

Greater expectations: UN peacekeeping & civilian protection

Refugees International 29 July 2009 The brutal reality of modern day conflict and the recognition of an international **responsibility to protect** civilians in times of crisis has made peacekeeping more important — and more controversial — than ever. As the nature of peacekeeping has evolved, the recent European Union and United Nations peacekeeping forces in Chad and the Central African Republic illustrate key lessons on how to meet this challenge of peacekeeping and civilian protection. The U.S. should support and promote new developments in peacekeeping operations in order to help create an effective method to protect civilians.

Peacekeepers today are routinely mandated to protect civilians under imminent threat of violence. Yet, there is no clear doctrine to tell military peacekeepers how to make a protection mandate work. Furthermore "peace enforcement" — when one or more parties to the conflict do not consent to the deployment of peacekeepers — is frequently not appropriate for UN peacekeepers to undertake. This requires new tools such as the developing African Union Standby capability or the European Union rapid deployment capacity.

(...)There are clear steps the U.S. government can take to increase the overall effectiveness of global peacekeeping forces and to support the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations as it works to improve peacekeeping forces around the world. Some of these steps are relatively simple, such as continuing to pay U.S. peacekeeping dues in full and on time and working with the UN to provide standardized peacekeeping training. However, the U.S. should also be willing to deploy U.S. forces and 'enabling' assets such as engineering units, and strategic lift capabilities to help missions deploy quickly and completely. (...)

The world is beginning to understand that we all have a **responsibility to protect** people from violence, genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity. Learning from the experiences of EUFOR and MINURCAT will help future missions operate more effectively, and ensure that greater numbers of people are protected from harm.

Full report :

[http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWFiles2009.nsf/FilesByRWDocUnidFilename/SODA-7UEPAX-full_report.pdf/\\$File/full_report.pdf](http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWFiles2009.nsf/FilesByRWDocUnidFilename/SODA-7UEPAX-full_report.pdf/$File/full_report.pdf)