

The PKO in Cambodia – Lessons Learned: The Japanese Perspective

MG Takashi Watanabe
Ground Self Defense Force, Japan

1 Introduction

Since the establishment of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO)¹ in 1948, 55 United Nations (UN) Peacekeeping Operations (PKOs) have been established, and more than 800,000 personnel have been deployed. Looking back on a history of over 50 years, it can be argued that PKOs have played a major role in curbing international conflict and promoting peace in the international community. At the same time, PKOs have confronted a variety of challenges in the post Cold War framework, experiencing an unprecedented pace of change that continues to take place today. Approximately 80%, or 42, of the 55 PKOs to date have been conducted since 1988. While some PKOs have yielded significant results and have opened new dimensions for the conduct of operations, a number of setbacks have also been experienced. The limitation on capabilities has been viewed as a problem in recent years, and there have also been some periods of inevitable paralysis.

Originally, PKOs were operations that centered on military organizations. They were tasked with the mission of intervening between the countries involved in disputes to suspend, check, and monitor hostilities when intervention and mediation by the UN, which has no coercive force of its own, did not work. PKOs were based on the broad consensus of the international community, and consisted of peacekeeping forces and military observers consisting of troops and personnel provided by UN member states. These operations have been termed “first generation” (traditional type) PKOs, and these operations are still conducted today. One example is the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) operating in the Golan Heights between Israel and Syria, in which approximately 50 Japan Self Defense Force (SDF) personnel are participating.

However, since the beginning of the 1990s, many of the disputes that require a response from the international community have changed from international disputes to domestic or complex international disputes. Thus, in addition to the military component, PKOs have been conducted that include a range of civilian components, such as election, policing, human rights and administrative areas. These are called “second generation” (complex (rehabilitative) type) PKOs. The PKO in Cambodia in which I participated in 1992 can be termed a typical second generation PKO, and it was the first PKO in which the SDF took part. Similar PKOs were

¹ UNTSO: United Nation Truce Supervision Organization

subsequently conducted in such locations as Mozambique² and East Timor³. The SDF also participated in these operations.

In recent years, in addition to the concept of preventative diplomacy, the PKO has shown signs of further development. These developments are based on collaboration between regional organizations and international NGOs from a humanitarian perspective. There have been attempts at a preventive diplomacy PKO model that aims to prevent the outbreak or recurrence of conflict at a stage when reaching agreement between the parties to a dispute becomes difficult. A peace enforcement PKO model, which exercises coercive force on the basis of a specific international framework, is also being sought. These should be termed third generation PKOs.

This paper will examine the PKO in Cambodia based on experience gained from actual participation in it, while also considering the future of PKOs. At the same time, it will consider new roles for military forces.

2. The Background and Characteristics of the Conflict in Cambodia

(1) Cambodia in the Cold War Framework

The period of peace in Cambodia, which gained independence from France in 1954, was short. In the context of the deepening Cold War between the East and West from the beginning of the 1960s, North and South Vietnam were pitted against each other, and after the 1964 Gulf of Tonkin incident, US-Cambodian relations deteriorated. As a result of the bombing of northern Indochina and the beach landing at Danang by US Forces in 1965, relations between the two countries were severed, and Cambodia further strengthened its ties with North Vietnam. Meanwhile, the Pol Pot faction that had been hiding in the jungle since 1960 due to the Sihanouk administration's campaign against the left wing, joined with the left wing forces within the government.⁴ In 1968, the faction launched its armed struggle with an attack on a police station in Batdambang. In 1970, the Pol Pot and Sihanouk factions drew closer together following the exile of Prince Sihanouk as a result of a coup by pro-US General Lon Nol. The National United Front of Kampuchea was formed, with the Royal Government of National Union of Kampuchea set up in opposition to the Lon Nol administration. At the same time, an end was being sought to the Vietnam War at the Paris peace conference, but despite US efforts to include peace for Cambodia, without an agreement from the Pol Pot faction, the Paris Peace Agreement concluded in 1973 excluded Cambodia. During this time, the Pol Pot faction was receiving massive

² ONUMOZ: Organization Nations Unis de Mozambique (United Nations operation in Mozambique)

³ UNTEAT: United Nations Transitional Authority in East Timor, UNMISSET: United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor

⁴ The right wing led by General Lon Nol attributed a 1967 peasant uprising in Samlot of Batdambang to the left wing in opposition to the right wing led by Khieu Samphan. Khieu Samphan left the government and joined the Pol Pot faction in the jungle.

military assistance from China and stockpiling arms. In 1975, it took control of the capital Phnom Penh and overturned the Lon Nol administration. Phnom Penh's residents, who had been critical of the Lon Nol government, initially welcomed the liberating army. However, everyone, including the elderly, children and the sick, was ordered to leave the capital, marking the beginning of the Pol Pot government's reign of terror. Between 1975 and 1979, the whole of Cambodia was turned into a concentration camp under the Pol Pot regime. People branded as counter-revolutionaries were massacred indiscriminately, with the number of dead estimated at between one million to 1.7 million.⁵ In December 1979, the Vietnamese Army invaded Cambodia, and the Heng Samrin regime was established. The war between this regime and the Democratic Government of Kampuchea, composed of the Pol Pot, Sihanouk, and the Son Sann factions set up with strong backing from the US, China and ASEAN because of its opposition to Vietnam, lasted more than ten years.

(2) Action by the International Community and the Framework for Resolution

Judging from the outcome, it could be argued that the settlement of the Cambodian civil war was simply awaiting the fundamental change in the international environment represented by the collapse of the Cold War framework. After the December 1989 Malta conference, the US opposed UN representation for Democratic Kampuchea for the first time in July 1990, and announced the beginning of political talks with Vietnam in order to resolve the Cambodia problem. Meanwhile, China, which had supported the Pol Pot faction, was forced to accept a political solution to the Cambodia problem in order to maintain its relations with ASEAN nations. Following the New York conference in August 1990, a comprehensive peace plan for Cambodia was finally settled at the Paris conference in November 1990. China, which had dismissed the idea of dissolving the Heng Samrin regime and establishing a united government composed of the four factions, established diplomatic relations with all six ASEAN nations, including Singapore and Brunei, soon after normalizing relations with Indonesia in August of that year. The four factions, including the Heng Samrin regime, basically accepted the UN Security Council peace plan, and finally agreed to the establishment of a Supreme National Council (SNC) headed by Prince Sihanouk.

With the agreement of the four Cambodian factions, the SNC members and representatives of participating countries signed a peace agreement at the October 1991 Paris International Conference.⁶ It was 13 years since the Vietnamese invasion in December 1978, 21 years since the beginning of the civil war that had begun with the coup by Lon Nol that exiled Prince

⁵ A 1990 UNICEF report "Status of Women and Girls in Cambodia," put the number who died during the Pol Pot regime at over one million.

⁶ Agreement on a Comprehensive Political Solution for the Conflict in Cambodia (Paris Peace Accords October 23, 1991).

Sihanouk, and 26 years since the beginning of the US bombing of northern Indochina.

3 The Significance and Outcome of the PKO in Cambodia

(1) UNTAC as a Second Generation PKO

The PKO in Cambodia, which marked the first PKO participation by the SDF, was a memorable operation for Japan. At the same time, it was also a remarkable operation for the UN. The Cambodia PKO was a major test of the UN-led response approach to the many regional and ethnic conflicts occurring around the world, including the Gulf War, in the wake of the collapse of the Cold War framework.

It had two major characteristics. The first was the scale of the dispatch and the level of involvement by the international community. At the time, the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) was the largest PKO deployed following the Cold War. Some 100 nations actually took part in the Cambodia PKO, with 22,000 personnel involved.⁷ The international community took a tremendous interest in the PKO, as if to compensate Cambodia for 20 years of neglect, and many countries from around the world participated. According to the words of Yasushi Akashi, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, UNTAC was a spectacular testing ground for determining what form UN PKOs should take following the Cold War.

The second characteristic of the Cambodia PKO was the depth and breadth of its mandate. Under the Paris Peace Agreements, with regard to the authority of UNTAC, “all powers necessary to ensure the implementation of the Agreements” were delegated by the SNC to the UN,⁸ giving it significant power that could also be termed a UN trusteeship. Organizationally, it was divided into the traditional military component and a civilian component, and the civilian component consisted of six departments. Namely, these were the civil administration, electoral, human rights, civilian police, refugee repatriation, and the rehabilitation departments. The civil administration department was in charge of ensuring the neutrality of the administrative authorities in the areas controlled by each of the factions, and monitoring and supervising elections so that they were implemented fairly and freely without bribery and intimidation from the factions. The electoral department was responsible for the preparation and monitoring of fair elections, and the human rights department was in charge of developing and implementing a human rights education program, and general monitoring of human rights and corrective measures during the transitional period. The civilian police department had a broad responsibility for monitoring and supervising the police in the areas controlled by each faction,

⁷ Does not include UNV (United Nations Volunteers) and local staff. Moreover, the military component was a 16,000-strong organization drawn from 32 nations.

⁸ Paris Peace Accords, Chapter 3, Article 6.

and for policing, maintaining public order and conducting criminal investigations to the extent needed for UNTAC's operations. The refugee repatriation department was effectively run by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and was in charge of repatriation, protection and settlement assistance for 370,000 refugees on the Thai border. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) ran the rehabilitation component, which was in charge of creating an environment for the settlement of refugees and the rehabilitation of Cambodia.

(2) The Characteristics of the Cambodia PKO

The two objectives of the PKO in Cambodia were to maintain peace through the monitoring of the cease-fire, disarmament and demobilization, and to establish a legitimate government by holding free and fair general elections. The precondition for these objectives was securing a minimum of freedom of expression, political activity and freedom of association. From this perspective, the Department of Human Rights was established in UNTAC for the first time in a UN PKO. The responsibilities of UNTAC's human rights component were: (1) the development and implementation of a human rights education program to promote respect and understanding of human rights; (2) the oversight of general human rights during the transitional period; and (3) the investigation of complaints related to human rights and corrective measures where appropriate.⁹ It can be argued that UNTAC's human rights operations were a comprehensive and ambitious experiment that aimed for the resolution of conflict in a nation in which conflict was ongoing. UNTAC's human rights officers conducted investigations with the cooperation of civilian police officers and military personnel, and had the authority to demand that the factions replace, dismiss, and punish those responsible for human rights abuses. However, UNTAC's human rights operations were severely tried from the outset. This was due to the 18-month time limit, the lack of coercive force, which is a limitation of the UN itself, limits on materials that had been destroyed and exhausted during the prolonged war, and the lack of the minimum educational infrastructure to facilitate human rights education. At the same time, there was also a gulf between the Southeast Asian Hinayana Buddhist Cambodians, who have a weak concept of human rights, and the mainly European and American human rights officers, who insisted that human rights were a universal concept.

(3) The Limitations of UNTAC

a. The Peace Process and its Limitations

UNTAC's mandate as set by the Paris peace conference was 18 months. The challenge was

⁹ Paris Peace Accords, Appendix 1, Section E.

to rebuild a country that had been ruined and divided by prolonged conflict. Therefore, UNTAC divided its term of operation into two phases. The first phase was verifying the withdrawal of foreign armies from Cambodia and the cessation of foreign military aid, maintaining and monitoring the cease-fire between the four factions, maintaining domestic order by disarming and demobilizing 70% of each factions' armed forces, and repatriating some 370,000 refugees, mainly from around the Thai border area.

The second phase was the establishment of a legitimate national government by holding fair elections. During this period, the aim was to rebuild the shattered basic infrastructure of the nation, and to settle the refugees by clearing land mines as well as other means.

However, because the Pol Pot faction opposed this process, the deadline for Phase I was reached before its actualization, and UNTAC had to proceed on to Phase II. "The establishment of a neutral environment for elections," which was one of responsibilities of the military component, became difficult to accomplish. At the time, there was an incident when Special Representative Mr. Akashi and Lieutenant-General John M. Sanderson, Force Commander of the military component, were detained and turned back at a checkpoint while moving from the Pailin area, controlled by the Pol Pot faction, to observe Dutch troops. The mass media around the world was more critical of UNTAC for its weak attitude than the Pol Pot faction for violating the Paris agreement. Even some of the young civilian officials serving at UNTAC also took the view that UNTAC should be resolute in bringing pressure to bear on the Pol Pot faction despite the risks. However, from a military perspective, the military component deployed in UNTAC did not possess the capability to execute military operations against the Pol Pot faction in the jungle.¹⁰

Thus, the Cambodia PKO was faced with a major decision due to the opposition of the Pol Pot faction, which had the greatest military strength of the three factions opposing the Phnom Penh regime. In 1993, the hostility of the Pol Pot faction to the Phnom Penh government became clear, and acts of violence by the faction became increasingly frequent. There were massacres of local people and the heads of community organizations. Even UNTAC personnel began appearing among the victims. The deaths of a young Japanese UN volunteer and that of a Japanese police officer serving with the civilian police, who were taking part in a PKO for the first time, just as the SDF was, aroused much mass media interest and shook UNTAC to its foundations.

However, UNTAC persistently continued with dialogue and its operations, including collaboration between the military component and UN volunteers, with the aim of bringing about fair elections. Moreover, it turned the general public into an ally and increased confidence

¹⁰ UNTAC deployed 12 infantry battalions (one battalion consisted of approximately 850 soldiers), but artillery firepower was absent, and there was a lack of adequate communications, medical assistance and air capabilities. It was an extremely limited force for conducting offensive operations.

in the elections by establishing a special investigating officer system to deal with human rights abuses, fostering human rights NGOs, strengthening administrative monitoring, and setting up an UNTAC radio station. This was in complete contrast with the sense of crisis among observers and mass media personnel who were only exposed to second-hand information in New York and Japan.

UNTAC continued with its mediation based on dialogue, including the June 1992 Tokyo Conference, a joint mediation by Japan and Thailand, and the UN Security Council appeal for an oil embargo, while progressively developing a tougher attitude, adopting resolutions such as an embargo on raw timber and gems. Ultimately, it can be argued that UNTAC's judgment was correct. However, there was a possibility that the Pol Pot faction, which had not been disarmed, was planning to disrupt the elections, and if it had carried out a systematic disruption, the holding of the elections would probably have failed. Thus, the Cambodian general elections were held on a tightrope. In the final analysis, the factor in making the elections successful was the expression of a strong desire for peace by the Cambodian people, who had suffered more than twenty years of civil war. This desire may have been the sole reason why the Pol Pot faction chose not to disrupt the elections.

4 Intervention in Conflict and its Legitimacy

(1) UNTAC's Options

The measures available to UNTAC when the transition to Phase II of the Cambodia PKO peace process became impossible due to the opposition of the Pol Pot faction can be envisaged as below:

Plan A: Return to Phase I of the peace process and persist in persuading the Pol Pot faction to disarm and demobilize. (Mediation)

Plan B: Encourage the disarming and demobilization of the Pol Pot faction through means other than military action, such as UN Security Council resolutions. (Sanctions)

Plan C: Strengthen the military component and carry out the disarming and demobilization of the Pol Pot faction using military force. (Coercion (peace enforcement))

In the end, Plan A was impractical, and Plan C was impossible. Above all, both these plans represented a return to the situation before the Paris Peace Agreement, and the resulting extension in the term of UNTAC's deployment would also have been problematic from the perspective of the UN's financial circumstances. The problem was how to respond as a PKO after being unable to uphold the cease-fire agreement, and at a stage when it was no longer able to implement the peace process agreement. This meant a reconsideration of the basic principles

of the PKO.

(2) PKO Principles and Challenges

a. Basic PKO Principles

The basic PKO principles are not clearly expressed in the UN Charter, but they are: (1) the agreement of the parties involved in the conflict; (2) fairness and impartiality; and (3) the minimum use of military force only used in self-defense. A PKO is strictly a non-coercive operation, and it is a reversal of the UN's conventional thinking on the sovereignty of a nation as well. Since the Treaty of Westphalia, national sovereignty has been considered inviolable and not open to intervention. The UN, which is based on the consensus and agreement of the sovereign nations that make up its members, did not possess a mechanism in the past for intervening to resolve the domestic problems of sovereign nations.

Mr. Yasushi Akashi, UNTAC Special Representative of the Secretary-General, has explained the basic principle of a PKO as follows: "The UN PKO can be compared with the display window of a shopping mall. It is lightly armed, so anyone who tries to challenge and destroy it can easily do so. However, when this happens, it makes a big crashing noise, so the people nearby come out saying 'What's happening?' Therefore, not many people risk such a heinous act. As the PKO display window is put in place reflecting the consensus of the international community, it is an easy task to physically break through it, but quite difficult politically and psychologically. Unlike a conventional army, which aims for victory, the PKO is based on the agreement of all the conflicting factions. It is a force assembled from each country that fulfils a strictly third party function. Its role is similar to that of police or diplomats."¹¹ Akashi's words have even more resonance when considering the international community with the sophisticated information technology infrastructure of today and the future. The PKO environment in the future will be just like a brightly illuminated display window. Moreover, many TV cameras and monitors are trained on the window recording anyone who tries to break it. It is unlikely that anyone will break the display window without already being set for criticism and sanctions from the international community.

However, the breaking of the display window by the person who owns it, for example, while a dangerous and reckless act, is not a criminal act, and the only one to suffer is the window owner. Although neighbors and regional organizations can criticize conflicts over domestic issues, it is extremely difficult to stop them. This seems to be where the real problem for PKOs lies.

¹¹ Yasushi Akashi; *Ikirukoto ni mo Kokoro Seki (In a Hurry to Live)*, Chuokoron-Shinsha, Inc. May, 2001,

b. The PKO Challenge: The Possibility of Humanitarian Intervention

Since the end of the Cold War, humanitarian issues, which had been relegated to a small corner in the political and ideological confrontation, have received much attention. Looking at the examples of the UN Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the Genocide Conference, and the Ottawa Conference on Land Mines, humanitarian activities from the viewpoint of the rights of the individual that supersede the sovereign nation, and in particular, the protection of the disadvantaged, have become a major force in driving the international community.

When considering PKO activities in response to civil war-type conflicts from this perspective, we confront the three questions below. Namely, these are:

1. Is intervention in a conflict by the international community without the consent of the parties involved in the conflict (sovereign nations) legitimate under international law?
2. Can humanitarian activities implemented by the international community secure the above legitimacy? And what are the specific contents of these?
3. How should military force be used in these humanitarian activities?

While it is true that nations and regional communities have called for armed intervention in conflicts from a humanitarian perspective in recent years, at the same time, it is also true that only a military can be expected to possess this type of coercive force. Nevertheless, the fact of military intervention is unchanged regardless of the objective, and intervention with military force should not be permitted unconditionally even if the objective is humanitarian. In this case, there is a need to define conditions in which humanitarian military intervention is permissible. From that perspective, a UN Security Council resolution could be one of the essential conditions. Alternatively, regional agreement may also be one of the conditions, as seen in the NATO response to Yugoslavia. With regard to the agreement of the parties involved, for example, in a scenario of conflict between some militia groups and local residents as in East Timor, obtaining agreement of the parties is extremely difficult and takes time. Essentially, humanitarian intervention has a strong element of being an emergency measure, and there is a danger that waiting for the total agreement of the parties involved will lose time. In any event, an international consensus on the conditions for humanitarian intervention in conflict has not yet been obtained, and it is necessary to consider that many of the failed PKOs attempted since Cambodia have been intervention in conflict from a humanitarian viewpoint. Ultimately, it is not the fact of military intervention itself that determines the success of intervention in the regional or international community, but the strength of the powerful nation, region or international community behind the military force as a totality.

Based on my impressions of serving in the field in the execution phase, it is nearly

impossible for the UN to deploy a PKO with a humanitarian objective in the midst of a conflict such as a civil war. In many cases, the definition of the parties to the conflict is vague, and the clear distinction between two sides, which is a prerequisite for the concept of a cease-fire, is difficult because they are not operating on the same dimension. It is certainly possible to promote dialogue between the parties to a conflict and to carry out humanitarian activities even when a cease-fire has not yet been agreed to. However, it is difficult to prevent the expansion of a civil war or the spread of a conflict into new regions. Moreover, so long as either side has a prospect of victory or the pretext and motive for conflict, regardless of their intentions, second generation PKO activities ultimately end up supporting one or more of the various factions in the conflict, and it can be difficult to maintain neutrality. In this event, the PKO is faced with a choice. Namely, moving to a peace enforcement-model of PKO as in Chapter 7 of the UN Charter, or suspending activities until the environment needed for the redeployment of the PKO is created.

(3) The Legitimacy of Humanitarian Intervention in Conflict

Today, positive action needs to be taken to protect human rights, whether sovereign nations like it or not. At the same time, it can be argued that the international community should constantly monitor laws that disregard human rights and human rights abuses everywhere in the world. Therefore, there is a common trend to interpret intervention in conflict by the international community from a humanitarian perspective as legitimate. Going even further, some argue that not only international organizations such as the UN or regional organizations like NATO, but also any nation, group or NGO can act to protect and enforce basic human rights.

Meanwhile, “human security” has become established as an important concept in forums such as the UN in debates on how to provide concrete assistance to people whose survival is imperiled due to civil war against the backdrop of an increase in internal conflicts in the 1990s. The concept of “human security” is conventionally believed to have two components of thought: “freedom from want” and “freedom from fear.” The former gives priority to the socio-economic aspect, and belongs to the same line of thought traditionally advocated by the UNDP. The latter advocates the international community’s “responsibility to protect,” and the concept includes the establishment of PKOs and the International Criminal Court, as well as humanitarian intervention. The concepts of “freedom from fear” and “freedom from want” in “human security” are not mutually exclusive. Rather they are complementary, and this has recently been termed “security first.” Following the recent trend, the UNHCR is not only providing refugee camps, but also advocating the need for measures including PKOs or more coercive moves to provide a safer environment. Moreover, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan has also stressed the importance of securing human safety. In other words, whether promoting development or

assisting refugees, the importance of the role of the military organization seems to be increasing due to the need to realize “freedom from fear.”

However, on the other hand, it is true that under the “human security” framework, the side that intervenes in conflict is usually one or more of the developed countries, while the side that experiences intervention is a developing nation. Despite the contention that this development is action based on a universal humanism, it is also true that intervention has been criticized for selective implementation based on national interests, as seen in the difference in the responses to Rwanda and Kosovo. In this situation, the reality is that many international humanitarian activities are currently conducted through trial and error on an individual basis.

5. Collaboration between PKOs and NGOs, and their Limitations

(1) The Limitations of PKOs

Rebuilding the social infrastructure of a nation that has been destroyed by a long conflict takes time. However, apart from some of the exceptional traditional PKOs,¹² no PKO can be continuously deployed over the long term. From the perspective of international politics, a PKO must obtain visible results in the short term. In particular, in comparison with first generation PKOs that focus on military activities with self-execution capability, second generation PKOs, which have a strong civilian component, have to be limited in their term of deployment from the maintenance and management viewpoint as well. Large-scale PKOs with a complex mandate have many operational problems that need to be resolved, including ensuring the treatment and safety of personnel, coordination between the civilian and military components, and organizational maintenance and management.

What must be stressed here is that maintaining a cease-fire, stabilizing law and order, holding elections, and establishing a legitimate government is not alone sufficient for rehabilitating a nation like Cambodia that has been shattered by a long civil war and conflict. Support from the international community is required in all sectors. However, the longer the UN maintains over-protective support over the long term, the more difficult independence becomes, and ultimately rehabilitation is delayed. Therefore, support that promotes independence from a long-term perspective, including the training of human resources, is needed, and UN PKOs are not equipped for this type of long-term support. This is a limitation of PKOs.

(2) The Potential and Limitations of NGOs

¹² As of October 2002, 15 PKOs are in operation, and five of them have been running for at least twenty years. They are UNTSO, UNMOGIP (United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan), UNFICYP (United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus), UNDOF and UNIFIL (United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon).

a. The Potential of NGOs

NGOs have the flexibility of being able to act without being constrained by the framework of international politics. At the same time, there are many fields in which they are able to contribute, such as the promotion of dialogue between the parties to a conflict and peace education. The importance of NGOs in the international community is increasingly growing as illustrated by the UN International Year of the Volunteer in 2001.

The background to this is first that there are many nations in the world that are considered to be in need of assistance from the international community. Current conditions are severe, and assistance is essential in many fields, including poverty, economic crises, population problems, ethnic and religious conflicts, inferior health environments, deforestation and the deterioration of local environments, and education. Secondly, it is because the priority in the areas where assistance can be expected is the social sector. Areas such as poverty, education, health and sanitation, and the environment are closely related to people's daily lives. As programs to address these areas ultimately need to be implemented so that they penetrate into local communities and down to individuals, it can be argued that these areas are suited to the voluntary activities of NGOs.

Thirdly, it is because international voluntary activities have become easier as borders between nations have come down amidst the advance of globalization, and developments in transport and telecommunications technology. Thus, NGOs have many advantages that UN PKOs do not, and the field of activity for NGOs is likely to increasingly expand in the future.

People, primarily from the NGOs that spontaneously came from all over the world, supported Cambodia during its too long civil war when the UN did not function effectively. More than 10 groups of Japanese volunteers were active before UNTAC, and the support for Cambodia of these volunteers, who worked despite the extremely difficult living conditions and security concerns, deserves attention. UNTAC also worked to foster volunteers and NGOs, with the result that more than 10 Cambodian human rights groups with over 150,000 members were active when UNTAC withdrew.

b. The Limitations of NGOs

In general, NGOs are marked by weak organization and a lack of controlling power. In recent years, the number of casualties among personnel serving in PKOs, and among civilian personnel in particular, has continued to increase. In the five years between 1997 and 2001, more than 250 NGO humanitarian personnel died in the performance of their duties,¹³ and in

¹³ According to UNOCHA (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs) figures, all of

1998 PKO civilian personnel casualties exceeded military casualties for the first time. That was the year when four UN workers, including Yutaka Akino, a political affairs officer and former associate professor at Tsukuba University, were murdered by anti-government forces in Tajikistan, shocking both the domestic and international community. In response to this problem, in July 1998, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan ordered the relevant departments of the UN to undertake a comprehensive review of security for UN and NGO personnel involved in PKO and humanitarian relief work. With this as the background, Japan further stepped up its appeal for the early effectuation of the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel.¹⁴ As a result, the ratification of the 22 nations needed to bring the convention into effect was achieved in December 1998, and it became effective in January 1999. Nevertheless, many NGOs do not want to be restricted by the UN regulatory framework, and NGO risk management has not made concrete progress. This is a limitation of NGOs.

(3) Collaboration between PKOs and NGOs

Generally speaking, the mission of the military component of the PKO is primarily to create regional stability through military operations that include monitoring and maintaining a cease-fire. However, simultaneously, this has the secondary effect of creating the environment for NGO activities. At the same time, intrinsic military rationality and efficiency is effective in non-military activities that include occupational and land mine clearance training for demobilized combatants, facility management, and the provision of social infrastructure such as roads and bridges. It is often said that although PKO is not a soldier's job, it is a job that can only be done by soldiers, and it has been pointed out that collaboration between the military components of PKOs and NGOs has generally been inadequate to date. Military organizations that symbolize the unity of the government with the nation, and NGOs that have their intrinsic meaning in transcending the concept of the nation, make incompatible bedfellows.

The lack of cooperation between the infantry units deployed in each area and local NGOs has also been pinpointed as a major problem in Cambodia. While differences in the intrinsic viewpoints of military and NGO organizations are inevitable, the social maturity of the nations that sent military units to the PKO seems to have significantly affected NGO-PKO cooperation in Cambodia. In the Cambodia PKO, the main infantry units that cooperated significantly with NGOs consisted of 12 battalions drawn from the 11 countries of Bangladesh, Bulgaria, France, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Pakistan, Tunisia, and Uruguay. With the exception of France and the Netherlands, these countries generally did not have adequate

the 250 deaths were due to deliberate violence (ambushes, armed attacks, and anti-aircraft assaults) and accidents in the course of the execution of their duties. All the personnel who died, including local staff, were humanitarian relief personnel. This figure does not include PKO personnel (including civilians).

¹⁴ Japan was the second country to ratify the convention in 1995.

knowledge and experience of NGO activities. Initially, there was a tendency for mutual distrust between many of the soldiers, who could not even speak English, the common UN language, acting on the basis of following orders within a military organization, and local, grass roots NGOs acting on the basis of freedom and flexibility. Initially, there were few English speaking personnel in the Indonesian infantry battalion deployed in Kampong Thum, a Pol Pot faction stronghold, during the Cambodia PKO election, and mutual understanding between UN volunteers and NGOs was inadequate. UNTAC posted an English interpreter to the Indonesian battalion and implemented security measures such as attaching escorts to NGOs in times of danger in coordination with the civilian police component, and strengthening permanent liaison between the military component and volunteers, including NGOs. This is an example in which compensating for the mutual weaknesses of the military component of the PKO and NGOs meant that the strengths of both were manifested more strongly.

6. Japan's Participation in, and Response to, PKOs

(1) The Lessons of the Gulf War and Subsequent Developments

The Gulf War was a major issue for Japan in terms of how it should be involved in international problems; despite providing a massive 13 billion US dollars in assistance, it failed to receive recognition for its contribution. Japan later made preparations to send Air Self Defense Force (ASDF) cargo planes for a Non-combatant Evacuation Operation (NEO) from the Gulf region (no action was actually taken), and a bill of two years standing was passed after the Gulf War, following the dispatch of Maritime Self Defense Force (MSDF) vessels for minesweeping operations in the Persian Gulf. This law was the International Peace Cooperation Law,¹⁵ and the Cambodia PKO was the first SDF overseas operation in cooperation with the international community based on the International Peace Cooperation Law.¹⁶ In this sense, it could be argued that the Gulf War was a major event in bringing about concrete action in Japan's post-Cold War national strategy.

(2) PKO for the Defense Agency and the Self Defense Forces

a. From a Bilateral to a Multilateral Framework

In 1978, I was commissioned as a second lieutenant and received my first assignment. A few

¹⁵ Law Concerning Cooperation for United Nations Peacekeeping Operations and Other Operations (June 25, 1992).

¹⁶ The first application of the International Peace Cooperation Law was the PKO in Angola (United Nations Angola Verification Mission II: UNAVEM II).

years earlier, Saigon had fallen and the US had withdrawn from Vietnam, and 1978 was a year in which several incidents of concern to global security took place, such as the December invasion of Cambodia by the Vietnamese Army. However, I was completely disinterested in the affairs of the international community. During that time, it was not even conceivable that the SDF would someday operate overseas in any form at all, much less take part in overseas PKO activities, and its involvement in Cambodian rehabilitation came as a surprise.

Actually, the SDF did reach one turning point in 1978. The Cabinet approved “The Guidelines for US-Japan Defense Cooperation,” and the Japan Air SDF began participation in bilateral exercises with the US Air Force in that year. In 1980, the MSDF first took part in RIMPAC, and the Ground Self Defense Force (GSDF) began bilateral communications exercises with the US Army in 1981. In the context of the increasingly intense Cold War framework, the SDF effectively moved to a bilateral security system. From then to the present, the SDF has become increasingly internationalized through the execution of bilateral exercises with US Forces, in addition to accumulating expertise as a military organization based on international law from its domestic presence. I also took part in numerous bilateral programs over a span of more than ten years. This experience was a major factor in enabling the SDF to fulfill its mission in Cambodia in cooperation with other countries.

Thus, it can be argued that the Cambodia PKO opened the door for Japan and the SDF to move from bilateral to multilateral relations. Takeo province, where the 600-Japanese engineer battalion was initially deployed, was the area of a French infantry battalion. The Force Commander of the military component was an Australian Lieutenant General, the Chief of Operations was a Dutch colonel, the Chief of Logistics was a Polish colonel, and the Chief of Engineering was a New Zealand colonel. The Director of Civil Administration for Takeo was an Indonesian civil servant. The SDF had absolutely no experience with this type of multinational framework, and I remember how we were able to learn a lot from the PKO that the military organizations in other countries knew as a matter of course.

b. The Educational and Training Significance of the PKO

There are ten characteristics that soldiers taking part in a PKO should possess, and they are as follows:

1. Impartiality
2. Patience
3. Compassion
4. Background knowledge
5. English proficiency
6. Humble and modest attitude

7. Cooperation
8. Flexibility
9. Outgoing personality
10. Psychological stability

On review, these characteristics have much in common with the characteristics needed by today's soldiers who, on the basis of the volunteer system, are charged with the defense of the nation as representatives of the general citizens. It is often said that PKOs are the best training fields for the military in peacetime and, at the same time, it is also an extremely important forum for military – military contact.

c. Examination of Diverse Frameworks

Today, many military organizations aim to improve mutual trust through military exchanges between countries, in addition to having the ultimate responsibility of preparing for war as the last recourse in national self-defense. At the same time, they are also expanding their activities beyond the military field in cooperation with the governments of other countries, international organizations and NGOs.

Under a review of the guidelines for Japan-US defense cooperation (the New US-Japan Defense Guidelines), the Japan Defense Agency and the SDF, based on close cooperative Japan-US relations, are contributing to maintaining international peace and international cooperation through international peace cooperation operations and international emergency relief activities aimed at stabilizing the international community. They are also being proactive in a range of efforts to increase trust in Japan's relationship with the relevant countries through security dialogue and military contact, and to maintain and enhance peace and stability through cooperation with arms control and reduction efforts via organizations such as the UN.

7. The Role Japan Should Play and the Future Outlook

(1) Japan's Restrictions and Developments Toward Overcoming Them

Needless to point out again here, Japan has many restrictions on its involvement in the international community for resolving international conflict. Nevertheless, its basic guidelines for participating in international peace cooperation operations include the three basic principles for the UN PKO, and they are not unique to Japan. Rather, it could be argued that they constitute a common framework among developed nations. The so-called five conditions are: (1) a

cease-fire must be agreed to between the parties to the conflict; (2) the parties to the conflict¹⁷ must have given their consent to Japan's involvement in the PKO; (3) the activities must be conducted in a strictly impartial status; (4) participation may be withdrawn if any of the above three conditions ceases to be satisfied; and (5) use of weapons shall be limited to the minimum necessary to protect the lives of personnel. The restriction for Japan lies in the fact that what is basic common sense for the militaries of nations taking part in PKOs is not recognized by Japan. The Japanese military units deployed in Cambodia initially confronted the disparity between the Rules of Engagement (ROE) for UNTAC, and the Japanese rules for the use of weapons. Japanese PKO personnel were only able to defend themselves and other unit members in the same area of operation as themselves. Moreover, the use of weapons in legitimate defense or to avert an emergency was left to the judgment of the individual, and appeared to be outside the standards of conduct for troops operating in the organization of a military unit. In general, international law governing military activity and UN standards makes prohibitions clear, and conduct is mainly in line with the ROE.

The International Peace Cooperation Law was amended ten years after its enactment to allow SDF operations that had previously been frozen, and a more realistic framework for the use of weapons was revised. However, there are still disparities with the standards of countries that deploy troops for UN PKOs, and Japan is not yet deemed to satisfy the conditions for the dispatch of infantry units.

Nevertheless, all countries take part in PKOs with their various restrictions. It is inevitable that PKOs suit respective countries, and it is hoped they take part to the extent of their ability. I am in no doubt that PKOs involve areas that can only be addressed by a military organization. At the same time, I believe that the PKOs in which Japan takes part do not need to be military-only activities. Article 2 of the International Peace Cooperation Law stipulates, "In addition to implementing international peace cooperation activities, providing materiel cooperation, and appropriately soliciting the associated cooperation of non-government bodies in these activities, Japan shall cooperate effectively in international peacekeeping operations by utilizing the general agreement and knowledge of personnel involved in the implementation of international peace cooperation operations." In the future, international cooperation in which governments, civilians and NGOs act from their respective viewpoints is likely to be needed, and a strategic approach as a nation will probably be necessary, including preventative diplomacy and economic cooperation such as Overseas Development Assistance (ODA).

(2) The Future Outlook

When surveying the outlook for future PKOs from the perspective of those deployed, it will

¹⁷ Includes countries in regions where the peacekeeping force will operate.

be necessary to carefully examine the following three points:

a. In-the-Field Realism

In building the PKO framework, the function of the international community in diplomatic mediation for the participants in a conflict is naturally important. Nevertheless, we need to understand that PKOs are not resolved in desktop plans or meetings. While the causes, such as ethnicity, religion or poverty, are similar in any conflict, causes in an actual conflict are all complexly intertwined, and the main ethnic group and the background to the conflict are also unique in each case, meaning that no two conflicts share the same cause. While the means and techniques of conflict resolution must be extremely orthodox, there are a variety of approaches and methods, and their implementation requires flexibility and creativity. I firmly believe that operations in the field are the most important component in PKOs.

b. Establishing a System of Government-Civilian Cooperation (Response to the Development of the Borderless World)

A PKO is a UN operation, and its core is the nations that make up the members of the UN. In the context of an increasingly borderless international community, nations are now facing an era of searching for the respective roles of government-civilians-individuals. In relation to the previous section, the situation in the field is truly borderless. In the field of a PKO, soldiers, civilian police, civil servants, NGOs, private sector and local residents are mixed and united in activity, and it is truly a multinational, multicultural, and multifaceted activity. Thus, there is no central department overseeing everything, and the regulations, doctrines and principles for governing these activities are in reality extremely vague. Sometimes, national and organizational interests conflict with each other, so chaos in the field is the rule rather than the exception. While UN initiatives are desirable now more than ever, the time has come for equal consideration to be given to the establishment of reciprocal and regional frameworks for nations dispatching personnel.

c. Flexibility and Practicality

The August 2000 UN General Assembly approved the Report of the Panel on UN Peace Operations, known as the Brahimi Report.¹⁸ The report concluded, “The UN has repeatedly failed in complex peace operations over the past ten years, intervening in unstable situations without established cease-fire agreements.” In addition, it made many constructive proposals,

¹⁸ Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations and UN Resolution No.1327.

saying, “In complex peace operations, military force is an essential element for creating the space to build peace, but it must be deployed so that a close cooperation between maintaining and building peace is maintained for ultimate conflict resolution.” In particular, it stated, “The 6-12 week period leading up to a cease-fire or peace agreement is the most critical period in establishing a stable peace and the credibility of UN peace operations.” It proposed deployment within 30 days of a Security Council resolution for a traditional PKO, and within 90 days for a complex PKO. At the same time, it suggested that the Secretary-General should deploy a study team in advance of a PKO deployment to confirm whether the military personnel to be provided have the training and equipment needed for the PKO. This team could also make an evaluation from the perspective of practicality as well.

The main feature of the report was the fact that it made reference to UN reform, stating, “There are wide disparities in the qualities of staff, and more competent staff are burdened with the unfair work of compensating for less competent staff.” It encouraged the UN itself to be stirred into action in strong tones saying, “So long as the UN takes no steps toward becoming truly based on ability, it will be unable to prevent the worrying trend, particularly among the young, for competent human resources to leave the organization.” As someone who has experienced activities under the UN of the past, I have to agree. It will likely be difficult for the UN to quickly resolve the problems of the international community that will arise in the future without reforming itself, and I believe that this will be a major force motivating the member countries of the UN.

8. Conclusion

When the PKO in Cambodia ended, all the observers believed that it had created a model for the resolution of civil war-type conflicts. However, the successive events in Somalia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Kosovo over the next few years forced PKOs deployed to civil war-type conflicts, and the attempts of the international community, to face the harsh reality.

So long as many of the issues involved in causing a conflict are unresolved, they are unlikely to disappear in the future. In the 20th century, the number of deaths from atrocities inflicted by non-democratic nations on their own citizens is estimated at about 150 million. This figure is two to four times more than the number of fatalities in wars between nations over the century. The international community has so far been too powerless in the face of the Holocaust, the Cambodian Killing Fields, and similar dictatorial excesses. Reflecting on the past, including the errors, overconfidence and dictatorship wrought by nations and organizations to date, the world is making progress, albeit little by little.

The 20th century has been termed the century of war. Since the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States that took place in the first year of the 21st century, the world has just embarked on a long struggle against the new common enemy of terrorism. We do not know how long and how hard this struggle will be at present, but in any case, the unity of the international

community centering on the UN and its member nations will be essential for victory in the struggle with terrorism. A range of peace operations, including PKOs, takes place within this context. As a member of the military, I am strongly aware that we are attempting to take on the final struggle against a clear and global common enemy. I am firmly convinced that this current war on terrorism may make us stronger and further consolidate our cooperation more than ever.