

**MALAYSIAN ARMED FORCES INVOLVEMENT IN PEACEKEEPING,
CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNT**

INTRODUCTION

1. Peacekeeping has become the United Nations (UN) primary task in the domain of global peace and security in the turbulent post the Cold War era. The history of peacekeeping operations began with the establishment of the UN Emergency Force (UNEF) during the 1956 Suez crisis. UN peacekeepers have typically served 2 functions, first to observe peace, monitor and report on the maintenance of ceasefires and second, to provide an inter-positional buffer between belligerents by establishing zones of disengagement.

2. Consistent with the national commitment towards global peace and stability, Malaysia had been actively supporting the efforts of the UN. The Malaysian Armed Forces (MAF) as a major participant has always maintained a proud tradition of excellence in all UN missions which it has participated in more than 25 countries since Congo in 1960. To enhance these achievements and further equip our peacekeepers with regard to the standard and conduct of operations, Malaysia has established its very own peacekeeping training center in April 2006.

SCOPE

3. The scope of this paper is as follows:

- a. UN – MALAYSIA Standby Arrangement for Peacekeeping Mission.
- b. MAF Peace Keeping Mission.
- c. Military Observers and Mission staff.
- d. Present MAF deployment.
- e. Challenges and Lessons Learnt.

UN – MALAYSIA PEACEKEEPING ARRANGEMENT

4. In September 1996, the UN and Malaysian government signed an MoU for a Standby Arrangement for deployment of Malaysian troops under the UN mandate. The arrangement includes the following:

- a. An Infantry Battalion with the strength of 900 personnel.
- b. 50 x Military Observers (UNMO).
- c. 50 x Staff officers in Force Headquarters (FHQ).
- d. 25 x Logistics Officers.

- e. 50 x Civilian Police (CIVPOL).
- f. 20 x Election Commission Officers.

5. The deployment is to take effect with prior notice of 30 days for an Infantry Battalion and 21 days for the rest of the personnel.

MAF INVOLVEMENT IN PEACEKEEPING MISSION.

6. Our first involvement with the UN was in Congo in 1960. This operation Congo witnessed the deployment of 3,500 MAF personnel. The tour of duty at the nascent stage of the country's independence was an important event in the annals of the Malaysian Armed Forces and as well as in the history of Malaysia. The significance of Malaysia's early involvement in peace keeping operations showed our belief in the UN system and in the settling of disputes and conflicts through means as stipulated in the UN charter. Since then, MAF has been involved in 6 peacekeeping missions that required troop deployment, 9 peacekeeping missions that involved staff officers and men and 16 peacekeeping missions that involved military observers.

7. **PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS.** A total of 6 peacekeeping missions which involved 18,000 troops were deployed.

Ser	Mission Area	Duration	Remarks
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
1.	CONGO	October 1960 – April 1963	
2.	NAMIBIA	February 1989 – April 1990	
3.	CAMBODIA	March 1993 - November 1995	
4.	SOMALIA	July 1993 – February 1995	
5.	BOSNIA	December 1993 - June 1998	
6.	TIMOR TIMUR	Sept 1999 - February 2000	

8. PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS INVOLVING MAF MILITARY OBSERVERS AND MISSION STAFF.

Ser	Mission	Mission Area	Duration (Year)	Remarks
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
1.	UNOC	CONGO	1960/1963	
2.	UNTAG	NAMIBIA	1989/1990	
3.	UNIMOG	IRAN-IRAQ	1988/1991	
4.	UNOSGI	IRAQ	1991/1992	
5.	MONUA	ANGOLA	1991/1999	
6.	UNPROFOR UNMLOY IFOR SFOR	BOSNIA HERZEGOVINA	1992/1995 1992/1996 1995/1996 1996/1998	
7.	UNOSOM	SOMALIA	1993/1995	
8.	UNOMOZ	MOZAMBIQUE	1993/1995	
9.	UNAMIC	CAMBODIA	1993/1994	
10.	UNOMIL III UNOMIL	LIBERIA	1993/1997 1999	
11.	UNASOG	CHAD/LIBYA	1994	
12.	UNIKOM	IRAQ/KUWAIT	1991/2002	
13.	UNSMA	AFGHANISTAN	1998/1999	
14.	UNMOT	TAJKISTAN	1998/1999	
15.	INTERFET UNTEAT	TIMOR LESTE	1999/2000 2000/2005	

CURRENT MAF INVOLVEMENT AND PRESENT DEPLOYMENT

9. Currently, the MAF is involved in 10 missions throughout the globe.

10. The present deployment of officers and men as Military Observers and HQ staffs as follows:

Ser	Mission	Task	Employment		Remarks
			Officers	Staff	
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)
1.	UNHQ New York	Permanent Rep	1		
2.	MINUSTAH Haiti	Logistics Officer	1		
3.	UNMIL Liberia	Mil Observer	1		
4.	MONUC Rep Demo Congo	Staff	10	7	
5.	MINURSO Western Sahara	Mil Observer	1		
6.	UNMIK Kosovo	Liaison Officer	1		
7.	UNOTIL Timor Leste	Mil Observer	1		
8.	UNMIS Sudan	SSO Air Ops Mil Observers Adjt	1 3	10	
9.	UNMEE Ethiopia/Eriteria	Staff	2	7	
10.	ONUB Burundi	Mil Observer	3		

CASUALTIES AND DEATH Table depicting MAF personnel deaths on duty:

Ser	Mission/Task	Death/Casualties		Remarks
		Officer	Rank & File	
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
1.	<u>PEACE KEEPING FORCE</u> a. ONUC - Congo b. UNOSOM II - Somalia c. UNTAC - Cambodia d. UNPROFOR - Bosnia	2	6 5 1 1	
2.	<u>MILITARY OBSERVER/STAFF</u> a. UNPROFOR - Bosnia b. MINURSO - W/ Sahara c. UNMISSET - Timor Leste	1 1 1		

CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNT

12. Malaysia has always supported and will continue to support the UN Peacekeeping mandate. The total involvement of The MAF personnel to date is more than 19,000 in more than 25 missions. MAF personnel have carried out their duties professionally despite the dangers involved.

13. Present day peace keeping operations are more complicated and challenging. Modern day Peacekeeping has moved beyond the confines of traditional activities of supervising cease-fires, monitoring withdrawal of warring factions and acting as buffer between them. Peacekeepers now have to face vigorous challenges in difficult environments. For this reason, peacekeepers should be well trained. This is to ensure professionalism in dealing with warring factions as well as the population in the conflicting area. Peacekeeping is no longer just military operation. It requires peacekeepers to have an acute understanding of issues pertaining to political and military objectives in addition to mission strategies and objectives. These, then are the challenges that that peacekeeping and support operations face.

14. Some of the lessons that can be learnt from past experience are as follows:

INFORMATION SHARING

15. To minimize casualties and misunderstanding, adequate information and intelligence should be provided prior to deployment. It can be difficult to acquire good and accurate information in the warring states. Troops that are insufficiently briefed can be handicapped. This is detrimental to lengthy peacekeeping ops.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

16. The structure and composition of peacekeepers are determined by the task and mission (primarily from directives/sanctions from UNHQ through Special Representatives). It is imperative that organization of troops assigned to designated areas are given ample early warning to minimize redundancy and save time.

MISCELLANEOUS

17. Other factors to be considered are logistics and supplies. Shortage of items and equipment is a common complaint in Peacekeeping Operations. Poor coordination between UN Staff and the Military components of the operation is another issue. Adequate and precise knowledge of warring factions and an understanding of traditions and culture can be the key to greater success of any peacekeeping mission.

CONCLUSION

18. Malaysia is proud of its contribution towards peacekeeping operations under the auspices of UN. Malaysia has been contributing troops for regional peacekeeping through consensus of neighbouring states. The MAF is actively involved in the Mindanao International Monitoring Team and the Acheh Monitoring Mission (AMM). On its part, MAF has benefited by obtaining real-life training and exposure for its troops.

