the DRC in over 40 years, Kinshasa, June 2006.
(UN Photo by Myriam Asmani)*

MONUC also supported the collection of elections results from over 50,000 polling stations to 62 destinations where the results were processed, and helped in compiling the results. A total of 73,000 Congolese police officers were mobilized for the elections, more than half of them trained by MONUC. The deployment in August of the 1,200 strong European Union Force (EUFOR) as a temporary reinforcement to MONUC further helped secure the historic electoral process.

While the elections took place in a generally calm environment, violence broke out in Kinshasa shortly before the announcement of the provisional results of the presidential election on 20 August. This escalated over the course of two days into clashes involving the security guards of the two main presidential candidates, President Joseph Kabila and then Vice-President Jean-Pierre Bemba. Through the quick military intervention of MONUC and EUFOR, and diplomatic efforts in particular by William Lacy Swing, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the DRC, calm was restored and confidence rebuilt between the two parties, which paved the way for a largely peaceful second presidential round.

None of the achievements of 2006 would have been possible without the determination and desire for peace of the Congolese people, supported by UN peacekeeping troops and other international partners. Congo remains a tragic country, where 1,000 people are said to die each day from hunger and disease. Even voting was difficult as National Assembly ballots contained information on 3,000 candidates. The Congolese and the international community now face the challenge of turning election euphoria into a consolidated and functioning democracy.

A number of peacekeepers gave their lives to end conflict and secure the elections: in January, nine Guatemalan soldiers were killed in an ambush in Ituri. In May, one Nepalese soldier was killed and eight others detained during skirmishes between MONUC and a militia group. They were eventually released on 8 July.

On the humanitarian front, MONUC supported the formulation, development and coordination of a national humanitarian strategy, which resulted in an action plan and US\$681 million worth of projects around the country. The mission was also involved in innovative approaches to reconcile military and security objectives with improved protection and assistance to vulnerable civilian populations. This led to the deployment of Mobile Operating Bases all over the country, and later to the return and repatriation of over half a million internally displaced persons (IDPs) and 26,000 refugees. During 2006, MONUC organized over 350 humanitarian missions to Congo's most isolated and vulnerable people; facilitated and implemented 100 Quick Impact Projects which assisted some 250,000 Congolese; and also supported the transportation of 206 tons of humanitarian cargo.

UN peacekeepers carried out robust joint military operations with the national armed forces in the troubled eastern district of Ituri, leading to the disarmament of 5,000 militia elements. In a year in which over 93,000 ex-combatants were demobilized, including 27,346 children, MONUC also assisted in the repatriation of 800 foreign combatants and 700 dependants to their countries of origin. In Ituri, MONUC acted as facilitator in talks that led to disarmament accords with three armed groups. In December, the first of these groups entered the DDR process, marking a significant step on the road to peace and security.

MONUC played a crucial role in ending human rights violations and impunity in the DRC through its instrumental role in collecting evidence that led to five high-profile trials for war crimes and crimes against humanity. On 17 March, Thomas Lubanga, a former militia leader, was transferred to the International Criminal Court (ICC) on charges of having enlisted, conscripted and used children under 15 to actively participate in hostilities (a war crime under the Rome Statute of the ICC). As most human rights abuses in the DRC involve police or army, MONUC trained 1,600



A Congolese woman casts her vote, Kinshasa, 18 November 2006. (UN Photo by Myriam Asmani)

Congolese army officers, civilian judges, prosecutors, national police officers and election officials in internationally accepted human rights standards.

In response to reports of sexual misconduct involving military and civilian staff, MONUC created a special conduct and discipline unit which developed a network of 24 military and police focal points and regional action plans across the country. During the year, they processed several allegations, trained 1,469 staff and gave induction briefings to all newly arrived MONUC personnel.

If 2006 was a year of hope for the DRC, 2007 will be dedicated to the consolidation of the democratic process, the establishment of new institutions, the promotion of national reconciliation and good governance with a focus on managing natural resources and fighting corruption, and the promotion of economic development and reconstruction. Humanitarian needs remain dire. The expectations of the Congolese people are understandably high, and the country will continue to rely on the strong support of the UN and the wider international community as it works towards sustainable peace. ■

UN helps Lebanon recover, as Europe returns to peacekeeping

On 12 July, when Hezbollah launched an attack on Israel, killing three Israeli soldiers and kidnapping two, both Lebanon and Israel were thrown back into a degree of conflict, death and destruction that their citizens had been spared in recent years. For the next 34 days the people of Lebanon and northern Israel experienced the worst fighting there for decades. More than 1,100 Lebanese were reported killed, mostly civilians, while more than one million were displaced within Lebanon or across its borders to neighbouring States. In northern Israel, dozens of civilians were killed and hundreds of thousands slept in bomb shelters or headed south as thousands of Hezbollah rockets hailed down during the conflict. It was widely feared both in the region and internationally that if the

conflict was not resolved quickly it could expand beyond the borders of Lebanon and Israel. The United Nations had to act fast to stop the loss of innocent life and prevent the violence from spreading.

In response to the crisis, Secretary-General Kofi Annan called for an immediate cessation of hostilities and dispatched a high-level delegation to the region comprised of his special political adviser, Vijay Nambiar, his Special Envoy for the Implementation of Security Council resolution 1559, Terje Rød-Larsen, as well as the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Alvaro de Soto. The troika travelled to Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, the occupied Palestinian territory and Israel to talk to the parties in a bid to find ways to defuse the crisis. This was the first of several

diplomatic missions to the region undertaken by senior UN officials which culminated in the Secretary-General's own visit in August. When not physically present in the Middle East, the Secretary-General and his aides remained engaged via intensive telephone diplomacy with leaders from both within and outside the region.

For its part, the Security Council also began intensive negotiations on the issue. On 14 July, the Council backed the Secretary-General's decision to send a diplomatic mission to the region. However, its Members could not agree to call for an immediate cessation of hostilities. It took the Council five more weeks of negotiations before its members agreed to do so.

As the conflict dragged on, the Secretary-General became increasingly concerned over the violence marked by Hezbollah's deliberate targeting of Israeli population centres and Israel's disproportionate use of force resulting in large numbers of Lebanese civilian casualties. The Secretary-General repeatedly implored the Security Council to take steps to address the situation and stressed that "all members of the Council must be aware that its inability to act sooner has badly shaken the world's faith in its authority and integrity."

On 11 August, the Council adopted resolution 1701, which called for an immediate cessation of hostilities; a significantly expanded and more robust United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) with an authorized strength of 15,000; the deployment of Lebanese troops to southern Lebanon; and the withdrawal of all Israeli forces from the same area. The resolution also called for the release of the captured Israeli soldiers, the creation of a weapons-free zone in south Lebanon, and the ban on sales or supply of arms to Lebanon except as authorized by its Government. Furthermore, the resolution called for the delineation of Lebanon's international borders and full implementation of the relevant provisions of the Taif Accords and of resolutions 1559 and 1680,



The German, Swedish and Danish units of the the Maritime Task Force training in South Lebanon, 14 October 2006. (UNIFIL Photo)

that require the disarmament of all armed groups in Lebanon other than that of the Lebanese State.

Welcoming the resolution's adoption, the Secretary-General paid tribute to UN personnel who worked through the conflict to help the affected population. "Indeed, UNIFIL's tenacity has made possible the diplomatic solution you have just forged," he told Council members. He also urged continued global attention to the situation: "In order to prevent yet another eruption of violence and bloodshed, the international community must now be prepared to offer sustained support and assistance for the political and economic reconstruction of Lebanon, and also to address the broader context of crisis in the region."

While the Security Council and the Secretary-General worked intensively to find a diplomatic solution, the UN peacekeepers on the ground courageously and professionally carried on with their duties. Officials from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) planned for contingencies.

Prior to the conflict erupting, UNIFIL had 2,000 soldiers in South Lebanon, and was tasked with maintaining a ceasefire along the 70-mile (121 km) Blue Line between Israel and Lebanon, by patrolling, observing, reporting violations and liaising with the parties to maintain calm. UNIFIL's military contingents hailed from China, France, Ghana, India, Ireland, Italy, Poland and Ukraine. Some 50 military observers from the Observer Group Lebanon (OGL), part of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), rounded out the peacekeepers' presence. The mission kept the Security Council informed of the situation on the ground – including the presence of armed militia; the regular violation of Lebanese airspace; attacks across the Blue Line; and the upsurge in volatility.

After the conflict erupted, UNIFIL continued to fulfill its core mandate of observing and reporting despite the high level of insecurity. However, UNIFIL's ability to conduct patrols and occupy all observation posts was curtailed and its

continued presence was threatened by a lack of critical supplies, including diesel fuel. Nonetheless, UNIFIL continued to support the work of the UN humanitarian agencies and carry out its own limited humanitarian activities in support of the local population.

Unfortunately, UNIFIL's continued efforts came at a high cost as peacekeepers were often trapped by exchanges of fire between the two sides, and were occasionally directly caught up in fighting. In the most deadly incident, four military observers were killed when an Israeli laser-guided weapon struck the OGL's Observer Post in Khiyam. The patrol base – obliterated in the fatal strike – had been clearly marked, easily distinguishable through visual recognition and in place for more than 30 years. The Israeli authorities – who had failed to heed repeated calls from senior UN officials about the closeness of earlier strikes – ultimately assumed responsibility for the fatal attack. A civilian UN staff member and his wife were killed and a number of UNIFIL troops and OGL observers injured in separate incidents.

The Secretary-General realized that while getting agreement on a resolution had proved difficult, getting the resolution implemented would be even harder. To

build support for the swiftest possible implementation of 1701, including the deployment of a credible force to secure the fragile cessation of hostilities, he undertook an 11-day tour of Europe and the Middle East. Among his objectives were securing troop contributions; expediting the withdrawal of Israeli troops and deployment of Lebanese Armed Forces; convincing Israel to lift its blockade on Lebanon; and finding a mechanism to facilitate the release of the captured Israeli soldiers and Lebanese prisoners.

In Brussels, the Secretary-General worked with European leaders to generate the force necessary for South Lebanon. He left with a pledge of about 7,000 European troops – nearly half the total number of troops authorized under the enhanced UNIFIL. In addition to pledges of 'boots on the ground,' the Secretary-General also received a promise to put 'boats in the sea' through the proposed establishment of the UN's largest maritime presence in its history.

Getting Israel to lift its blockade of Lebanon proved to be a greater challenge, but ultimately the Secretary-General's persistence paid off. While Israel officials voiced concerns about the international community's ability to cut the flow of arms to Hezbollah, the Secretary-General stepped up his diplomatic activ-



French troops arriving at night, Naquoura, Lebanon, 19 September 2006. (UNIFIL Photo)

ities. Ten days later, after his meetings with regional leaders and phone conversations with world leaders and the parties involved, Israel finally agreed to a full lifting of the blockade.

Finding a mechanism to secure the release of the captured Israeli soldiers and Lebanese prisoners was also a high priority for the Secretary-General. After consultations with Israel and Lebanon, he appointed a facilitator to work with the two parties to find a mutually acceptable solution.

Throughout his trip, the Secretary-General stressed that he hoped his efforts towards stabilizing the situation in Lebanon, and relations between Lebanon and Israel, would also contribute to resolving other conflicts in the region – in particular the situation in Palestine and the Golan Heights.

While anticipating the Council's decision on which kind of military force (UN-led or multinational) would be responsible for keeping the eventual peace, DPKO engaged in discussions with potential troop contributing countries about a prospective mission's troop levels, requirements, and rules of engagement.

Once the decision was finally made that UNIFIL would be strengthened, the dis-

ussions intensified. It was obvious that UNIFIL's rules of engagement must allow the forces to respond as required should the situation in southern Lebanon present any risk of a resumption of fighting. It was agreed that in addition to exercising the inherent right to self-defence, all UNIFIL personnel may use force to ensure that UNIFIL's area of operations is not utilized for hostile activities; to resist attempts by forceful means to prevent UNIFIL from discharging its duties under the mandate of the Security Council; to protect UN personnel, facilities, installations and equipment; to ensure the security and freedom of movement of UN personnel and humanitarian workers; and to protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence in its areas of deployment, within its capabilities.

UNIFIL's Maritime Task Force (MTF) took over responsibility for supporting the Lebanese Navy in monitoring its territorial waters, securing the Lebanese coastline and preventing arms smuggling. With more than 1,600 sailors from Denmark, Germany, Greece, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Turkey, the MTF is the largest maritime force ever to have served under the UN flag.

The unprecedented speed of the deployment of UN peacekeepers, from 2,000

to 8,000 in less than two months, with robust rules of engagement, enabled the withdrawal of Israeli troops and the deployment of the Lebanese Armed Forces all the way to the Blue Line – for the first time in decades. UNIFIL organized tripartite meetings between the parties – the first held in years – to ensure that this process went without any major hitches. Meanwhile, de-miners from UNIFIL and the UN Mine Action Service began work on ridding the area of unexploded ordnance – including cluster munitions – thus lowering the danger posed to the hundreds of thousands of Lebanese who quickly returned to their homes in the south.

The Security Council's decision to strengthen UNIFIL instead of replacing it with a different type of multinational force represented a vote of confidence in UN peacekeeping. In recent years the Security Council had often assigned high-profile international military peacekeeping operations to NATO or "coalitions of the willing," instead of troops serving under the UN flag, – Kosovo, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Timor-Leste serve as current examples. But when it came to South Lebanon, the Security Council realized that UN peacekeeping was the only viable option – proving once again that the Blue Helmets remain an invaluable tool for the international community to resolve crises that threaten international peace and security.

Europe's decision to provide troops to the enhanced UNIFIL not only demonstrated the continent's support for the people of Lebanon and Israel, but also signified that Europe was resuming a prominent role in UN peacekeeping. France and Italy drastically boosted their existing contributions to UNIFIL, and were joined by soldiers from 20 other countries both from Europe and beyond. Prior to this sizeable deployment of Blue Helmets to Lebanon, less than 6% of all UN peacekeepers serving globally had come from the continent – a considerable drop from the large number of European peacekeepers serving just a decade ago. In fact, the 7,000 troops pledged to Lebanon more than doubled the total number of military troops com-



A UNIFIL peacekeeper liaising with an officer of the Lebanese Armed Forces, South Lebanon, 19 September 2006. (UNIFIL Photo)

ing from European/NATO countries in all other UN peacekeeping missions.

In a unique arrangement, UNIFIL troop contributors have provided a total of 33 officers and staff to the mission's strategic military cell at UN headquarters which

provides military guidance at the strategic level to the forces on the ground.

The implementation of 1701 remains a barometer of the will of the international community and the parties on the ground to move ahead with a meaning-

ful peace in the region. As the Secretary-General has pointed out, this new and welcome commitment must be matched by ongoing support and assistance not only to Lebanon and Israel, but to the wider Middle East region. ■

Other UN peace operations in the Middle East

UNSCO

Based in Gaza, with duty stations in Jerusalem and Ramallah and a mandate covering Israel, the occupied Palestinian territory, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Egypt, the **Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO)** is the focal point in the region for UN support to peace initiatives and for the co-ordination of humanitarian aid to the Palestinians.

2006 began with expectations faltering that Israel's withdrawal from Gaza would usher in a period in which the parties would return to the negotiating table and work towards the implementation of the Road Map, with its vision of a two State solution. On 4 January, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon was hospitalized following a serious stroke, and on 25 January Hamas swept to power in free and fair Palestinian legislative elections.

Despite UNSCO's continued strive for dialogue between the parties, the only meeting between Israeli and Palestinian leaders in 2006 was a courtesy encounter on the margins of a gathering in Jordan.

On the ground in Gaza and the West Bank, there was continued fighting and instability, with Palestinian militants firing rockets from Gaza into Israel and Israel conducting ground and air incursions into Gaza. A large number of civilians were killed and infrastructure destroyed as a result of the escalation of violence.

70 per cent of Palestinians currently live below the poverty threshold and unemployment rates are soaring. Economic hardship has been compounded by Israel's refusal to handover customs and tax it collects on behalf of the Palestinian Authority under international agreements.

Meanwhile, in spite of calls by the Quartet – the United Nations, the United States, the European Union and Russia – for Israel to desist, settlement construction has continued as has work on the barrier. UNSCO has repeatedly warned that this would prejudice the outcome of Final Status negotiations. UN agencies continue to monitor these developments and their impact on the lives of Palestinians. ■

UNTSO

The United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) was established to monitor ceasefire lines negotiated after the 1948 conflict between Israel and its neighbours. UNTSO has evolved with the changing dynamics of the region including five major wars, subsequent ceasefires, and two peace treaties. To fulfill its current peacekeeping requirements, UNTSO provides unarmed military observers – hailing from 23 troop contributing countries – to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF). UNTSO military observers provide daily contact with local communities and their leaders along the Blue Line in Lebanon and with military commanders and deployed forces on either side of the ceasefire line in the Golan Heights.

With the outbreak of war between Israel and Hezbollah in July, UNTSO personnel maintained their positions at their patrol bases to fulfill their mandate requirements. Four UNTSO observers were killed when an Israeli bomb struck their patrol base near Khiyam, Lebanon. After two weeks on the line reporting on the activity of both parties, UNTSO personnel relocated to their headquarters in

Tyre. Within days of the UN-brokered ceasefire, they were back at their patrol bases providing support to UNIFIL. ■

UNDOF

Established in 1974 following the agreed disengagement of Israeli and Syrian forces on the Golan Heights, the **United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF)** is tasked with supervising the implementation of the accord and maintaining the ceasefire. The force consists of 1,025 troops hailing from Austria, Canada, India, Japan, Nepal, Poland and Slovakia. When renewing its mandate in December, the Security Council echoed the Secretary-General's statement that UNDOF's continued presence is "essential" given that the situation in the region is tense and "is likely to remain so, unless and until a comprehensive settlement covering all aspects of the Middle East problem can be reached". ■

OPRSG

The UN assistance role in Lebanon was growing even before war erupted in Lebanon and Israel over the summer of 2006, bringing a new set of political, peacekeeping, humanitarian and development challenges. **The Office of the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General for Lebanon (OPRSG)** proved to be an invaluable set of eyes and ears in Beirut, and a key instrument in the UN's diplomacy for peace. Relying on contacts with all of the key actors in the country, Geir Pedersen, the Personal Representative, and his team played a role in forging the cessation of hostilities that permitted the deployment of the expanded peacekeeping force. The office continued at year's end to promote needed dialogue between the country's political forces. ■

UN pursues peace in Darfur

Although UNMIS' main focus in 2006 was on the fulfillment of its mandate to help implement the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) of 2005, the deteriorating crisis in Sudan's western Darfur region and international efforts to resolve it increasingly involved the mission as the year progressed.

Initially, this consisted of providing assistance to promote a political settlement to the conflict by providing good offices, substantive expertise and logistical support to the African Union (AU) mediation and the participants attending the talks in Abuja, Nigeria.

Those talks culminated in the signing of the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) in Abuja on 5 May 2006 after months of negotiations. The DPA provided a moment of hope that three years of suffering in Darfur might be about to come to

an end, although it had been signed by the Government of Sudan and only one of the Darfur rebel groups – the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) faction led by Minni Minawi.

It quickly became clear, however, that serious problems existed among Darfur's other rebel groups, who were given a grace period until 31 May to sign the DPA, but failed to do so, and with the Government of Sudan's vision of the agreement's implementation.

On the ground, the lack of information about the provisions of the agreement among the general population of Darfur was quickly exploited by those tribal and rebel leaders who opposed it, and the camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs) started to split into pro and anti-DPA factions. Communities loyal to Abdul Wahid, a rebel leader who had not

signed the DPA, were encouraged to demonstrate against the agreement, claiming that it did not represent their interests. The Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), another of the rebel movements, declared its early opposition.

By the start of 2006, the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS), deployed originally to monitor compliance of the parties with the Humanitarian Cease-fire Agreement of 8 April 2004, was clearly struggling to fulfill an enhanced mandate given to it on 20 October 2004 to contribute to a secure environment for the delivery of humanitarian assistance and the return of refugees and IDPs. Despite often valiant efforts, AMIS lacked adequate funding and resources. To the UN and others in the international community, it was clear that a multidimensional UN peacekeeping operation was required.



SRSG Jan Pronk addresses a crowd of SLA-G19 (non-signatories of the Darfur Peace Agreement) leaders, fighters and civilians in Birmaza, North Darfur, 18 October 2006. (UNMIS Photo by Frederic Noy)

The signing of the DPA added impetus to the detailed planning for a transition to a UN mission already underway at UNMIS headquarters in Khartoum and at UN headquarters in New York.

In Khartoum, however, President Omar al-Bashir and his Government quickly rejected the idea of a UN peacekeeping operation taking over from AMIS, which the Security Council called for in resolution 1663 of 24 March 2006. The AU PSC had also indicated its approval of a transition to UN peacekeeping.

The Government of Sudan, citing threats to its sovereignty by the West, mobilized public sentiment against a UN peacekeeping force in Darfur, in Sudan and across the Muslim world. A series of high-level meetings and missions took place throughout the year to convince President al-Bashir that the UN intended only to protect civilians and help bring peace and stability to Sudan.

After intense diplomatic pressure, including from Security Council members during a visit to the region in June, and a special mission led by by Lakhdar Brahimi, Khartoum reluctantly agreed to allow a joint UN-AU technical assessment team into Sudan to undertake the necessary preparatory planning for a UN peacekeeping operation in Darfur.

That team, led by Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Jean-Marie Guéhenno and AU Commissioner for Peace and Security Said Djinnit, were unable to convince President al-Bashir of the need to support a transition to a UN force.

On 31 August 2006, the Security Council adopted resolution 1706 in which it decided to expand UNMIS' mandate by up to 17,300 international military personnel and up to 3,300 police and 16 Formed Police Units, to be deployed to Darfur. However, this was quickly and emphatically rejected by the Government of Sudan, and the clear signs on the ground in Darfur were that they had decided to pursue a military solution to the crisis in the region.

As the situation in Darfur continued to disintegrate, the Secretary-General,



Nomadic tribesman on their way to western Bahr Al Ghazal dig for water in a dried waddi, 6 November 2006. (UNMIS Photo by Frederic Noy)

using the recommendations made by the assessment team, instead planned a series of measures to help bolster AMIS, pending deployment of a multidimensional UN peacekeeping operation, which he deemed necessary to implement the DPA. This proposed support included command and control; communications; enhanced mobility; engineering; training; location and sourcing of water; resource and administrative management; and public information.

While efforts by Security Council members, other key member states and regional organizations to persuade Khartoum to change its mind were undertaken, UNMIS continued its intensive efforts to bring the non-signatories into the peace process. UNMIS also continued its support to AMIS, which included establishing telephone and information technology networks, and providing training to AMIS on humanitarian issues and asset management systems. In addition, UNMIS provided public information support to help the AU promote the DPA, and UNMIS civil affairs officers on a number of occasions provided mediation and support to efforts to diffuse tension in the IDP camps.

On the humanitarian front, United Nations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) continued to expand the massive humanitarian aid effort in the

region in order to render aid to the increasing number of communities affected by the violence. While facing constant funding shortages, restrictions on access and instances of harassment and intimidation, the relief effort sustained more than 2.5 million people in the first half of the year. Some 13,000 humanitarian workers from over 80 NGOs, Red Cross/Red Crescent societies and 13 UN agencies were involved.

In addition, through the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the UNDP, a significant human rights presence was consolidated in Darfur in 2006 to monitor and verify cases of human rights abuses, and provide human rights training, as well as legal representation for victims of torture, gender-based violence, and other human rights violations.

In the second half of 2006, the situation in on the ground in Darfur continued to deteriorate. Violence spiraled across the region; obstruction and attacks against humanitarian workers intensified; banditry was rampant; militia groups continued to target civilians; and the incidence of sexual violence against women and girls increased. By the end of the year, those in need of humanitarian assistance had risen to around 4 million, while over 400 humanitarian workers had been forced to relocate for their safety.

In addition, implementation of the DPA had fallen well behind schedule. The DPA bodies which had been formed, such as the Ceasefire Commission, suffered delays and disagreements over their functioning. Other DPA bodies were not established at all.

The Secretary-General warned the Security Council on 26 September that the region was facing a catastrophe and that the Government of Sudan and rebel groups were showing utter disregard to the DPA. He stressed the urgent need to broaden public support for the agreement through initiatives such as the Darfur-Darfur Dialogue and Consultation.

On 20 September, the AU PSC extended the AMIS mandate until 31 December 2006, and called on the UN to support AMIS. The UN and AU agreed on a package of immediate support, with a view to strengthening efforts to implement the DPA.

On 22 September, the Secretary-General and AU Chairman Konare wrote to President al-Bashir, asking that he support implementation of this plan. In a response, President al-Bashir indicated that he did.

At UN headquarters, a three-phased plan was developed: two stages of increasing

support to AMIS, followed by a unique “hybrid” operation to be conducted in tandem by AU and UN peacekeepers.

On 16 November 2006, the Secretary-General convened a landmark, high-level meeting in Addis Ababa, which brought together the five permanent members of the Security Council, representatives of the Government of Sudan, States and organizations with political influence in the region, and some AMIS troop contributing countries. The participants of the meeting agreed on the three-phased approach to peacekeeping in Darfur. This was then endorsed by the participants of the AU PSC on 30 November in Abuja, which was in turn endorsed, on 3 December by the Council of Ministers of the Sudan – under the chairmanship of President al-Bashir – and on 19 December by a Security Council presidential statement.

UNMIS has since been working intensively with the Secretariat and the AU to translate these positive political and diplomatic developments into concrete results on the ground, focusing on facilitating the deployment of the assistance packages.

Tragically, by the end of the year, the parties on the ground had shown no signs of abandoning the pursuit of their ob-

jectives through military means and as a result the prospects for vulnerable communities continued to look extremely bleak for 2007. In addition, the spill-over of violence to Chad and the Central African Republic was threatening a regional crisis of even greater proportions.

The year also ended on a sour personal note between UNMIS and the Government of Sudan when, in a letter dated 22 October 2006, the Government of Sudan “terminated” the mission of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Sudan, Jan Pronk. Although the Secretary-General protested the decision with President al-Bashir, SRSR Pronk left when his contract ended at the end of the year. ■

UNMIS helps to cement peace between North and South Sudan

Sudan took positive steps to implement the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2006, including the redeployment of troops and the fulfillment of other security commitments. Nevertheless, areas of the country were still plagued by armed militias, disagreements over borders, disputed oil revenues and the escalating crisis in Darfur.

A major milestone was reached in July, when the Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) pulled its remaining 5,672 soldiers out of eastern Sudan and moved them to the South. The United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) actually closed its Kassala office in September, withdrawing 80 civilian and 250 military staff.

The Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) continued to withdraw from the South, with a target date of July 2007 for complete redeployment to the North. Southerners, however, still faced the threat of “other armed groups” (OAGs) – renegade bands of former combatants who had failed to join either the SPLA or the SAF, as stipulated in the CPA.

In several southern areas, commanders of the South Sudan Defence Force, an OAG, refused to abide by their agreement to join the SPLA, as laid down in



Residents of Torit, eastern Equatoria, watch as newly trained police officers (former SPLA soldiers) march at their graduation ceremony, 15 November 2006. (UNMIS Photo by Tim McKulka)

the Juba Declaration in January. There were suspicions that militias had remained active to create instability and control disputed areas or oilfields. A location of particular dispute was the Abyei transitional area, where political tensions remained high and the populace still lacked a local administration.

The South was also beset with pockets of insecurity due to tribal tensions, an abundance of small arms, and the return of refugees and displaced persons. In addition, southerners suffered sporadic attacks by the regionally based Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), until Government of Southern Sudan-mediated peace talks led the LRA and Ugandan Government to sign a cessation of hostilities agreement in August.

The delay in forming Joint Integrated Units between SAF and SPLA forces to fill security gaps left by the former opposing forces also affected the security situation. Efforts were urgently required to shape the SPLA into a modern, professional army not only to subdue hostilities, but to rein in errant soldiers who were clashing with the local population.

Having completed almost 100 per cent of its deployment in the South, UNMIS

was able to help stem violence in the region by supporting both military and civilian disarmament programmes, which included training over 400 SPLA data collectors to register their troops. The mission also sent over 600 police officers to the South, who assisted with community policing in Juba, and in training the newly formed Southern Sudan Police Service.

In addition, UNMIS helped bolster the South's war-torn infrastructure, assisting with the demining and repairing of more than 300 kilometres of roads during the year. The mission supported projects addressing the lack of basic services, such as water, sanitation, health care and education. These were urgently needed for the thousands of returnees and refugees who were now re-entering the region, as well as to improve local morale.

As the South struggled to rebuild, demarcation of the North-South border faced serious delays, which will affect the sharing of oil revenues, the completion of re-deployment in 2007, the mid-term elections in 2009, and the referendum on unity in 2011. Governmental parties also squabbled about the status of the National Petroleum Commission – whether

it would be advisory or decision-making – and the equitable division of oil revenues between North and South Sudan.

The Government's hesitation in deciding on key issues slowed down several CPA activities, including preparations for national elections, originally set for mid-2008, but now delayed until mid-2009. Commissions envisioned in the peace accord were either non-functional or yet to be established, including those focusing on national human rights, the civil service and land disputes. The pace of CPA implementation picked up during the final legislative session of the year, however, when some 64 bills were tabled.

Analysts have suggested that continuing strife in Darfur could have consequences on implementation of the CPA, and that peace in Sudan is indivisible. A successful CPA, they argue, could become a model for sustainable peace in Darfur, but the Government must make greater efforts to make the North-South agreement work. Considerable progress will be needed in the coming months in such areas as border demarcation, security and police reform, the return of refugees and IDPs, and preparation for future elections. ■

BONUCA: Peacekeeping to follow dialogue

Convinced that dialogue is the only solution to the continuing conflict in the Central African Republic and its sub-region, the **United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office (BONUCA)** in that country was behind a plethora of peace initiatives in 2006. General Lamine Cissé, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and others have held a series of talks with political parties, trade unions, civil society organizations and foreign ambassadors with a view to making the negotiation process as inclusive as possible. This would mean counting the armed opposition among the main stakeholders.

In an effort to distribute and disseminate information on its activities, BONUCA held regular radio broadcasts

on the culture of peace and the ideals of human rights. In December, the office also organized a training session for officials from the regional offices for national reconciliation to support the Government's initiative to create a forum for meetings and dialogue throughout the country.

The internal situation has been marked by crises within the political movements, which are wracked with dissension. The Government has called on the parties to unite or adopt different names. Meanwhile, BONUCA has mediated between the authorities and other political leaders to promote reconciliation. The office has encouraged the political parties to engage in dialogue and to maintain their unity,

given their key role in strengthening CAR's fragile democracy.

The security situation in the region remained volatile and the deployment of a UN peacekeeping force on the country's borders with Sudan and Chad – in the planning as 2007 began – would help ease the growing tensions in the area. While some 50,000 displaced persons have received assistance from UN agencies and affiliated NGOs thus far, close to 20,000 in less accessible rural areas are still in need of help.

The insecurity prevailing in various parts of the country has led to a deteriorating human rights situation where violations committed by armed gangs and wayward elements of the defence and security forces often go unpunished. ■

Timor-Leste: Hard lessons in peacekeeping

The international community had considered Timor-Leste a notable UN peacekeeping achievement until violence exploded in April 2006, less than a year after the last UN peacekeepers had departed and a few months before the mandate of the follow-on political office was to conclude. The unexpected turn of events in this tiny, new South-East Asian country left many wondering what exactly had gone wrong.

The months following the departure of the UN peacekeeping mission in May 2005 had seen progress for Timor-Leste. Four years after independence in 2002, international confidence was growing in the new State, and the traumas of 1999 appeared to be subsiding. Instead, the violence of 2006 seemed to reveal the risks to nation-building of international forces leaving too soon or not having done enough while there.

In early 2006, UN planners discussed ways of continuing support after the departure of the UN political office (UNOTIL), particularly for presidential and parliamentary elections due in 2007. But in April, a simmering dispute over sacked members of the armed forces flared into the open.

The “petitioners”, as those soldiers had become known, were to hold a peaceful demonstration from 24 to 28 April to protest the dismissal of some 600 soldiers (more than one third of the nation’s armed forces), demanding the establishment of an independent commission to address their grievances, including alleged discrimination within the armed forces against persons from the western districts.

On the final day of the demonstration, violence erupted in front of the Government Palace, followed by other incidents around the capital, Dili. By the end of the day, five Timorese had been killed and more than 40 injured. The ramifications were far-reaching. Tensions heightened between the armed forces and the Timorese police force (PNTL), as well as within PNTL (often setting easterners against westerners), leading to the disintegration of the PNTL. Thousands of Timorese in Dili were displaced from their homes and sought refuge in churches, other public buildings and United Nations facilities, while others fled to outlying districts.

On 25 May, the situation worsened as members of the Timorese Defence

Forces (F-FDTL) launched armed attacks against the PNTL national headquarters. UN military training advisers and UN police negotiated a ceasefire but, as the chief UN Military Training Adviser escorted the unarmed Timorese police out of the headquarters, F-FDTL officers reportedly opened fire killing eight and wounding more than two dozen people.

Meanwhile, on 24 May, the leaders of Timor-Leste made requests to the Governments of Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand and Portugal, for police and military assistance to restore peace and security. Two days later, international forces arrived to restore law and order, which had completely broken down. Gangs were looting and setting fires; 37 people lost their lives, with many others wounded. The humanitarian consequences were severe, with more than 150,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs). These events shaped the rest of 2006.

Four successive UN missions had been deployed in Timor-Leste from mid-1999 until the troubles of April/May 2006. Each had a distinct purpose, the first, UNAMET, organized and conducted a popular consultation which resulted in the Timorese rejection of special autonomy within Indonesia. From October 1999 to May 2002, UNTAET exercised legislative and executive authority over the territory during the transition to independence and supported capacity building for self-Government. Next, the UN Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISSET) was to provide assistance until all operational responsibilities were devolved to the Timorese authorities, and to enable the new nation to attain self-sufficiency. Although Secretary-General Kofi Annan had recommended maintaining a peacekeeping force, he failed to win support from all members of the Security Council, which instead established a special political office (the UN Office in Timor-Leste or UNOTIL) to support the further development of critical State institutions, including police, and provided training in democratic governance and human rights.



A United Nations police officer from Malaysia patrols the Comoro market in Dili, October 27, 2006. (Reuters Photo by Lirio Da Fonseca)

The achievements of these missions were substantial. Nonetheless, the 2006 crisis forced the UN and international community to take a hard look at nation-building and peacekeeping policies and practices.

“The sad events of recent weeks reflect shortcomings not only on the part of the Timorese leadership, but also on the part of the international community, [in] inadequately sustaining Timor-Leste’s nation-building process,” the Secretary-General told the Security Council in June. “We have learned, at a painful price for Timor-Leste, that the building of institutions on the basis of fundamental principles of democracy and the rule of law is not a simple process that can be completed within a few short years.”

At the end of May 2006, Secretary-General Annan dispatched a Special Envoy, Ian Martin, to assess the situation. He returned to tell the Security Council that the most serious underlying cause of the conflict lay within the security sector.

“The crisis has revealed political cleavages, not only between the defence force and the police service, which has long been a subject of concern, but also internally in each institution,” Martin said. Within each institution, ideological divisions, originating from the resistance and influencing the initial recruitment of both institutions had been allowed to fester.

On 8 June, the then Foreign Minister, José Ramos-Horta, asked the Secretary-General to appoint a Special Commission of Inquiry to review the incidents of April and May and other related issues, ensuring that “the outcome of such an inquiry will assist the reconstitution of Timor-Leste’s security sector and ensure accountability for criminal and human rights violations allegedly committed during the crisis period.”

In its final report released on 17 October, the Independent Special Commission of Inquiry, established under the auspices of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, established the responsibility of various actors and institutions, including several former high-ranking officials.



A boy salutes his father, a police officer deployed to Timor-Leste, during a sending-off ceremony at Camp Crame headquarters in Manila, the Philippines, October 14, 2006. (Reuters Photo by Cheryl Ravelo)

Implementing the Commission’s recommendations will require further assistance from the UN and the international community, particularly in helping to establish a stronger, independent judicial system.

On 25 August, the Security Council established a new peacekeeping operation, the UN Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), entrusted with a far-reaching mandate and a strong civilian component, including 1,608 United Nations civilian police.

Among UNMIT’s key tasks are facilitating the process of national reconciliation; supporting the electoral process; supporting the restoration of security; training the Timorese police; supporting and strengthening key institutions; supporting and strengthening human rights monitoring; supporting the completion of investigations into outstanding cases of serious human rights violations committed in 1999; cooperating and coordinating with UN agencies and other partners; facilitating the provision of relief and recovery assistance; assisting the design of poverty reduction and economic growth policies;

mainstreaming gender perspectives and those of children and youth; and providing accurate information to the Timorese population.

In the weeks following UNMIT’s establishment, the situation in Timor-Leste remained volatile. With its executive policing role, the UNMIT police, in close cooperation with the international security forces, have maintained overall public security, often restoring calm when violent incidents occur and engaging in community policing. Further progress was achieved on 1 December with the signing of the Supplemental Arrangement on Policing between UNMIT and the Government, which regulates UNMIT’s exercise of executive police authority and the reconstitution of the national police force.

A key objective for UNMIT is to continue to contribute to the maintenance of public security until the Timorese police are able to resume their responsibilities. The restoration of peace and security is a prerequisite for the return of 100,000 IDPs to their homes and for the presidential and parliamentary elections to be held in April/May 2007. ■

Sierra Leone: Sustaining the hard-won peace

Sierra Leone has come a long way since the arrival of the first United Nations peacekeepers in 1999. While the country has made significant strides in the past six years, with the assistance of the UN and other partners, these achievements need to be consolidated and sustained. Concerted efforts are required to address the root causes of the conflict and the prevailing stability has yet to produce tangible economic dividends and social benefits for the majority of Sierra Leoneans.

To assist the Government of Sierra Leone in addressing these challenges, the Security Council established a follow-on mission, the UN Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL). The Integrated Office – operational since 1 January 2006 – in collaboration with the Government and the entire UN Country Team, has already made some progress in consolidating peace, enhancing democratic transformation and building national capacity for conflict prevention.

The Secretary-General's visit to Sierra Leone in July, provided an opportunity for both the Government and the UN to review developments in the country. Progress made includes the finalization of the peace consolidation strategy, prepared jointly by the Government and UNIOSIL, as well as reform of the security sector, promotion of good governance, and democratic transition. In addition, the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for 2006-2007 has been revised and signed to prioritize and focus the support of the UN system in the social and economic areas that contribute to increase security, improve access to justice, and enhance human development.

However, without substantial progress in economic and social development, the achievements reached so far could unravel, the country's Vice-President, Solomon Berewa, told the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) during its first country-specific meeting in October. Seizing the opportunity to alert the international community to the urgent need to accelerate efforts towards peacebuilding, Mr. Berewa said: "We are here

because we are beginning to hear the alarm bells that signal very credible threats to our peace."

The head of UNIOSIL and Executive Representative of the Secretary-General for Sierra Leone, Victor Angelo, at the same meeting emphasized that it was essential for the international community to help address the root causes of the country's conflict, which still threaten the peace.

Many potential sources of tension remain, including poverty, regional instability, corruption and lack of accountability, youth unemployment, weaknesses in the rule of law and low capacity for public services delivery. There are fears that progress might stagnate as international attention turns to other crises. UNIOSIL is designed to assist the Government in tackling these concerns and to ensure a cohesive approach among UN agencies, funds and programmes.

The second presidential and parliamentary elections in Sierra Leone since the end of the conflict will be held in July 2007. With the support of UNIOSIL and other external partners, preparations for the elections have included the completion of the electoral boundary demarcation exercise. The elections are critical for the country's continued progress on the path to stability, democratization and development. In addition to some constraints facing the electoral process, there are indications of growing intolerance among some political actors that could lead to violent campaigns and disruption of the process. These tendencies suggest that the UN and the wider international community should pay greater attention to the forthcoming elections in Sierra Leone.

UNIOSIL is the first Security Council mandated follow-on mission with a broad mandate in the political, security, human rights and development areas, in an integrated manner. But first experiences have already shown that it is hard to attract resources to overcome the heritage of yesterday's crisis.

UNIOSIL's primarily challenge will be to sustain the international attention necessary to consolidate peace that is still

in the making. The inclusion of Sierra Leone on the agenda of the PBC is an encouraging indication of continued engagement of the international community in Sierra Leone. In this regard, the Government, national partners and civil society organizations, are working in collaboration with UNIOSIL, the UN Country Team and other external partners to ensure a well coordinated and effective engagement with the PBC. ■

From peacekeeping to peace consolidation in Burundi

The United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB) completed its mandate on 31 December 2006, having overseen the first democratic elections in twelve years, the installation of a national Government, and the disarmament and demobilization of nearly 22,000 combatants. As Burundi takes an important step towards lasting peace and stability, the UN has pledged continued support through funding from the Peacebuilding Fund and the establishment on 1 January 2007 of BINUB, a new Integrated Office in the country.

The signing of the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement in 2000 paved the way for a ceasefire two years later between Burundi's Hutu and Tutsi population, ending a long-standing ethnic conflict which had ravaged the country. The deployment of Blue Helmets to assume their peacekeeping duties came in 2004 to replace a year-long AU mission in Burundi.

During ONUB's tenure, at least 2,500 officers from Burundi's national police force enrolled in a UN police training-of-trainers programme to strengthen activities in areas such as anti-corruption, anti-terrorism, penitentiary security and border and airport security. Burundian police were assisted by their ONUB colleagues in ensuring adequate security conditions for voters during a total of six elections in 2006, from the communal and local to the legislative and presidential, including a referendum on a new Constitution. In another sign of confi-

dence in Burundi's police force, a contingent of 39 officers joined the AU peacekeeping mission in Darfur, Sudan.

The overall security situation improved, in particular, following the signing on 7 September of a Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement by the Government and Palipehutu-FNL, the last remaining armed group in Burundi. However, the slow pace of implementation is a source for concern and the UN supports efforts to quickly address the outstanding issues.

“Burundi has come a long way from its darkest days of conflict but there is still a long way to go,” said Carolyn McAskie, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support and former SRSG for Burundi. “It is critical that the international community support the country now as it moves past this fragile post conflict stage towards long term and sustainable development, based on a broad commitment to peace.” ■



ONUB's Thai Engineer Company during the contingent's farewell parade and medal ceremony, Bujumbura, Burundi, 31 October 2006. (UNOB Photo by Mario Rizzolio)

Peacebuilding architecture takes shape

The UN's new **Peacebuilding Commission (PBC)** is moving ahead with helping Burundi and Sierra Leone identify and tackle their numerous post-war challenges; the **Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO)** is operational; and the **Peacebuilding Fund (PBF)** is gearing up to disburse funds in both countries.

Less than six months after its inauguration, at the UN in New York, 23 June 2006, the PBC was assisting the key players in both Burundi and Sierra Leone to develop a commonly-agreed strategy for each country to rebuild physical, administrative and social infrastructures.

By bringing together the Governments, the UN Country Team, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and international donors, the PBC has facilitated agreement on a holistic approach to supporting these two African countries during their transition from peacekeeping to peace consolidation and development.

At the first two country specific meetings, in New York in October and December, both countries on the PBC's agenda were candid in recognizing

peacebuilding challenges which needed immediate attention, including governance, human rights and youth unemployment, as well as economic, judicial and security sector reform.

Promoting good governance, strengthening the rule of law and ensuring community recovery were identified as some of the priority areas for Burundi. However, a weak judicial system, impunity, and disputes over land ownership remained as problems. So far, little or no progress has been made in implementing the comprehensive ceasefire reached in September between the Government and the Party for the Liberation of the Hutu People-National Liberation Forces (Palipehutu-FNL).

The December meeting reported that the Government of Sierra Leone was working with international partners on reform in the justice and security sectors, to review its anti-corruption strategy, and to establish and strengthen governance institutions, especially in the lead up to the 2007 national elections. More effort was needed to enhance the role and participation of civil society including women's

groups, to implement the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, to support the Special Court, and to support the newly established National Human Rights Commission. The PBC also noted the need to encourage sub-regional cooperation.

The PBC's capacity was backed up by the Secretary-General's launch on 11 October of the Peacebuilding Fund, designed to “kick-start” critical Peacebuilding interventions and serve as a catalyst for more sustained engagement by multilateral and bilateral actors. In addition, a Peacebuilding Support Office has been created within the UN Secretariat to assist these new structures in carrying out their challenging work.

The Fund has received pledges of more than US\$210 million and will be used to address critical peacebuilding gaps determined jointly by the UN and the relevant Government authorities. Both countries will receive an allocation of at least US\$25 million from the PBF in early 2007, following a review of their respective priority plans. ■

Côte d'Ivoire: Transition to peace extended by another year

A succession of false starts, stalemates and blockages throughout the year obliged the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the African Union (AU) and the UN Security Council to give Ivorian leaders another year to organise proper elections and complete the peace process, beyond the 31 October 2006 deadline initially set by the international community. Likewise, the mandate of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) was extended for an additional six months until the end of June 2007.

Elections would have culminated the completion of key processes agreed upon between the Ivorian parties, including the disarmament of former combatants. People without identity papers – numbering about 3 million – were to have received birth certificates at “audiences foraines”, public mobile courts, which would also deliver certificates of nationality to Ivorians and residence permits to foreigners. However, both processes suffered as a result of bickering between the country's two main political blocks.

In a successful pilot project in May, 5,000 persons received duplicate birth certificates. However, when nationwide hearings were launched in July, President Laurent Gbagbo's Front Populaire Ivoirien (FPI) and allied pressure

groups known collectively as the Patriotic Galaxy blocked the mobile courts. This led to clashes between the Young Patriots and the youth wing of the Rally of Houphouëtistes for Democracy and Peace (RDHP), an alliance of parties opposed to the presidential camp, during which at least five people died. The clashes ended in late July when the two sides signed an agreement to bury the hatchet.

Prime Minister Charles Konan Banny subsequently issued new guidelines, as the FPI had demanded, under which the mobile courts would not have the power to issue certificates of nationality. While the new guidelines promoted the lifting of the FPI's boycott of the mobile court hearings, it angered both the political opposition and the former rebel Forces Nouvelles (FN). President Gbagbo on Independence Day (7 August) confirmed that the courts would issue only substitute birth certificates. Then he issued a decree replacing all judges, including those who had been heading the courts. As a result, few people appeared before the mobile courts, and the operation was ultimately suspended.

Talks on disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) proceeded erratically, involving the armed wing of the Forces Nouvelles (FAFN) on one

side and the Forces de Défense et de Sécurité (FDS) on the other, an under the supervision of UNOCI and the French Force Licorne.

In May, a breakthrough seemed imminent when both sides started withdrawing combatants from the frontlines. But in August, the FAFN reacted to Gbagbo's Independence Day statement, and to the new guidelines on identification issued by the Prime Minister, by suspending their participation in the DDR talks.

Discussions on the restructuring of the army were launched in December, but the first two sessions achieved little. Nor did the dismantling and demobilisation of militias get far. Some 1,000 militia members were demobilised in August, but the process was plagued by demands for the inclusion of more supposed members of militia and eventually suspended due to a paucity of weapons handed in.

Côte d'Ivoire's peace process was also bogged down by a storm over the tenure of the National Assembly. In January, the Young Patriots showed their opposition to a statement by the International Working Group on Côte d'Ivoire, which noted that the Assembly's term of office had ended. They attacked UN installations in Abidjan and the west and plundered residences of UN staff in the western towns of Guiglo and Daloa, prompting the relocation of UN staff and military units, as well as a temporary reinforcement of the mission by the transfer of troops from the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL).

Calm returned following a meeting between the then Chairman of the AU, Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, and Ivorian leaders. The status of the erstwhile National Assembly has since remained controversial.

Claims by the Patriotic Galaxy during January's upheavals that the international community was trampling on Ivorian sovereignty, the Constitution and national institutions were voiced throughout the rest of the year.

One area of progress was the redeployment to FN areas of administrators dis-



Members of the Bangladeshi battalion celebrate reconciliation among village chiefs in the Zone of Confidence, 15 March 2006. (UNOCI Photo by Paulo Ferreira)

placed by the conflict who began returning in August, with the help of UNOCI, albeit limited to the identification process.

UNOCI also helped enable students in FN areas to take final examinations for the first time in two years by transporting examination papers and officials and generally securing the process.

UN peacekeepers continued to safeguard a three-year-old ceasefire, and to assist the State in other ways, such as transporting and escorting officials across the Zone of Confidence, an area controlled by UNOCI and the Force Licorne that separates the Government-controlled south from the FN-controlled north.

UNOCI peacekeeping contingents continued to provide health care to vulnerable populations and to carry out other humanitarian and developmental work such as building roads and rehabilitating schools and health centres.

If Côte d'Ivoire failed to move closer to peace in 2006, it was not for want of contacts between its main political leaders, known as the "Big Five": President Gbagbo, Prime Minister Banny, FN-leader Guillaume Soro, and the two main leaders of the RHDP, one-time Prime Minister Alassane Ouattara and ex-President Henri Konan Bédié.

Between March and September, the Big Five met five times in the political capital, Yamoussoukro, and Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire's economic capital. Their third meeting, held in July under the sponsorship of Secretary-General Kofi Annan, yielded a timetable for delivery on commitments related to DDR, the dismantling of militias, identification, the electoral code and a code of conduct for the media. Most of these deadlines, however, were not met.

As part of the Secretary-General's efforts to restore dialogue among the parties and re-launch the key processes under the roadmap, he also organized a mini-summit in New York in September, in the margins of the 61st session of the General Assembly, to take stock of the progress made. While a great number of regional and Ivorian leaders attended, President Gbagbo boycotted the meeting.



Ivorian Prime Minister Charles Konan Banny and French Minister of Development and Francophony Brigitte Girardin visit an illegal toxic waste site in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, 8 September 2006. (UNOCI Photo by Ky Chung)

The President of the Republic of the Congo, Denis Sassou-Nguesso, travelled to Abidjan on two occasions in his capacity as Chairman of the AU in an attempt to break the impasse. Other mediation efforts included appeals by the Ivorian Catholic bishops for dialogue between the parties as well as numerous initiatives by civil society.

Security Council resolution 1721 was adopted on 1 November, following the referral by the AU Peace and Security Council of a body of decisions made during its summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in October and inspired by recommendations from an earlier ECOWAS meeting in Abuja, Nigeria. The resolution added new dimensions to the transition, including a greater role for the AU – alongside UNOCI – in daily mediation with the Ivorian parties.

Resolution 1721 also tasked the High Representative for Elections with verifying that measures taken at every stage of the electoral process were in keeping with international norms. It vested stronger executive powers in Prime Minister Konan Banny to enable him to push the peace process forward, including the ability to issue decrees.

However, as the year struggled to an end, another major crisis developed when the President issued decrees reinstating State officials whom Banny had suspended in connection with the dumping of toxic waste in Abidjan in August, which killed

at least 10 people and sickened 100,000. Gbagbo also dismissed the directors of the state newspaper *Fraternité Matin*.

This led to an open clash between the President and the Prime Minister. When Banny criticised the measures on State TV, the President promptly removed the broadcaster's directors. Protests followed in December by RHDP youths in the hinterland and Abidjan suburbs. Banny withdrew to Yamoussoukro, his home area.

Amid efforts to mediate between the two men, Gbagbo suggested, in a televised address on 19 December, direct negotiations between his camp and the FN, the scrapping of the Zone of Confidence, and other measures to end the crisis. He said time had come for Ivorians to take charge of the peace process since the international community had failed.

The opposition, on the other hand, stressed the need to remain within the framework of resolution 1721, while the Secretary-General urged Gbagbo and Banny to initiate a sustained political dialogue with all Ivorian political leaders to find common ground.

The sustained elements of the peace process throughout the year indicate that the activities are feasible, the resources exist and the international community is supportive. Whether or not the transition begun in November is the final one will depend largely on Côte d'Ivoire's politicians. ■

Wanted: Female peacekeepers

In the early years of peacekeeping, UN soldiers conducted foot patrols along State borders and security zones, peered through binoculars from observation posts across deserts and mountains, and strung barbed-wire and other obstacles to keep (all-male) armies apart. Peacekeeping operations then carried out almost exclusively military functions and peacekeepers were almost exclusively male. Today, peacekeepers – in addition to their military/security-related tasks – are mandated to strengthen State institutions, organize elections, train police and corrections officers, disarm and reintegrate former combatants, and conduct HIV/AIDS awareness programmes.

It is now widely understood that successful implementation of complex, multidimensional peacekeeping mandates depends on women serving in meaningful numbers and making major contributions.

On the civilian side, women have steadily increased their level of representation in peacekeeping missions in recent decades and now make up 30 per cent of civilian staff. Female profession-

als have played key roles in political and civil affairs, public information, human rights, electoral issues and have headed missions including in Bosnia & Herzegovina, Burundi and Georgia.

The increased level of women serving in civilian posts – combined with the establishment of gender offices to ensure the integration of a gender perspective into all aspects of peacekeeping – has contributed to the empowerment of women in countries hosting peacekeeping missions. These gains can be seen in the fact that in these once war-ravaged countries, more women are voting and running for office; Constitutions are being revised to uphold the principle of equal rights of women and girls; discriminatory legislation is being revised; women's advocacy groups are being strengthened; women are becoming increasingly represented in the police and civil service.

Of equal importance to the specific achievements of the UN's female civilian staff are the gains fostered through the role modeling effects and positive examples they set for women and girls in the countries where they serve.

Against this backdrop of greater numbers of women achieving progress on the civilian side, it became clear that the number of women serving as uniformed peacekeepers – both police and military – remained unacceptably low. In early 2006, women made up only 1 per cent of the UN's military strength and 4 per cent of its police.

Aware that the United Nations cannot tell countries that are going through security sector reform to increase the number of women serving in their armed forces and police when its own numbers are low, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) convened a policy dialogue with 55 troop- and police-contributing countries at UN headquarters in March 2006.

The gathering, which served to help carry out the directives of Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, reviewed strategies for enhancing gender balance among uniformed per-

sonnel in peacekeeping missions. Following two days of plenary discussions, participants reached a broad consensus that meaningful change is possible and that steps must be taken by all concerned to increase the number of uniformed women peacekeepers if the peacekeeping agenda is to remain credible.

Member States were asked to double the number of female uniformed peacekeepers every year for the next few years, while for the long-term, DPKO's military division has set the goal of reaching 10 per cent female representation.

The undeniable strengths that female police and soldiers bring to peacekeeping operations were widely discussed at the meeting. All participants agreed that the deployment of female peacekeepers is an operational imperative. Female peacekeepers in significant numbers ensure the full involvement of local women in post-conflict processes, without which there can be no durable peace and security.

Women peacekeepers help the mission enhance its ability to communicate with the entire host community, gather information; and handle situations in which sensitivity to gender considerations is critical, especially those related to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) screening process, electoral issues and cases of gender-based violence.

With more female military observers, local women may experience fewer difficulties in reporting sexual violence and abuse. Increasing the number of female police officers enhances the mission's ability to communicate with women in the local population. And with ever more women being drawn into combat roles, the presence of more female UN soldiers helps facilitate the screening process at cantonment sites where demobilization is taking place.

In December 2006, out of the 71,673 military personnel only 1,034 were women and out of the 8,482 UN police only 454 were women. Nigeria has taken the lead in providing female police officers, furnishing 49 by the end of 2006, followed by India and Bangladesh with



Captain Nampumelelo Nteo of the South African Technical Assistance Team at Base Camp Ndromo, DRC, doing geographical surveillance, 25 October 2006. (MONUC Photo by Martine Perret)

34 each and the United States with 24. Nigeria is expected to deploy an all-woman police contingent to support the African Union in Darfur in early 2007, while India recently sent a similar contingent to Liberia.

Once the US Marine Corps' recruiting slogan was "we are looking for a few good men." Today, the UN peacekeeping's recruitment slogan could very well be "we are looking for a few good women," or rather, "a whole lot of them." ■

Kosovo: Keeping the momentum

Despite having started on a sombre note with the death of Kosovo President Ibrahim Rugova in January, 2006 promised to be a constructive year for Kosovo with the launching in February of talks on Kosovo's future status led by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Future Status Process for Kosovo, Martti Ahtisaari.

During 2006, the Special Envoy brought together representatives from Belgrade and Pristina in direct talks with the active support of the Contact Group, comprised of France, Germany, Italy, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States. At the outset of the process, the Contact Group Ministers issued "Guiding Principles", which were conveyed to the Security Council, and which included the principles that "there should be no return of Kosovo to the pre-1999 situation, no partition of Kosovo, and no union of Kosovo with any or part of another country", while affirming that "the settlement needs to be acceptable to the people of Kosovo" and that "a multi-ethnic settlement is the only workable option".

Fifteen rounds of "technical talks" between delegations from Pristina and Belgrade were held in Vienna in 2006, and the Special Envoy presided over a High-Level meeting held on 24 July with the participation of President Boris Tadić and Prime Minister Vojislav Koštunica from Serbia, and President Fatmir Sejdiu and Prime Minister Agim Çeku from Kosovo. The "technical talks" included discussions on decentralization, the protection of cultural and religious heritage

in Kosovo, economic issues, and the protection of community rights within the Framework of the Ten Contact Group Guiding Principles.

Although not participating directly in the status talks, the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) has provided facilitation and support to the United Nations Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Future Status Process for Kosovo (UNOSEK). Together with the NATO-led peacekeeping force, known as KFOR, UNMIK has continued to ensure a safe and secure environment in Kosovo throughout the future status process.

Amid heightened political tensions linked to the status process, UNMIK and the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government in Kosovo (PISG) have nevertheless kept their focus on the implementation of the "Standards for Kosovo", a strategic framework aimed at strengthening democracy, governance and the rule of law, improving the protection of minority rights and laying the foundation for economic development. To keep up momentum on standards implementation, the Contact Group identified 13 priority points which are being implemented by the PISG. The standards have recently been incorporated into Kosovo's roadmap towards European integration, the "European Partnership Action Plan", which ensures that the principles that have helped to guide Kosovo during the status process will continue to guide Kosovo's future even after a status settlement.

The year 2006 witnessed other notable developments in Kosovo. The changes in the leadership of the PISG (President, Prime Minister and the President of the Assembly) in the first quarter were made in a democratic manner and in accordance with applicable law. The new leadership began with an extensive campaign to reach out to minority communities, encouraging their cooperation with and participation in the PISG. Regional integration and cooperation have improved. On behalf of the PISG, UNMIK signed several bilateral agreements in the field of economic cooperation with Albania, the former Yugoslav

Republic of Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Turkey, as well as multilateral agreements in the fields of aviation, energy and free trade. On returns, the Protocol on Voluntary and Sustainable Returns, signed between Belgrade and Pristina, is expected to enhance the operational and technical co-operation of Belgrade and Pristina to improve the conditions for, and facilitate the returns of, internally displaced persons (IDPs) to Kosovo. On decentralization, the capacity-building of the three Pilot Municipal Units began in order to allow them to become fully-fledged municipalities in 2007.

With the transfer of further competencies to the PISG, UNMIK has been increasingly playing a role in monitoring and providing support for the Kosovo authorities. In 2006, the Ministries of Justice and Internal Affairs were established, as well as the Kosovo Judicial Council within the PISG. Accordingly, UNMIK adapted its structures. The mission's civil administration pillar was transformed into a smaller department, and the presence of UNMIK representatives at central and municipal levels was substantially reduced. The capacity-building of these new institutions is underway.

As the status process approaches its final stage, UNMIK has embarked on preparations for an orderly transition, in conformity with United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999). UNMIK worked intensively during the year with partner organizations to plan for the transfer of its authority and responsibilities to the institutions of Kosovo and a future International Civilian Office (ICO) expected to be established under a status settlement. Two planning teams for this future ICO have been set up in Pristina: one covering future EU involvement in the rule of law sector, and another working on the mechanisms and structures to oversee the implementation of the status settlement.

While the timing of a status resolution remains in the hands of the Security Council, expectations on the ground run high that Kosovo's status will be resolved in 2007, and that UNMIK will be able to successfully complete its mission thereafter. ■

New DDR tools to “turn swords into ploughshares”

The year 2006 marked a turning point in UN efforts to disarm, demobilize and reintegrate (DDR) ex-combatants. In addition to building on its impressive total number of people disarmed over the past five years – some 400,000 – the UN also launched a new set of DDR standards aimed at improving this process, which is considered essential to restoring stability in war-ravaged countries.

While the UN has been involved in supporting DDR programmes since the late 1980s, in recent years these have become an even more vital part of UN peace efforts. Over the past five years alone, the Security Council has included DDR in the mandates of multidimensional peacekeeping operations in Burundi, Côte d’Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Liberia and the Sudan. Simultaneously, the UN has increased its DDR engagement in non-peacekeeping contexts, such as Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, the Republic of Congo, the Aceh province of Indonesia, Niger, Somalia and the Solomon Islands.

Over the past two years, staff members from peacekeeping missions, UN Country Teams and headquarters worked jointly to develop the new Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards. Drawn

from the best practices of various UN agencies and missions currently working in peacekeeping, these Standards are “field-tested” and ready for immediate application.

The standards take account of the UN’s extensive experience in addressing the specific needs of key groups, including female combatants and children associated with armed conflict, as well as cross-cutting issues like gender, HIV/AIDS, and health. The standards aim to bolster long-term stability, based on a growing awareness of the need to supplement disarmament and demobilization with genuine and lasting opportunities for ex-combatants to reintegrate into their peacetime communities.

The standards acknowledge the difficulty involved in transforming individuals who have been scarred by conflict, in some cases for years or even decades, into productive members of society. In response, they call for measures to provide psycho-social counseling, job training, educational opportunities and mechanisms to promote reconciliation in the communities where former fighters return.

In December, the standards were launched together with three accompanying tools that will ensure their widespread application: the Operational

Guide, which addresses practical concerns, the Briefing Note for Senior Managers, which contains key strategic and policy guidance, and the web-based DDR Resource Centre (www.unddr.org), which includes all of these documents, and serves as the UN’s “one-stop shop” for information on the initiative.

At the launch ceremony, senior UN officials expressed pride in the work the Organization has done in places like Sierra Leone and Afghanistan, where more than 134,000 combatants laid down their arms with the UN’s help, while voicing satisfaction that the standards will improve this process at each stage.

They pointed out that while different combatants in various contexts may have similar concerns and needs, there are also many specific factors that must be taken into account. The standards pave the way for achieving this, for example, by uniting a child soldier with his family or by paying due attention to the health concerns of a person living with HIV/AIDS.

These new tools will refine the UN’s approach to DDR to better help each ex-combatant reintegrate into society, so that they can go from being a cause of insecurity to a force for growing stability in countries urgently in need of committed people who can contribute to the rebuilding process. ■



A North Kivu mobile team at work in Matembo, DRC, during the demobilization process, 8 November 2006. (MONUC Photo by Martine Perret)

Fighting sexual exploitation and abuse

As the number of UN peacekeepers reached historic highs in 2006, stepped-up efforts were taken to ensure compliance with the Secretary-General’s zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse.

UN rules prohibiting staff from sexual relations with anyone under the age of 18, or with prostitutes, and discouraging sexual relations with “beneficiaries,” were communicated widely to personnel serving in field operations.

With nearly 100,000 UN personnel serving in 21 peace operations worldwide, the

UN remained determined to prevent even a single peacekeeper from harming the very same people they are sent to protect, and to punish any wrongdoers.

In addition to the trauma inflicted on individual victims, sexual exploitation and abuse undermines the reputation of the vast majority of Blue Helmets who serve honourably with pride and purpose and it erodes the trust between the peacekeepers and the local population so essential for the operation to successfully fulfill its mandate.

While paying tribute to the vast majority of upstanding personnel who serve under difficult conditions, Secretary-General Kofi Annan said that it was “tragic and intolerable that those contributions are undermined by the small number of individuals among them who have engaged in acts of sexual exploitation and abuse.”

In 2006, three years after the Secretary-General instituted special measures spelling out prohibited sexual conduct applied to all UN staff and other related personnel, the UN has strengthened its capacity and commitment to enforce the rules and infuse personnel with a “duty of care.” Conduct and discipline teams and independent investigative offices cover most of the peacekeeping operations, and all peacekeeping personnel are now required to undergo training on preventing sexual exploitation and abuse. Missions have established networks of key professionals to receive complaints, while declaring off-limits for all UN personnel premises where prostitution is known or suspected to occur. Other measures such as curfews, “non-fraternization” policies for military personnel and “hotlines” for anonymous complaints are also in place in many missions.

As part of its campaign to confront and tackle the problem, the UN organized a high-level conference in New York in December to take stock of current achievements and challenges faced in preventing and responding to sexual exploitation and abuse by UN and NGO personnel. It was attended by nearly 150 different agency and country representatives, including diplomats and other officials. “Today, our

personnel are better informed about what is expected of them,” Mr. Annan told participants. “Allegations of exploitation and abuse are being handled in a more systematic and professional manner. Staff who commit such acts are fired. And uniformed peacekeeping personnel are being sent home and barred from future peacekeeping service, and also in the expectation that their own Governments will deal with them.”

At the same time, he acknowledged the need for more action. “My message of zero tolerance has still not got through to all those who need to hear it – from managers and commanders on the ground, to all our other personnel.”

Further steps that the UN will take include enhancing the missions’ efforts to provide information to victims and host communities on the outcome of completed investigations and, given the high incidence of prostitution-related offences, launching an anti-prostitution campaign in 2007.

Also in 2007, the General Assembly will discuss two reports prepared by a group of legal experts appointed by the Secretary-General that provides advice on a range of issues, including on how to strengthen the criminal accountability of UN staff and experts on mission serving in United Nations peacekeeping operations, and making military contingents accountable under their national law for crimes committed in peacekeeping operations. Efforts are also underway to draft memoranda of understanding to be signed by the UN and contributing countries outlining what each could expect of the other. ■

SHIRBRIG: Ready to deploy

Established in 1996 by seven countries, the Multinational Stand-By High Readiness Brigade for United Nations Operations (SHIRBRIG) is a multinational brigade that can be made available to the UN as a rapidly deployable peacekeeping force.

The SHIRBRIG initiative has brought together a group of like-minded countries – 15 members and eight observers – com-

mitted to reinforce the UN Stand-By Arrangement System through effective and continuous pre-deployment planning, with highly qualified officers. SHIRBRIG promotes interoperability through the establishment of common standards and procedures, as well as joint training of headquarters staff and the officers of the SHIRBRIG assigned units.

Experience has proven that the rapid deployment of military assets within the first six to seven weeks after a Security Council mandate is crucial for the success of a peacekeeping operation. In his 1995 statement “Supplement to an Agenda for Peace”, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali recommended that the UN consider the idea of a rapid deployment force, consisting of units from a number of Member States, trained to the same standard, using the same operating procedures and interoperable equipment, and taking part in combined exercises at regular intervals.

Any deployment of SHIRBRIG must be mandated by the Security Council. Although originally established for UN missions under Chapter VI of the Charter, more robust missions are considered on a case-by-case basis. SHIRBRIG will deploy for a maximum of six months, following which the mission is either terminated or replaced by a non-SHIRBRIG contribution.

From 2000 to 2006, SHIRBRIG participated in five UN missions, either with deployments or in support to the planning: UNMEE, UNOCI, UNMIL, UNAMI and UNMIS.

A series of SHIRBRIG initiatives have also been taken to assist the African Union and the various African regional organizations in their desire to establish the African Stand-By Forces, a regional initiative based on the SHIRBRIG model.

At present, SHIRBRIG has a rapidly deployable permanent staff consisting of 16 officers located in Høvelte, Denmark. Another 100 non-permanent staff officers, who perform duties in and for their home countries, are trained and ready to join the permanent staff in addition to force pool units. ■

Nepal: Peacemaking bears fruit

Nepal has emerged as a peacemaking success story of 2006, when local political will and international support joined to create conditions favorable for a negotiated peace. The restoration of parliamentary politics and the decision by Maoist insurgents and Nepal's mainstream political parties to settle the decade-long armed conflict stand as clear proof of the Nepalese desire for peace and the preservation of democracy. The call for United Nations involvement shows Nepal's belief in United Nations expertise in managing a peace process and in the unique legitimacy that the UN can bring to helping forge comprehensive, long-lasting political settlements which are recognized nationally and internationally.

The conflict between Maoist insurgents and Government forces had killed some 13,000 people, driven large numbers into exile and further devastated an already poverty-stricken economy. In February 2005, King Gyanendra assumed direct executive powers with the help of the army, marginalized political parties and increased repression against human rights and civil society groups and the media. The move eventually pushed for-

mer antagonists, the Maoist insurgents and political parties, into an alliance to restore democracy. Mass demonstrations in April 2006 forced the King to back down, restore Parliament and hand over power to a Government of the Seven-Party Alliance of the mainstream political parties. This was followed by political negotiations between the Maoists and the new Government that led to a Comprehensive Peace Agreement. The agreement, signed on 21 November 2006, includes arrangements for formalizing and solidifying a ceasefire, an interim governance structure, the holding of Constituent Assembly elections in 2007 and the management of arms and armed personnel of both sides during this interim period.

On arms and armed personnel, the agreement established that Maoist combatants would gather in cantonments and their arms and munitions would be put under lock and key at UN-supervised sites. An equal number of the army's weapons would be locked up under UN monitoring. The Nepalese army itself would be confined to their barracks. At the same time an interim Constitution would be drafted, an in-

terim legislature established and an interim cabinet formed. Elections to a new Constituent Assembly would be held by mid-June 2007. The interim Constitution was finalized on 16 December 2006 and was promulgated by a new interim Parliament on 15 January 2007.

Prior to the signing of this historical agreement, for several years the UN has carried out good offices missions and maintained diplomatic contacts with all sides to promote political dialogue and a negotiated settlement to the conflict. Apart from its political engagement, the UN has been on the ground for decades through a multitude of agencies assisting Nepal with long-term socio-economic development programmes as well as with humanitarian and relief assistance projects. A sizable human rights monitoring mission, established by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, has been in the country since 2005.

Through sustained interaction with all sides in Nepal and countries in the region, the United Nations contributed to the political process that led to the peace agreement. As the parties began to formulate their request for direct UN support for the process, a political mission, led by UN Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura, visited the country at the end of July 2006 and engaged in talks with all key players. As a result, the parties were able to reach an agreement on the nature of the future role of the UN in helping create an atmosphere for free and fair Constituent Assembly elections.

In August, the Secretary-General appointed Ian Martin as his Personal Representative for Nepal to act as the senior UN political interlocutor to help the parties further define and elaborate the support required from the UN.

As negotiations were coming to a close, the Maoists and the Government formally requested the UN's assistance to manage the peace process in three main areas: monitoring of the arms and armed personnel of both sides, continued human rights monitoring and electoral assistance.



United Nations civilian observers register Nepalese soldiers, 24 January 2007. (UN Photo)

The Security Council in a Presidential Statement on 1 December 2006 endorsed the Secretary-General's proposal for deployment of an advance mission of 35 monitors and 25 electoral personnel, who began arriving in early January 2007. Acting on the recommendation of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, on 23 January the Security Council established, for a period of 12 months, a fully-fledged monitoring mission – the United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN) – with close to 190 arms monitors, electoral personnel and other civilian staff.

In the meantime, a separate accord covering the modalities of the UN monitoring role in the arms management process was reached on 28 November, and the UN began the initial steps of arms monitoring on 15 January 2007 in coordination with a national monitoring task force established by the parties as a stop-gap arrangement until round-the-clock monitoring by the UN could be put in place.

The UN's role has been to give advice and guidance as well as assist in implementation, while the actual ownership of the political process and responsibility for the implementation of the agreement lies with the Nepalese parties. The role of the UN in 2007 will be to maintain confidence in the process by ensuring that any breach of the agreement is investigated and made known. ■

Haiti: Progress against all odds

The year 2006 could not have started off worse for the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). The Force Commander, Lieutenant-General Urano Teixeira Da Matta Bacellar, took his own life in early January. At the same time, opponents to the transition process waged a vicious slander campaign against MINUSTAH and its chief which, in the words of the Secretary-General, threatened the security of the mission personnel, as well as the holding of free and fair elections. With the first of three scheduled elections only a month away, it was widely believed that disaster loomed ahead.

MINUSTAH proved the pessimists wrong, rebounding from these early set-

backs and forging ahead with a string of major accomplishments, which included assisting the Haitian authorities in organizing and conducting presidential, parliamentary and local elections; helping develop a police reform plan; conducting joint anti-crime operations; supporting the extension of State authority; and aiding the fight against poverty through quick impact projects and other activities.

The first hurdle to be cleared was on 7 February, when the presidential and initial round of parliamentary elections were held – the first nationwide voting since an insurgency forced former President Jean-Bertrand Aristide into exile two years before. The United Nations worked hand-in-hand with the Haitian electoral officials to organize and conduct the elections. The mission's 6,500-plus troops and 1,895 police officers were tasked with providing security and logistical support throughout the country, including distributing election material to some 9,200 polling stations. MINUSTAH's military and police components implemented an "all hands on deck" policy with every uniformed peacekeeper out on the streets to help the Haitian National Police (HNP). The poll, remarkably free from violence with a far higher turnout than anyone predicted, was hailed as a significant step forward for Haiti. René Préval was de-

clared the elected President by the Haitian authorities later in the month.

MINUSTAH again provided full logistical, technical and security support for the second round of parliamentary elections on 24 April. These led to the establishment of a broad-based Parliament and the formation of a multi-party Government, following extensive consultations. On 3 December, the electoral cycle was completed with the holding of local and municipal elections and a number of legislative run-offs. While the overall election went well, there were isolated incidents of violence, which upset the balloting, affecting a small percentage of the electorate.

The successful cycle of elections, which cemented the transition to democracy, not only helped Haiti internally, but also boosted the country's international standing; CARICOM, the Caribbean regional body which had suspended Haiti following President Aristides's ouster, readmitted it as a full member.

Since security is a crucial issue for Haiti, where kidnappings are relatively common and other forms of criminality remain substantial, MINUSTAH's mandate includes provisions to assist strengthening the judiciary and penal system, and to professionalize the police. MINUSTAH's



Haitian President René Préval visits Cité Militaire, a Port-au-Prince neighbourhood overcome by escalating gang violence, alongside Haitian National Police Chief Mario Andresol, MINUSTAH Deputy Force Commander General Eduardo Aldunate, and UNPOL Chief Graham Muir, 8 August 2006. (MINUSTAH Photo by Sophia Paris)



A UN peacekeeper throws tear gas during clashes with local residents following the arrest of an accused kidnapper in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, 20 December 2006. (Reuters Photo by Eduardo Munoz)

post-electoral focus on ensuring security throughout the country not only improved individual safety, but also contributed to the general sense of greater stability so essential to encouraging foreign investment, fostering job creation and re-establishing tourism.

A significant step towards reforming and strengthening Haiti's security structure was taken when the Government signed the Haitian National Police Reform Plan on 8 August. This plan, which followed an extended review and consultation between Haitian police and political officials, with support from the United Nations, lays out a clear and comprehensive outline for the development of a basic policing capacity within Haiti, drawing on experience in the country and internationally.

Haitian and MINUSTAH officials also agreed in late August to an enhanced security plan for the least secure areas of Port-au-Prince. A series of joint Haitian police and UN checkpoints were set up, several MINUSTAH platoons were redeployed from the outlying regions to the volatile shantytowns of Port-au-Prince to support the increased tempo of operations, and the configuration of Formed Police Units (specially trained and heavily armed UN police) was adjusted. In December, MINUSTAH and the HNP further increased their pace of operations to counter the activities of armed criminal gangs, and especially the kidnapping of innocent civilians, including schoolchildren.

Haiti is the poorest country in the western hemisphere, with low levels of literacy, high infant mortality rates and short life expectancy. Extreme poverty is a fertile breeding ground for criminal activities, which means that security in Haiti cannot be sustained without also supporting social and economic development in the poorest neighbourhoods. The United Nations family, which plays a significant role in this area of activity, completed numerous infrastructure projects and provided clean drinking water to more than 150,000 people in the capital on a daily basis.

MINUSTAH's focus also includes activities to improve the poor human rights situation; reorient the stalled disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process; and strengthen the democratic structures of governance and the rule of law. However, the mission's successes in 2006 did not come without a heavy price. Eleven peacekeepers lost their lives in the course of the year, including five from acts of violence. ■

Cyprus: Building bridges between neighbours

The arrival of the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG), Michael Møller, in January and the new Force Commander, Major-General Rafael José Barni, in early March set the tone for the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) in 2006.

Secretary-General Kofi Annan met Greek Cypriot leader Tassos Papadopoulos in Paris in February and Turkish Cypriot leader Mehmet Ali Talat in Geneva in November to review the progress made towards achieving a peaceful and united Cyprus.

The visit by Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Ibrahim Gambari to the island in July became the catalyst for a two-track process to launch bi-communal discussions on everyday technical matters including an exchange of substantive issues for review and approval by both sides.

In late March, the refurbished As-tromeritis-Zodhia/Bostanci crossing, the island's fifth buffer zone crossing point linking north and south, was reopened thanks to a European Union (EU)-funded road improvement scheme. By the end of the year, the focus had shifted to Nicosia's Ledra Street and renewed efforts to open a crossing in the heart of the old town.

In July, UNFICYP lent support to colleagues and many others trapped in the devastating developments in neighbouring Lebanon. UNFICYP helped bring 1,222 evacuees to safety from Beirut and ports in southern Lebanon, including 392 UN staff and dependents. On two occasions, an UNFICYP helicopter flew to Beirut carrying the Lebanese Prime Minister and senior officials between Cyprus and the 26 July summit in Rome.

Assistance to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) continued in August when the remains of Augustine Bielonwu, a civilian UNIFIL staff member killed during an Israeli rocket attack on 17 July in Tyre, were brought to Nicosia, where a memorial service was held.

On 22 November, two landmines were detonated in the buffer zone in a joint EU/UN ceremony to signify that Nicosia had become mine-free. In acknowledging the EU's contribution, the SRSG noted that the de-mining effort had removed 2,810 mines from 25 minefields and had cleared 1.8 million square metres of land in the buffer zone since its launch in November 2004. ■

UNAMI: Behind the scenes for a better Iraq

While the ongoing violence in Iraq grabbed many newspaper headlines in 2006, behind the scenes, the United Nations was working to promote stability in the country. Although these activities could not – for security and other reasons – be widely publicized, they nevertheless contributed to the progress that was achieved against the grim backdrop of the conflict.

Throughout 2006, the UN Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI) continued to support and assist the people and the Government of Iraq with political and economic efforts towards achieving a peaceful, stable and prosperous Iraq in accordance with its mandate.

Following the successful conduct of the general elections in December of 2005, UNAMI pursued its efforts to promote national dialogue and reconciliation through an inclusive, participatory and transparent political process that responds to the legitimate interests and needs of all Iraqis. To this end, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq, Ashraf Jehangir Qazi, was in constant contact with Iraqi authorities and leaders from all segments of society, as well as with representatives of countries from the region and the wider international community.

UNAMI supported the Council of Representatives in the preparations for a constitutional review process and the implementation of the Iraqi Constitution. The mission assisted the Constitutional Review Committee on substantive and procedural aspects of the constitutional review process. Through a range of seminars, workshops and trainings, the mission promoted dialogue aimed at building consensus behind the revision of the Constitution. UNAMI also continued to coordinate donor assistance aimed at assisting the Council and the Government of Iraq with issues related to the Constitution.

During this period, UNAMI continued its support to the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq (IECI), providing

assistance aimed at strengthening the capacity of the IECI in the logistical, financial and technical areas. UNAMI also assisted the Council in establishing the professional Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC). The mission continued the coordination of international electoral support and the implementation of electoral assistance programmes financed through the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq.

UNAMI has long been working closely with Iraqi ministries, judicial institutions and civil society to promote the establishment of a strong human rights protection system, including a national commission dedicated to the issue. The mission now issues a bi-monthly report on the human rights situation in the country.

Over the past year, UN programmes, funds and agencies worked together, from both inside and outside Iraq's borders, to improve living conditions and economic opportunities for all Iraqis. In cooperation with Iraqi authorities, the UN Country Team worked tirelessly to improve the quality of life in critical areas such as health, education, water and sanitation.

In a country with 1.7 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) and from which up to two million have fled to neighbouring countries, the Country Team also provided critical immediate assistance. UNAMI assisted with strengthening the capacities of Iraqi ministries and institutions, and led the coordination of UN humanitarian programmes and the financial assistance of the international donor community. In particular, the Iraq Trust Fund under the Reconstruction Fund Facility, managed by the UN Development Group, provided donors with a mechanism for allocating resources towards priorities identified jointly by the Iraqi Government and the UN. As the year drew to a close, 26 donors had pledged and deposited over US\$1.1 billion to the Trust Fund Facility. Meanwhile, the implementing UN agencies had legally com-

mitted US\$688 million and disbursed US\$586 million of the total approved projects amounting to US\$886 million.

Another important initiative to promote economic and reconstruction efforts was the elaboration of the International Compact with Iraq. The Compact is a project jointly chaired by the Government and the UN to build a new partnership with the international community. With the support of the World Bank, it will over the next five years bring together the international community and multilateral organizations to help Iraq achieve its National Vision, according to clearly defined priorities, benchmarks and commitments. ■

Afghanistan: Progress and growing security challenges

The inauguration in December 2005 of the new Afghan National Assembly marked the completion of a process of political transition begun in 2001 and which included the adoption of a new Constitution, and the holding of presidential and parliamentary elections. With the necessary Afghan structures in place, the country forged ahead on its intended path towards peace, stability and development with the continued support of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). Yet, at the same time, 2006 marked the toughest year for Afghanistan since 2001, with the challenges of nation-building set against an environment of worsening violence.

Recognizing that Afghanistan continues to face enormous challenges in a number of areas, the Government and its international partners gathered in London in January, where they agreed on a new framework for international engagement beyond the completion of the Bonn process. The Afghanistan Compact set out an ambitious, five-year agenda for sustained and prolonged engagement in the country with a view to consolidating democratic institutions, curbing insecurity, controlling the ille-

gal drug trade, stimulating the economy, enforcing the law, providing basic services to the Afghan people, and protecting their human rights.

The Compact – viewed as a model for similar plans in places such as Timor-Leste and Iraq – also established key benchmarks and timelines, as well as a Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board co-chaired by the Afghan Government and the UN. One of the Compact's first benchmarks was achieved within months, with the establishment of an appointments mechanism for senior Government officials. Reaffirming their commitment and support to the country, Afghanistan's partners in London pledged some US\$10.5 billion in assistance over the next five years. They also welcomed the interim Afghanistan National Development Strategy (iANDS), whose structure mirrors the three pillars of the Compact: security, followed by governance, human rights and the rule of law, and finally economic and social development.

2006 saw a growing consensus that improvements in security will be essential if the promise of the Afghanistan Compact is to be realized. Of particular concern was the steep increase in suicide bombings, and attacks against schools and Government officials, as witnessed by the assassination of a provincial Governor and a women's affairs director.

Addressing rising insecurity and countering the insurgency in southern Afghanistan remained at the heart of joint efforts by the Government and the international community throughout the year, both through military and non-military means. On the military front, 2006 witnessed the expansion of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to the south and east of the country, thereby assuming responsibility for security across the entirety of Afghanistan in conjunction with Afghan security forces. Some 26,000 ISAF troops now assist the Government in providing security throughout the country.

The gravity of the security situation also led President Hamid Karzai to establish

a Policy Action Group consisting of Afghan security forces, their international counterparts, representatives of countries with a significant troop presence and UNAMA. Efforts on the diplomatic front were stepped up with high-level talks between Afghanistan and its neighbours, particularly Iran and Pakistan, on issues including security, economic cooperation and counter-terrorism.

Far from being deterred by the security challenges, the UN pressed ahead in playing an important role in both the political and development spheres, demonstrated by the opening of two new offices in the east and south-east. UNAMA's provincial offices in Kunar and Zabul are intended to facilitate the expansion of the UN's reach in terms of development and other fields, and contribute to the stabilization of the country. Their opening carried a message to Afghans that the UN will continue to help the Government improve the delivery of services, even in areas affected by the insurgency.

The provision of humanitarian relief is one of the many ways in which the UN is assisting the Afghan population. In 2006, a severe drought and armed conflict in parts of the country left over 2 million people in need of food and other assistance. To address the crisis, the Government and the UN appealed for nearly US\$120 million. The Government, with support from designated ministries and UN agencies, was leading the response as the year drew to a close.

Afghanistan achieved much in 2006 with a functioning National Assembly and the confirmation of key Government positions, including the Attorney General, and members of the Cabinet and the Supreme Court. At the same time, it continued to grapple with challenges such as corruption, opium production, and the disbandment of illegal armed groups. Since 2002, when UNAMA was established, great gains have been made. But the challenges for the UN in one of the world's most difficult environments are still considerable and the job is far from done. ■

Tajik peacekeepers may soon join UN ranks

In 2006, the United Nations Tajikistan Office of Peacebuilding (UNTOP) continued to undertake efforts to strengthen national mechanisms for peacebuilding. One key element of these efforts was UNTOP's National Dialogue Project. It brings together representatives of political parties, civil society, and local and central authorities in distinctive fora across the country for dialogue on social and political issues. Presidential elections held in November provided a welcome opportunity to link the project with key national stakeholders in the sphere of elections. In this regard the office facilitated dialogue between political parties and election administration authorities, provided guidance on legal issues, and undertook efforts to coordinate international technical assistance prior to election day. At the polls, voting took place in a peaceful manner and without security related incidents.

Another important activity for UNTOP was the establishment of the Peacekeeping Group under the Ministry of Interior of Tajikistan. The objective of the Group is to prepare Tajik personnel to take part in UN peacekeeping operations. Thirty police officers from the Ministry of Interior received English language training and participated in a special course on peacekeeping. The first Tajik peacekeepers will be ready for international assignments as early as in summer of 2007. Initiated by UNTOP, with financial support from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), the training program under the Peacekeeping Group will enable Tajikistan to play a more active role in the international community and contribute to UN peace efforts worldwide.

As part of implementing its peacebuilding mandate and to raise public awareness, UNTOP carried out projects to build national capacities in treaty reporting and to raise awareness about human rights in Tajik society. The office conducted a wide range of activities in

these areas, including human rights education for civil servants at the Ministry of Justice, seminars on introducing human rights instruction in classrooms, including development of a textbook, for the Ministry of Education, and roundtables on the role of civil society in implementing human rights recommendations for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Tajikistan. UNTOP and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) also organized an international conference on the establishment of a human rights ombudsman in Tajikistan. Work continues on this initiative, which would raise the level of engagement by Tajikistan with international human rights treaty mechanisms and boost awareness in Tajik society with regard to human rights issues. ■

Encouraging dialogue in Georgia

The United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) continued to monitor the 1994 Moscow Agreement on a Ceasefire and Separation of Forces and to facilitate dialogue and confidence-building between the Georgian and Abkhaz sides aimed at meaningful negotiations on a comprehensive political settlement in line with Security Council resolutions.

Expectations of a new momentum rose after the February UN-chaired high-level meeting of the Group of Friends involving all parties to the conflict. UNOMIG facilitated the resumption of the Coordinating Council of both sides – which had been suspended since 2001 – and the establishment of new mechanisms for promoting stability and dialogue on the ground.

UNOMIG's efforts to promote dialogue were affected by differences between the sides over political status and existing formats. Amidst continuous lack of progress on key issues, the Georgian side urged further international support for its territorial integrity and the restructuring of the peacekeeping and negotiation formats

on the basis of direct dialogue and greater international involvement. The Abkhaz side enhanced its campaign for recognition and insisted on the continued presence of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) peacekeeping force. Tensions surged in July around the Georgian special operation in the Georgian-controlled upper Kodori valley with the stated aim to restore law and order. The Abkhaz side saw it as a security threat and a gross violation of the Moscow Agreement, and refused dialogue prior to a resolution of the situation there.

UNOMIG took active steps to prevent further escalation through mediation, including support for a direct high-level meeting between the parties. It enhanced patrolling and established posts to monitor movements towards the Kodori valley by both sides. The mission also conducted two joint patrols with the CIS peacekeeping force in the valley, which had been suspended since 2003. UNOMIG enhanced efforts to promote transparency, including in relation to movements in the security zone.

The mission impressed on the Abkhaz and Georgian authorities the need to restore communications and dialogue, including on economic rehabilitation in the zone of conflict. It called upon them to focus on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1716 (2006) and to resolve issues that have been an obstacle to progress in the peace process. ■

India and Pakistan continue peace process

While the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) continued to perform its mandate of “observing and reporting” on the status of the ceasefire along the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir, the year 2006 was marked by the continuing after-effects of the devastating earthquake that shook parts of India and Pakistan on 8 October 2005.

Although relief and humanitarian operations are not within its mandate, until recently, UNMOGIP was providing logistical support to the various UN agencies and programmes involved in earthquake relief efforts. On 8 October 2006, UNMOGIP marked the one-year anniversary of the earthquake with a ceremony at its Rawalpindi headquarters to remember all those who lost their lives in the earthquake and to honour, in particular, the UNMOGIP personnel and their families who perished.

Both Governments showed political will to resolve outstanding issues via the Composite Dialogue between them and the implementation of Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs) and other political and economic measures. Included among the CBMs are three new crossing points opened by Indian and Pakistani authorities along the Line of Control. These crossing points have allowed civilians from both sides to see family members, some for the very first time. The Government of India has also held two roundtable conferences to which all parties to the conflict in Indian-administered Jammu and Kashmir were invited.

Unfortunately, relations between the two Governments deteriorated somewhat in the wake of the Mumbai train bombings on 11 July. Following these events, all dialogue between the two countries ceased and was not resumed until their Presidents met at the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) conference in Havana, Cuba, two months later. That meeting resulted in both leaders issuing unofficial invitations to each other to visit their respective countries and consolidated their intention to reinstate diplomatic dialogue.

Despite positive developments in 2006, the dispute over the status of Jammu and Kashmir remains unresolved. UNMOGIP will continue to carry out its mandate and support the efforts of both Governments to continue their dialogue and further the peace process. ■

Somalia: Will peacekeepers return?

Somalia's fortunes swung like a pendulum through 2006.

A horrible drought followed by equally bad flooding provided a desperate humanitarian backdrop to the collapse of discredited warlords in Mogadishu in May; the rise and expansion of the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) to some of the major population centres in the south central regions of the country in the latter half of the year; to the recapture of the same territories by a militarily weak Transitional Federal Government (TFG) backed by Ethiopian troops in December 2006 and January 2007.

As this magazine went to press, the TFG was consolidating its hold on the country with the help of its allies and parliamentary approval for martial law. The UN was preparing to return staff who had withdrawn from Somalia for security reasons in October. Ethiopia's Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi, was promising to withdraw his forces within a few

weeks and the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD) and the African Union (AU) were indicating that an African peace support mission could be on the ground in Somalia to fill this security vacuum by late January 2007. The Security Council granted a waiver for the operation with the passage of resolution 1725 on 6 December.

Captive throughout, to this political and military rollercoaster, was a civilian population in acute distress. Relief deliveries to populations dislocated were complicated by acute insecurity and remoteness.

The political year for Somalia opened on a promising note however with the January signing of the Aden Declaration brokered by Yemen to end differences between President Abdullahi Yusuf and the Speaker of the Transitional Federal Parliament (TFP), Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Adan. With the signing of the Declaration, the TFG and the TFP relocated to Baidoa, 140 miles northwest of Mogadishu in February and held its first session soon after.

February also saw a dramatic shift in Somalia's complicated clan-based balance of power with the emergence of the Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism (ARPCT). It comprised Mogadishu's warlords with the stated goal of combatting the UIC's influence in the city. Alliance members claimed the courts were harbouring Al-Qaeda operatives and other foreign combatants and supporting terrorism. ARPCT fighters and gunmen loyal to the courts engaged in fierce battles in the capital. Intense indiscriminate fire in urban areas killed hundreds and displaced thousands. By May, the Courts had routed the warlords and established their authority in central and southern Somalia. A sense of law and order returned to Mogadishu for the first time in 15 years.

By contrast, the TFG barely held control of Baidoa, an uncomfortable fact starkly illustrated by the assassination of Abdallah Deerow Isaaq, Somalia's Minister for Constitutional Affairs as he left a mosque



A street in Mogadishu, Somalia, after 16 years of civil war, 18 January 2007. (UNPOS Photo by Ian Steele)

in the city in July, and by an unsuccessful car bombing attempt on the life of President Yusuf outside the Parliament building on 18 September. The previous day, an Italian Catholic nun was assassinated in Mogadishu. In June, a Swedish cameraman and journalist was killed by an unknown assailant while filming a rally in Mogadishu. These incidents and a number of threats forced the UN to curtail and then withdraw all international staff from Somalia in October.

As tensions increased, the pace of diplomacy quickened. With the support of the UN, the League of Arab States (LAS) initiated a round of dialogue between the TFG and UIC in Khartoum on 22 June. After attending the talks, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia, François Lonsény Fall, travelled to Baidoa and Mogadishu in July for separate meetings with the President, Prime Minister and Speaker and with the Chairman of the UIC, Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed. Ambassador Fall obtained commitments from both sides to continue the dialogue. A second Khartoum round followed on 2 September.

After their surprisingly quick overthrow of the warlords who had ruled Mogadishu by fear for some 15 years, the Courts continued to expand the territory under their control, often without firing a shot. Soon after Khartoum II, the Courts took control of the strategically important port city of Kismayo and the town of Burhakaba just 60 kilometres south of Baidoa. By late October, their forces had flanked Baidoa, cut off its fuel supply and seized control of eight of the country's 18 administrative districts. Its supporters were also reported to be active in the northern territories of 'Puntland' and 'Somaliland'.

Ambassador Fall briefed the Security Council five times during the year and undertook multiple missions into Somalia, within the region and beyond, to encourage continued support for the peace process.

The AU and IGAD continued to ask the Security Council for a waiver on the arms embargo to facilitate the deployment of the foreign peace support mis-

sion (IGASOM). The Courts vowed to fight any foreign troops opposing them on Somali soil, and they declared jihad against Ethiopian forces which they alleged were already inside the country protecting the TFG. The Government alleged that the Courts were receiving outside military support. Numerous reports and sightings during the year confirmed heavy external military support for both sides. The international community repeatedly expressed fears that Somalia was at risk of becoming host to a proxy war between Ethiopia and Eritrea, with the strong likelihood that the entire region could become embroiled.

Meanwhile, the LAS, IGAD and others in the international community, tried unsuccessfully to draw a positive result from a third round of talks in Khartoum in October. The talks were postponed when the parties refused to meet face-to-face.

After the postponement of Khartoum III, the Speaker led a delegation of about 20 members of Parliament to Mogadishu in October to encourage the UIC to resume the dialogue in Khartoum. Although he achieved a seven-point agreement with the UIC, it was unacceptable to the TFG which maintained his initiative did not have the prior blessing of the President and Prime Minister, and had been pursued without consulting the TFP as a whole.

As a stand-off between heavily armed forces of the Transitional Federal Institutions (TFI) and UIC developed outside Baidoa and other strategic locations, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General led an international peace delegation to Baidoa in November. The mission urged the President and the Speaker to bridge their differences, help maintain the unity of the TFI and uphold the Transitional Federal Charter as a framework for peace in Somalia. Ambassador Fall received their assurance on all counts, but the ominous build-up of defensive and offensive forces in and around Baidoa continued.

After the rout of warlord militias in Mogadishu, there were frequent reports of foreign forces and military equipment in Somalia in support of both the TFG and



Somali children near Villa Somalia in Mogadishu, 18 January 2007. (UNPOS Photo by Ian Steele)

the UIC. The military build-up came to a head on 24 December when skirmishes threatened the Government seat in Baidoa and provoked the full force of the TFG and its Ethiopian support. As a result, the Courts militia retreated to Mogadishu where they made only a brief stand before emptying their arsenals into the open arms of the general population and retreating once more to the southern port city of Kismayo, which fell soon after with scarcely a shot fired. UIC remnants retreated once more to the southern tip of Somalia, in a dense forest near Ras Kamboni, where they continued to resist the TFG and Ethiopian forces.

The fighting appeared to have subsided at the beginning of 2007, leading many observers to wonder if the Courts militia had simply melted into the general populace with plans and the capacity to mount an insurgency. In January, an African Union assessment mission to Somalia recommended that AU peacekeepers should deploy to Somalia for six months before handing over to a UN peace operation. ■

UNMIL: Rising optimism as Liberia solidifies peace

Throughout 2006, Liberia made tangible progress in consolidating peace, reviving the economy and rebuilding national institutions through a joint effort with its international partners.

Led by President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, who became Africa's first female elected head of State in the 2005 presidential election, Liberia now has a functioning Government that pursues an ambitious development agenda in the four strategic areas of peace and security, economic growth, infrastructure development, and governance and the rule of law. Since President Johnson-Sirleaf assumed office in January 2006, her Government took a number of initiatives to help the nation recover from years of war.

The restructuring of the national army and police is well under way. Some parts of the capital Monrovia now have running water and electricity for the first time in more than a decade. Revenue collection has noticeably increased. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission has begun to carry out its two-year man-

date, which is aimed at finding a lasting solution for national unity and reconciliation. Emergency jobs have been created for ex-combatants and unemployed youth. In terms of anti-corruption measures, the Government began eliminating ghost and corrupt staff from its payroll to "right-size" civil administration. It also implemented an anti-graft mechanism in fiscal management and brought under review any illegal or unfavourable concession agreements on natural resources.

The President's leadership and commitment have garnered significant support from humanitarian and development partners. The United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), in addition to keeping the country secure, has been a major coordinator of the international community's assistance, supplying a framework for the Government's development agenda and leading the provision of technical assistance and logistical support.

On security reform, UNMIL assisted the Liberian National Police in intensifying

its recruitment and training of an additional 1,400 personnel to create a new 3,500-strong law enforcement institution by 2007. In the area of economic revitalization and infrastructure, UNMIL and other UN agencies, including the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), worked to create nearly 20,000 temporary jobs for skilled and unskilled labourers in public works, such as road rehabilitation and drainage clean-up, in response to the Government's call for emergency employment.

For the restoration of State authority throughout the country, UNMIL assisted the Government in taking control of the Guthrie Rubber Plantation, which had been occupied previously by ex-combatants who were tapping rubber illegally and destabilising the plantation community. Along with other international actors, UNMIL also helped draft the new Forestry Reform Law, which articulates the Government's responsibility to manage forestry resources more sustainably.



Former Liberian President Charles Taylor exits a UN helicopter upon arrival in Freetown, Sierra Leone, where he was held by a UN-backed Special Court on multiple charges of war crimes, crimes against humanity and other serious violations of international humanitarian law, March 29, 2006. (UN Photo)

The passage of the law in September paved the way for the permanent lifting of UN sanctions on timber trade.

For Liberia's decentralization effort, UNMIL and UN agencies initiated the formation of a County Support Team in each of the 15 counties to strengthen the capacity of local authorities in administering social services and implementing community development activities. On the humanitarian front, UNMIL coordinated with the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the World Food Programme (WFP) to complete the resettlement of all 314,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) before the rainy season began.

Despite significant progress made so far, Liberia still faces daunting challenges. The country still relies heavily on the UN's 15,000-strong force to maintain security, three years after the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Accord in Accra, Ghana, which ended 14 years of civil conflict. Hundreds of thousands of refugees are yet to come home from neighbouring countries. Basic needs in the areas of health care and education have not been met. Many towns and villages remain isolated due to deplorable road conditions. The real challenges of consolidating peace are just beginning to emerge, and UNMIL is determined to help Liberia succeed. ■

UNMEE: The stalemate continues

Notwithstanding multiple efforts, including diplomatic initiatives launched by third parties such as the United States and the Ethiopia-Eritrea Boundary Commission (EEBC) to break the impasse, 2006 began and wound up with Ethiopia and Eritrea still at a stalemate on the demarcation of the border.

In 2006, the Security Council passed three resolutions – 1661, 1681, and 1710 – on the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), reiterating its long-standing call for Eritrea to end its restrictions on the mission and for Ethiopia to take immediate, concrete and unconditional steps to enable demarca-

tion of the border. All three resolutions went unheeded by the two parties.

However, the situation in the Temporary Security Zone (TSZ) and adjacent areas turned volatile and tense in mid-October, when approximately 2,000 troops of the Eritrean Defence Forces, along with tanks, artillery and air defence equipment, entered the TSZ in Sector West. The authorities in Asmara later explained that the troops were inducted in the area to assist with crop harvesting and other development projects in the buffer zone. The international community welcomed assurances from Addis Ababa that Ethiopia would not respond "in kind" to what it considered a "provocative act".

It was, indeed, a difficult year for UNMEE, which had to forge ahead with its mandate obligations and keep watch over these trying developments in spite of a significant reduction in troop levels down to 2,300 troops, including 230 military observers. This situation was exacerbated by restrictions by the Eritrean authorities, including a continued flight ban on the mission's helicopters imposed in October 2005 which greatly curtailed UNMEE's capacity to monitor the TSZ. The adverse impact of the flight ban also rippled across other operations of the mission, such as the public information office.

UNMEE provided humanitarian assistance to communities in its area of responsibility. The mission was particularly active in the domains of de-mining, road maintenance, water supply, technical and financial support for community initiatives, the promotion and protection of human rights, and creating public awareness about the HIV/AIDS scourge.

The impasse in the peace process has been frustrating to the local populace in both countries, but with its humanitarian outreach, UNMEE continues to show them the human face of peacekeeping. ■

Deadlock in Western Sahara

Politically, 2006 proved to be another frustratingly "uneventful" year for the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO),

with continuing deadlock in the search for a lasting political solution to the long-standing conflict.

Marked by the mission's focus on fairness, firmness and impartiality, the Government of Morocco and the Frente Polisario have generally allowed MINURSO to assist them in maintaining the ceasefire. However, their positions remain far apart and all recent efforts by the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy, Peter van Walsum, to initiate direct negotiations between them have been unsuccessful.

Meanwhile, MINURSO has undergone significant change allowing it to improve its organizational structure and strengthen its operational output. By closing the two sector headquarters in late 2005, it became possible to reinforce the nine team sites with more UN military observers to carry out the mission's first night operations. Additional day patrols have brought the increase to 30-40 per cent compared to earlier years.

The introduction of night operations in areas heavily infested with unexploded ordnance (UXO) led to the creation of a Mine Action Centre (MAC). Aimed at improving the safety of the mission and the populations living in – and returning to – its area of operation and responsibility, the MAC has organized mine risk education in the refugee camps in Tindouf, Algeria. It is also in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Mauritanian authorities to facilitate mine clearance activities along the border of Western Sahara with Mauritania and to pursue regional mine-awareness programmes.

MINURSO's support for the Confidence-Building Measures (CBM) programme of the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) continued with some interruptions during the year. The CBM flights bring families together from the refugee camps in Tindouf and the Moroccan-controlled part of Western Sahara, some of whom have not seen each other for almost 30 years. ■

Public information: Getting the message out

“I am worried you are too popular and the station will collapse because of its popularity. Everywhere I go I hear Miraya...” (Comment from a listener of the United Nations Radio Miraya in Juba, southern Sudan)

Launched in June, 2006, Radio Miraya (Arabic for mirror) quickly grew popular and effective in explaining the peace process and the UN’s role in the Sudan.

The fifth UN radio station to be operating on behalf of current UN peace operations in 2006, Miraya’s has been a fraught birth.

Before a peace operation is deployed, DPKO and DPI usually conduct assessment missions to determine the media landscape and the best means of reaching the local population to help them understand and support the peace process and the UN’s mandate and presence.

UN radio stations are considered a far-reaching and cost-effective option if the communications infrastructure has col-

lapsed in a post-conflict situation, or if the airwaves are dominated by a single or very few voices. The intent is not to displace indigenous media, but to help build local capacity. Most producers and reporters are local talent.

In the Sudan, the UN believed that only radio could reach the far-flung populations of the world’s tenth largest country. However, UNMIS has yet to receive authorization from the Government in Khartoum to broadcast and it operates in South Sudan with the OK of the Government of Southern Sudan. Miraya has also been preparing weekly programmes for broadcast in Darfur on local stations.

Miraya offers a chance for public dialogue on the peace process and other local issues. It operates 24/7, has expanded to four other locations outside Juba and features an outstanding collection of regional music in addition to reliable news broadcasts.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, another peacekeeping station,

Radio Okapi, (named after an animal resembling a both a zebra and giraffe) has become an institution: it is ranked the most popular station in the DRC with close to 50 million listeners.

Linking all parts of a huge country not otherwise sewn together by roads, river, airwaves or political unity, and broadcasting in five languages, Okapi has literally enabled the people of the DRC to know about each other, each other’s music and the political process that led to nation-wide elections this year. Broadcasting on FM and short-wave via 54 transmitters, Okapi’s coverage before elections reached 80 per cent of the country. Electoral observers cited its contributions to a fair electoral process.

All heads of departments are Congolese, and the station is training its journalists with the hope that they can take over the station with the end of the peacekeeping mission.

Both Miraya and Okapi are joint ventures between the United Nations and a Swiss NGO, Fondation Hironnelle. Donations (from the Dutch, Swiss, UK and US Governments, for example) are also crucial.

In Côte d’Ivoire, Radio ONUCI broadcasts over a frequency allocated by the state broadcaster Radio-TV Ivoirienne (RTI), covering at least 50 per cent of the population, with 90 per cent of those within range listening to its news broadcasts. While RTI has changed management twice during the political upheavals between the camps of the President, the Prime Minister and opposition forces in the north, ONUCI-FM has been able to broadcast without interference. The UN hopes that listeners notice the difference between straight talk and information and the highly political and sometimes hate-filled language in other media.

The Fondation Hironnelle is also helping the transition of a former peacekeeping station, Radio UNAMSIL (now “UN Radio” in Sierra Leone) to become a public access broadcaster. Credited in a



Imitation of SRSG William Lacy Swing by Congolese artist Mira Mikaza, Kinshasa, DRC, 12 December 2006. (MONUC Photo by Myriam Asmani)

2005 opinion survey by 94 percent of the respondents as a good source of information, the station is now faced with how to maintain its profile and capacity with fewer resources.

The same survey group from City College of New York/Yale University found that 95 per cent of the Liberian population surveyed gave UNMIL Radio equally high marks. The UN radio station in Liberia is the only station to cover most of the country and has set standards that many local stations are keen to emulate.

With its varied mix of styles, formats and language, (including talk-shows and entertainment 24/7) the station reaches several audiences, with programming that ranges from serious discussion on political issues and live coverage of key events to light entertainment, spiced with messaging on current affairs and the development, political and social agenda. Interactive discussions go on not only across Liberia, but with refugees in Ghana, Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Nigeria.

How to keep these stations alive, maintain as credible a voice as possible, manage the assets, pay staff and contribute to the overall media scene in the country are questions for UN peace operations as missions draw to a close. Timorese managers, for example, did not have the resources or capacity to continue the radio they inherited from UN peacekeepers two years ago, and its work suffered.

In missions where local media are active and diverse, UN public information components produce radio and TV programming to be aired by local broadcasters. In Burundi, the peacekeeping mission produced daily radio programming and scores of TV features for local broadcasters during its two-year presence that ended on 31 December. The mission also trained young people in journalism, and some of its own public information staff went on to start production companies.

From Kosovo, UNMIK TV produces a programme for Serb displaced persons broadcast over Serbia's commercial "TV Pink." The show, "Danas y Sutra" ("Today and Tomorrow") carries news about the



A billboard from UNOCI's peace campaign in Côte d'Ivoire entitled "La Route de la Paix", courtesy of Outhouse Communications.

Serb minority in Kosovo targeting some 250,000 Kosovo Serb IDPs elsewhere in Serbia. "Danas y Sutra's" audience of nearly one million indicates that far more people than the target audience find the programming compelling.

Broadcast media grew rapidly in 2006, particularly as technology enabled dissemination of video by satellite from the field to UN headquarters and from there to hundreds of broadcasters via the Department of Public Information's UNIFEED system. Most UN field missions now have their own websites. But each mission is different and in more low-tech regions, public information staff seek out other means of communication.

In Liberia, UNMIL has joined with comedian and national icon George Tamba, alias Georgio Butini, to communicate on the peace process in the language of the grassroots. As his jokes leave his audiences in stitches, he embeds messages on issues such as sexual exploitation and abuse, gender-based violence, disarmament, HIV/AIDS, human rights and reconciliation. Post-conflict Liberia has also relied on Butini to mobilize support for the new

political administration especially in the countryside, with a household name and an appeal that cut across class, gender and tribe.

In Côte d'Ivoire, UNOCI's public information office capitalized on the Ivorian team's participation in the 2006 World Cup – "les Eléphants" had players from both sides of the north-south conflict – to create a campaign for peace called "La Route de la Paix," linking sports, unity, peace and progress in images and messages replicated from billboards to sandals and set to music by reggae artist Alpha Blondy.

Unsolicited works on peace by musicians and artists can be the ultimate form of communication, as well as a good sign of local acceptance.

Congolese rap artist Mira Mikaza had a big hit in Kinshasa recently with his music video "Koko Souing," which he performs in the persona of William Lacy Swing, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the DRC. According to the chorus, "quand Koko Souing entre en jeu, personne ne va tirer", or "when Grandpa Swing gets involved, nobody's gonna shoot..." ■

Interview with the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Marie Guéhenno



Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, studies a map during a flight from Beirut to Naquoura, Lebanon, 29 August 2006. (UN Photo by Mark Garten)

Year in Review: As we enter 2007, why this unprecedented demand for UN peacekeepers?

USG Guéhenno: A number of conflicts are coming to an end. That's the positive side of this surge. You don't deploy peacekeepers without a prospect for peace. So in that sense the enormous growth of peacekeeping is a welcome sign. At the same time, turning to UN peacekeepers should not be the only answer. One has to continue to carefully assess whether a given situation is really best addressed by a UN peacekeeping operation. It would jeopardize all the progress made in peacekeeping if the lessons of the 1990s were forgotten, if – just because peacekeeping has enjoyed a string of successes – it is again seen as the universal solution. That's not the case.

YiR: Isn't the demand for UN peacekeepers in places where there is ongoing fighting or no real peace agreement –

such as Darfur, Chad or even Lebanon – a risky direction for peacekeeping?

JMG: There is a risk. Often the international community focuses only on the material and materiel sides – will we find the troops, the resources, etc. Those are valid questions because as we reach the present levels of some 85,000 troops and police, it gets harder and harder to get troops and to get the capacities, enablers, force multipliers we need to ensure their efficiency. But the other concern mentioned less often, but as important, is when there are so many peacekeeping operations, will there be enough international engagement and diplomatic attention to each situation? With so many deployments at one time, the danger of this “political overstretch” will also need to be watched carefully.

YiR: What were the major achievements of peacekeeping during the past year?

JMG: It was a welcome change to see thousands of European troops deploying extremely quickly in Lebanon this summer and a good illustration that the combination of UN assistance – which has been considerably strengthened – and political will can lead to very rapid deployment. Will that mean that we will now see systematically much more troops from developed countries in peacekeeping? It's too early to tell.

The greatest success of the year was what happened in the DRC – to have the largest and most complex elections ever in the history of the UN, in a country with no infrastructure, which had not had a free election in more than 40 years. To organize an election that has been widely recognized by international observers as free and fair in a country that just a few years ago was devastated by war with several foreign armies occupying it: that is something of historic proportions which can be a strategic turning point for a big part of Africa, if not for the whole continent. But all that needs to be consolidated. There is still a State that needs to be rebuilt. So the partnership between the Congolese people and the interna-

tional community is not over with the elections. On the contrary, the next challenge is to keep that engagement vital and dynamic, and to ensure that it continues to address the evolving situation.

YiR: This year there were demonstrations demanding UN peacekeepers in Darfur. How would UN peacekeepers help in Darfur?

JMG: Enormous expectations are placed on the UN. That's the dilemma of peacekeeping. The more successful we are, the more expectations we build. We must not forget the preconditions for successful UN peacekeeping: for peace to come back to Darfur, there has to be a political process of reconciliation. That political process has to be underpinned by a solid, robust military force able to carry out its mandate and to deter potential spoilers. But it would be a mistake to think that force alone can address the challenges of Darfur. In Darfur we are working in partnership with the African Union. We have developed a hybrid operation, to join forces with the AU. It's a good illustration of the productive interaction between Africa and the UN.

YiR: You have for the past couple of years pointed to the managerial challenges of operating so many missions. How can the UN meet these challenges in 2007?

JMG: The comparative advantage of the UN is to combine all our political, military, police and development resources to support the missions in an integrated manner. That's what makes the strength of UN multidimensional operations, and this kind of integrated support is also what missions expect of headquarters. We are engaged in a multi-year programme to transform peacekeeping – “Peace Operations 2010” – and we believe that the surge has confirmed the need to continue with our reform process. We're looking at the restructuring of headquarters that would promote integration of peace operations to strengthen our oversight; have more resources at headquarters to make sure missions have a solid, comprehensive

response attuned to the needs of the field; while concurrently examining and re-evaluating the sometimes outdated rules and regulations that govern peacekeeping. What we are seeing in peace operations is the transformation of an organization created to run conferences into a field-driven organization. So structures and regulations have to be adapted to be supportive of the needs of the field, and preserving the unity of command is fundamental strength of UN peacekeeping.

YiR: What surprised you in the past year?

JMG: When I look at the big African picture, when one sees the positive develop-

ments in West and Central Africa, it's been a strategic shift. In West Africa, we have one big question mark, which is how Côte d'Ivoire will turn out. But when you see Liberia, Sierra Leone... They are fragile, but with major improvements. Combined with the DRC and Burundi, you have a major part of the African continent over which many people despaired just a few years ago, and now there are hopeful signs. Nothing is guaranteed and it needs continued attention, but certainly it's in much better shape, with much better prospects today than three years ago.

That has to be nuanced by all the big questions that arise with the Horn of

Africa. We have the unresolved issues in Sudan, but certainly the fact that the conflict between North and South Sudan has ended is a positive development. But the continuing violence in Darfur can have a negative impact beyond Darfur. You see the unresolved issues in Somalia, the absence of resolution between Ethiopia and Eritrea, which – some years ago – was celebrated as a success story, while DRC was seen as a hopeless situation. There's a remarkable reversal of perceptions: the picture of Africa at the end of 2006 is quite different from what one would have anticipated in 2003. ■

UN political missions: Addressing the roots of conflict

So often at the root of armed conflicts around the world are political issues requiring political solutions. Guided by that principle, UN political missions were present in nearly a dozen countries during 2006, making important contributions to conflict prevention, peacemaking and post-conflict peacebuilding.

Political missions occupy an important place, therefore, in a spectrum of UN peace operations that also encompasses its well-known peacekeeping operations. Some work with mandates to help prevent and contain tensions within societies before they lead to violent conflict. In other cases conflicts are already underway, and the role of the UN mission is to foster dialogue and compromise between rival parties. Still other missions are active in the peacebuilding phase, lending UN support to national programmes of political and institutional reform that will be critical to ensure enduring peace.

Though each situation is unique, political missions are distinguished by their largely civilian character, and frequently include mandates to employ the “good offices” of the Secretary-General towards bridging political differences that underlie conflict. A focus on governance is another common denominator, given the acknowledged importance of inclusive

political systems and democratic institutions for preventing conflict – or avoiding its recurrence.

With important current exceptions in Afghanistan, Timor-Leste and Sierra Leone, most UN political missions today are overseen and supported by the Department of Political Affairs (DPA), the lead UN department for peacemaking and preventive diplomacy.

With the support of Member States, DPA took important strides forward in 2006 in outfitting itself to better support the work of political missions, as well as other diplomatic envoys of the Secretary-General, based in the field. The year saw the establishment within DPA, for example, of a new Mediation Support Capacity created to strengthen the good offices functions of the Secretary-General. DPA also launched a new and comprehensive public website on peacemaking, www.un.org/peacemaker, which places an array of peacemaking tools, information and advice at the service of peace envoys and their staff.

The strategic presence of UN political missions around the globe and the wide range of situations covered by their activities are illustrated in many articles of this magazine. In Africa alone, political missions were active in several conflict-prone areas, working to encourage regional

peace strategies in West Africa and the Great Lakes Region; and to accompany the peacebuilding process in countries such as Guinea-Bissau.

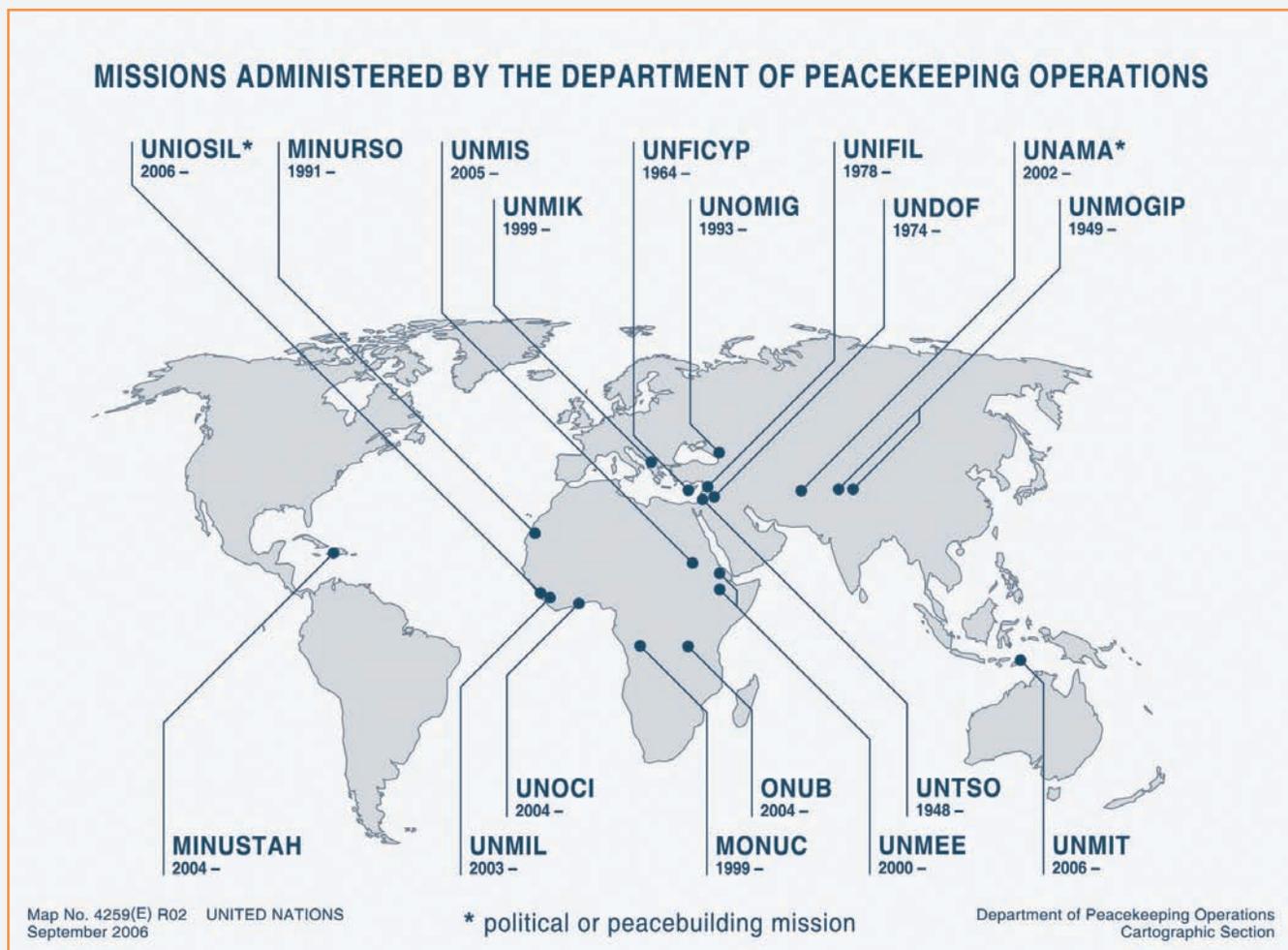
The United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS), deployed in the aftermath of a crippling civil war in the late-1990s, has continued its effort to help the West African nation cast off a legacy of violent conflict and establish a stable civilian democracy.

Among its activities during the past year, the **United Nations Office in West Africa (UNOWA)**, based in Dakar, Senegal, continued its support to the resolution of the long-standing border conflict between Nigeria and Cameroon. An important step forward was taken in August of 2006 with the long-awaited withdrawal of Nigerian troops from the disputed Bakassi peninsula.

The work of the **Office of the Special Representative for the Great Lakes Region** culminated in December of 2006 at the Second Summit of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region. Leaders from 11 countries signed a Pact on Security, Stability and Development, which has received praise for its potential to help bring lasting peace to a region that has seen some of the world's bloodiest wars. ■

As of 31 December 2006

Peacekeeping operations since 194861
 Current peacekeeping operations16
 Current peace operations directed and supported by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO)18



PERSONNEL

Uniformed personnel (68,923 troops, 8,675 police and 2,496 military observers)80,094
 Countries contributing uniformed personnel114
 International civilian personnel 4,555
 Local civilian personnel 10,300
 UN Volunteers 1,951*
 Total number of personnel serving in 16 peacekeeping operations 96,900**
 Total number of personnel serving in 18 DPKO-led peace operations 101,642***
 Total number of fatalities in peace operations since 19482,322

FINANCIAL ASPECTS

Approved resources for the period from 1 July 2006 to 30 June 2007..... About US\$5.28 billion
 Estimated total cost of operations from 1948 to 30 June 2006..... About US\$41.54 billion
 Outstanding contributions to peacekeeping About US\$1.90 billion

* Numbers include 16 peacekeeping operations only. Statistics for two special political and/or peacebuilding missions – UNAMA and UNIOSIL – directed and supported by DPKO can be found at <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/ppmb.pdf>
 ** This figure includes the total number of military and civilian personnel serving in 16 peacekeeping operations and two DPKO-led special political and/or peacebuilding missions – UNAMA and UNIOSIL.
 *** Includes fatalities for all UN peace operations.

CURRENT PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

UNTSO Since May 1948
United Nations Truce Supervision Organization
Strength: military observer 150; international civilian 101; local civilian 120; total personnel 371
Fatalities: 48
Appropriation 2006: \$29.96 million

UNMOGIP Since January 1949
United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan
Strength: military observer 41; international civilian 23; local civilian 49; total personnel 113
Fatalities: 11
Appropriation 2006: \$7.92 million

UNFICYP Since March 1964
United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus
Strength: troop 853; police 64; international civilian 37; local civilian 104; total personnel 1,058
Fatalities: 176
Approved budget 07/06–06/07: \$46.27 million

UNDOF Since June 1974
United Nations Disengagement Observer Force
Strength: troop 1,048; international civilian 39; local civilian 107; total personnel 1,194
Fatalities: 42
Approved budget 07/06–06/07: \$39.86 million

UNIFIL Since March 1978
United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
Strength: troop 11,563 international civilian 118; local civilian 304; total personnel 11,985
Fatalities: 258
Approved budget 07/06–03/07: \$350.87 million*

MINURSO Since April 1991
United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara
Strength: military observer 183; troop 31; police 4; international civilian 101; local civilian 138; UN volunteer 22; total personnel 479
Fatalities: 14
Approved budget 07/06–06/07: \$45.94 million

UNOMIG Since August 1993
United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia
Strength: military observer 127; police 12; international civilian 98; local civilian 181; UN volunteer 1, total personnel 419
Fatalities: 11
Approved budget 07/06–06/07: \$33.38 million

UNMIK Since June 1999
United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo
Strength: military observer 37; police 1,960; international civilian 506; local civilian 2,040; UN volunteer 152; total personnel 4,695
Fatalities: 46
Approved budget 07/06–06/07: \$217.96 million

MONUC Since November 1999
United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
Strength: military observer 734; troop 16,487; police 1,075; international civilian 919; local civilian 2,092; UN volunteer 665; total personnel 21,972
Fatalities: 98
Approved budget 07/06–06/07: \$1,094.25 million

UNMEE Since July 2000
United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea
Strength: military observer 222; troop 2,063; international civilian 149; local civilian 194; UN volunteer 65; total personnel 2,693
Fatalities: 17
Approved budget 07/06–06/07: \$137.39 million

UNMIL Since September 2003
United Nations Mission in Liberia
Strength: military observer 188; troop 13,613; police 1,097; international civilian 504; local civilian 941; UN volunteer 263; total personnel 16,606
Fatalities: 87
Approved budget 07/06–06/07: \$714.88 million

UNOCI Since April 2004
United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire
Strength: military observer 190; troop 7,847; police 992; international civilian 358; local civilian 526; UN volunteer 209; total personnel 10,122
Fatalities: 27
Approved budget 07/06–06/07: \$472.89 million

MINUSTAH Since June 2004
United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti
Strength: troop 6,684; police 1,692; international civilian 432; local civilian 642; UN volunteer 191; total personnel 9,641
Fatalities: 13
Approved budget 07/06–06/07: \$489.21 million

ONUB June 2004 – December 2006
United Nations Operation in Burundi
Current strength: international civilian 242; local civilian 308; UN volunteer 98; total personnel 648
Fatalities: 24
Approved budget 07/06–06/07 \$128.54 million

UNMIS Since March 2005
United Nations Mission in the Sudan
Current strength: military observer 592; troop 8,734; police 680; international civilian 799; local civilian 2,234; UN volunteer 185; total personnel 13,224
Fatalities: 16
Approved budget 07/06–06/07: \$1,079.53 million

UNMIT Since August 2006
United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste
Current strength: military observer 32; police 1,099; international civilian 129; local civilian 320; UN volunteer 100; total personnel 1,680
Fatalities: 1
Approved budget 08/06–03/07 \$170.22 million**

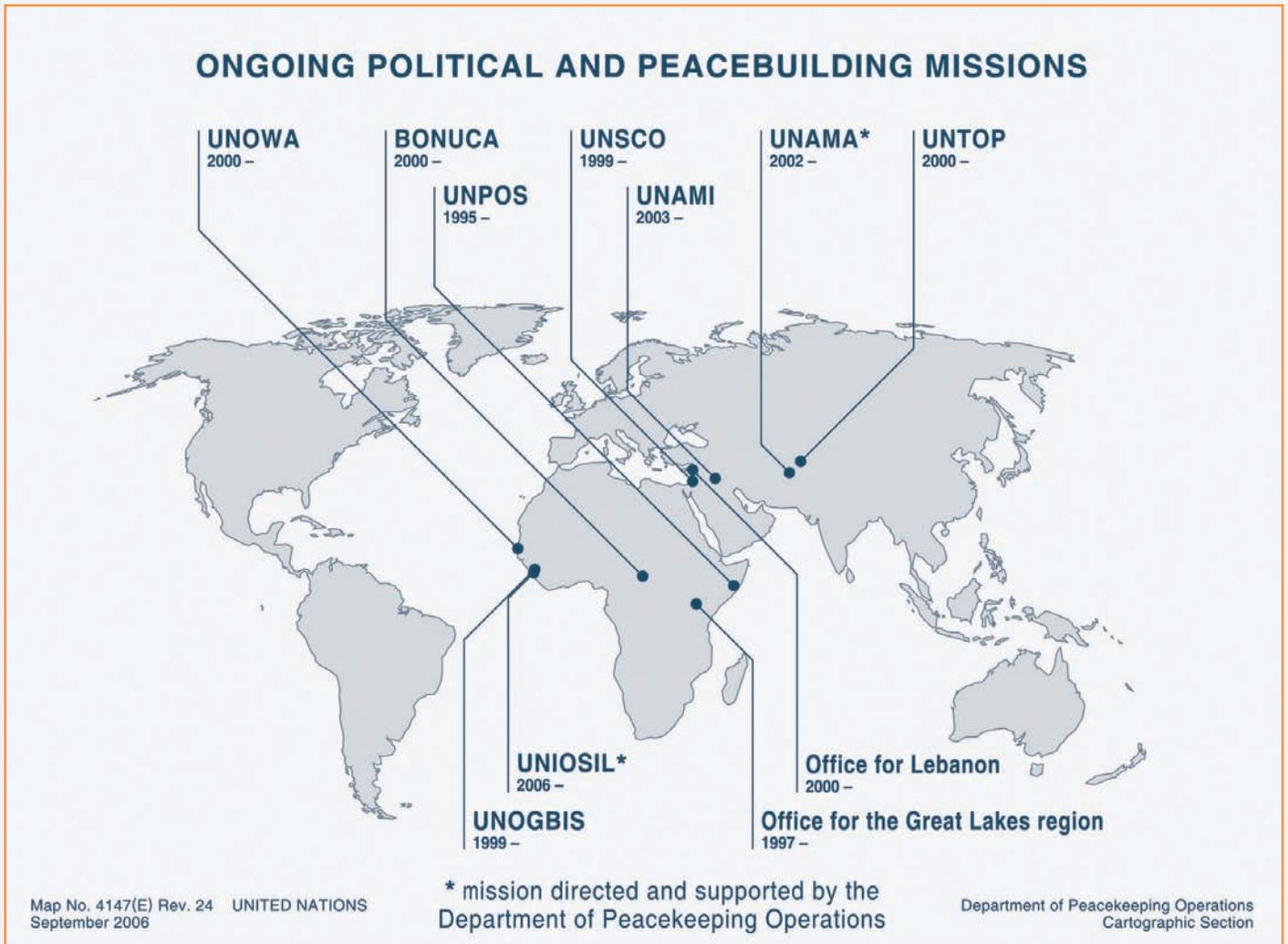
* Commitment authority for 1 July 2006 to 31 March 2007.

** Commitment authority for 25 August to 31 March 2007.

*** Includes requirements for the support account for peacekeeping operations and the UN Logistics Base in Brindisi (Italy).

NOTE: UNTSO and UNMOGIP are funded from the United Nations regular biennial budget. Costs to the United Nations of the other current operations are financed from their own separate accounts on the basis of legally binding assessments on all Member States. For these missions, budget figures are for one year (07/06-06/07) unless otherwise specified. For information on United Nations political missions, see DPI/2166/Rev.42 also available on the web at <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/ppbm.pdf>.

As of 31 December 2006



NUMBER OF MISSIONS 11

PERSONNEL

Uniformed personnel 263

International civilian personnel 614

Local civilian personnel1,511

UN Volunteers67

Total number of personnel serving in political and peacebuilding missions 2,455

For information on United Nations peacekeeping operations, see DPI/1634 Rev.67 or visit the United Nations website at <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/index.asp>

UNPOS Since 15 April 1995
United Nations Political Office for Somalia
 Special Representative of the Secretary-General and
 Head of UNPOS: Francois Lonseny Fall (Guinea)
 Strength: international civilian 17; local civilian 9

Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region Since 19 December 1997
 Special Representative of the Secretary-General:
 Ibrahima Fall (Senegal)
 Strength: international civilian 9; local civilian 7

UNOGBIS Since 3 March 1999
United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in Guinea-Bissau
 Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of
 UNOGBIS: Shola Omoregie (Nigeria)
 Strength: international civilian 9; military adviser 2; po-
 lice adviser 1; local civilian 10; UN volunteer 1

UNSCO Since 1 October 1999
Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East
 Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process
 and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to
 the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian
 Authority: Alvaro de Soto (Peru)
 Strength: international civilian 27; local civilian 23

BONUCA Since 15 February 2000
United Nations Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic
 Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of
 BONUCA: Lamine Cissé (Senegal)
 Strength: international civilian 26; military advisers 5;
 police 6; local civilian 51; UN volunteer 3

UNTOP Since 1 June 2000
United Nations Tajikistan Office of Peacebuilding
 Representative of the Secretary-General for Tajikistan:
 Vladimir Sotirov (Bulgaria)
 Strength: international civilian 8; police adviser 1;
 local civilian 20

Office of the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General for Lebanon Since 4 August 2000
 Personal Representative of the Secretary-General: Geir
 O. Pedersen (Norway)
 Strength: international civilian 6; local civilian 6

UNOWA Since 29 November 2001
Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa
 Special Representative of the Secretary-General: Ahme-
 dou Ould-Abdallah (Mauritania)
 Strength: international civilian 7; local civilian 9

UNAMA* Since 28 March 2002
United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
 Special Representative of the Secretary-General: Tom
 Koenigs (Germany)
 Strength: international civilian 206; local civilian 848;
 military observer 11; police 3; UN volunteer 34

UNAMI Since 14 August 2003
United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq
 Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq:
 Ashraf Jehangir Qazi (Pakistan)
 Authorized strength: 938 (406 international, 532 local)
 Current strength (staff based in Iraq, Jordan and
 Kuwait): international civilian 228; local civilian 352;
 troop 223; military observer 11

UNIOSIL* Since 1 January 2006
United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone
 Executive Representative for UNIOSIL: Victor da Silva
 Angelo (Portugal)
 Strength: international civilian 71; local civilian 176;
 military observers 9; police 17; UN volunteer 29

Mission completed in 2006:

UNOTIL May 2005 – August 2006
United Nations Office in Timor-Leste

* Political or peacebuilding mission directed and supported by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. All other political and peacebuilding missions are directed by the Department of Political Affairs. For information on political and peacebuilding missions, visit the United Nations website at http://www.un.org/Depts/dpa/prev_dip/ft_prev_dip.htm

PEACEKEEPING CONTRIBUTORS (Military observers, police, and troops as of 31 December 2006)

No.	Country	Police	Milob	Troops	Total
1.	Albania		2		2
2.	Algeria		13		13
3.	Argentina	40	7	852	899
4.	Australia	63	23	9	95
5.	Austria	28	14	380	422
6.	Bangladesh	787	105	8,789	9,681
7.	Belgium		15	375	390
8.	Benin	70	34	1,179	1,283
9.	Bolivia		31	419	450
10.	Bosnia and Herzegovina	13	12		25
11.	Botswana		5		5
12.	Brazil	8	27	1,217	1,252
13.	Bulgaria	59	8		67
14.	Burkina Faso	104	19		123
15.	Cambodia		15	136	151
16.	Cameroon	150			150
17.	Canada	85	32	15	132
18.	Central African Republic	14			14
19.	Chad	15	3		18
20.	Chile	10	6	499	515
21.	China	180	67	1,419	1,666
22.	Columbia	2			2
23.	Côte d'Ivoire	1			1
24.	Croatia	12	21	13	46
25.	Czech Republic	16	14		30
26.	Denmark	26	52	85	163
27.	Djibouti	39			39
28.	Dominican Republic		4		4
29.	Ecuador		24	68	92
30.	Egypt	39	77	818	934
31.	El Salvador	26	16		42
32.	Estonia		2		2
33.	Ethiopia		21	1,592	1,613
34.	Fiji	37	9	223	269
35.	Finland	5	25	209	239
36.	France	150	33	1,805	1,988
37.	Gabon		6		6
38.	Gambia	82	10	1	93
39.	Germany	182	45	916	1,143
40.	Ghana	100	63	2,531	2,694
41.	Greece	10	13	227	250
42.	Grenada	1			1
43.	Guatemala		22	211	233
44.	Guinea	117	21		138
45.	Honduras		12		12
46.	Hungary	5	15	88	108
47.	India	361	83	9,039	9,483
48.	Indonesia		33	1,025	1,058
49.	Iran		3		3
50.	Ireland	18	24	489	531
51.	Italy	30	17	2,415	2,462
52.	Jamaica	13			13
53.	Japan			31	31
54.	Jordan	894	70	2,856	3,820
55.	Kenya	64	62	1,009	1,135
56.	Kyrgyzstan	8	15		23
57.	Lithuania	6			6

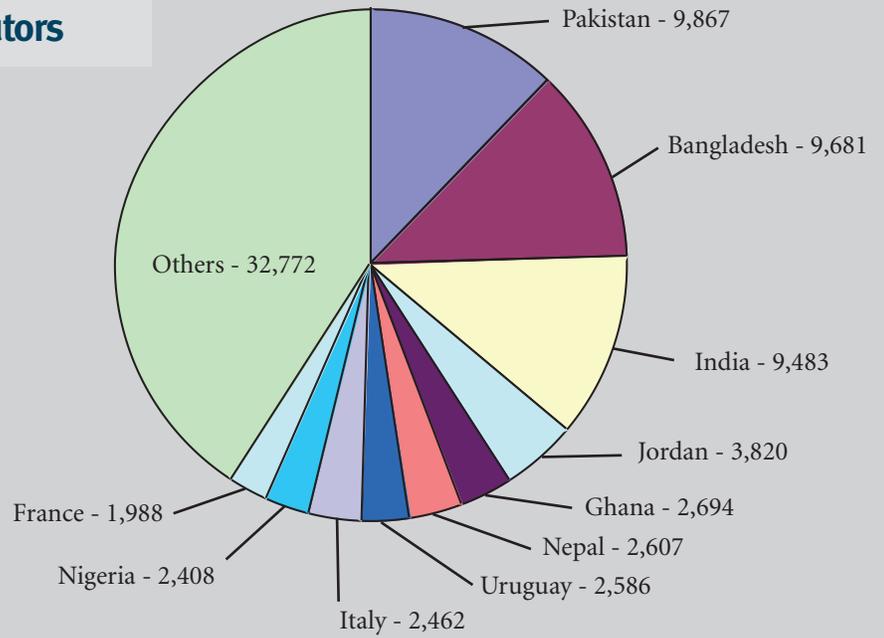
No.	Country	Police	Milob	Troops	Total
58.	Luxemburg			2	2
59.	FYR of Macedonia	1			1
60.	Madagascar	14			14
61.	Malawi	19	33	112	164
62.	Malaysia	210	59	128	397
63.	Mali	44	39		83
64.	Mauritius	2			2
65.	Moldova		8	1	9
66.	Mongolia		14	250	264
67.	Montenegro		2		2
68.	Morocco		5	1,545	1,550
69.	Mozambique		2		2
70.	Namibia	7	19	616	642
71.	Nepal	493	45	2,069	2,607
72.	Netherlands	19	23	163	205
73.	New Zealand	25	15	1	41
74.	Niger	149	23	382	554
75.	Nigeria	365	80	1,963	2,408
76.	Norway	34	35	143	212
77.	Pakistan	512	124	9,231	9,867
78.	Paraguay		37	35	72
79.	Peru		24	207	231
80.	Philippines	325	13	327	665
81.	Poland	128	23	660	811
82.	Portugal	208	6	146	360
83.	Qatar			35	35
84.	Republic of Korea	5	26	1	32
85.	Romania	203	53		256
86.	Russia	77	91	123	291
87.	Rwanda	64	15	261	340
88.	Samoa	50			50
89.	Senegal	467	35	1,379	1,881
90.	Serbia	7	7	6	20
91.	Sierra Leone	2			2
92.	Singapore	21	2		23
93.	Slovakia		2	292	294
94.	Slovenia	15	2	11	28
95.	South Africa		33	1,057	1,090
96.	Spain	69	7	1,277	1,353
97.	Sri Lanka	80	4	958	1,042
98.	Sweden	66	24	73	164
99.	Switzerland	11	19		30
100.	Thailand	31	15		46
101.	Timor-Leste	9			9
102.	Togo	10	8	320	338
103.	Tunisia		37	467	504
104.	Turkey	242	5	513	760
105.	Uganda	40	14	2	56
106.	Ukraine	230	34	301	565
107.	United Kingdom	69	14	275	358
108.	United Rep. of Tanzania	2	18	6	26
109.	United States of America	298	17	9	324
110.	Uruguay	14	67	2,505	2,586
111.	Vanuatu	26			26
112.	Yemen	22	24		46
113.	Zambia	56	57	352	465
114.	Zimbabwe	84	17	2	103

	POLICE	UNMO	TROOP
Totals	8,695	2,527	69,146

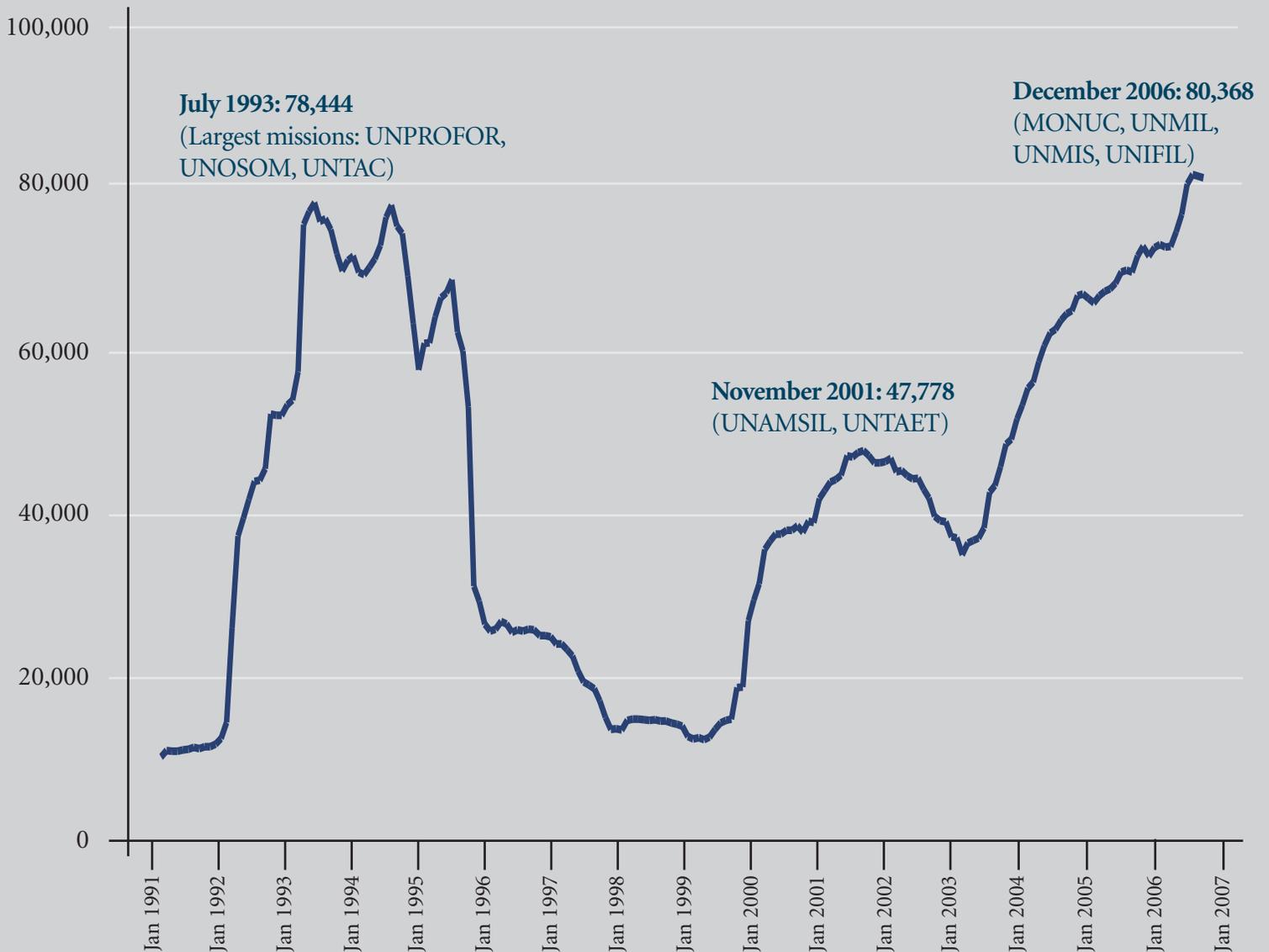
Grand total in PKO **80,368**

Top 10 uniformed personnel contributors

As of 31 December 2006



Surge in uniformed UN peacekeeping personnel from 1991 to 2006





For more information on United Nations peace operations,
visit the United Nations website at
<http://www.un.org/peace/>