

**Remarks by United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping
Operations
Jean-Marie Guéhenno**

Cooperation on Peace Operations: The role of Japan and Asia

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I. INTRODUCTION

Thank you. It is a pleasure to be here with you today. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the Japan Institute of International Affairs for extending me this invitation. I am honored to be here and to have this opportunity to share a few thoughts with you.

II. EVOLUTION AND CURRENT STATUS OF PEACEKEEPING

Within the United Nations, peacekeeping now represents a central mechanism for resolving armed conflict within the international system. We are proud of our record, but it has been won at a hard price.

UN peacekeeping has played a key role in stabilizing a significant number of countries in the past three decades, among them Cambodia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Namibia, Mozambique, Tajikistan, Croatia, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. And we are making progress right now in many more countries, including Sierra Leone, Liberia, Burundi, Haiti, Timor Leste, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and others where UN peace

operations are helping societies close long chapters of conflict and return to normal development.

To do this work over 88,000 troops and police and some 21,000 civilians currently serve in 20 peace operations across four continents in a dozen different time zones. Including our new missions, the budget for UN peacekeeping operations will soon reach \$7 billion supporting a total of over 110,000 police, military and civilian authorised personnel deployed in the field. And our expansion is not only extensive, it is unremitting. In the almost eight years that I have served as the Head of United Nations Peacekeeping, we have launched ten new operations and dramatically expanded two others.

This is a new UN; one that has not received so much attention in this part of the world. UN peacekeeping is the international community's instrument of choice in addressing over half of the 30 or so major armed conflicts currently ongoing around the globe.

The changes in the UN peacekeeping system are not just quantitative. Modern peacekeeping has also been marked by the establishment of complex and multidimensional operations. Today's peacekeepers are called upon to do much more than monitor and observe cease fires or border violations.

When World War II ended, approximately half of the world's conflicts were either anti-colonial or inter-state wars. In the post-Cold War era, conflicts have largely disappeared, replaced instead with situations that tend to be

associated with the disintegration of central authority in poor or weak states. Ideology, regular armed forces with clear chains of command, distinctions between soldiers and bandits, and between fighters and civilians – all these distinctions are being eroded. These are often wars of chaos – in Japanese I understand this is called “Ran”. And they require a new type of response.

Today’s peacekeeping is therefore less about purely military matters than it is about enabling the broader transition from chaos to sustainable peace. The peacekeepers accompany and support peace agreements, with the consent of the parties, although this sometimes requires the use of force against those marginal elements which have put themselves outside of a peace agreement. However, force means nothing by itself in this modern context. It has to be embedded in a wider, fundamentally political effort to help rebuild legitimate government, promote the rule of law, establish and maintain basic economic systems, and so forth. The blue helmets, who are the emblems of peacekeeping in practice, provide a foundation of security for their civilian colleagues who assist national authorities to restart basic systems of government and rebuild legitimate state institutions which can preserve the peace.

Peacekeeping has its risks and outcomes can never be certain but the money contributed to peacekeeping by member states is very much a sound investment. Recent independent reviews of the UN peacekeeping system, including by the US RAND Corporation and others have found peacekeeping under the UN Charter to be the most effective, and most cost-effective, way of managing the most common forms of armed conflict in the world today.

However, it is also important to understand that UN Peacekeeping is not the right tool for every job. There will always be a need for a variety of international approaches – economic assistance; regional integration; mediation; sanctions; military deterrence, and others.

III. REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE – THE ROLE OF ASIA AND JAPAN

Asia is a region that benefits enormously from a peaceful and open world trading system. The resources you need, and the markets you need, both require a degree of basic stability in the international system. This region, in other words, does not just thrive by itself; it thrives in stability, as a successful part of an inter-dependent global order. And it has an enormous interest in maintaining the integrity of that global system.

At the wider level, Asia is now a global actor, and its responsibilities are global, even if its immediate interests are not directly engaged. If there is a need – a human need, to save lives and help bring stability – then this region now has responsibilities that go far beyond its borders. The world expects you to play that leading role and it is heartening to see that Japan has been embracing this role. Some have said that this is the “Hour of Asia”. From the perspective of UN peacekeeping, it’s hard to argue with this. But we would say, perhaps, that it is the hour of Asia as a global player.

The region, and in particular Japan, already makes important contributions to international security systems. And if current trends are any guide, Asia will be the future for UN peacekeeping force generation. Given that Asia does not have an over-arching regional organisational structure, for most

Asian states, engagement in peacekeeping operations will therefore most likely be through the UN framework.

South Asian countries are among the top troop contributors and Asian peacekeeping operation capacities are growing and diversifying - Indonesia is now participating, Mongolia is a new contributor, Thailand and the Philippines provide large numbers of police, and China is continuing to increase its participation.

Encouragingly, Asia is not only becoming more interested and involved in peacekeeping, but it is also building upon this through various inter-state and international forums. For example, China held an ASEAN plus 1 meeting on UN peacekeeping last October, the Republic of Korea is holding a peacekeeping conference in June, and here we are today in a forum in Japan devoted to peacekeeping. In addition, Asian expert training capacities are growing, as demonstrated by the Malaysian regional peacekeeping operations training centre and the Chinese police peacekeeping centre.

Asia's involvement in United Nations peacekeeping operations, and its desire to expand that involvement, also places a responsibility upon the United Nations. We need to better understand Asia's perspectives on multilateral security mechanisms. We need to know more about how Asian countries can best engage with the UN, what strengths and capacities these states can bring to peacekeeping, and we need to engage with countries, like Japan, directly to better understand your priorities and those of the region.

Japan's engagement in peacekeeping is already substantial. Japan is not only a financier of peacekeeping (contributing 16.5% of peacekeeping's budget, among the first countries to have disbursed contributions to the MINURCAT Trust Fund, and providing personnel for eight UN peacekeeping operations), but it is also engaged as a bilateral donor alongside UN peacekeeping operations. In MONUC, Japan has supported stabilization efforts for eastern DRC to help implement the measures agreed at the Conference on Peace, Security and Development in the Kivus provinces. Japan is also one of the leading donors to Timor-Leste having provided more than US\$240 million in development assistance since 1999. This aid has been critical to furthering a wide range of development and governance programmes.

In Sudan, Japan has been working to provide political support to the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement - the basis for sustainable peace in Sudan – and Japan has recently expressed interest in contributing military personnel and assets to UNMIS. In Sierra Leone, Japan's support has taken shape by providing support to the energy sector and the local elections scheduled for July 2008. Japan has also made significant contributions to Afghanistan's stabilization: hosting the 2002 Tokyo conference on Afghan reconstruction, leading the disarmament demobilization and reintegration process and, since 2001, contributing over USD 1.2 billion to the consolidation of peace in Afghanistan, targeting governance, the disbandment of illegal armed groups, and infrastructure development¹.

¹ Japan is a member of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB), the body that oversees the implementation of the Afghanistan Compact, and one of the six largest development contributors to

Recently, Japan has also been extending its support to building African peacekeeping capacity by providing assistance to the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre² and by sending specialists to Africa, Egypt and Ghana to train the trainers. All these contributions are an expression of Japan's commitment to global peace and security.

Just as Japan is a significant contributor to peacekeeping, its commitment to peacebuilding is equally impressive – a commitment that has been expressed at the highest levels in Japan. In January, Prime Minister Fukuda presented an initiative to advance Japan's role as a "Peace Fostering Nation" in the annual policy speech at the Diet, and earlier this year the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Koumura, delivered a policy speech entitled: "Japan: A Builder of Peace" where he stated that Japan "must demonstrate leadership in building peace in the world." Japan's commitment is reflected in actions as well as words. Japan is the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission and has made significant financial contributions through the UN Trust Fund for Human Security, UN Democracy Fund and the Peacebuilding Fund. Japan has established a programme for Human Resource Development in Asia for Peacebuilding (the Hiroshima Peacebuilders Center) and in March this year the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs in conjunction with the United Nations University organised the Tokyo Peacebuilders Symposium.

Japan has also just co-hosted TICAD 4 focusing on African Development and has committed to double in five years its overseas development aid to

Afghanistan. On 6 February 2008, Japan hosted the VIIth JCMB meeting in Tokyo, which focused on counter-narcotics. Japan's interest in Afghanistan diminished somewhat following a major domestic political controversy caused by the deployment of Japanese troops to southern Iraq.

² Japan provided this assistance in cooperation with UNDP to enhance capabilities of 400 personnel.

Africa. Japan has striven to enhance awareness of the importance of peace consolidation through the TICAD process – offering bilateral and multilateral assistance in collection of small arms, DDR and landmines, and reintegration through community development based on the principle of human security which focuses attention on empowering the people where state authority is not in place. One such example of this is Japan’s support for SSR, DDR and mine action. Since 1995 Japan has consistently provided funding for mine action projects carried with total contributions of more than US\$58 million.

Clearly Japan is contributing a great deal, however, one area we would hope to see increased engagement would be in the deployment of Japanese nationals in peacekeeping operations. Conscientious efforts by the Japanese government, including the Hiroshima Peacebuilders Center, to support aspiring young candidates for peacekeeping and peacebuilding is another example of Japan’s desire to increase its commitment. In addition to assisting the Hiroshima Peacebuilders Center through the Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations in New York, the Department of Field Support is working with such NGOs as the Japan Center for International Cooperation (JANIC), Association for Aid and Relief (AAR) and the Africa-Japan Forum to encourage Japanese nationals to apply for positions in UN peace operations.

IV. PEACEKEEPING IS PART OF PEACEBUILDING

One of the challenging and rewarding aspects of peacekeeping is that over time our understanding of the definition of peace has shifted. Early UN peacekeeping operations were considered a success if they assisted the parties in stabilising a situation. Later operations were judged successful as evidenced by the withdrawal of a peacekeeping operation. However, today peacekeeping is no longer viewed as a self-contained operation, but rather is seen as the first phase of political, economic and military investments in post-conflict states. It is this much broader conceptualisation of the peace process that offers the greatest promise for building lasting peace in any fragile country.

A significant evolution in peacekeeping over the past decade has been in our understanding of how peacebuilding begins at the outset of international engagement during the peacekeeping mandate. Today, UN peacekeeping doctrine and practice starts from the premise that we are only one part of a wider response to the challenge of building peace after conflict.

Accordingly, we need to focus on the challenge of making the linkages between peacekeeping, and longer-term peacebuilding, stronger and the transition seamless. Part of addressing this challenge is overcoming the misleading perception that post conflict financial support is an "additional cost". In reality, investing in both peacekeeping and in building the capacities of the state, is an investment in the long-term democratic stability.

Both peacekeeping and peacebuilding are sound investments but when viewed as one greater process rather than two distinct activities they have

the potential to exponentially expand their impact. For a country like Japan who contributes heavily to peacekeeping as well as aid programmes this nuanced understanding of the process for creating durable peace is very important. Japan's contributions to peacekeeping and Japan's aid programmes can be extremely valuable tools when coordinated within the context of an overall international peacebuilding strategy.

Peacekeepers are critical early peacebuilding actors, laying the foundation for a longer and more comprehensive effort. This is particularly the case in some key areas, such as support to political processes, provision of security and the rule of law, and the extension of state authority. These core peacekeeping functions are critical for peacebuilding – if we don't get the political process underway, and security in place, then the space for longer-term development and capacity-building is hugely constrained. In other areas, we serve as enablers for the peacebuilding efforts of others, particularly development actors: in building capacity, promoting economic recovery and employment, facilitating local dialogue and confidence building.

This is not always straightforward. There are sometimes inevitable tensions between short-term political and security exigencies and longer term sustainable development objectives and this is why the establishment of a coordinated strategic approach, in the early phase of a post-conflict context, is critical.

A critical peacebuilding role of peacekeeping operations, particularly of senior mission leadership, is in reaching out and bringing different actors

into the broad peacebuilding effort. Successful peacekeeping operations have encouraged and facilitated the engagement of national, regional, UN and other international partners in providing security, logistic and technical assistance but equally, in promoting dialogue and, where appropriate, coordinating the activities of diverse actors. In recognizing the roles, peacekeeping doctrine and planning concepts over the past 10 years have put new emphasis on an integrated approach and on working with partners. This is the fundamentally changing the way in which we understand and carry out our peacekeeping tasks. We still have some way to go however and it is in these areas that I see the new frontiers of peacekeeping.

The UN peacebuilding architecture can play a valuable role. The PBC, which Japan chairs, offers an umbrella to engage all peacebuilding actors, including IFIs and private actors, in an inclusive process. And, as Burundi and Sierra Leone have demonstrated, the UN peacebuilding architecture engages in active partnership with national authorities, providing a platform for incorporating and supporting Host State interaction with international partners throughout the transition to sustainable development.

V. CONCLUSION

Let me conclude by saying that Asia, and in particular Japan, have already begun to shoulder their global responsibilities in promoting peace and security issues. The attention to developing the next generation of peacekeepers, through initiatives such as the establishment of peacekeeping training facilities is a particularly encouraging development in this regard.

This is vital. Asia wants to be a good citizen of a peaceful world, and to help manage the great changes that are coming – not just because a peaceful world is good for Asia, though this is a part of it.

And the United Nations is ready to serve as a central framework for helping you to be that “good citizen”, working side by side with other nations, from other continents, for the common good.

We honour the work that you have done; we thank you for the commitments and preparations that you have made for the future, and we look forward to growing cooperation in the years to come.