

UN Military Specialised Training Materials on Child Protection



Based on the Department of Peace Operations
UN Military Specialised Training Materials on Child
Protection

SERIES EDITOR

Harvey J. Langholtz, Ph.D.



Peace Operations Training Institute

Study peace and humanitarian relief any place, any time

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Cover Photo: Universal Children's Day Celebration in Civilian Protection Site 3, Juba. Children hold up banners on what great things children can become during the celebration of Universal Children's Day. 20 November 2015. UN Photo #654472 by JC McIlwaine.

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*** These materials are quoted from UN guidance.**

**** These materials are quoted from UN guidance and are available in full as supplemental materials accessible through the POTI student classroom. They include:**

- MINUSCA Protection of Civilians Handbook;
- Rules of Engagement for Missions X, Y, and Z;
- UNMISS Protection of Civilians Strategy;
- Security Council resolutions 2387 (2017), 2406 (2018), and 2409 (2018);
- Force Commander's Child Protection Directive Template.

The precise contents of these handouts will not be covered on the End-of-Course Examination but will be helpful for completing Module 6 exercises.

Powerpoints from the original training document can also be found in the student classroom.

Background

Deploying Military peacekeepers trained in child rights and child protection has become an increasingly crucial element for UN Peace Operations. They are mandated by the Security Council resolutions on children and armed conflict, which were established to protect children from the effects of conflict. Security Council resolutions 1261 (1999), 1379 (2001), 1460 (2003), 1612 (2005), 2143 (2014), 2225 (2015), and 2427 (2018) specifically call for training of peacekeepers on the protection and rights of children and pre-deployment awareness training on child protection. Accordingly, the training of Military peacekeepers on child protection is recognized as a key priority for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) in its child protection policy.¹

In 2008, DPKO included a child protection training module in its Core Predeployment Training Materials (CPTM) as part of the mandatory curriculum. In 2017, the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, C34, in its report A/71/19, affirms *"...the importance of continuing to ensure that all peacekeeping personnel receive adequate training on child protection and child rights in order to strengthen the protection of children in conflict and post-conflict situations. The Special Committee also notes with appreciation the efforts to update training programmes and materials, all of which are critical to ensuring that there is an effective and comprehensive response, including preventive measures, with respect to child protection. The Special Committee welcomes the launch of the child protection pre-deployment training modules developed by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and UNICEF, encourages the continued development of specialised training modules on child protection for all categories of peacekeeping personnel, requests the Department to make them available, and encourages troop- and police-contributing countries, as well as all regional and national peacekeeping training centres, to make full use of them."*

In Resolution 2143 (2014), paragraph 20, the Security Council, *"...Recommends that Member States include child protection in military training and standard operating procedures, as well as in military guidance as appropriate; recommends further that United Nations entities and United Nations peacekeeping troop- and police-contributing countries undertake targeted and operational trainings for the preparation of United Nations mission personnel including troop and police contingents on their contribution in preventing violations against children so as to give all mission personnel the ability to effectively recognize, report and respond to UN DPKO – Military Specialised Training Materials on Child Protection violations and abuses committed against children and to successfully support child protection activities for better implementation of their respective mandates..."*

Child protection training materials 2014

Following the request of the C34 in 2012, DPKO surveyed six peacekeeping missions on child protection training needs and received over 500 replies from actively serving peacekeepers. With this critical input from the field, the materials were developed in close consultation with child protection

1) On 1 January 2019, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) became the Department of Peace Operations (DPO). As these training materials were drafted prior to the 2019 structural changes, "DPKO" is used throughout the course. Students should note that DPKO is now DPO.

actors, as well as all members of the C34. A total of 37 Member States participated in the workshops accompanying the development process. The resulting materials included:

- a. An update to the Module on child protection included in the Core Predeployment Training package;
- b. Specialised Training Materials on child protection; and a
- c. Training Film.

They were designed for the Pre-deployment and in-mission training of UN peacekeepers, both military personnel and Formed Police Units. These modules are available at the Peacekeeping Resource Hub web page: <<https://research.un.org/en/peacekeeping-community/training/STM/UNMilitaryonCP>>.

Updated child protection training materials, 2018

These training materials were reviewed and updated in 2018 to ensure compliance with the latest UN child protection policy and guidelines for UN military peacekeepers. The updated materials include new scenarios based on current challenges in the Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, and South Sudan.

Specialised training materials on child protection were developed for UN Police in 2015/16. A separate Specialised Training Materials package on Child Protection for Military Child Protection Focal Points is also under development and will be issued to Member States in 2018.

Purpose

Child protection is more than a subset of protection of civilians. While many of the concepts of POC and the basic information on the Rules of Engagement apply, the child protection mandate entails some very specific tasks the military needs to undertake in addition to the physical protection of children. These are mandated by the Security Council and usually include, but are not limited to, supporting the implementation of a Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism on grave violations against children, supporting the implementation of Action Plans to end these grave violations against children, and supporting DDR processes.

These training modules aim at introducing child protection concepts and providing child protection mission-specific tactical situations for discussion among military and police contingent leaders and staff. The materials intend to promote a better understanding of the missions' child protection mandate, actors in the mission and outside of the mission who contribute to the protection of children, and actors integral to the coordination of child protection.

Included in this training are exercises that encourage peacekeepers to consider their own behaviours towards children, and the differentiation between child protection activities and community outreach activities. Finally, the training focuses on the roles and responsibilities of every peacekeeper to successfully implement the child protection mandate. Three scenario-based exercises, set in UNMISS, MINUSCA and MONUSCO, allow for the opportunity to apply the knowledge presented in these modules.

Structure of the Materials

The six modules in this Specialised Training Materials on Child Protection are organized as follows:

- » **Module 1: Children in Armed Conflict:** Examines the impact of armed conflict on children and identifies the *six grave violations* that guides UN peacekeeping mandates.
- » **Module 2: Frameworks for Child Protection:** Examines the international laws, Security Council resolutions, and Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) - Department of Field Support (DFS) - Department of Political Affairs (DPA) Policy on Child Protection that guide all mission mandates.
- » **Module 3: Interacting with Children:** Examines the difference between military child protection activities and civilian child protection activities.
- » **Module 4: Roles and Responsibilities of Peacekeeping Mission Components and External Partners:** Identifies the various actors within peacekeeping missions, the role of the civilian Child Protection advisers and the military Child Protection Officers, and the internal and external child protection actors that coordinate with the military on issues related to child protection.
- » **Module 5: Military Roles and Tasks on Child Protection Part I:** Examines the roles and tasks of military personnel as related to child protection, situational awareness, and child protection considerations in military operations.
- » **Module 6: Military Roles and Tasks on Child Protection Part II:** Examines Rules of Engagement as related to child protection, reviews the grave violations peacekeepers are most likely to encounter in the field mission context, as well as responses and appropriate actions when encountering child soldiers, and engages in scenario discussions.

References and resources

Conventions, protocols, resolutions, and other guiding frameworks

- *UN Conventions on the Rights of the Child and Optional Protocols*, 1989. See also: <https://www.unicef.org/protection/57929_58013.html>;
- The *Geneva Convention of 1949* and their *Additional Protocols of 1977*;
- The *International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 182 of 1999*;
- The *Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography*, 2000;
- The *Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict*, 2002;
- The Paris Principles and Guidelines on Children associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups, 2007;
- The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC), 1998;
- Security Council resolutions on Children and Armed Conflict: Resolutions 1261 (1999), 1314 (2000), 1379 (2001), 1460 (2003), 1539 (2004), 1612 (2005), 1882 (2009), 1998 (2011), 2068 (2012), 2143 (2014), 2225 (2015) and 2427 (2018);
- The Vancouver Principles on Peacekeeping and Preventing the Recruitment and Use of Child Soldiers, 2017.

Non-UN Sources

- Landmine Monitor 2017, International Campaign to Ban Landmines – Cluster Munition Coalition, December 2017;
- Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative. *Child Soldiers: A Handbook for Security Sector Actors*, 2012 (Second Edition, 2013);
- International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), *Legal Framework for the Protection of Children in Armed Conflict*, 2011.

UN sources

- *Code of Conduct* and UN Policy on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse,
» <<https://conduct.unmissions.org/>>;
- DAW/UNICEF, *The Girl Child and Armed Conflict: Recognizing and addressing grave violations of girls' human rights*, September 2006;
- DPKO, Integrated Training Service, *Core Pre-Deployment Training Materials*, November 2009;
- DPKO, Integrated Training Service, *Child Protection in Peacekeeping Training Modules, Core Pre-deployment Training Materials*, September 2017;

- DPKO-DFS, Integrated Training Service, Comprehensive Protection of Civilians Training Materials for UN Peacekeeping Operations, 2017;
- DPKO-DFS, Guidelines on Implementing Protection of Civilians Mandates by Military Components of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, February 2015;
- DPKO-DFS Specialised Training Materials on Child Protection for UN Police, 2015/2016;
- DPKO-DFS-DPA Policy on Child Protection in UN Peace Operations, 2017;
- DPKO-UNICEF-OSRSG CAAC Field Manual: Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) on Grave Violations against Children in Situations of Armed Conflict, 2012;
- Infantry Battalion Manual: Volume I, August 2012;
- Infantry Battalion Manual: Volume II, August 2012;
- Integrated Missions Planning Process (IMPP): Guidelines Endorsed by the Secretary-General on 13 June 2006;
- Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict (OSRSG CAAC), The Six Grave Violations Against Children During Armed Conflict: The Legal Foundation, 2009 (updated 2013);
- OSRSG CAAC, The Rights and Guarantees of Internally Displaced Children (Working Paper Number 2), 2011;
- Operational Guide to the Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS) — see chapters 5.20 on “Youth and DDR” and 5.30 “Children and DDR,” 2010;
- Peacekeeping Capstone Doctrine, 2008;
- UNICEF, Machel Study 10-Year Strategic Review: Children and Conflict in a Changing World, 2009.

Websites and applications

- Children and Armed Conflict. Application for iPhone and Android, developed by Watchlist and Mission of Lichtenstein;
- <<http://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/>>;
- <<https://www.icc-cpi.int/drc/lubanga?ln=en>>;
- <<http://www.coalitionfortheicc.org/node/111>>;
- <<https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/child-protection>>;
- <<http://watchlist.org>>.

UN Military Specialised Training Materials on Child Protection

Welcome to the training on child protection for UN peacekeepers. You will learn about the child protection mandate and what it means for you in your daily operations.

The definition of child protection is the prevention of and response to abuse, neglect, exploitation, and violence against children. You as peacekeepers have a specific role to play in that. You also need to know how to deal with children when you encounter them in your operations.

The training is structured around the following modules:

1. The Impact of Armed Conflict on Children;
2. Frameworks for Child Protection;
3. Interacting with Children;
4. Roles and Responsibilities of Peacekeeping Mission Components and External Partners
5. Military Roles and Tasks on Child Protection Part I; and
6. Military Roles and Tasks on Child Protection Part II.

Method of Study

This self-paced course aims to give students flexibility in their approach to learning. The following steps are meant to provide motivation and guidance about some possible strategies and minimum expectations for completing this course successfully:

- Before you begin studying, first browse through the entire course material. Notice the module and section titles to get an overall idea of what will be involved as you proceed.
 - The material is meant to be relevant and practical. Instead of memorizing individual details, strive to understand concepts and overall perspectives in regard to the United Nations system.
 - Set personal guidelines and benchmarks regarding how you want to schedule your time.
 - Study the module content and the learning objectives. At the beginning of each module, orient yourself to the main points. If possible, read the material twice to ensure maximum understanding and retention, and let time elapse between readings.
 - At the end of each module, take the End-of-Module Quiz. Clarify any missed questions by re-reading the appropriate sections, and focus on retaining the correct information.
 - After you complete all of the modules, prepare for the End-of-Course Examination by taking time to review the main points of each module. Then, when ready, log into your online student classroom and take the End-of-Course Examination in one sitting.
- » ***Access your online classroom at***
<www.peaceopstraining.org/users/user_login>
from virtually anywhere in the world.
- Your exam will be scored electronically. If you achieve a passing grade of 75 per cent or higher on the exam, you will be awarded a Certificate of Completion. If you score below 75 per cent, you will be given one opportunity to take a second version of the End-of-Course Examination.

Key Features of Your Online Classroom »

- Access to all of your courses;
- A secure testing environment in which to complete your training;
- Access to additional training resources, including multimedia course supplements; and
- The ability to download your Certificate of Completion for any completed course.

MODULE

1

Children and Armed Conflict



This module will focus on the specific impact of armed conflict on children.

UN Photo #533678 by Tobin Jones.

In this module »

- Section 1.1 Who is a Child?
- Section 1.2 The Nature of Armed Conflict is Changing
- Section 1.3 The Six Grave Violations
- Section 1.4 Gender Issues in Child Protection

Learning Outcomes »

- Understand who a child is and why children are most at risk during armed conflict.
- Understand the changing nature of conflict and its impact on children.
- Know and understand the *six grave violations*.
- Be familiar with gender concerns and vulnerabilities that boys and girls face.
- Explain factors and risks that contribute to children being recruited by armed forces or groups.
- Explain that one child may be affected by multiple violations, thereby exacerbating trauma.
- Explain the different experiences of boys and girls associated with armed forces or groups.



A child holds up bullets collected from the ground in Rounyn, a village about 15 kilometres from Shangil Tobaya, North Darfur. Most of the village's population has fled to camps for internally displaced people because of heavy fighting between the Government of Sudan and rebel forces. 27 March 2011. UN Photo #468142 by Albert González Farran.

This module will focus on the specific impact of armed conflict on children. We will explain why conflicts disproportionately affect children and familiarise you with the common violations and threats you, as peacekeepers, are likely to encounter in your mission areas. You may see children being misused as child soldiers, raped, torn from their families or killed. A firm understanding of the impact of conflict on children will help you to be more alert to the protection needs, threats and violations against children in armed conflict.

Module 1 has four main objectives. By the end of the module, you will understand who a child is, as defined by the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*. We will then look at what makes children especially vulnerable during conflict, along with their unique protection needs. We'll examine the changing nature of conflict and the impact current conflict situations have on children. As defined by the Security Council, we will identify the *six grave violations* and discuss your role in reporting on these violations. And finally, we'll look at the similar and unique concerns that exist for girls and boys during times of armed conflict.

Section 1.1 Who is a Child?

The *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*, Article 1, states that a child:

“Means every human being below the age of 18 years, unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.”

The simplified and common understanding of this is that a child is every human being below the age of 18. **Therefore, for all UN (peacekeepers), a child is any person under the age of 18 years.** In some cultures, and according to the laws of some host states in which we are deployed, a child enters adulthood once he/she gets married, becomes a parent or earns his/her own income. Maturity is defined by the social role he/she assumes rather than by age. **However, peacekeepers must adhere to the internationally accepted definition as stated above.** When in doubt, we apply the highest standard of protection and assume that the person is a child.

Film: Child Protection in UN Peacekeeping (A Child's Fate)



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on Child Protection

View A Child's Fate online »

View a 12-minute film developed by DPKO entitled: "A Child's Fate." The film describes the horrors that children are exposed to in conflict, includes a call to action, and explains why peacekeepers have to take action. It also shows how every mission component has a role to play. Finally, it introduces us to child protection specialists who have been deployed to peacekeeping missions.

View A Child's Fate here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gNFnRIGPzSM>

Children are vulnerable

- **What threats do children face during armed conflict?**
- **Why do you think children are more at risk than adults during armed conflict?**

While many children prove remarkably resilient when faced with extremely difficult circumstances, children are disproportionately affected by armed conflict due to the following three reasons:

1. **Children can be more easily influenced and may not fully understand the consequences of their actions.** For example, they may be lured into joining an armed force or armed group, thinking they will be gaining “employment” or be protected from violence. Children have also unknowingly acted as “suicide bombers,” carrying explosives hidden in their bags or clothing, without knowing it.
2. **Children depend on family, community and government structures for protection and care.** These structures are generally destroyed during conflict. This explains why displaced or unaccompanied children are at greater risk of exploitation or abuse.
3. **Children are still in the process of growing up.** The violence from armed conflict poses risks to their healthy development. For example, the denial of access to basic services, including adequate nutrition,

has a more serious long-term effect on children, particularly babies and younger children, than adults. Traumatic experiences and other negative influences during this time (such as indoctrination) carry more consequences for children than adults.

Section 1.2 The Nature of Armed Conflict is Changing

Now we are going to explore some of the characteristics and trends that define armed conflict. There are few country-versus-country conflicts these days. Most are now internal conflicts: independence struggles, separation struggles, ethnic and/or religious struggles, and civil wars within the borders of one country. These conflicts often spill over into other countries — causing influxes of refugees or internally displaced people (IDPs) or the spread of armed groups — and can, in turn, affect the immediate region.

One key dynamic of conflict that impacts children today is the deliberate action of armed groups. In order to achieve a strategic advantage, these groups will use grave measures such as committing attacks on villages and raping civilians and children. In addition, the frequency at which children are being abducted and/or recruited for use as child soldiers is alarming; war takes place in and around villages, with schools and hospitals serving as easy targets, making civilians and children especially vulnerable.

War has devastating impacts on children. We will now look more closely at the impacts that war and conflict have on children. The consequences of conflict on children can be placed in two groups:

- **Peace and security impacts; and**
- **Humanitarian and development impacts.**

The nature of armed conflict is changing »

Internal armed conflict

Regional conflict

Civilians targeted

Civilian/child casualties

Ethnic and sectarian violence

Number of armed groups has increased

Proliferation of weapons

Rape and violence as a tool of war



Peace and security concerns

Peace and security concerns include physical threats, exploitation, and abuse of children. Examples of such impacts are the killing of children in shelling and crossfire situations, injury to children by landmine and explosive remnants of war, rape and sexual violence against children, detention of children, torture of children, and acts that constitute war crimes and crimes against humanity. **UN peacekeeping operations play a key role in addressing the peace and security concerns of children.**

Humanitarian and development concerns

Humanitarian and development concerns include food distribution, water points, refugee camps for shelter, temporary schools, medical facilities, etc. These concerns are normally addressed by international or government humanitarian and development agencies. Cooperative work and effort from all relevant actors is needed in order to fully respond to the devastating effects of conflict on the lives of children. We will explore this in more detail in Modules 4-6.

The Devastating Impact of War on Children



Figure 1-1

Section 1.3 The Six Grave Violations

The *six grave violations* against children during armed conflict were selected due to their obvious nature and severe consequences on the lives of children, and their ability to be monitored and quantified. The *six grave violations* against children in armed conflict are indeed heinous breaches of international law, and the legal basis for asserting actions in response to such breaches will be covered in the next module.

Reports on the grave violations are sent to the Security Council and those who have been reported as perpetrators can be brought to justice and sanctioned. ***When you are in a mission you will be expected to contribute to reporting on these violations:***

- Killing and maiming of children;
- Recruitment or use of children as soldiers;
- Sexual violence against children;

- Abduction of children;
- Attacks against schools and hospitals; and
- Denial of humanitarian access.

After broad consultations within the UN, the UN Security Council identified *six categories of violations* that warrant priority attention. When conducted by armed forces or groups in an armed conflict, these six categories are known as the “**six grave violations**.” You will need to know these violations. We will now go through each of the violations in detail.

The Six Grave Violations

- Security Council Resolution 1612;
- Grave violations are against international law;
- Reports of violations are sent to the UN Security Council;
- **UN Peacekeepers contribute to reporting on these violations.**



UN DPKO – Military Specialized Training Materials on Child Protection

Killing and maiming

Killing and maiming includes **any action that results in the death of or serious injury to one or more children, such as scarring, disfigurement, or mutilation.** While often intentional, maiming can also result from wounds caused by bullets in a crossfire or detonation of anti-personnel landmines. In current warfare, hundreds and thousands of children are often killed and injured in the course of military operations, including in crossfire, aerial bombardment, and shelling. A worrying trend is the rise in suicide attacks, and the use of children to carry them out, leading to the death of, or serious injury to, children. About 10,000 people are killed or injured by unexploded ordnances (UXOs) annually: *more than 40% of casualties are children.*

Sometimes children are maimed deliberately. Between 1999 and 2002, during the civil war in Sierra Leone, the rebels instituted a policy of cutting off the hands, legs and arms of captured soldiers and civilians, including children. Hundreds of children were amputated or used to conduct the maiming.

In Iraq and Myanmar, spikes in armed clashes and violence caused a substantial number of child casualties in 2017. In Afghanistan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen, the highest number of verified child casualties from armed conflict was recorded in 2017.



Abdurrahim Ahmed Mohamed, age twelve, lost his right hand and the sight in his left eye when he and his friends played with unexploded ordnance (UXO) as small children in their village. 2 April 2012. UN Photo #509287 by Albert González Farran.

Killing and maiming »

Any action that results in the death of or serious injury to one or more children:

- Shelling;
- Crossfire;
- Cluster munitions;
- Landmines;
- Unexploded Ordnances (UXOs);
- Suicide bombs.

- Iraq: 279 children killed (143 boys, 84 girls, 52 gender unknown) and 438 children maimed (270 boys, 143 girls, 25 unknown gender);
- Myanmar: 296 children killed and maimed, including 169 boys, 62 girls, 36 unknown gender;
- Afghanistan: 861 killed and 2,318 injured, including 251 girls;
- Syria: 910 children killed and 361 maimed;
- Yemen: 552 children killed (398 boys, 154 girls) and 764 maimed (549 boys, 215 girls).

Recruitment and use of child soldiers

A child associated with armed forces and groups (commonly referred to as "Child Soldiers") refers to any person below 18 years of age who is, or who has been, recruited or used by an armed force or armed group in any capacity, including but not limited to:

- Direct combat on the front lines;
- Intelligence operations as spies;
- Scouts or reconnaissance (especially because children are seldom viewed with suspicion);
- Decoys or saboteurs;
- To man checkpoints;
- Couriers or messengers to communicate;
- Porters, cooks, cleaners, etc.;
- Enslaved as sex objects or as "bush wives," etc.

Recruitment and use of child soldiers »



Former child soldiers in North Kivu board a helicopter flight arranged by the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) for repatriation to undisclosed regions or areas of the country. 13 January 2009. UN Photo #316079 by Marie Frechon.

A child associated with armed forces and groups (commonly referred to as "Child Soldiers") refers to any person below 18 years of age who is, or who has been, recruited and used by an armed force or armed group in any capacity, including but not limited to:

- Fighters;
- Cooks;
- Porters;
- Spies;
- For sexual purposes.

"Children associated with armed forces or armed groups" or "CAAFAG," is the term used for these children. *The key point is: you don't have to have a weapon to be a child soldier.* It must be stressed that CAAFAG is the technical and politically correct term, but the term that most are familiar with is "child soldiers." When using the term "child soldiers," it must be used broadly, as defined here on the slide. Henceforth, during this training, we will use the term "child soldiers".

Tens of thousands of boys and girls are recruited and used as child soldiers by armed forces or groups in conflict situations in over 20 countries around the world. As a military peacekeeper, you are likely to encounter children looking like *young soldiers*: carrying guns and wearing uniforms. However, it is important for you to realise that the definition of a "child soldier" is much broader, given children's wide-ranging functions in armed forces or armed groups. In fact, a child doesn't need to carry a weapon to be a "child soldier." It is important to understand that armed groups can employ children in a number of different ways.

From the Paris Principles on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, 2007:

"A child associated with armed forces and groups (commonly referred to as "Child Soldiers") refers to any person below 18 years of age who is, or who has been, recruited or used by an armed force or armed group in any capacity, including but not limited to . . . active fighters, cooks, porters, spies, or for sexual purposes."

Abductions

Abducting children is illegal under international law. It may constitute a grave breach of the *Geneva Conventions* and amount to crimes against humanity and war crimes. In times of conflict, children are often abducted from their homes, schools and refugee camps. The abduction of children by force, either temporarily or permanently, can range in purpose from recruitment by armed forces or groups, forced labour, sexual slavery and recruitment. Many children also get trafficked across borders.



For 18 years the Lord's Resistance Army, which claims to be fighting for a state ruled according to the Ten Commandments, has terrorized the northern provinces of Uganda, abducting 20,000 children and forcing 1.6 million people to flee their homes. The UN's Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs has called Northern Uganda the "largest neglected humanitarian emergency in the world". Photo by Sven Torfinn.

Abductions »

The unlawful removal, seizure, capture, apprehension, taking or enforced disappearance of a child either temporarily or permanently for the purpose of any form of exploitation of the child.

- Recruitment;
- Information gather;
- Forced Labour;
- Sexual violence.

One of the most notorious situations involving widespread abduction of children over the past 10 years took place in northern Uganda, where the number of abductions was estimated to have reached 25,000 or more. Tens of thousands of abducted children were made to serve the rebels. During the two-decade conflict, young girls and women were vulnerable to physical and sexual abuse, not only at the hands of the rebels, but by government soldiers as well. In Nigeria, Boko Haram has abducted almost 2,000 children since 2013. The girls in captivity suffered from rape or became “wives” of Boko Haram members. Many of these girls bore children from this sexual violence.

Rape and sexual violence

Rape and other forms of sexual violence during armed conflict are prohibited under the *Geneva Conventions* and their *Additional Protocols*. Such acts may constitute war crimes, crimes against humanity, torture and genocide.

Children who experience sexual violence suffer from psychological trauma and health consequences including transmitted infections such as HIV/AIDS and early pregnancies. Victims of rape, and their children, may experience rejection by their families.

The risk of sexual violence increases dramatically with the increase of fighting forces and a breakdown of law and order. Moreover, poverty and joblessness can create extremely perilous conditions for young girls, including trafficking for sexual exploitation. These girls and their children are particularly vulnerable to all forms of exploitation, including prostitution and trafficking, and need special protection.

Boys are also victims of sexual violence in conflict. Boys may also face trauma as witnesses or perpetrators of sexual violence. They may be forced to commit rape either directly by their commander, or indirectly through peer pressure.

Examples

- Baccha Baazi (dancing boys) is a practice in Afghanistan. It is a form of sexual slavery and child prostitution in which boys are sold to wealthy or powerful men, including military and political leaders, for entertainment and sexual activities.
- Democratic Republic of Congo: The United Nations verified more than 800 victims of rape and sexual violence in 2017. *33% were children!* The actual number of reported cases is substantially higher; during the same period, almost 6,000 cases of sexual violence in conflict-affected provinces of the DRC had been reported.

Rape and Sexual Violence

A violent act of a sexual nature committed against a child.



UN Photo #535619 by Staton Winter.
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on Child Protection

- Rape;
- Sexual slavery;
- Forced prostitution;
- Forced pregnancy;
- Enforced abortion;
- **Girls are especially vulnerable during wartime.**

Attacks against schools and hospitals

Under international humanitarian law, both schools and hospitals are protected civilian objects, and therefore benefit from the humanitarian principles of distinction and proportionality.

In recent conflicts, schools and hospitals have come under increasing attack in efforts to discredit the government or to instill fear in the population. Armed groups, including government troops, also use schools as bases or storage areas, thus denying education to children. Teachers, nurses and doctors may also come under personal attack in order to make these institutions less effective. Lastly, as stated earlier, abductions can take place in schools.

The effects of conflict are compounding. Short-term loss of education can lead to the loss of several key years of education, significantly affecting future employment prospects for children.

In 2017, in Syria, the United Nations confirmed that hospitals and schools had been bombed and, in many cases, specifically targeted by government forces. In the Kasai region of the DRC, there were 1,000 reported attacks on schools and hospitals by members of armed groups in 2017.

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Attacks against Schools and Hospitals

- Physical attacks and threat of attacks on buildings (targeted/indiscriminate attacks);
- Attacks or threats against school children;
- Attacks or threats on personnel, doctors, nurses or teachers (killing, maiming, harassment, coercion, abduction);
- Looting and wanton destruction of buildings;
- Military use of schools and hospitals.



UN Photo #138694 by Eskender Debebe.

Denial of humanitarian access

Denial of humanitarian access to civilians, including children, and attacks against humanitarian workers assisting children are prohibited under the *4th Geneva Convention* and its *Additional Protocols* and may amount to crimes against humanity and war crimes. Moreover, humanitarian access to civilians is a principle of customary international law.

Humanitarian access is crucial in situations of armed conflict where civilians, including children, are in desperate need of assistance. Denial of humanitarian access entails blocking the free passage or timely delivery of humanitarian assistance to persons in need (including children) as well as deliberate attacks against humanitarian workers. Access can be denied or hampered by parties to the conflict for security or political reasons. In many parts of the world, humanitarian assistance is sometimes interrupted because of ongoing fighting. It is estimated that in today's conflicts around the globe, 80 million children are denied humanitarian assistance.

Examples:

- In 2017, almost 200 instances of denial of humanitarian access were documented in South Sudan; some involving attacks on humanitarian personnel and looting of humanitarian assets, preventing children from receiving essential aid.

- In Iraq, ISIL restricted supplies of medicine and clean water and closed checkpoints, denying access of humanitarian aid to communities and children.

Section 1.4 Gender Issues in Child Protection

Girls and boys are often more vulnerable to certain kinds of threats and violations based on their distinct gender roles within their societies.

Violence against civilians, particularly sexual violence, is a prevalent feature of current conflicts. In situations of armed conflict, women and girls, and often men and boys too, are tortured and sexually abused with impunity. Sexual violence is used to humiliate, terrify and intimidate the victims and their loved ones. It is used as a weapon of war. Often, without male relatives, husbands and friends to protect them, women and girls face increased risk of physical assault and vulnerability to sexual and other forms of violence.

Girls assume various roles within the armed group, including as fighters. They are also often sexually abused and may be forced to be the “wives” of commanders and soldiers. In some cases, they even become pregnant and bear the soldiers’ children. This role makes it particularly challenging to identify the girls in demobilization and reintegration efforts. Girls can easily be overlooked and mistaken to be soldiers’ dependents, especially because many are too embarrassed or afraid to speak up. They may also have different needs in the reintegration process due to their different experiences. **Peacekeepers should therefore pay special attention to the distinct needs of girls in DDR efforts.**

As peacekeepers, you should be keenly aware of these gender differences. Here are two other examples to illustrate this point:

- In many refugee and internally displaced persons (IDP) settings, women and girls are more vulnerable to sexual violence because of the almost daily need to leave camps in search of firewood for cooking.
- Boys tend to be more often targeted for their alleged association with armed forces or armed groups, which may put them at risk of physical attack, as well as illegal detention and torture.

Gender Issues in Child Protection »



Malian girls stand in the shade in Kidal, northern Mali. 27 July 2013. UN Photo #557567 by Marco Dormino.

» Tasks assigned to girls and boys can differ based on their distinct gender roles within their societies;

» Women and girls face a higher risk of rape and other forms of sexual violence during armed conflict;

» The experiences of girls and boys in armed forces differ, including methods of recruitment, identification, and reintegration.

Case studies: Gender issues

Discussion questions:

Think about the testimonies below based on the following suggested discussion questions:

1. Which factors put Jacques and Jasmine at risk during the conflict? How has the fact that they were children at the time of the conflict increased their vulnerability?
2. How do the experiences of Jacques and Jasmine differ due to their different gender roles?

You should consider some of the factors that can increase the risk of a child being recruited by armed forces or groups and reflect on the different experiences of girls and boys associated with armed forces or groups.

Testimony of a Boy

Jacques was recruited into the insurgent group Mayi-Mayi when he was 10 years old.

"I remember the day I decided to join the Mayi-Mayi. It was after an attack on my village. My parents, and also my grandfather were killed and I was running. I was so scared. I lost everyone. I had nowhere to go and no food to eat. In the Mayi-Mayi, I thought I would be protected, but it was hard. I would see others die in front of me. I was hungry very often, and I was scared. Sometimes they would whip me, sometimes very hard. They used to say that it would make me a better fighter. One day, they whipped my [11-year-old] friend to death because he had not killed the enemy. Also, what I did not like was to hear the girls, our friends, crying because the soldiers would rape them."

Testimonies from Amnesty International Report, Democratic Republic of Congo: Children at War, Creating Hope for the Future, 2006.

Testimony of a Girl

Jasmine was recruited by the insurgent group Mayi-Mayi in South-Kivu, when she was 12 years old. She is now 16 and has a four-month-old baby.

"When the Mayi-Mayi attacked my village, we all ran away...the soldiers captured all the girls, even the very young. Once with the soldiers, you were forced to "marry" one of the soldiers...If you refused, they would kill you...They would slaughter people like chickens....Wherever we were fighting, along the way, they would take the women and girls working in the fields...They would take young girls, remove their clothes, and then would rape them...My "husband" did not beat me too often...But one day, he was killed in an attack. I felt I was in danger and I should leave. On the way, as I was pregnant, I had my baby. I was alone in the bush, without medication. I still have pain from this. Then I went to my "husband's" village, but his parents rejected me and my child, after taking all my belongings. They blamed me for his death. I wanted to go home, but it is so far away, I was afraid the Mayi-Mayi would find me and capture me again."



On vulnerability factors

While Jacques appears to have joined the armed group “voluntarily,” the loss of his parents and the ensuing lack of protection, food, and housing put him in an extremely difficult and possibly life-threatening situation. Children like Jacques lack the maturity to make an informed decision as to whether to join an armed force or group and can be more easily influenced than adults. The recruitment of all children — whether they are forced to join or are driven to join by other factors, is prohibited under international law.

Jasime got taken because she was a young girl who could be given to a soldier as a wife, to reward him. Girls are especially chosen for this. Becoming pregnant then increases the dependency on the soldier. As you can see in this case, the girl has nowhere else to turn to. She is stigmatized and will not be able to go back to her community, or the community of her husband’s family. However, traumatic experiences — like the ones experienced by Jacques and Jasime — can have more severe and long-term effects on children, as they are still in the process of their physical and intellectual development.

On gender differences

The threats and violence girls and boys face during and after conflict often differ based on their distinct gender roles within their societies. Jacques, like many boys, was mainly used by the armed group for fighting and support tasks. Girls may assume various roles within an armed force or armed group, including the role of combatants, but they are often at greater risk of sexual violence, of being used as sexual slaves, or forced to be the “wives” of commanders and soldiers. Some of them become pregnant and bear the soldiers’ children. Girls can easily be overlooked and mistaken as the soldiers’ dependents. This role makes it particularly challenging to identify the girl victims during formal disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) efforts. It is especially crucial that peacekeepers pay special attention to the distinct needs of girls during the DDR process.

The consequences for girls can be long-term. In some cases, communities shun rape victims and children born of rape. Jasime refers to her abductor and soldier as her husband. This illustrates one of the factors that we discussed earlier about the difficulties of accessing girls during the DDR process. The stigma associated with sexual violence and the fear of rejection by the family and community is such that many are too embarrassed or afraid to speak up. At the age of 16, Jasime now has to take care of her baby on her own.

Example of differences between the experiences of girls and boys affected by armed conflict:

In refugee and IDP settings throughout the world, women and girls are made more vulnerable to sexual violence because of the almost daily need to leave camps in search of firewood for cooking. For example, in Darfur women and girls often walk several kilometers away from the camps to find a few branches to burn. This turns them into prime targets for militia groups, national military or police forces and other men who act in a climate of impunity.

In Afghanistan, most victims of mines and other explosive remnants of war are boys between the ages of 8 and 15. Boys often assume roles in Afghan society that require them to be outside the house like herding cattle. Boys also tend to be targeted more often for their alleged association with armed forces or armed groups, which may put them at risk of physical attack as well as illegal detention and torture.

Take Aways

- A child is anyone under the age of 18 years;
- Children face specific risks during armed conflict;
- The nature of conflict has changed and severely affects children;
- The *six grave violations* against children; and
- Protection needs of boys and girls may differ.

References

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- Landmines Monitor 2017, International Campaign to Ban Landmines — Cluster Munition Coalition, December 2017;
- United Nations, OSRSG CAAC, The Rights and Guarantees of Internally Displaced Children (Working Paper Number 2), 2011, <<https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/>>;
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- United Nations, DAW/UNICEF, The Girl Child and Armed Conflict: Recognizing and Addressing Grave Violations of Girls' Human Rights, September 2006.

End-of-Module Quiz »

1. What are the three (3) main reasons why children are disproportionately affected by armed conflicts?
2. TRUE or FALSE: When in doubt about if a person is a child or not, peacekeepers must apply the highest standard of protection and assume that the person is a child.
 - A. True
 - B. False
3. _____ defines a child as a human being below the age of _____.
 - A. UN Convention on the Rights of the Child; eighteen (18)
 - B. UN Convention on the Rights of the Child; twenty-five (25)
 - C. The Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols; eighteen (18)
 - D. The Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols; twenty-five (25)
4. List the six grave violations against children.
5. In Afghanistan, most victims of mines and other explosive remnants of war are _____.
 - A. Women and girls
 - B. Humanitarian aid workers
 - C. Boys between the ages of 8 and 15
 - D. Girls between the ages of 8 and 15
6. Which of the following is a major challenge discussed in this module to helping girls in demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration (DDR) efforts?
 - A. Girls typically flee before these efforts begin
 - B. Girls can easily be overlooked and mistaken as the soldiers' dependents
 - C. The demands of boys overshadow the needs of girls
 - D. DDR efforts extremely brief; girls might miss opportunities for help while tending to their other responsibilities
7. What is the one key dynamic of conflict that impacts children today?
 - A. Inter-state/country-vs-country conflicts
 - B. The deliberate action of armed groups
 - C. The threat of nuclear weapons
 - D. The targeting of military personnel
8. Where are some places that children may be abducted from?
9. Do children have to be involved in direct combat to be considered a "child soldier"?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No
10. TRUE or FALSE: Humanitarian and development concerns are addressed by UN peacekeeping operations while peace and security concerns are addressed by international or government humanitarian and development agencies.
 - A. True
 - B. False

Answer Key provided on the next page.

End-of-Module Quiz »

Answer Key »

1. Children can be more easily influenced and may not fully understand the consequences of their actions; Children depend on family, community and government structures, which are generally destroyed during conflicts, for protection and care; and Children are still in the process of growing up, and their experiences during an armed conflict may have long-term psychological and developmental impacts.
2. A. True
3. A
4. Killing and maiming of children; recruitment or use of children as soldiers; sexual violence against children; abduction of children; attacks against schools and hospitals; and denial of humanitarian access.
5. C
6. D
7. B
8. Schools, homes, and refugee camps.
9. B
10. B. False

Appendix A: Modules 1-6 Take Aways

MODULE 1-6: HANDOUT – TAKE AWAYS | 1

TAKE AWAYS

Modules 1-6

MODULE 1

- A child is anyone under the age of 18 years
- Children face specific risks during armed conflict
- The nature of conflict has changed and severely affects children
- The Six Grave Violations against children
- Protection needs of boys and girls may differ

MODULE 2

- Know the legal instruments for child protection and the mandate of your mission
- Military peacekeepers have a legal obligation to protect children
- Officers and troops must be trained on child protection, the mission mandate related to child protection, and the mission context and common violations of children's rights in the mission
- Ensure all military operations are in full compliance with IHL and the mission ROE

MODULE 3

- Peacekeepers should be aware of the influence of their own cultural background when dealing with children and local communities in order to avoid disrespectful or harmful behaviour
- Peacekeepers need to abide by the *Code of Conduct* and other ethical standards when dealing with children in their mission areas
- Remember UN's *Zero Tolerance Policy* on sexual exploitation and abuse and the prohibition against child labour
- Always keep the guiding principle in mind when interacting with children: *Do No Harm*

MODULE 4

- Child protection is a team effort and everyone has a role to play
- Responsibilities differ and are complimentary
- Coordination is essential
- Reporting is crucial to trigger the chain of action
- Military should establish CP focal points at Force, Sector, Battalion and Company levels
- Establish CP information requirements and mechanisms for information sharing with CPA

This is quoting from UN guidance.

2 | MODULE 1-6: HANDOUT – TAKE AWAYS

MODULE 5

- Know your roles and how you can contribute to child protection:
 - Direct roles – prevention of violations
 - Support roles – gather information, support child protection section, provide security to CPAs
- Create orders and SOPs to address information requirements, hand-over of children, etc.
- In all your actions and orders, **consider the best interest of the child**
- Military components have directives/SOPs on child protection – **use them**
- Child protection is part of almost every patrol activity
- Protection is a combination of actions to *reduce vulnerability* and *reduce threat*
- Make an assessment of the child-specific indicators in your operational environment

MODULE 6

- Protection of children is an integral part of the overall mandate
- The Rules of Engagement provides you with the authority to use force to protect children
- The handling of child soldiers is complex and requires training
- Remember two key considerations
 - Take action to address child protection threats
 - Inform child protection actors
- Hand over child soldiers to CP actors immediately

This is quoting from UN guidance.

Appendix B: List of Acronyms

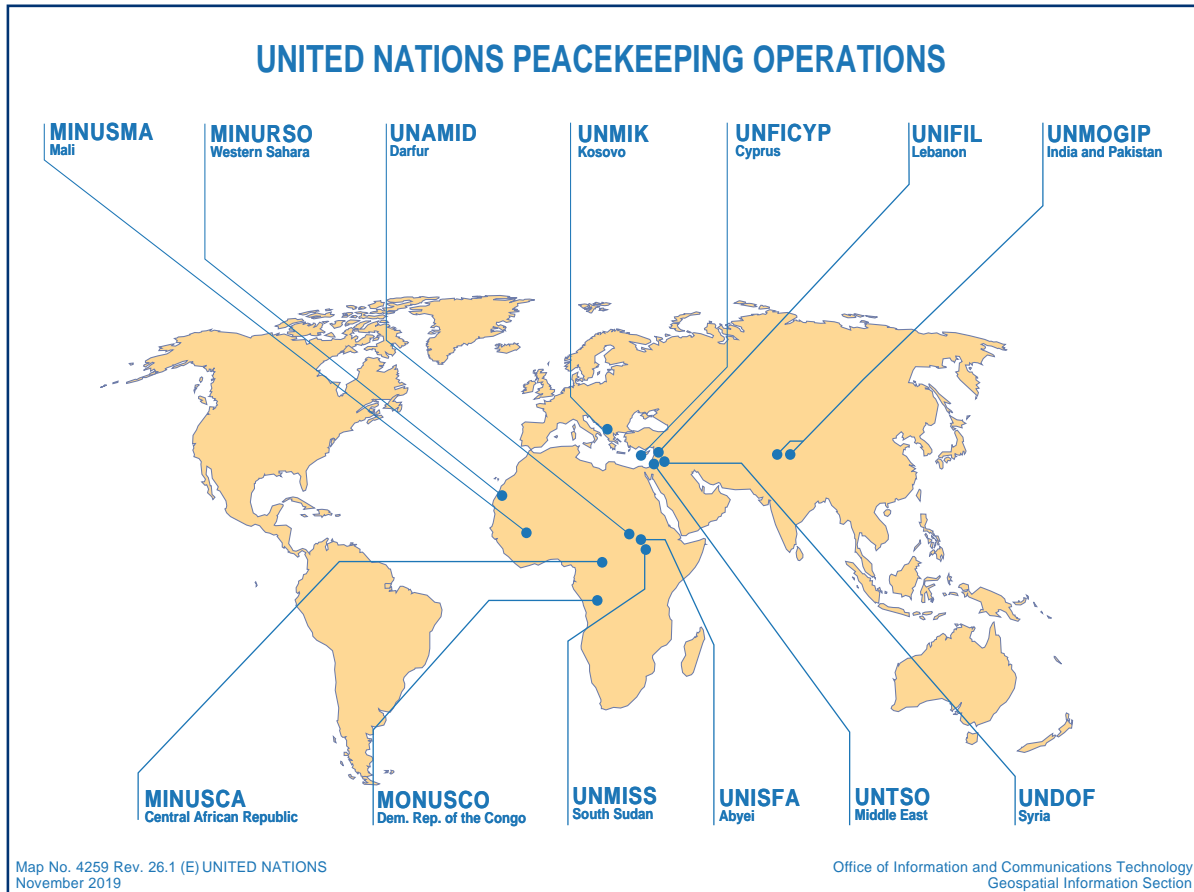
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AOR	area of responsibility
APC	armoured personnel carrier
CAAFAG	children associated with armed forces or armed groups
CAN	Community Alert Network
CDT	Conduct and Discipline Team
CIMIC	civil-military coordination
CLA	Community Liaison Assistant
CONOPS	Concept of Operations
COS	Chief of Staff
CP	child protection
CPA	Child Protection Adviser
CPS	Child Protection Section
CPTM	Core Predeployment Training Materials
CPU	Child Protection Unit
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
DAW	Division for the Advancement of Women
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
DFS	Department of Field Support
DMS	Director of Mission Support
DPA	Department of Political Affairs
DPET	Policy, Evaluation and Training Division
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
DSRSG	Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General

DUF	Directives on the Use of Force
FARDC	Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo
FBU	Finance and Budget Unit
FC	Force Commander
FHQ	Force Headquarters
FJOC	Field Joint Operations Centre
GVPP	Gender, Children, and Vulnerable Persons Protection
HC	Humanitarian Coordinator
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HOM	Head of Mission
HOMC	Head of Military Component
HOPC	Head of Police Component
HR	human rights
HRDDP	Human Rights Due Diligence Policy
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDDRS	Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards
IDP	internally displaced people
IHL	international humanitarian law
IHRL	international human rights law
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMPP	Integrated Missions Planning Process
IPOs	individual police officers
ISIL	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
JMAC	Joint Mission Analysis Cell

JOC	Joint Operations Centre
MILOB	military observer
MINUSCA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic
MLO	military liaison officer
MONUSCO	The United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
MRM	Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OLA	Office of Legal Affairs
OMA	Office of Military Affairs
OPAC	Optional Protocol on Children in Armed Conflict
OPCON	Operational Control
OSRSG CAAC	Office of the Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict
PCC	police-contributing countries
POC	Protection of Civilians
POC	Protection of Civilian Adviser
QIPs	quick impact projects
RC	Resident Coordinator
ROE	Rules of Engagement
SAF	Sudanese Armed Forces
SCR	Security Council resolution
SEA	sexual exploitation and abuse
SOP	standard operating procedure
SPLA	Sudan People's Liberation Army
SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary-General

SRSB-CAAC	Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict
SSR	Security Sector Reform
TCC	troop-contributing countries
UNAMID	United Nations–African Union Mission in Darfur
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNHQ	United Nations Headquarters
UNIBAM	United Nations Infantry Battalion Manual
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNIFIL	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNMISS	United Nations Mission in South Sudan
UNOCI	United Nations Operation in Côte d’Ivoire
UNPOL	United Nations Police
UXOs	unexploded ordnances
WFP	World Food Programme
WPA	Women Protection Adviser

Appendix C: Current Peacekeeping Operations



UN Peacekeeping Map from the UN Cartographic Section, November 2019: <www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/map/dpko/P_K_O.pdf>.

- » ***Looking for statistics or other data about peacekeeping around the world today? Visit the UN Peacekeeping resource page for the most up-to-date information about current peacekeeping operations and other UN missions:***
- <<https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/resources>>.***

Instructions for the End-of-Course Examination

Format and Material

The End-of-Course Examination is a multiple-choice exam that is accessed from the Online Classroom. Most exams have 50 questions. Each question gives the student four choices (A, B, C, and D), and only one is the correct answer. The exam covers material from all modules of the course and may also include information found in the annexes and appendices. Video content will not be tested.

» ***Access the exam from your Online Classroom.***

Time Limit

There is no time limit for the exam. This allows the student to read and study the questions carefully and to consult the course text. Furthermore, if the student cannot complete the exam in one sitting, he or she may save the exam and come back to it without being graded. The “Save” button is located at the bottom of the exam, next to the “Submit my answers” button. Clicking on the “Submit my answers” button will end the exam.

Passing Grade

To pass the exam, a score of 75 per cent or better is required. An electronic Certificate of Completion will be awarded to those who have passed the exam. A score of less than 75 per cent is a failing grade, and students who have received a failing grade will be provided with a second, alternate version of the exam, which may also be completed without a time limit. Students who pass the second exam will be awarded a Certificate of Completion.