

## **SGTM 10: United Nations Civil–Military Coordination**

The 10<sup>th</sup> Standardized Generic Training Module (SGTM 10) describes issues of coordination between civil and military activities in United Nations peace operations. It also addresses issues of coordination with United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other elements in the implementation of the mandate of the peace operation and to accomplish the overall goals of the mission.

The content of SGTM 10 should be understood and practised in relation with other modules, especially those on the structure of peace operations (SGTM 2), cultural awareness (5 B), child protection (5 C), human rights (8), humanitarian assistance (9); disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (12) and gender equality in peacekeeping (17).

### **Background**

The variety and number of organizations either directly participating in a United Nations peace operation or supporting its mandate has grown together with the broadened scope of issues that such missions are charged with. In the complex peace mission of today, coordination among the participating groups has become crucial to the success of the operation. Coordination is needed internally among the components of a peace operation, as well as externally between the peace operation and other international and local civilian organizations, NGOs, the local government or administrative authorities, the parties to the conflict and the local population.

International and local organizations that the peace operation must interact with include members of the humanitarian relief community, the peacebuilding and development communities, local police and others involved in the criminal justice system, human rights organizations, elections specialists and observers and those responsible for conflict prevention and peacemaking.

### **Aim**

The aim of SGTM 10 is to inform peacekeepers about how civil–military coordination is conducted in complex United Nations peace missions.

### **Learning Outcome**

After completing SGTM 10, peacekeepers should be familiar with civil and military roles and coordinating functions in a complex peace mission.

### **Assessment Criteria**

On completion of this module, every peacekeeper should be able to

- Describe what is civil–military coordination.
- Cite the principles of civil–military coordination.
- Explain how civil–military coordination is practised.
- Given a scenario, identify the roles of peacekeepers in civil–military coordination.

## **Duration and Time Schedule**

The syllabus of a 45-minute presentation on SGTM 10 is outlined below. No more than 30 minutes should be used for the lecture. The remaining 15 minutes should be given to questions and general discussion on case scenarios or real-life examples. The trainer should modify the time allocated for your module according to national training requirements.

## **Syllabus Outline**

- ◆ Structure of the presentation
- ◆ Civil–military coordination
- Enacting coordination
- ◆ Peacekeepers’ role
- ◆ Summary

## **Notes on Methodology, Content and Teaching Materials**

SGTM 10 has a practical orientation. It is best presented by a trainer who has had first-hand experience in civil–military coordination in a United Nations peace operation.

Videos, magazine and newspaper articles, and anecdotes on the topic are excellent tools for supporting the presentation, particularly if they come from countries of the peacekeeping troops or that are participating in peace operations. Video documentaries that show civil–military cooperation and coordination in executing humanitarian projects would reinforce the objectives of this module. Other desirable inputs would be photographs that portray some of the different humanitarian roles, including some that show United Nations peacekeepers conducting civil–military coordination and liaison activities.

A policy on civil–military coordination and cooperation may exist in the mission’s host country. A summary of one or two pages could be distributed to brief trainees.

Trainers should, if possible, relate examples and experience of civil–military coordination in peace operations from their own country. Trainees should be encouraged to provide examples to their classmates that emphasize the importance of the subject for peace operations and daily life.

At the outset of the presentation, trainers should inform the trainees of the content, format and timing. Knowing what to expect, trainees can improve their ability to focus on the subject and benefit from the presentation.

## **References**

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16  
18  
19  
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200  
49  
64  
80  
25

## **Structure of the Presentation**

A standard presentation on United Nations civil–military coordination for peacekeepers at the basic level should cover:

- ◆ Civil–military coordination
- Enacting coordination
- ◆ Peacekeepers’ role.

### **SLIDE 1**

- ◆ **Civil–military coordination**
- ◆ **Enacting coordination**
- ◆ **Peacekeepers’ role**

## **Civil–Military Coordination**

Most peace operations are deployed in environments that can be characterized as complex emergencies. Complex emergencies usually imply a conflict environment in which civilians are often targets of the violence. Institutions of governance may have collapsed and economic and other infrastructure has deteriorated. There is likely to be scarcity of food and other basic commodities and large numbers of people may have been displaced by the lack of security or sustenance. Peace operations that respond to complex emergencies need to be organized for multidimensional activity, that is, for a range of political, military and civilian action, and are commonly referred to as complex peace missions.

**Definition.** In the United Nations system, civil–military coordination refers to the coordinating mechanisms and procedures used by United Nations peace operations, particularly its military component, to cooperate, coordinate and liaise with humanitarian, development and other partners as well as the civilian population of the host country.

The definition adopted by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) in its civil–military coordination policy document (reference 19) is:

“Civil–military coordination is the system of interaction, involving exchange of information, negotiation, de-confliction [sic], mutual support, and planning at all levels between military elements and humanitarian organizations, development organizations, or the local civilian population, to achieve respective objectives.”

In multidimensional peace operations with police components, this definition includes coordination and liaison activities of police as well.

The defence forces of most countries as well as regional military arrangements and organizations employ a similar concept, but may use differing terms and definitions, for example, civil–military cooperation, civil–military operations and civil affairs, among others. For DPKO, this definition applies.

## SLIDE 2

### **Civil–military coordination works through**

- ♦ **Information exchange**
- ♦ **Negotiation**
- ♦ **Mutual support**
- ♦ **Joint planning**

**Principles.** The three principles of civil–military coordination within the context of United Nations peace operations are:

**Recognizing mutual interdependence.** Each component’s success depends on the success of the others. For instance, the electoral component cannot successfully organize an election if the peacekeeping force and United Nations police along with their local counterparts have not been able to provide a secure environment within which elections can take place. Coordination, mutual support, joint planning and continuous exchange of information on progress or setbacks become critically important for the mission’s overall success.

**Avoiding duplication.** Overlap and duplication of effort occur in the absence of meaningful coordination. Different actors may use time and resources to collect the same information or assistance from various agencies may focus on the same high-profile cases, while the less prominent or inaccessible, but equally needy ones are ignored. The more meaningful the coordination, the more efficient is the overall effort. For instance, if the medical unit of a United Nations peace operation decides to provide primary health care to local people in their area of deployment, but does not coordinate this effort with a local clinic and medical NGOs that may be active in the same area, they may all end up providing assistance to the same people, while neglecting others. By coordinating their efforts, they could together cover a much wider area while each could be providing services that it was most qualified to perform.

**Combining efforts.** The collective efforts of all the civil, military and police actors could, by timing their individual activities to coincide and reinforce each other’s, achieve more together than each would be able to achieve on its own. The mechanisms of coordination include exchange of information, joint planning, mutual support and ongoing coordination and feedback. For example, through coordination, the various components involved in a disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) campaign (the peacekeeping force, military observers, United Nations police, other United Nations agencies, international and local NGOs, local authorities, conflicting parties, the local community, former combatants and their families) mutually reinforce each others’ efforts. In so doing, they develop a positive momentum for the DDR campaign that helps each actor overcome the obstacles it faces in its own area of specialization.

## SLIDE 3

- ♦ **Recognizing interdependence**
- ♦ **Avoiding duplication**
- ♦ **Combining efforts**

**Actors in civil–military coordination.** In United Nations peace operations, there are several actors that are key to civil–military coordination.

- The Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) is the head of the peace operation and is normally a senior political figure who leads the political implementation of the peace process, including conflict prevention, peacemaking, and peacebuilding. The SRSG is also responsible for the overall management of the peace operation. As the seniormost United Nations representative in the country, the SRSG heads the overall United Nations presence in the country, including the United Nations development and humanitarian entities.
- A significant actor in civil–military coordination is the peacekeeping force, which is mandated to create a secure and stable environment within which the political process can continue. In some countries where United Nations peace operations are deployed, this role is given to a regional or international military force not under the command of the United Nations. This force is also an important actor in civil–military coordination.
- A multidimensional peace operation may also have a police component, with the mandate to monitor and mentor the local police force or, in some instances, to ensure that law and order prevail.
- In addition, there may be several civilian components of the peace operation that would have a role to play in civil–military coordination, particularly the human rights component, the public information component (which normally conducts community outreach activities), the political affairs and civil affairs components, and the DDR section, if there is one.
- Among the development actors, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which is responsible for leading the long-term recovery and reconstruction efforts, is a key actor in civil–military coordination. The head of the local UNDP office is normally also designated the resident coordinator, responsible for coordinating the activities of the United Nations funds, programmes and agencies on the ground.
- The humanitarian coordinator, who coordinates United Nations humanitarian relief activities and also works closely with humanitarian NGOs, both local and international, is another important actor. In some instances the resident coordinator and the humanitarian coordinator is the same person.
- Local authorities are also significant actors in civil–military coordination as they are the ones that assess local needs and set priorities.
- Civil society groups that interact with the peace operation and the humanitarian and development communities become key interlocutors in civil–military coordination.

#### Slide 4

<b>Key actors in civil–military coordination</b>
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♦SRSG
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- ◆ **Military forces**
- ◆ **UN police**
- ◆ **Civilian components**
- ◆ **UNDP**
- ◆ **Humanitarian coordinator**
- ◆ **Local authorities**
- ◆ **Civil society groups**

### **Enacting Coordination**

Civil–military coordination activities include information sharing, joint planning and evaluation, negotiation and mutual support; these enable a complex peace mission to achieve its mandate. The exchange of information is at the core of all coordination. It can take place through meetings, through exchanging written or electronic information and through the establishment of joint operations centres. The success of the civil–military coordination effort is directly related to the quality and quantity of information shared.

Joint planning and evaluation is the most advanced form of coordination and the most difficult to achieve, but when applied, also the most effective.

Coordination occurs when initiatives, campaigns and programmes are synchronized through information-sharing and linked so that they complement one another.

Cooperation occurs when mission components support and assist each other to achieve an objective; for example, when the peacekeeping force provides a security escort for a humanitarian relief convoy.

Confidence-building efforts help to improve confidence levels among the local government, interest groups and population in the peacekeeping operation and the peace process.

#### **SLIDE 5**

- ◆ **Coordination**
- ◆ **Cooperation**
- ◆ **Confidence-building**

**Coordination** should take place at all levels (headquarters, sectoral, regional, district and local) and in all programme areas (security, humanitarian relief, reconstruction, human rights and electoral, among others) where more than one actor is active. Although a special focus may be necessary at different points in a mission’s life cycle (for example, during the DDR phase or for when preparing for elections), all components of the mission need to be coordinating their programme activities all the time. Externally, the peace operation also needs to be coordinating its activities with other peacekeeping partners to ensure the consolidation of peace in the longer term.

At the headquarters or mission-wide level, a joint operations centre (JOC) or similar body, where all the mission components are represented, is a crucial management tool for the SRSG to ensure

overall coordination. The JOC may also be a forum for coordination with other United Nations system partners.

The peacekeeping force typically uses a civil–military coordination centre or facility to ensure coordination with humanitarian and development actors, the local population or the local authorities in their area of operations at sector or battalion level.

The humanitarian coordinator, supported by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), is responsible for coordinating humanitarian assistance and policy.

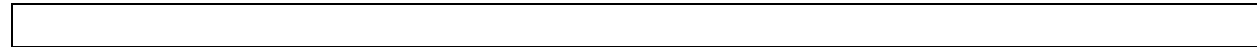
Occasionally, specific persons may be appointed to coordinating positions. Many components and organizations place liaison officers with partner organizations to improve coordination. The force commander may, for instance, place a liaison officer with the humanitarian coordinator’s office or the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to work closely with these offices on support for humanitarian assistance or refugee returns.

In some circumstances, NGOs may not participate in United Nations civil–military coordination activities to protect their independence. The United Nations respects that independence and, where necessary, both parties can informally exchange information to avoid duplication and to ensure the safety and security of civilian personnel.

**SLIDE 6**

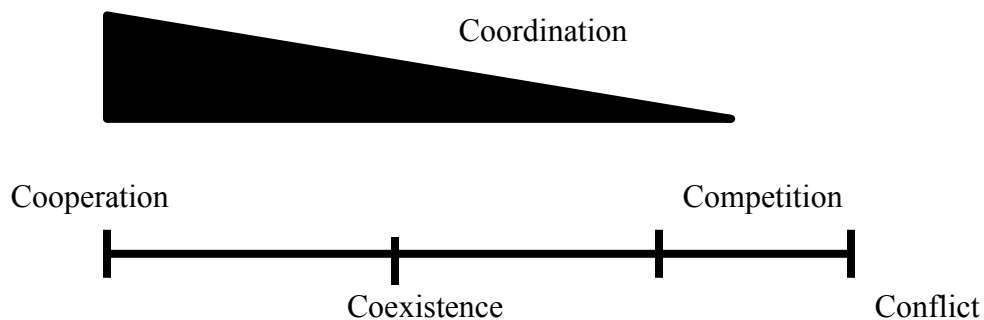
**Coordination through:**

- ◆ **Mission headquarters**
  - JOC
- ◆ **Peacekeeping force**
  - Civil–military coordination facility
- ◆ **Humanitarian coordination**
  - OCHA office in-country



**SLIDE 7**

**Coordination in United Nations Peace Operations**



**Cooperation** and mutual support can take many forms between civilian and military actors. For example, the peacekeeping force can support others in the following ways:

- ◆ **Security.** Peacekeeping troops are responsible for security in their areas of responsibility; hence they provide the enabling environment that allows others to do their job.
- ◆ **Transport.** The peacekeeping force does not normally use all of its transport capability because it deploys with excess capacity in anticipation of unforeseen needs. It can provide unused capacity or excess cargo space to others on its aircraft, ships and vehicles. That is one of the most useful services it performs within a mission.
- ◆ **Engineering.** Peacekeeping forces usually have excess engineering capability as well that it can make available under certain conditions, especially in emergencies, when it can repair or maintain roads, provide water and electricity or construction services.
- ◆ **Medical.** Peacekeeping medical units can assist the local population with basic medical care or with education and situational assessments.
- ◆ **Communications.** Peacekeeping forces can use their own independent means of communication to serve others in an emergency when normal telecommunications systems are inoperative.
- ◆ **Special expertise.** The peacekeeping force is often the only organization that can provide specialist services, such as weather forecasting and air traffic control.

**SLIDE 8**

**Cooperation from peacekeepers in:**

- **Security**
- **Transport**
- **Engineering**
  - **Roads**
  - **Water**
  - **Electricity**
  - **Construction**
- **Medical services**
  - **Care**
  - **Assessments**
  - **Training**
- **Communications**
- **Special expertise**

**Confidence-building** campaigns aim at strengthening the confidence of the local population in the peacekeeping force, the United Nations operation and the peace process in general. To that

end, most United Nations peace operations deploy with a public information component, and in most cases the peacekeeping force itself has a small public information capacity.

The peacekeeping force undertakes confidence-building campaigns through

- ◆ Patrols that demonstrate their presence, gather information and foster good relations by disseminating information about the mission's mandate and achievements.
- ◆ Cultural and social activities organized by peacekeepers, such as sporting events, cultural events, beach clean-up and other environmental events, and other community education and training initiatives.
- ◆ Humanitarian assistance projects that benefit the community. To ensure the long term sustainability of such initiatives, these must be coordinated with other actors, specifically the Humanitarian Coordinator and local authorities, and be part of the overall humanitarian response in that area.

#### SLIDE 9

##### **Building confidence through:**

- ◆ **Patrols**
- ◆ **Public information**
- ◆ **Cultural and social activities**
- ◆ **Humanitarian assistance projects**

#### **Peacekeepers' Role**

Civilian, military and police peacekeepers support each other and the local community in diverse ways.

A soldier can, for instance, support humanitarian action by

- ◆ Providing security: guarding relief supplies, securing roads and guarding refugee camps.
- ◆ Sharing information gathered during patrols and other contacts with local communities.
- ◆ Escorting convoys: providing security escorts for humanitarian convoys.
- ◆ Providing space for humanitarian goods on ships, aircraft or trucks.
- ◆ Pitching tents or rebuilding schools, hospitals and other critical infrastructure.
- ◆ Supplying potable water or helping to purify water and fix pumps and pipes.
- ◆ Supplying manpower to off-load equipment, pitch tents and perform countless other tasks. (Generally, the United Nations tries to use the skills available within the local population; that provides them the opportunity to earn money, learn new skills and identify with the new development in their community.)

#### SLIDE 10

- ◆ **Security**
- ◆ **Information-sharing**
- ◆ **Convoy escort**
- ◆ **Transportation**

- ◆ **Construction**
- ◆ **Potable water**
- ◆ **Manpower**

### **Summary**

Trainers should use this section to summarize their presentation by reminding trainees of the structure and contents of the session and the most important messages:

- The civilian and military components of a United Nations peace operation are interdependent and need to collaborate to achieve their objectives. Coordination is thus necessary to ensure that they all collaborate effectively.
- All peacekeepers can expect to participate in activity that supports other organizations. Mutual support is thus part of their overall task and helps achieve a comprehensive peace.

### **SLIDE 11**

- **Interdependent components need to collaborate**
- **Mutual support enables mission to accomplish goals**