The Role of Peacekeeping Operations in Electoral Processes

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<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAR</td>
<td>After Action Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>AOR</td>
<td>Area of Responsibility</td>
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<td>CARICOM</td>
<td>Caribbean Community</td>
</tr>
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<td>CENI</td>
<td>Commission Electorale Nationale Indépendante</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEP</td>
<td>Provisional Electoral Council (Haiti)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CE/CARE</td>
<td>Committee of Enquiry into Complaints and Allegations Regarding Elections</td>
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<td>CIMIC</td>
<td>Civil Military Coordination</td>
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<td>CIVPOL</td>
<td>Civilian Police</td>
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<td>CONOPS</td>
<td>Concept of Operations</td>
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<td>CPIO</td>
<td>Communications and Public Information Office</td>
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<td>CSOs</td>
<td>Civil Society Organizations</td>
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<td>DFS</td>
<td>Department of Field Support</td>
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<td>DJESC</td>
<td>Departmental Joint Electoral Support Centers (MINUSTAH)</td>
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<td>DPA</td>
<td>Department of Political Affairs</td>
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<td>DPKO</td>
<td>Department of Peacekeeping Operations</td>
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<td>DRC</td>
<td>Democratic Republic of Congo</td>
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<td>DSRSG</td>
<td>Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General</td>
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<td>EAD</td>
<td>Electoral Affairs Division</td>
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<td>EAFT</td>
<td>Electoral Assistance Task Force (MINUSTAH)</td>
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<td>ED</td>
<td>Electoral Division</td>
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<tr>
<td>EoAR</td>
<td>End of Assignment Report</td>
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<td>ETT</td>
<td>Elections Technical Team (UNMIL)</td>
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<td>EWG</td>
<td>Electoral Working Group (UNMIL)</td>
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<td>FOB</td>
<td>Forward Operational Base</td>
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<td>FPU</td>
<td>Formed Police Units</td>
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<td>GMPTL</td>
<td>Women Parliamentarians’ Group of Timor-Leste</td>
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<td>HRU</td>
<td>Human Rights Unit</td>
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<td>IEC</td>
<td>Independent Electoral Commission (Côte d’Ivoire)</td>
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<td>ISP</td>
<td>Integrated Security Plan</td>
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<td>JESC</td>
<td>Joint Electoral Support Centre (MINUSTAH)</td>
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<td>JMAC</td>
<td>Joint Mission Analysis Cell/Centre</td>
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<td>JOC</td>
<td>Joint Operations Cell/Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>LNP</td>
<td>Liberian National Police</td>
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<td>MC</td>
<td>Military Component</td>
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<td>MEC</td>
<td>Military Election Cell (UNMIL)</td>
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<td>MINUSTAH</td>
<td>United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti</td>
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<td>MONUC</td>
<td>United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo</td>
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<tr>
<td>MONUSCO</td>
<td>United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo</td>
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<td>NACEM</td>
<td>National Coordination and Elections Monitoring (Liberia)</td>
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<td>NEC</td>
<td>National Elections Commission (Liberia)</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organization</td>
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<td>OAS</td>
<td>Organization of American States</td>
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<td>OGA</td>
<td>Office of the Gender Adviser</td>
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OHCHR Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OPA Ouagadougou Political Agreement
PACE Project d’Appui au Cycle Électoral (DRC)
PAD Political Affairs Division
SC Security Council
SEPI Secretary of State for the Promotion of Equality (Timor-Leste)
SIPA School of International and Public Affairs
SOP Standard Operating Procedures
SRSG Special Representative of the Secretary-General
UNAMA United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNCT United Nations Country Team
UNDP United Nations Development Program
UNEST United Nations Electoral Support Team (Timor-Leste)
UNICEF United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM United Nations Fund for Women
UNMIL United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNMIT United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste
UNMIS United Nations Missions in Sudan
UNMISS United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan
UNOCI United Nations Operation in Côte d’Ivoire
UNPOL United Nations Police
USG Under Secretary-General
VIP Very Important Persons
Acknowledgements

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The report is an independently edited publication, and all errors of fact, analysis, and judgement are very much our own.
Executive Summary

This study identifies the roles of peacekeeping operations in electoral processes, focusing on six missions\(^1\) and seven substantive units.\(^2\) A parallel component of the project provides an analytical account of trends in the evolution of electoral assistance mandates given to peacekeeping missions. This executive summary provides an overview of this report’s findings and analysis.

The electoral assistance mandates given by the Security Council have authorized levels of involvement ranging from executive authority to technical and logistical support. The domestic ownership of the electoral process and the mission's role in coordinating international assistance have been increasingly emphasized in peacekeeping mandates. Today, peacekeeping missions are primarily asked to provide technical expertise and logistical assistance. Recent mandates have also included specific references to thematic issues of particular concern to the Council (e.g. gender, human rights, or use of media) to ensure that they are made mission-wide priorities.

The importance of strategic leadership, planning, and coordination by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) and his/her senior team was a consistent finding throughout the cases studied. In many instances, SRSGs have delegated much of their management responsibilities to Deputy Special Representatives of the Secretary-General (DSRSGs) and others, through special structures established to coordinate electoral activities. They have focused their attention on managing relationships with domestic partners through their good offices role and coordinating international actors. As the face of the mission, SRSGs also sought to manage expectations about the mission’s involvement in the election and the importance of domestic ownership of the process.

Some of the challenges in effective mission management were identified as an unclear delineation of the division of responsibilities between the DSRSGs and the Chief of Electoral Affairs Division (EAD), and informal forms of coordination that lacked guidance from senior leadership. In addition, few examples of early and specific planning documents for missions’ electoral support activities were found.

This project also examines the responsibilities of each of the substantive components in the mission, and their specific added value to the mission’s electoral strategy.

The Political Affairs Division (PAD) was typically the lead actor in the establishment of a Code of Conduct for political parties and in the dissemination of these principles to the electorate. PAD was also seen as an effective coordination partner in ensuring mission-wide understanding of the ongoing political dynamics during electoral processes, by providing bottom up reporting. Improvements could be made in creating a greater sense of national ownership and including national political analysts in its work.

\(^{1}\)MINUSTAH, MONUC, MONUSCO, UNMIL, UNMIT, and UNOCI.
\(^{2}\)Political affairs, civil affairs, human rights, gender, communications and public information, and police and military.
The Civil Affairs Unit’s contribution to the electoral process was seen in three core areas: civic education, threat assessment and conflict mitigation. Although these efforts were understood as a continuation of their ongoing work with communal networks, in the context of an election, civil affairs officers were asked to lead some substantial electoral planning structures, including protection of civilian task forces and local-level electoral support centers. However, there seems to be an inconsistent level of understanding and appreciation of Civil Affairs’ role in elections.

In preparation for elections, Human Rights Units may work to address human rights concerns in the legal framework of elections, and are responsible for monitoring the voting environment. Their other monitoring, reporting, and protection responsibilities also tend to focus on electoral issues as these gain prominence in the host country. Human rights officers have been afforded some flexibility in their work because of their dual status as members of the mission and representatives of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). Recommendations regarding HRUs include creating a more practical handbook on human rights work in elections and improving coordination within the mission and with national counterparts.

The Gender Unit’s work within electoral processes was supported by a well-developed base of guidance material from Headquarters. The key responsibilities of these units are mainstreaming gender-sensitive approaches and encouraging female participation. The need to address the specific challenges posed by gender-related electoral violence and to coordinate the unit’s activities with those of UN Women and other actors have been articulated as areas for improvement.

Communications and Public Information Offices were found to be effective in managing and monitoring local media sources, and articulating the mission’s electoral mandate, often directly under the SRSG. These units seek the appropriate balance between these core responsibilities and providing platforms for national actors to discuss electoral issues. Improved and tested guidance materials might be useful for these offices.

Police and Military, the elements most commonly associated with peacekeeping, have been called upon to engage in a variety of diverse tasks in electoral processes. In addition to securing a safe environment for voting, threat assessments, and protecting the right to assemble, they are involved in training of national counterparts and providing logistical support. Crowd control and rapid intervention are particularly important priorities in elections. This requires improved engagement with the civilian component of the mission, in addition to other security institutions.

Electoral assistance has become a core task of peacekeeping missions and, as such, should be approached in a manner that reflects its importance. Many of the best practices and recommendations found by this study emphasize the need for clearly-established guidelines regarding electoral support activities undertaken by the mission’s security and substantive units. Before, during, and after elections, there have been a variety of innovative approaches used by these units, including through coordination mechanisms to capitalize on their comparative advantages. The benefits of implementing these practices could be better spread within and across missions through the use of more formalized means of sharing information.
Introduction

The United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations’ (DPKO) Policy and Best Practices Service has asked a team of graduate students from Columbia University’s School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA) to conduct a review of the work of peacekeeping missions in electoral processes, with a particular focus on the roles played by substantive units.

There is a growing acknowledgement that elections are complex political processes that cannot be understood simply as isolated technical events. Credible, transparent, and inclusive elections depend on the presence of suitable conditions during the preparation for the election, the conduct of the election itself, and the period of transition following the election. In many post-conflict societies, United Nations peacekeeping missions have been authorized to help develop these conditions.

Since 1991, DPKO has increasingly been asked to provide support to elections. The purpose of this project is to review and evaluate these efforts by analyzing the mobilization of missions and their substantive units around elections. This project hopes to inform and serve as the basis for a discussion on the development of guidelines and recommendations for future missions mandated to assist in electoral processes.

Purpose and Scope of Research

While other UN agencies and international actors are involved in elections, this report analyzes the role of peacekeeping operations in order to identify and highlight its comparative advantages. In particular, it focuses on the responsibilities of the missions’ substantive units, and their coordination and mobilization around an election. The project also seeks to identify trends in the evolution of electoral assistance mandates given to peacekeeping missions by the Security Council (SC).

Peacekeeping missions have been deployed in a variety of countries and circumstances. Some countries have recently emerged from regional conflicts or protracted civil wars, while others have been through sporadic episodes of instability. These countries have varying levels of state and institutional capacity. These differences have an impact on the nature and activities of the peacekeeping missions. However, despite these differences, this research is based on the idea that there are some baseline activities and minimum requirements that should be carried out by all missions.

At the request of DPKO, this report focuses on six missions where the UN has provided a significant degree of electoral assistance: MINUSTAH (Haiti), MONUC (DRC), MONUSCO (DRC), UNOCI (Côte d’Ivoire), UNMIL (Liberia), and UNMIT (Timor-Leste); with particular emphasis on six substantive areas: political affairs, civil affairs, human rights, gender, communications and public information, and police and military.

3 Key documents from other missions, such as UNAMA (Afghanistan) were also used in the research and are referenced in this report where appropriate.
Methodology

The research methodology included an extensive desk review of the Secretary General’s Reports, Security Council Resolutions, Security Council Reports, Security Council Presidential Statements, Secretary General’s letters, and knowledge documents provided by DPKO, including After Action Reports, End of Assignment Reviews, briefings, and evaluations. In total, over 264 documents were read by the research team and consolidated in a summary matrix highlighting their key points. In addition, 25 interviews were organized by DPKO’s Policy and Best Practice Service and conducted by the research team with officials both at Headquarters and in the field in order to develop a better understanding of the context in which decisions were made.

This study was conducted over a six-month period. Despite the extent of this research, it does not claim to be comprehensive, since it is based on fragmented and incomplete data from a limited number of missions. The team also did not have the opportunity to travel to the field and engage with UN officials on the ground. Nonetheless, the findings of this report are expected to lead and contribute to a broader discussion on these issues.

The research team distinguishes between the terms “best practices” and “recommendations.” “Best practices” refer to actions that have been taken by at least one mission and which were evaluated by UN staff as being a good idea to replicate in the future. “Recommendations” refer to actions that have not necessarily been tried in the past, but which UN staff or the research team believe should be considered.
Electoral Assistance Mandates

The Department of Peacekeeping Operations’ involvement in electoral processes is defined and authorized by the Security Council. These resolutions and the specific provisions regarding electoral assistance are not only based upon the requests of the host country, but are also the result of political negotiations between the member states in the Council. Therefore, the agreed language and terms of the mandate lack the optimal clarity to design a mission’s electoral strategy.\footnote{Please see the appendix for a chart analyzing the paragraphs regarding electoral assistance within Security Council Resolution, and a graphical interpretation of the UN’s levels of involvement in electoral processes.} Paradoxically, this ambiguity can also be useful, as it allows the head of the mission, the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG), greater flexibility to give a functional interpretation to the SC resolution. These mandates have varied over the past two decades, as each mission’s involvement and responsibilities have been grounded in their particular national contexts. Although each mandate and mission is unique, this research has highlighted important trends in the Security Council’s authorization of electoral assistance over the past 20 years.

As of 2012, the Council has authorized twenty-five peacekeeping missions to provide support to national elections, some of which have covered multiple electoral cycles.\footnote{Please see the appendix for a complete listing of the electoral assistance paragraphs from these twenty-five mission, and a graphical interpretation of the UN’s level of involvement in elections since 1991.} The Secretary-General’s August 2011 report on the UN’s role in elections provides five basic types of electoral assistance: (a) organization and conduct of elections; (b) verification/certification; (c) technical assistance; (d) expert panels; and (e) coordination of international observers.\footnote{Report of the Secretary General. \textit{Strengthening the role of the United Nations in enhancing the effectiveness of the principle of periodic and genuine elections and the promotion of democratization. A/66/314}, 19 August 2011.} However, the SC has not given executive authority over an electoral process to a UN mission since 1999, when it administered elections in Kosovo and Timor-Leste.

Building domestic capacity and enforcing the national ownership of elections has instead become a priority for the international community and the principle of partnership has been increasingly emphasized in the mandates given to peacekeeping operations. Since 2000, there has been a greater emphasis by the SC to reinforce the leadership of the host country’s government in the electoral process. The UN’s support has become linked to the government’s approval, with many activities mandated “as requested” to underline this requirement.

While a peacekeeping mission may still be the primary actor in providing logistical and technical support, a robust but discrete role is favored in cases where the host country lacks sufficient infrastructure and institutions. This is often the case when a peacekeeping operation is called to support a nation’s first election in the aftermath of a peace agreement to end a civil war. In the second electoral cycles, when countries wish to assert their sovereignty, mandates have focused on enhancing the sustainability of electoral institutions, and the host country’s lead role in the process. An additional trend has been seen in the recent practice of specifically mentioning the independent electoral management body, rather than “the government,” as the entity the mission
will support. This narrowing of the entity in charge of the election, further promotes the objective, impartial, neutral and independent nature of DPKO’s electoral assistance.\(^7\)

Verification and certification mandates are also becoming increasingly rare for Peacekeeping’s involvement in elections. With the recent exception of Côte d'Ivoire, and a small and limited certification team in 2006 in Timor-Leste,\(^8\) these tasks had not been mandated to a UN mission since 1996. In the case of UNOCI and UNMIT, an enhanced UN role was specifically requested by the governing parties as a further step to ensure a credible, transparent, and inclusive electoral cycle. Having a UN entity so deeply involved in the outcome of an election has been questioned in some quarters, especially in tense political environments. Moving forward, a draft policy directive on the *Principles and Types of UN Electoral Assistance* has indicated that verification should only be accepted on a limited and exceptional basis, only when “it is deemed absolutely necessary to contribute to political stability or preserve a peace process.”\(^9\) It is not clear whether the Timorese non-binding model of certification will be subject to the same conditions if a country once again makes such a request.

**Key Characteristics of Current Mandates**

At the moment, out of the seventeen peacekeeping missions deployed in the field, nine of them have an electoral assistance component in their mandate.\(^10\) Primarily, the tasks assigned by the Council focus on technical issues, and the possible deployment of peacekeepers to assist in the logistical aspects of elections. Another key characteristic is the Council’s request that the mission coordinate the involvement of the international community and its many external actors. This responsibility of coordination is generally divided into two areas, the coordination of donors and financial aid, and of the various monitoring teams. While the UN has not observed an election since 2001 in Fiji, many other actors, from regional institutions to non-governmental organizations, have filled these roles. In order to ensure that these actors are all working towards a common purpose, the Council has increasingly called on missions to take on this responsibility of observer coordination.\(^11\) An additional characteristic of recent mandates is the inclusion of a specific thematic reference to alert the mission of an area of particular concern of the SC. For the latest presidential elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), MONUSCO’s role was articulated in paragraph 7 of SC/RES/1991. In addition to the common references to technical and logistic support, the Council emphasized the role of the human rights unit in reporting and following up on possible human rights violations in the context of the upcoming elections. This signaled to all parties that the Council was concerned about the potential for

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\(^7\) United Nations, Focal Point for Electoral Assistance, Department of Political Affairs, *Principles and Types of UN Electoral Assistance*, 1 December 2012.

\(^8\) The terms of the Timor-Leste certification greatly differed from the more powerful role of the SRSG in UNOCI. The team consisted of three international experts and a small support staff, and lacked any enforcement mechanism for their recommendations. The certification mechanism succeeded in their call for some necessary legal changes for both presidential and parliamentary elections, but not all their recommendations were adopted by the electoral authorities or the parliament.

\(^9\) United Nations, Focal Point for Electoral Assistance, Department of Political Affairs, *Principles and Types of UN Electoral Assistance*, 12/1/2012.

\(^10\) UNOCI, MINUSTAH, MONUSCO, UNMIT, UNMIL, UNMISS, UNAMA, MINURSO and UNMIK

widespread abuses, and it empowered the human rights unit to take an assertive role in MONUSCO. According to an interview with a Human Rights Officer in Kinshasa, this reference in the mandate was deemed particularly important to ensuring that their work would be a mission-wide priority. The inclusion of this in MONUSCO’s mandate followed the actions the Human Rights Unit in UNOCI, who in the aftermath of Ivorian electoral crisis had to independently initiate a reporting process with authorization from the Human Rights Council.

Furthermore, ensuring greater participation in the electoral process by women has been emphasized in two recent cases, MINUSTAH in Haiti and the inaugural resolution for UNMISS in South Sudan. While this recognition is still an exception in most recent mandates, this trend does indicate a greater awareness on the part of the Council on the need to give increased importance and visibility to the issue of gender in elections and women’s participation in democratic institutions. Finally the public information unit and its role in curtailing hateful media rhetoric and fostering peaceful electoral activities have also been highlighted. The current mandates for UNMISS and UNOCI reflect this area of concern. While it is unclear whether this recent tendency of the SC to shed light on a particular issue has improved working conditions on the ground, for UN staff interviewed it appears to be a welcome development to help focus the mission’s efforts.

Although these trends reflect the broad evolution of the SC and peacekeeping’s mandates in elections, ultimately SC mandates only provide the framework for a mission’s activities. The true challenge is for the SRSG to use these guidelines and to design a shared, coordinated, and integrated strategy for the conduct of elections.

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12 Phone interview with Human Rights Officer (MONUSCO), 30 March 2012.
13 MINUSTAH (S/RES/1542) and UNMISS (S/RES/1996).
Mission Structure, Mobilization, and Management

The mandate for a peacekeeping operation, as established by the Security Council, is the starting point for defining a mission’s responsibilities. This section examines the roles and responsibilities of the SRSG, the mobilization of the mission towards elections, as well as the structure and management of the missions in electoral assistance.

Under the authority of the Security Council, the command of peacekeeping operations is entrusted to the Secretary-General, who in turn delegates the overall responsibility for the conduct and support of these missions to the Under-Secretary-General (USG) for Peacekeeping Operations, and the actual implementation of the mandate to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. These responsibilities are particularly important in times of an election as the country and the mission are under a great deal of stress.

The Role of the SRSG

The SRSG implements the mission’s mandate regarding electoral support and develops strategies to achieve the goals established by the Security Council. The SRSG’s responsibility to build consensus and facilitate dialogue between key actors has proven to be especially critical during a post-conflict electoral cycle. His/her capacity to lead the mission and mobilize political and financial support for the elections has also become an important component of the SRSG’s responsibilities. It would seem that the Council has given three main functions to the SRSG in supporting an election:

- Provide strategic leadership to guide the Mission’s electoral mobilization and to ensure an integrated approach to its provision of electoral support
- Coordinate international support among UN agencies and other international stakeholders
- Provide good offices to facilitate the political process.

Strategic Leadership for Integrated Missions

The SRSG is the head of mission and therefore has to ensure that all components of the mission work towards a common goal with an integrated strategy that is shared, understood, and implemented by all stakeholders. Electoral support requires effective mobilization in order to overcome potential logistical and political challenges. The SRSG must also ensure that the mission as a whole prepares and mobilizes itself for elections and continues develop contingency plans, and that the different units of the missions coordinate their activities, share information, avoid duplication, and mutually reinforce their work to increase their impact for maximum effectiveness.

For instance, in Timor-Leste in 2007, UNMIT established an integrated coordination mechanism to strengthen the “One UN” approach to the elections to ensure that all dimensions of the electoral process would be addressed in a coherent and consistent manner. The Committee on

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14 The One UN approach aims to allow more coordinated delivery of programs by the UN family at the country level by establishing a consolidated UN presence.
High-Level Coordination met regularly to coordinate the activities of UNMIT and the government, and proved to be a valuable forum for collaboration and consensus building. It worked closely with UNDP, UNICEF, and UNIFEM in many electoral support areas including civic education, logistical support, donor coordination, support to the media, voter education, and capacity building with national electoral institutions. In 2012, an internal steering committee and a number of thematic and cross-cutting working groups were established “to ensure that the UN system provides cohesive and efficient support to the elections, under the overall guidance of the SRSG.”

This is not to suggest that creating special structures to enhance mission integration in support of an election is always desirable or is without potential problems. For instance, while the United Nations Electoral Support Team (UNEST) established by UNMIT seems to have been largely successful, integrating two structures may have caused some administrative frictions in the lead up to the 2012 elections. Similarly, the Electoral Assistance Task Force (EATF) in MINUSTAH and Elections Technical Team (ETT) in UNMIL also seem to have suffered from a lack of clear chain of command.

MINUSTAH

“Many of the staff seconded to the EATF in MINUSTAH had the unfortunate situation of being put into the difficult position of having two bosses, the EAFT and their own section chief. Without proper clarification of status, staff kept referring to their sections and viewed the EATF only as a task, as opposed to a seconded staff member of a task force. Conversely, section chiefs also found themselves managing these seconded and designated staff, which at times ran contrary to the EATF task force management.”

UNMIL

UNMIL created two thematic groups with existing staff. One was a UN-wide political task force, and the other was an electoral team on technical support and logistics, which functioned as an informal coordination mechanism. While the thematic working groups were useful, the roles and expectations from each section in relation to the elections were not sufficiently clarified from the outset, and turf wars between different units sometimes hindered effective coordination. This caused initial frustrations and delayed contributions to significant electoral assessments and contingencies. For instance, while the ETT’s establishment was disseminated within, full cooperation by all sections was not granted initially due to institutional culture of vertical reporting lines. The ETT was also composed of staff members from within the mission responsible for other tasks than elections.

Appropriate planning of the mission’s involvement in electoral processes may complement the use of coordination structures such as these. In a unique example, more than a year before the October 2004 Afghan elections, UNAMA prepared a draft work plan highlighting—for the

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16 EAD/DPA, EAD NAM Final Report, 7 March 2011.
period covering the summer of 2003 to the summer of 2004—the benchmarks to be completed by the mission’s substantive and security units during the electoral process.¹⁹

Strategic leadership may be reflected in the degree of missions’ mobilization towards elections. In particular, the analysis of organizational structure, information sharing mechanisms or civilian-military coordination may be a first step to understand electoral support dynamics from within the missions.

International Coordination
Another role of the SRSG in Peacekeeping’s electoral assistance relates to the coordination of international stakeholders. The need to coordinate and unite international efforts in post-conflict recovery is commonly accepted among international actors, even though there remains some resistance from key international stakeholders. Yet international coordination is particularly important in electoral assistance, where the ability to coordinate political and technical assistance might determine the success or failure of electoral support. The SRSG is therefore responsible for coordinating and monitoring other international stakeholders and multilateral organizations.

Multidimensional peacekeeping operations have a distinct and unique contribution to make through the activities of the troops and police officers, the countrywide presence and logistical assets, and the legitimacy provided by its SC mandate. Despite these advantages, peacekeeping’s electoral assistance may be challenged by the growing number of actors working on the ground that may have divergent agendas and whose mandates are not given by the SC. The role of the SRSG is crucial in overcoming these challenges.

A review of the six case studies shows disparities on the level of coordination of international actors. Again, part of these differences may be explained by the specifics of national contexts. Nevertheless, in several missions international coordination was highlighted as a good practice, on the grounds that leadership and coordination efforts have enhanced the quality and efficiency of international electoral assistance.

In Haiti, the SC mandate specifically acknowledged the need to “coordinate international electoral assistance to Haiti in cooperation with other international stakeholders including the OAS and CARICOM.”²⁰ For the 2006 and 2010 elections, MINUSTAH worked closely with the OAS. In November 2004, MINUSTAH and the OAS signed a memorandum of understanding concerning electoral assistance to Haiti, in order to delineate respective responsibilities and to set up an electoral cooperation committee to ensure that the assistance provided would be effective and coherent. For the 2006 elections, the OAS played the lead role on the voter registration process, while MINUSTAH worked mostly on facilitating the political process and ensuring logistics and security on Election Day.

²⁰ Resolution 1927, 4 June 2010
In DRC, the Project d’Appui au Cycle Electoral Congolais 2007-2011 (PACE) includes a “basket fund” managed by UNDP that aims to provide the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) with resources for the implementation of electoral activities.\textsuperscript{21}

In Liberia, the coordination of international assistance was also well developed, particularly on the donor/funding side, through the establishment of a donor coordination group. Donors were also channeled through a UNDP-administered trust fund, which prevented national authorities from selecting among multiple offers of assistance. Updates regarding elections were published and circulated monthly to all donors, and project board meetings were held monthly, in order to share information and avoid situations where different groups would provide conflicting advice to the host country.\textsuperscript{22}

Another aspect of the international coordination role of the SRSG is the support of observation groups. The types of cooperation have varied, from mainly information sharing, as in the 2006 Haitian elections, to technical and logistical support, as in Liberia in 2005. A report of the SG on Liberia stressed that UNMIL assisted in the deployment of national and international observers on the polling days.\textsuperscript{23} In Haiti, during the 2006 elections reports of the SG mention the presence of several international electoral observer missions organized through the “International Mission for Monitoring Haitian Elections, an ad hoc umbrella grouping of international observers; the International Foundation for Electoral Systems; and the European Union.” MINUSTAH maintained “constant contact with these observers around the country through regular meetings and briefings and had agreed that, in addition to information sharing, it would provide logistical and security assistance, in case of emergency, as resources permit.”\textsuperscript{24} In an earlier report, the SG had stressed the “need to establish a well-defined framework for collaboration among the various international observer groups to facilitate the activities of observers on the ground, to ensure appropriate geographical coverage and to provide guidelines on the application of common standards.”\textsuperscript{25}

**Good Offices and Facilitation of the Political Process**

The SRSG’s good offices role aims to mitigate potential tensions, and to help prepare a political climate conducive to peaceful elections. This often requires a direct and personal engagement with the host government, political parties, legislative actors, and the electoral management body. A review of all six cases conducted for this research confirms that SRSGs have used a wide range of tools to build trust, convince, engage, pressure or even threaten national counterparts using the SC mandate’s legitimacy and the logistical comparative advantage of peacekeeping missions as sources of political leverage.

For instance, in Haiti during the 2010 elections, the SRSG mitigated a potential electoral dispute through good offices and direct engagement with the presidential candidates. During the day of the first round, twelve candidates from the opposition decided to boycott the election after irregularities were reported. The SRSG’s role was crucial in convincing all participants to remain

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{21}DRC/UNDP, *Project d’Appui au Cycle Électoral Congolais 2007-2011*.
\item \textsuperscript{22}Interview with senior UNMIL representative, 7 March 2012, New York.
\item \textsuperscript{23}S/2005/764, 7 Dec 2005
\item \textsuperscript{24}S/2006/60, 6 Feb 2006
\item \textsuperscript{25}S/2005/313, 13 May 2005
\end{itemize}
committed to the democratic process. The SRSG’s ability to strategically tailor his response to the evolution of the political context allowed him to build trust with the different parties while exercising pressure on them when needed.

Depending on the situation faced on the ground, the SRSGs’ roles in facilitating the electoral process have varied. While the organization of meetings to foster dialogue among the political parties seems to be a commonality for each mission, the degree of direct and personal engagement with political actors has differed. For example, some SRSGs stated that they had personally remained in contact and conducted most of the politically significant meetings, often held in private due to their sensitive nature, with the key candidates and major stakeholders. In comparison, another SRSG interviewed described how he encouraged his staff, including the Political Affairs, Public Affairs, Civil Affairs, and field offices to promote dialogue to the greatest extent possible. In other cases, the discrete posture of the SRSG may have been the result of a strategic choice. Although the good offices role was mandated by the SC, sometimes the SRSG had to adopt a less visible posture to promote national ownership so as not to appear as interfering in the electoral process.

The personality or leadership style of the SRSG matters and plays a crucial role in any given mission. Other elements, such as the reality and needs on the ground, are equally important and may require a different response or an evolution of strategy. For instance, depending on the context and nature of an election—such as whether it is presidential or local—the responsibility of engaging with political actors can be further delegated downwards while the politically more significant meetings are still handled by the SRSG. This was the case in UNOCI during the 2010 election cycle. Although the SRSG was more active engaging with the candidates in the presidential election, he delegated these responsibilities during the legislative process when the environment was not as tense.

The SRSG, in consultation with DPKO, must give a functional interpretation to the mission’s mandate. This functional interpretation, as well as the political assessment conducted in the host country will determine the SRSG’s optimal approach to the electoral process. Although good offices may be considered as a diplomatic responsibility that demands a case-by-case approach, guidelines on interpreting the mandates of the SC, such as those on the meaning of good offices, do not seem to exist.

**Sub-SRSG Level Leadership**

While the strategic roles and activities of the SRSG are clearly central to the success of any mission’s support to an electoral process, effective structures which are able to guarantee mission-wide communication and coordination among various components is another equally important factor for mission’s success. The senior management reporting to the SRSG consists of DSRSGs, heads of units and advisers in specialized areas, often including the military, civilian

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27 Interview with senior mission representative, 5 February 2012, New York.
28 Interview with Political Affairs Officer (UNOCI), 17 February 2012, New York
police, political affairs, human rights, civil affairs, public information, gender, child protection and administration, among others. Advisers from these thematic components are often attached to the SRSG’s support office for strategic planning and the coordination of crosscutting issues.

Since an SRSG cannot alone fulfill the various leadership roles expected of him/her, an effective and appropriate delegation of some of his/her roles will be crucial. This is especially the case in dealing with the complexity of electoral assistance. It has been proven useful, for instance, to appoint the Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator as DSRSG to ensure greater strategic coherence and an effective transition from emergency relief to recovery and reconstruction for elections. In fact, the existence of clear guidance regarding the role of one of the DSRSGs has been noted in a number of documents and interviews reviewed for this report as a best practice. In other missions, the lack of clearly defined role of the DSRSG has been cited as one of the major challenges for the mission.29

**Mission Mobilization**

With the SRSG at the helm and his/her senior leadership supporting him/her, missions seem to have various vertical and horizontal meetings in place to ensure mission integration and coordination regarding electoral support. First, an executive body of senior managers generally meets daily to discuss the political direction of the mission, its strategies for implementation, and the various tasks and benchmarks of all components. Permanent or ad hoc working groups or task forces, which can include a wider range of internal or external participants, may also be established to complement the regular meeting and deal with specific challenges. The host government and/or local leadership may also interact with senior management in a formalized structure, such as a consultative forum to help define their needs and priorities.

All the missions under consideration in this report seem to have set up regular as well as special meetings in order to achieve seamless coordination and information sharing in support of electoral process. First, the regular meetings include, in many cases, senior management group meetings among section chiefs and the SRSG to discuss major policy issues of cross-mission concern and weekly section chief meetings on strategy and coordination, often chaired by the DSRSG. For instance, in UNOCI, the Groupe de Coordination Stratégique (GCS) chaired by the DSRSG/HC/RC and attended by heads of agencies, section chiefs from the civil components of UNOCI, as well as the Force Commander and Police Commissioner met on a regular monthly basis to discuss strategic, crosscutting issues.30 Similar structures have been identified in the rest of the missions examined.

In addition to the regular meeting and reporting chains, missions have often reorganized their structure or established special teams or units in preparation for the electoral processes. For instance, UNMIL in preparations for the 2005 elections saw a major reorganization of its substantive components to strengthen the cohesion among the different sections. Another

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example was found in MINUSTAH in 2006 where a Joint Elections Support Center (JESC) was created to serve as a hub for electoral information and direction.31

However, a structural change can only be effective if such reorganization is made fully aware to the members of the relevant offices and the expectations are clearly established. For instance, while it did have one of the two DSRSGs serving also as also resident coordinator and humanitarian coordinator (DSRSG/RC/HC) particularly focusing on election issues, MONUSCO during the 2011 elections did not try to establish any special teams or task force established as such, and attempted to utilize the existing structure with an emphasis on the informal communication between management at various levels of the mission.32 Yet, it should be noted that guaranteeing effective communication and information sharing among units in such an environment of informal communication could require greater effort from the units involved.

Missions have often developed different responses to the specific needs of the host country in terms of electoral support, either in the way the SRSG exercises good offices or in restructuring the mission for election mobilization. This review of peacekeeping missions’ structure, mobilization and management in electoral support highlights the importance of strategic leadership and coordination mechanisms. Although the specifics of the national political context require a case-by-case approach, some practices in missions should be highlighted as they could potentially be replicated in other contexts. Similarly, the recommendations below seek to stress some common standards that may improve the quality of peacekeeping missions’ response in electoral support.

Best Practices and Recommendations

Best Practices:

These are steps that some missions took to strengthen the One UN approach according to After Action Reports:

- The appointment of the DSRSG, UN Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator, as the focal point for electoral assistance as seen in the case of UNMIL during the 2005 elections strengthened the “One UN” approach to the elections, break down the institutional barriers to intra-UN communications and planning in preparations for elections.
- The establishment of UNEST as an integrated coordination mechanism by UNMIT for the 2012 elections helped integrate the mission’s support for the electoral cycle and strengthen the “One UN” approach. This was done in order to ensure that all dimensions of the electoral process were addressed in a coherent and consistent manner by the mission and its partners in the United Nations country team.
- In MINUSTAH the establishment of special structures for electoral support in 2006 and 2010 including JESC and EATF shared electoral information and directions, and served as a focal point for the entire mission on election activities. Before the 2010 elections, MINUSTAH elaborated a detailed and comprehensive operational plan, including

31MINUSTAH official, After Action Review, 8 December 2006.
32Interview with senior MONUSCO representative, 5 February 2012, New York.
management framework and related activation timeline, specifying each unit’s tasks and responsibilities, as well as reporting and monitoring mechanisms throughout the electoral process.

Recommendations:

For the SRSG

- Request an early assessment of the host country’s needs and priorities in electoral support to determine the response of the mission in terms of structure, human resources, staff training, and coordination mechanisms.
- Establish clearly the division of the roles and responsibilities of senior leadership officials, including DSRSGs and the Chief of Electoral Affairs, and communicate them.
- Elaborate a strategic planning document on mission’s mobilization for electoral support, to be disseminated to all components in the mission by the DSRSG or Chief of Staff.
- Design, in collaboration with the Electoral Affairs Section, a technical and operational planning document which should include:
  - the mission’s management framework for electoral support;
  - the division of the tasks and responsibilities among the electoral task force (if any), the thematic units, and the police and the military;
  - a related and detailed activation timeline starting at least 6 to 12 months before, and ending one month after Election-Day;
  - reporting and monitoring mechanisms within the mission on political and security events happening during the election.

For the DSRSG

- Define clearly the chain of command and control in order to mitigate any potential administrative frictions.
- Establish daily and functional communication mechanisms between all mission’s components to ensure seamless flow of information on operational matters.
- Improve information exchange between mission personnel and their counterparts at Headquarters.

For DPKO, with EAD

- Establish clear guidelines and strategic recommendations on peacekeeping electoral support for senior leadership.
- Establish training modules on peacekeeping electoral support for senior leadership. Include different options for mission restructuring and good offices strategies, depending on the mission’s mandate in electoral assistance and on the political context in the host country.
- Establish a user-friendly database on election-related data and activities.
Thematic Sections

The remaining sections of this report explore the work of units working in political affairs, civil affairs, human rights, gender, communications and public information, and police and military during electoral processes. In each case, the key activities and coordination with other units are highlighted. These reviews are followed by summaries of best practices and recommendations.
Political Affairs

During an electoral process, the role of the Political Affairs Division (PAD) is to provide timely political assessment and analysis, offer relevant recommendations on political engagements to the Mission leadership, and maintain thorough contact with not only political parties, but also other relevant actors including the media, international actors, NGOs, and civil society organizations. While the SRSG also engages with political parties under his/her good office role, this section focuses on the role of the PAD as a common structural component of missions in order to highlight the activities and challenges in engaging with political parties.

Structure

Due to the nature of its work, the PAD is arguably the unit working the most closely with the SRSG, and is directed by his/her guidance. In most cases, the Director of the PAD attends weekly executive meetings chaired by the SRSG as well as other meetings as needed. However, some field officers have noted that most of the PAD’s daily work was determined by the unit within the boundaries of the mandate and the strategic plan. This allows greater flexibility for the operations of the PAD without the SRSG having to provide detailed guidance.

Moreover, the unit feeds political analysis and information to the SRSG on a daily basis. Typically the primary mechanism for conveying information is through bottom-up reporting. The PAD prepares daily status reports that are sent up to the SRSG. At the provincial field level, political affairs officers compile reports from all sections—with inputs from police, military, civil affairs—in order to offer a consolidated analysis of the situation. However, some field officers expressed frustrations that often there were no follow-up actions taken based on the analysis and recommendations they provided to the leadership of the mission.

In MINUSTAH, for the 2011 elections, PAD officers were all based in Port-au-Prince, and there was no real new organizational structure as such, but some special teams were established as a part of mobilization for the elections.

PAD’s Special Team Set Up for 2011 Haitian Elections

“First, a small special reporting cell composed of 2-3 people was set up to collect information from all political officers. They kept log of anything that was being said such as statements of any incidents with political and security implications, and reported such information every 6 hours with analysis. Second, there were another 3 people on a mobile team, going around to various areas. They went into different areas to gain situational awareness, and used radios and cellphones to report back any relevant information. Since the team was very small, they only went to major points in the city where the PAD were expecting trouble. Finally the Director and Deputy Director served

33 Interview with senior MINUSTAH representative, 26 January 2012, New York.
34 Phone interview with PAD representative (MINUSTAH), 22 February 2012.
35 Interview with Political Affairs Officer (MONUSCO), 15 February 2012, New York.
36 Phone interview with PAD representative (MINUSTAH), 22 February 2012.
Key Electoral Activities

Codes of Conduct
Facilitating a code of conduct for political parties has been a key activity of PAD in all missions examined. By having a document that laid out principles and practices for conduct of elections early on in the electoral process, the code serves as a useful tool as it establishes a common understanding for appropriate behavior. However, there were divergent views with positive analysis on how and why the code of conduct is helpful for the work of the PAD. Some of the staff interviewed stated that it was useful because it provides a source of leverage, to put pressure and even enforce the terms of the code, while others were of the view that it was the process of bringing together the parties and discussing what can be consensually agreed, not the leverage provided by the code itself that was helpful.

MONUSCO in Preparation for 2011 Elections
“The code of conduct is an extremely useful tool because it gives everyone a benchmark for an agreed upon playing field […], and operationalizing that and focusing on it in your work is a best practice in terms of interactions with political actors fleshing out the contents. As a political officer, this gives you a good reference when speaking with political parties. I would advocate always doing that in preparation for elections. The code of conduct was the basis for all discussions with political parties on how they should behave. […] The main point to take away from this is that the code of conduct was central to our work and provided a very useful basis for our communications and leverage when talking to parties about how they were behaving.”

MINUSTAH in Preparation for 2010 Elections
“We first disseminated the idea of the code of conduct to people and discussed about it. Town hall meetings were organized by Civil Affairs all around the country and we got different perspectives of groups and political parties. It was not a document in itself that mattered but rather the process, the ability to make people discuss, engage and commit to act peacefully. The best thing is to have the ability to listen, to have direct contact with the interlocutor and listen carefully without preconceived ideas - humility is the key. Creating a level of playing field is very difficult to do. The PAD tends to overemphasize our importance and ability to influence a political process, but the arena they operate is very limited - we are really here more to meet with everyone and recommend and support. We need to first know all the political actors, their agenda, their background, to gain a broader comprehension and situational awareness. Only then we can start bringing ideas, such as the code of conduct. Ideas can only be pushed when there is a fundamental empathy and at least the minimum of knowledge of the political reality. Humility is really essential. Listening and slowly

37Phone interview with PAD representative (MINUSTAH), 22 February 2012.
38Interview with Political Affairs Officer (MONUSCO), 15 February 2012, New York.
promoting ideas. Example with the code of conduct: we were pushing this idea, but also needed to listen and find out what the parties wanted. Pushing an idea on the one hand, but also looking for information on the other, because we need to feed other units with information for identifying hot spots, elaborating threat assessments, etc.”39

“[Although few] participants refused to sign the code of conduct, [claiming] that Haitian law provides all the necessary electoral guidance ... commitments were made at eighty per cent of the forums attended by candidates or their representatives.”40

**Political Planning and Analysis**

Prior to the election, the PAD is actively involved in the preparation of contingency planning based on their on-going analysis of the country’s political dynamics. For instance, UNOCI preparation for the 2010 elections, established multiple contingency plans both at the political and security level, in anticipation of any disturbances to the electoral process.41 These plans helped secure reinforcements and led to early engagement with opposing parties and the Ouagadougou Political Agreement (OPA) facilitator, President Blaise Compaoré of Burkina Faso.

*UNOCI’s Contingency Planning*

“On security, there was a contingency planning on the worst-case scenario. Security mechanism in place showed a lack of capacity, so with threat assessments, we beefed up reserves and riot control police. The first round was quite good. All stakeholders agreed on the second round, and we revised the threat analysis. On political track, there was a contingency plan but not necessarily at the level of ONUCI. We were pretty confident that things were going to work out well as everyone accepted the first round results. What came after was a deliberate attempt to stir up a civil war. Could we have anticipated it? It is hard to answer. Beefing up PKO to unprecedented level would not have helped. There were deliberate attempts to get ONUCI out of there by attacking and accusing. These were all challenges for us to implement mandate. We had to not only certify, but also had the responsibility of protection of civilians and others. But the situation made it nearly impossible. Looking in hindsight, I think we basically succeeded, but that required a lot of contingency planning.”42

**Maintaining Contact**

On the Election Day, the PAD was generally involved in maintaining contact with key political actors, and liaising and exchanging information with observers. Nonetheless, some of the PAD members were often reassigned to other substantive components or to provide more direct electoral assistance. For instance, in MONUSCO during the 2011 elections, the regional offices of the PAD were directed to create a specific emergency response cell and an ad-hoc body to

39Phone interview with PAD representative (MINUSTAH), 22 February 2012.
40MINUSTAH Internal Memo, *MINUSTAH Civil Affairs Supporting the Electoral Process*.
41Interview with Political Affairs Officer (UNOCI), 17 February 2012, New York.
42Interview with Political Affairs Officer (UNOCI), 17 February 2012, New York,
manage observers. Such practices were of concern, as these efforts were mostly last minute and poorly organized. The PAD officers were often not properly trained to perform such roles.

**Post-election Follow-up**

Finally, during the post-election phase, the PAD’s main responsibilities are to follow up with parties, and provide information and analysis on the political climate. Emphasizing the importance of respecting the outcome of the election is also an important priority. Political affairs officers often must engage with losing parties who are claiming fraud, and their threats not to participate in a fraudulently elected government. Advocating for their participation in the elected structures, and the importance of a robust opposition in a government has proven to be a key responsibility of the PAD officers in aftermath of Ivorian Legislative Elections in 2011.

**Coordination with Other Units**

Coordination between the PAD and other substantive components of the mission is also a major requirement for promoting mission integration, developing a common understanding of the political dynamics, and capitalizing on the comparative advantage of each of the main components of the mission. Many have the opinion that the participation of the PAD in the coordination meetings, seminars, and workshops organized by other components including the Civil Affairs, Public Information, Human Rights, Gender, Electoral Assistance, and Mission Support was an important best practice.

Some examples include obtaining time-sensitive information or feeding key messages to the Mission’s broadcasting with respect to Public Information, or sharing monitoring and engagement responsibilities with Civil Affairs. However, the lack of a longer term prospective planning horizon, or advance planning for coordination were sometimes singled out as an area for improvement.

**Best Practices and Recommendations**

Best Practices:
- In multiple cases, the drafting of the political parties code of conduct has been found useful in exercising leverage to enforce desirable behavior of the parties as well as bringing together parties and discussing what can be consensually agreed.

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43 Interview with Political Affairs Officer (MONUSCO), 15 February 2012, New York.
44 Interview with Political Affairs Officer (UNOCI), 17 February 2012, New York.
45 Senior UNOCI representative, *End of Assignment Report*, January 2010
46 Phone interview with PAD representative (MINUSTAH), 22 February 2012; Interview with Political Affairs Officer (MONUSCO), 15 February 2012, New York.
47 Phone interview with PAD representative (MINUSTAH), 22 February 2012.
The participation of the PAD in the coordination meetings, seminars, and workshops organized by other components was found in several cases to help promote mission integration and developing a common understanding of the political dynamics.\textsuperscript{49}

According to a representative of the PAD in MINUSTAH, obtaining and integrating national political analysts into the works of the PAD given that any final decisions were reserved to the UN staff was effective in utilizing local contacts, expertise, and knowledge as well as addressing some of the shortage in staffing requirements.\textsuperscript{50}

Recommendations:

- Promote a more inclusive process in drafting the code of conduct in order to put greater emphasis on national ownership of the electoral process.
- Organize standing coordination meetings as well as special brainstorming sessions on key political developments, and designate focal points for liaison and interaction between the PAD and the various substantive components, in order to enhance coordination between the PAD and the other substantive components of the mission.
- Avoid reassigning PAD officers to other substantive components or for polling station monitoring or other substantive electoral support activities on the election days without prior training.

\textsuperscript{49}Senior UNOCI representative, \textit{End of Assignment Report}, 2010; Interview with Political Affairs Officer (MONUSCO), 15 February 2012, New York.

\textsuperscript{50}Phone interview with PAD representative (MINUSTAH), 22 February 2012.
Civil Affairs

The Civil Affairs Unit has been tasked to be the mission’s “eyes and ears” at the local level, as their interactions with community leaders, civil society organizations and sub-national governing structures are essential in determining the political pulse of the nation. After establishing these key relationships, civil affairs officers are called to focus on three sets of priorities: cross-mission representation, monitoring and facilitation; confidence-building, conflict management and support for reconciliation; and support for the restoration and extension of state authority. The 2008 DPKO/DFS policy directive, which defines and clarifies these priorities, interestingly does not have much to say regarding the role of the Civil Affairs Unit during a national election. Furthermore, the recently released March 2012 civil affairs handbook also echoes the directive’s stance, and only calls on the unit to complement the mission’s technical electoral support. Although Civil Affairs emphasizes their crucial role in promoting a space for dialogue and political participation, elections are not considered one of their core mandated tasks. Yet from analyzing reporting from the field, there have been a variety of innovative ways in which the civil affairs unit has supported electoral processes.

Key Electoral Activities

Civic Education
As the unit most directly connected with local communities, the civil affairs unit has been directly associated with a variety of civic education programming across many electoral cycles and missions. Within the policy directive, support to these types of activities was the only reference to elections, as it was mentioned as part of the unit’s broader responsibilities of developing political space at the local level.

In MONUSCO, Civil Affairs was an active component in the 2011 CENI Task-Force on Civic Education. Along with the Electoral, Political and Public Information Divisions, UNDP and local and international NGOs, this mechanism served as the primary tool to prepare the electorate for the upcoming elections. Because of the considerable local network the unit had developed over the past few years, they were seen as an essential part of this team. Furthermore, Civil Affairs served as the monitoring agent of the designed programming, and coordinated geographic and thematic interventions to fill the different gaps of understanding that emerged before the presidential elections.

In UNMIL for the 2005 election cycle, Civil Affairs was deeply involved in the strategic planning for civic education, working with the NEC (National Elections Commission)’s technical committee on the issue as well as with UNMIL’s Elections Unit. Civil Affairs not only were trained and conducted trainings in 15 different counties but substantially mobilized many domestic civil society organizations. Through the Liberia Council of Churches, the Inter-

Religious Council of Liberia, as well as University of Liberia and other University Student Associations, the unit empowered existing platforms to educate their constituency.53

**Conflict Mitigation and Mediation**

In the tense moments before, or in between rounds of a contested election, civil affairs units have played a significant role in providing an outlet for popular frustrations with the process, and a forum to engage with stakeholders to overcome dangerous misconceptions. They have also facilitated mediation between electoral candidates, local adversaries and different non-governmental organizations.

In MINUSTAH, between the first and second rounds in the latest presidential election, civil affairs officers organized with local officials 120 electoral “town hall-style” forums at the municipal or constituency level throughout the country. The forums gathered representatives of civil society, the local media, department and communal electoral officials, local authorities (mayors, Justices of Peace, police officers, administrative board members) as well as candidates, political representatives, and MINUSTAH personnel (UNPOL, military, Electoral Assistance Section (EAS), HR, Justice). The forums allowed stakeholders to clarify their roles, as well as to discuss measures to ensure a smooth electoral process. These forums were very well-received, and helped develop many joint measures to enhance public confidence in the process. The division of labor between the government and MINUSTAH was clarified and many of the communal concerns were addressed. While the specific impact of this initiative is difficult to measure, the second round was much more peaceful than the first, and showed a large increase in women voters.54

In UNOCI, in coordination with the Public Information Units, Civil Affairs conducted conflict management workshops for members of the Corps Préfectoral throughout Côte d’Ivoire. There was also a commitment to a series of intercommunity dialogue activities, to assist local communities, together with their leaders and authorities, to solve conflicts and tensions and to promote the peace process at the local level. These joint programs were continued through the 2010 presidential elections.55

For the 2011 Presidential Elections in Liberia, UNMIL civil affairs officers teamed with the Political Planning and Policy Section to organize meetings with civil society organizations, the NEC and mission leadership. This forum for political opponents to meet was enhanced by the involvement of local actors to ensure the messages of the meeting reached the Liberian electorate. In addition to this organizational role, the Civil Affairs Unit was influential in mediating disputes between competing NGOs. The National Coordination and Elections Monitoring group (NACEM) and the civil society organizations (CSOs) National Elections Committee, two diametrically opposed and divergent civil society groupings, were brought together by civil affairs to create a national Elections Coordinating Committee. This organization became one of the primary monitoring groups throughout the election cycle, deploying 400 observers during the referendum, 2000 observers for the first round, and 1500 for the second

53 UNMIL internal memo, *Civil Affairs Role in the 2005 Elections held in Liberia.*
54MINUSTAH internal memo, *MINUSTAH Civil Affairs supporting the electoral process.*
round of voting.\textsuperscript{56} As UNMIL draws down, this actor with substantial electoral experience seems to be an enduring national product of the work of the civil affairs unit.

**Threat Assessment**

There have also been substantial contributions by civil affairs in preventive activities and identifying emerging local threats to the electoral process. Their connections with local actors are often foundations for the development of early warnings systems, and have proven to be very effective in recognizing electoral “hot spots” for mission mobilization.

In fact, within UNOCI, the Civil Affairs Unit actually served as the Secretariat of the Protection of Civilian Task Force, and participated in its various working groups. This mechanism was responsible for developing a mission wide strategy to be submitted to Senior Management for approval and implementation.\textsuperscript{57}

Within MINUSTAH, Senior Civil Affairs officers as the Chief Regional Officers were coordinators of the Departmental Joint Electoral Support Centres (DJESCs). These mechanisms were launched well before Election Day to focus on preparation and planning and were deeply involved in developing threat assessments at the regional level. Lower level civil affairs officers were tasked to coordinate responses to information gaps and coordination challenges between the National Joint Electoral Support Centre and the various DJESCs. These officers were also called upon to assist the Electoral Affairs Section with technical electoral issues and developments.\textsuperscript{58}

**Core Competencies**

Despite these examples, there remain divergent views regarding civil affairs’ involvement in electoral processes, and whether it distracts the unit from their primary purposes. One side of the debate claims that their staff should be focused on its long-term priorities, (building state capacity and the maintenance of its local networks)\textsuperscript{59} while others are very appreciative of the work of civil affairs in their post-electoral reporting. Ultimately, due to the limited resources of peacekeeping, all units will have to alter their current programming to support the many demands of an election. A final question for this unit will be whether it can tailor its electoral support to further its long-term goals and priorities.

**Best Practices and Recommendations**

Best Practices:
- The inter-round town halls in Haiti were identified as a best-practice by most participants and MINUSTAH staff. Perceived as a key factor in greater public understanding about...

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{56} UNMIL After Action Report, *UNMIL Support to the 2011 Liberian Electoral Process*, 30 December 2011. \\
\textsuperscript{57} Senior UNOCI representative, *End of Assignment Report*, 23 July 2010. \\
\textsuperscript{58} MINUSTAH internal memo, *MINUSTAH Civil Affairs supporting the electoral process*. \\
\textsuperscript{59} Interview with Civil Affairs Officer, 24 February 2012, New York.}
the elections, and less violence in the second round. Perhaps a model to be replicated in tense electoral environments.

- Placing the civil affairs unit under the DSRSG/RC/HC in order to reinforce the integrated mission, and promote greater synergy with the UN Country Team (could be especially helpful in designing Civic Education Programming).  

- The joint efforts of the political affairs division and civil affairs to develop a code of conduct not only for party leadership but their supporters as well. Including civil society organizations (as was seen in UNMIL) in the planning stages, can help disseminate a standard of behavior to the local electorate.

- The Civil Affairs Online Network, which has served as an online forum to exchange training models and share best practices could be an effective tool for the other substantive units of the mission.  

Recommendations:

- Reassess how the civil affairs unit can match its core competencies with providing support to an electoral process, and incorporate findings in guidance material.

- Expand conflict management, and reconciliation programming to address potential electoral disputes, especially in the lead-up or between rounds of an election.

- Monitor their network of civil society organizations and assess their potential to serve as a partner in electoral reconciliation programming, and capability building opportunities.

- Enhance coordination with public information units to provide a radio platform for CSOs, and to expand their inter-communal dialogue activities leading up to national elections.

- Conduct a post-election assessment of the population’s impressions of the election to develop lessons-learned and to reduce tensions or misperceptions.

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60 Senior UNMIL representative, End of Assignment Report, 11 October 2005.

Human Rights

The Human Rights Units (HRUs) working in peacekeeping missions are responsible for preventing, monitoring, and addressing human rights violations in the country. They also work to build awareness of human rights issues within UN activities in the country and to develop the capacity of national institutions to address human rights issues. Human Rights Units typically fall under the direct supervision of the DSRSG also responsible for security and rule of law issues. Human rights officers are fully a part of the peacekeeping mission, but have dual reporting responsibilities, to the SRSG and to the High Commissioner for Human Rights. As of the end of 2010, 14 UN peacekeeping, political, and support missions had dedicated human rights staff.62

Elections in post-conflict societies can exacerbate tensions that create threats to the protection of human rights. The goals of peacekeeping missions’ Human Rights Units regarding elections include ensuring that voters can fairly exercise their rights to vote and related human rights, as well as to help prevent violence. They also pay close attention to the needs of vulnerable groups, which may otherwise be overlooked. These additional responsibilities can place additional human resource burdens on these units. However, as noted previously, the Security Council has recently begun to include specific mentions of human rights protection in its electoral assistance mandates for peacekeeping missions, which could help to make the work of HRUs more of a priority.

Key Electoral Activities

Monitoring the Vote
The responsibilities of human rights monitors do not include monitoring election procedures and their implementation, which is done by dedicated election monitors. Rather, they focus on monitoring the human rights environment surrounding the election and should stay away from actual polling sites so as not to be confused with elections monitors.63

Before, during, and after the day(s) of voting, human rights officers mobilize around the country to monitor in person the voter registration, vote, and counting, and to work with other domestic and international actors doing similar work. Human rights monitoring of the voting process, which can occupy most of or all of the HRU, creates significant logistical challenges, as the unit is forced to compete with the rest of the mission for access to resources (in particular, vehicles, but also personnel and information) to be able to deploy effectively. This mobilization is also challenging from an organizational perspective. Units do not receive explicit instructions on their responsibilities in electoral processes, though they do have access to the 2001 OHCHR Training Manual on Human Rights Monitoring, which includes a chapter dedicated to election observation in designing their plan for the elections. The development of these plans is also

63 Phone interview with Human Rights Officer (UNMIT), 8 March 2012.
informed by communication with OHCHR offices in other countries and with the use of the human rights monitoring checklist, which is used by human rights officers monitoring the vote to record their assessments of the right to vote, freedom from intimidation, freedom of expression and opinion, right to information, rights of vulnerable groups, role of security forces, and security incidents or concerns. The unit will also develop clear plans for its reporting responsibilities following the vote.

**Legal and Political Issues**

Beyond monitoring human rights during the election itself, HRUs work throughout electoral processes to address those issues in the immediate context of elections but distinct from the voting process. In preparation for elections, the Human Rights Unit may work with other substantive units across the mission to present a consolidated list of recommendations to the legislature on amending electoral laws, with the aim of improving human rights standards. These recommendations may address issues such as determining the fair and clear division of electoral boundaries, ensuring access to polling stations, and developing rules on candidacy and party participation. In Timor-Leste, the substantive sections of UNMIT and the UN country team cooperated on this task beginning in 2010, in preparation for the 2012 elections.64

The Human Rights Unit may also meet with judicial and military authorities, political parties, and representatives of civil society and the media to discuss concerns about the electoral process. After the election, they help to ensure that the final judgment on the result of the election is determined and made public as soon as possible.

**Other Election-Related Issues**

Election-related activities before and after the vote can also overlap with the unit’s existing monitoring, reporting, and protection responsibilities. Ongoing work, such as monitoring the media for hate speech and other threats to human rights, and analyzing flash reports submitted by security personnel continue during the electoral process, but will change in focus as political life in the country focuses on elections.

Increased tensions around the time of elections may create more work for Human Rights Units. In DRC, MONUSCO helped to address these additional responsibilities with limited resources by establishing a toll-free phone number that members of the public could call to report human rights abuses.65

Similarly, during the post-elections crisis in Côte d’Ivoire in 2010, ONOCI’s Human Rights Division established an integrated human rights monitoring and investigation task force comprised of representatives drawn from the mission and UN country team. This task force organized into 12 field teams deployed across the country to monitor the human rights situation, and was assisted in this task by the creation of a 24-hour call center, to which victims and witnesses could report cases of human rights violations.66

64 Phone interview with Human Rights Officer (UNMIT), 8 March 2012.
65 Phone interview with Human Rights Officer (MONUSCO), 30 March 2012.
Human Rights Units maintain their regular reporting to OHCHR headquarters, though election-focused reporting contributes to OHCHR’s global initiative to report on human rights in the context of elections. The unit also continues its work to mainstream human rights awareness within the mission, though training of security and substantive units may increase or adopt a new focus during electoral processes.67

**Coordination with Other Units**

Human Rights Units work closely with other parts of the mission, UN agencies, and external actors during electoral processes, both through existing mechanisms and new forms of cooperation.

The most important existing forms of cooperation and coordination in which Human Rights Units participate during electoral processes are the JOC sit-reps and JMAC meetings. These established information-sharing mechanisms allow the unit to raise awareness of emerging areas of concern, particularly in the time immediately surrounding the election. Human Rights Units also contribute their information and analysis (based on previous monitoring work) to the hotspot analysis led by the PAD, which, in turn, is used to decide where to focus the attention of future monitoring, including on election day. Security and human rights issues are also discussed through the Military Liaison Group.

Existing relationships between units at a lower level are also used to coordinate work regarding elections. Human Rights Units cooperate with communications and public information offices to monitor the media for hate speech; often relying on the latter’s briefing materials in conducting this analysis. These units also work together to promote human rights issues in the media or through the mission’s own communications platforms. Human Rights Units also cooperate closely with political affairs offices to share and confirm information (particularly to compensate for having insufficient resources to monitor all geographic regions). In both cases, existing relationships within the mission are used to do work focused on elections.

Election-specific mechanisms for information-sharing are also used by Human Rights Units to coordinate their work with other units in the mission. While these units tend to participate in cross-cutting election-themed working groups, many of these relationships are not so broad in their focus. Information-sharing work tends to center around direct meetings with other units and agencies on an as-needed basis to address shared areas of concern (such as electoral law reform or developing the capacity of the national electoral administration). Human Rights Units also participate in meetings with political parties, which are led by the PAD, to discuss particular issues reported to the unit. The unit also conducts election-related training within the mission (particularly of peacekeepers and police) and beyond.

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67Phone interview with Human Rights Officer (UNMIT)), 8 March 2012.
Best Practices and Recommendations

Best Practices:
- During the first round of voting in the 2012 Timorese elections, UNMIT’s HRU targeted locations of vulnerable groups (such as prisons and hospitals) for its monitoring activities, which was identified as a way to maximize the impact of scarce resources on election day.
- In preparation for the 2011 elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, MONUSCO established a hotline that individuals throughout the country could call to report instances of human rights violations.

Recommendations:
- Develop new training and guidance materials for HRUs assisting in electoral processes. Staff indicated that although the OHCHR manual on human rights monitoring in electoral processes provides useful information, it may be useful to have guidance materials that provide more practical recommendations for monitoring field work and cover activities that may be mandated by the Security Council.
- Emphasize coordination between the mission and agencies during electoral processes to assist in the mainstreaming of human rights awareness within the mission’s work.
- Coordinate the elections-related work of HRUs with other units in the mission and with national human rights institutions. Coordination is particularly important in allowing the unit to address short-term resource gaps (e.g. in cars and staff), as well as to share contacts and information (e.g. sharing information with the political affairs unit on reporting to prevent overlap in work). However, it should not be taken for granted that other parts of the mission or other UN agencies working on elections will monitor human rights, and the involvement of the HRU is needed.
Gender

SC Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women Peace and Security, which is the blueprint for gender and peacekeeping, specifically asks for gender mainstreaming in election-related activities. Article 8, section (c) calls on all actors involved, when negotiating and implementing peace agreements, to adopt a gender perspective, including: “Measures that ensure the protection of and respect for human rights of women and girls, particularly as they relate to the constitution, the electoral system, the police and the judiciary.”

*SC Resolution 1325 (2000).*

*DPKO/DFS Policy on Gender Equality in Peacekeeping Operations* (2010) specifies that “policy and operational plans for Headquarters and mission personnel shall elaborate and promote a set of minimum standards for ensuring effective integration of gender perspectives into all areas of peacekeeping relevant to the specific mandate of the mission, particularly with regard to electoral processes.” Peacekeeping missions therefore have a clear mandate to conduct gender-sensitive activities in electoral support.

Structure

Gender mainstreaming into peacekeeping operations aims at integrating gender “into all elements of policy and strategy development from planning, benchmarking, to indicator development and evaluation.” Such strategy is implemented by a Gender Adviser, whose main responsibility is to advise the SRSG on supporting local women to participate in peace processes, on protecting women and girls from sexual violence and on engaging women’s voices in legal and judicial procedures. Gender mainstreaming is operationalized by the Gender Advisory Team through a Gender Task Force which is comprised by focal points who represent the mission’s substantive sections (i.e. legal, electoral, SSR, DDR, judicial).

Although the Gender Advisor does not directly work on electoral issue, s/he advises the focal points on this. In some cases like in DRC for the 2011 election, the DSRSG set up a specific task force on gender and elections, the “One UN Gender and Elections Team,” coordinated by the Electoral Division, and which comprises the Gender Unit, UN WOMEN, UNDP, UNFPA, the Congolese Ministry of Gender, and women organizations.

Key Electoral Activities

The Gender Unit in peacekeeping electoral assistance generally works on a wide range of gender-related issues before, during, and after the elections. Gender Advisers provide technical advice for the mainstreaming of gender throughout the electoral process, from the voter registration to the potential election result contestation, from female candidates capacity building to legal assistance for the reform of electoral law.

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*United Nations DPKO/DFS, Gender Advisory Team Annual Progress Report 2010.*
Political Participation of Women

The focus of Gender Units in peacekeeping missions is to enhance women's political participation. Through a comprehensive and holistic approach, Gender Advisory Teams have identified obstacles to women’s involvement as candidates, voters, and election officials. Several activities undertaken in peacekeeping missions seek to address barriers to women's political participation at all stages of the electoral process. The concept of gender mainstreaming has been generally well developed, and an analysis of the five different case studies show that election-related activities in peacekeeping operations are increasingly gender-sensitive.

In East Timor, for example, through the project “Enhancing Women’s Leadership and Participation in the 2012 Elections in Timor-Leste,” UNMIT Gender Unit developed a Roadmap and Strategic Framework for enhancing women’s leadership and participation in the 2012 elections, supporting the Women Parliamentarians’ Group of Timor-Leste (GMPTL) in cooperation with UNEST, UNDP, UN Women, the Secretary of State for the Promotion of Equality (SEPI). As part of this project, a steering Committee was formed and coordinated by the GMPTL. The Roadmap is a technical tool that identified and compiled strategies and priority areas, while supporting targeted interventions in the country to strengthen women’s leadership and participation as candidates and voters.

In DRC, MONUSCO organized a training of trainers as part of the Gender and Elections program 2010-2013 realized by the Gender and Election Unit of MONUSCO’s Electoral Division and Gender Unit. This included capacity building of civil society organizations and political parties to break the socio-cultural barriers to promote the participation of women in political and electoral process.

In Haiti, MINUSTAH conducted a number of activities during the 2010 electoral process to promote and support women’s political participation. The Gender Unit also worked with the EAS and representatives from women’s organizations to identify support for women candidates. The Gender Advisory Team Annual Progress Report 2010 details other examples of key activities that Gender Units have conducted in all peacekeeping missions to support women’s political participation in electoral processes.

Electoral Security

To a smaller extent, Gender Units’ electoral activities focused on providing security for women candidates and voters. This may involve physical protection, as women can be threatened and victims of targeted violence as the result of their political participation. Gender Affairs Officers embedded in the Office of Military Affairs often advocate for specific measures to ensure women's security. In Haiti, for instance, MINUSTAH’s Gender Unit “worked with women candidates from across the political divide to discuss security issues facing women in the

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71 More Best Practices on the role of peacekeeping missions in enhancing women’s political participation can be found in: Gender Advisory Team, Annual Progress Report 2010.
politically charged electoral process.” In other cases like in DRC, MONUSCO conducted research actions and monitoring of the security of women and girls throughout the electoral process. Response plans were laid out for victims of election-related violence on women and girls, including first-aid and evacuation to hospitals.

Although MINUSTAH and MONUSCO have conducted specific activities related to gender and electoral security, it seems that these remain marginal and do not represent a general trend throughout peacekeeping missions. The authors of this report have not been able to consult any document mentioning potential gender-sensitive electoral security activities conducted by UNMIL, UNMIT, or UNOCI. Moreover, gender-related security issues are often approached solely as an obstacle for women’s political participation, and not as a broader issue that would tackle the many aspects of gendered electoral violence as analyzed in report *Breaking the Mold: Understanding Gender and Electoral Violence*.

**Coordination with Other Units**

Because of the crosscutting nature of gender issues, the work of the Gender Unit often requires the implementation of joint activities with other units within the mission and among partners. Mainstreaming gender into all election-related activities requires strong coordination mechanisms, such as the Gender Task Forces, which are established in all peacekeeping missions, as described above. Promoting the participation of women as voters and candidates generally involves public information campaigns, reform of electoral laws, political bargaining, military protection, but may also require activities to address issues such as the lack of financial support for women candidates. Joint work and activities are crucial to achieve greater participation of women in the electoral process. In DRC, the Gender Unit participated in the elaboration of a training manual for the security sector, which includes a module on democratization, human rights, and international humanitarian law. In Liberia, support was provided by linking female NGO leaders and elections observers with UNMIL’s Public Information Office for strong advocacy on women’s participation, and to the women’s Legislative Caucus in the drafting of the gender equity bill.

While the Gender Task Force mechanism allows greater coordination, some challenges remain because the influence of Gender Advisers can vary from one mission to another. Although the structure is in place, the position of the Gender Adviser is not always given the same weight. This sometimes depends on the SRSG’s sensitivity to gender issues, and on how well integrated gender is within the mission. In addition, the strength of the Gender Advisory team is crucial to push for greater gender sensitivity in election-related activities. “There needs a supportive SRSG and a strong Gender Adviser,” concluded a Gender Affairs Officer.

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73Interview via questionnaire with a Gender Affairs Officer (MONUSCO), March 2012.
76Interview with DPKO Gender Affairs Officer, 15 February 2012, New York.
77Interview with DPKO Gender Affairs Officer, 15 February 2012, New York.
Gender and Elections Knowledge Management

The Gender Unit in DPKO, in consultation with EAD, has developed guidance documents on gender, peacekeeping and elections for the Gender Advisers and Gender Affairs Officers deployed in peacekeeping missions. Based on best practices and lessons learned, these guidelines provide a very comprehensive approach on gender mainstreaming in electoral processes. In particular, the 2007 DPKO/DFS-DPA Joint Guidelines on Enhancing the Role of Women in post-Conflict Electoral Processes is “a tool to enable UN field personnel to assist the host government during elections to encourage women’s political participation. These guidelines provide useful direction, and help partners in this endeavor to stay on track and provide effective assistance in organizing reports for maximum sharing of knowledge and lessons learned.”78 Similarly, the 2010 DPKO/DFS Guidelines on Integrating a Gender Perspective into the Work of the United Nations Military in Peacekeeping provides some insight on gender-sensitive measures to ensure women’s security in electoral processes.

As of 2011, the Gender Unit in DPKO started a systematic exercise of identifying and analyzing annual progress made on gender and peacekeeping in the Gender Advisory Team Annual Progress Report 2010. The document reports on activities and best practices of peacekeeping missions in promoting women’s political participation, on protecting women against sexual and gender-based violence, in mainstreaming gender in DDR programs, in the police, etc. Yet, the report does not contain a specific part on electoral processes while electoral assistance has often been a key component of peacekeeping missions’ activities.

Other exercises such as the EAD Matrix on mandates and activities in the field of Gender and Elections might be useful to clearly define the division of tasks and responsibilities between DPA/EAD, UN Women, UNDP and DPKO. In particular, it may be a valuable basis for specific guidelines on integrated electoral assistance and gender in peacekeeping missions.

Gender and Electoral Violence

Gender knowledge materials such as best practices and guidelines provide comprehensive and operational tools for gender mainstreaming in electoral support. What seems, however, to be less tackled is the issue of gender and electoral violence. While several peacekeeping mission report to have specific actions to protect women voters and women candidates from potential threats, it seems that the linkage between gender and electoral violence is not fully and consistently addressed by the existing guidelines. As reported in a recent paper,79 the understanding of how electoral violence specifically relates to gender issues is crucial to tailor adequate response. The report addresses the particularities of electoral violence before, during, and after elections, and analyzes the situation of women as victims of electoral violence as well as women as perpetrators. The comparative advantage provided by logistical and security assets may require peacekeeping to more directly address the issue of gender and electoral violence, and probably

78 Electoral Affairs Division, Draft matrix for MAPPING EXERCISE – Mandates and Activities in the field of gender and elections.
find creative solutions to address electoral violence against women in the domestic and in the private sphere.

Guidelines Dissemination and Implementation
While guidelines material for gender issues is particularly well developed compared to other units in peacekeeping operations, it would be interesting to conduct an assessment on how much these guidelines are disseminated and used by DPKO/DFS and DPA staff in field missions. Also, it may be interesting to disseminate gender-related guidelines not only to Gender Units and Electoral Assistance Divisions in both DPKO/DFS missions and in DPA missions but also more broadly to all UN Country Team staff in multi-dimensional missions. Part of the challenges of mainstreaming gender into electoral support activities is to make sure that all components of the mission will have a gender-sensitive approach. Integrating gender into general guidelines on peacekeeping electoral support might be useful, particularly to enhance coordination among the different components within the mission.

Best Practices and Recommendations

Best Practices:80

- In Liberia, the 2003-2009 Best Practices Report81 identified UNMIL’s best practices in mainstreaming gender in the mission’s core tasks, including electoral support. While describing key activities to enhance women’s political participation, the report highlights as well what has been identified as keys to success:
  - Engaging local NGOs and networks; it “increased ownership and […] constituted a highly effective and efficient use of resources to reach a mutually chosen goal.”
  - Messages specific to local issues, in a local dialect;
  - UNMIL/OGA attention to central committees; “the recognition of critical entry points within the system, including main electoral structures promoted greater sustainability for the overall mission and made the effects visible even after the election.”
  - Widespread sensitization and empowerment.

- In Afghanistan during the 2010 legislative elections, several activities were implemented to address gendered security issues, and in particular threats against female candidates. UNIFEM set up a 24/7 hotline service for female candidates which “provided callers with referral services and a rapid response to security concerns.”82

On gender-related activities:

80 For best practices in Peacekeeping activities to enhance women’s political participation, see the Gender Advisory Team’s Annual Progress Report 2010.
82Briefing on the support to women candidates’ during elections in Afghanistan, A UNIFEM Project on “Women as Decision-Makers” supported by CIDA support.
• Develop, systematize, and strengthen Gender and Elections Task Forces with UN agencies, governmental representatives, political parties, and the civil society.
• Develop Gender and Military joint activities to prevent and address gender-based electoral violence, particularly domestic political violence.
• Improve gender responsive security planning, monitoring and reporting, in particular setting up a central system and hotline service for collating threats, and incidents to/by female voters, candidates, staff.83
• Implement in a systematic way and in all peacekeeping missions the gender-sensitive electoral security tasks developed by DPKO/DFS84 at the operational and tactical military level.
• Work closely with Human Rights Officers and the Office of Military Affairs on data collection and monitoring on gender and electoral violence.
• Implement Gabrielle Bardall’s recommendations, as appropriate, to address gendered electoral violence.85

On knowledge management:
• Include a section on election-related best practices in the next Gender Advisory Team Annual Progress Report.
• Clarify and disseminate to the missions the division of the tasks on gender and electoral support, particularly between DPKO, DPA/EAD, UN Women, and UNDP. Further develop the EAD Matrix on mandates and activities in the field of Gender and Elections as a valuable basis for specific guidelines on integrated electoral assistance and gender.
• Conduct an assessment on guidelines dissemination and implementation in peacekeeping missions, and on identifying potential needs for specific training modules.
• Push for the development of general guidelines on peacekeeping electoral support, where gender issues would be highlighted in all components of electoral support.
• Ask Gender Units to write systematically After Action Reviews after presidential and legislative elections.
• Ensure that Gender Advisers and Gender Affairs Officers write End of Assignments Reports in a consistent and systematic way across missions.

Communications and Public Information

Communications and Public Information Offices (CPIOs) play a central role in the collection and dissemination of information within and beyond the mission. As a result, these offices often, though not always, fall under the direct supervision of the SRSG. Regardless of their place in the mission, they are responsible for monitoring and developing contacts with the local media, and for sharing information about the work of the mission and other issues within the country. They do this using a range of platforms, with increasing use of new media.

CPIOs play many important roles in peacekeeping missions’ electoral support work, addressing issues ranging from violence to voter education and participation. The tasks of these offices can broadly be grouped into regular work that continues during the election period, and election-specific tasks that are not done otherwise.

Key Electoral Activities

Media Monitoring
Regular tasks such as media monitoring continue during electoral processes, though this work will necessarily focus increasingly on electoral issues as they gain prominence in the country’s public affairs. CPIOs collect information from various media sources, as well as directly through their contacts in the media, in order to understand the atmosphere around elections and gather information on potential attempts to incite violence, intimidate voters, or otherwise interfere with the conduct of elections.86

Civic Education and Voter Outreach
Assisting in electoral processes also introduces new tasks for CPIOs, though many of these are similar to those already done by communications and public information offices under normal conditions. Existing and new communications platforms are used to accomplish election-specific tasks, such as managing expectations and alleviating concerns about the mission’s role in elections (including promoting a favorable image of the mission in the country and internationally); educating voters and encouraging voting, particularly among marginalized groups; and promoting fair and non-violent behavior by all participants. Offices may develop communications strategies well ahead of elections in order to plan these activities, as well as to prepare ways of dealing with difficulties that might arise during the campaign, vote, or post-election transition.87

The mission’s communications office may also play an important role in reporting on the conduct of the vote and results of the elections. During the 2006 elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Radio OKAPI journalists were deployed to polling stations around the

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86Phone interview with Communications and Public Information officer (MINUSTAH), 30 March 2012.
country to cover the voting process. This would have been particularly important in the DRC, which lacks any other media outlet with the capacity to cover issues on a national scale.\textsuperscript{88}

The additional responsibilities given to the CPIO during electoral processes can stress the capacity of these units, even if extra staff members are recruited. For example, the lessons learned paper covering the 2009 suco (local) elections in Timor-Leste noted that voter education officers were also doing electoral training work, and recommends that dedicated electoral training officers be used in future.\textsuperscript{89}

\textbf{Coordination with Other Units}

In broad terms, the responsibilities of CPIOs generally and in electoral processes mean that these offices have overlapping responsibilities with, and must work alongside, security forces and other substantive units within the mission. Many of the routine ways in which communications and public information units interact with the rest of the mission are not affected by elections, though the content of information shared may change. These units feed information through the coordination and information-sharing structures such as the JOC and JMAC, including information collected regarding electoral processes. These centers may see increased use during electoral processes.\textsuperscript{90}

In addition to more traditional media monitoring and the use of connections with members of the local media, the communications and public information office may regularly request that other substantive units of the mission pass on reports of inquiries they have received, in order to help develop an understanding of the public’s perceptions of and concerns about the mission’s role in the country.\textsuperscript{91} Around the time of elections, this work can be used to develop a better understanding of concerns about and expectations on UN involvement in the election.

In other ways, electoral processes require new forms of cooperation within the mission. CPIOs often participate in missions’ central election-focused working groups or steering committees. CPIOs also create new ways of working with other units in the mission. For example, early in the preparations for elections, communications and public information offices will work closely with political affairs offices to reach agreements on fair media use and access by political parties and candidates during the campaign.\textsuperscript{92} These offices will also need to develop strategies to insure the proper implementation of these agreements. Communications teams will work with political and civil affairs offices in giving platforms to candidates and civil society groups to discuss the election and related issues. In Liberia, for instance, UNMIL’s Civil Affairs Section used the mission’s radio station to give a platform to government and civil society representatives to discuss election-related issues.\textsuperscript{93} Gender teams may also be involved in giving media access to

\textsuperscript{88}MONUC, 1\textsuperscript{st} Round Elections AAR.
\textsuperscript{89}UNMIT, 2009 Suco Elections Lessons Learned.
\textsuperscript{90}Phone interview with Communications and Public Information officer (MINUSTAH), 30 March 2012.
\textsuperscript{91}Phone interview with Communications and Public Information officer (MINUSTAH), 30 March 2012.
\textsuperscript{92}UNMIT, Lessons Learned.
\textsuperscript{93}UNMIL, After Action Review.
female candidates and in developing and disseminating messages to encourage the participation of women voters.

Voter education work is often led by dedicated electoral support teams, though communications and public information officers will assist in these efforts and will include related messaging in their own work.94 The preparations for the 2012 election in Timor-Leste, for example, included preparations for UNMIT’s public information unit to help engage the media in order to support the work of the EMB.95

**Best Practices and Recommendations**

**Best Practices:**

- CPIO staff indicated that a key responsibility of the mission is to use its communications platforms to inform the public on the results of the elections and the responsibilities of the elected representatives.96
- According to CPIO staff, it is useful to establish connections in the local media well ahead of elections, so that these contacts can be called upon when needed to assist in the collection and dissemination of information.97
- CPIO staff noted that building contacts in the local media for collecting and disseminating information ahead of elections made their work during electoral processes easier, as that these resources can be called upon when needed.98
- Visual media products can be a useful way to explain voting processes. In preparation for the 2010-2011 elections in Haiti, MINUSTAH produced and arranged small-scale public screenings of a video explaining how to vote and encouraging voters to resist pressure during the election.99

**Recommendations:**

- Develop guidance materials for communications and public information officers working on electoral processes. Communications and public information officers rely on their own experience, build networks within the mission, and learn on the job to work on elections issues. Standardized guidance materials created with input from experienced staff would also help for information learned in other elections and other missions to be shared.
- Develop and test communications materials for elections materials, particularly those presenting new logistical challenges for the mission, well ahead of time. Communications materials developed for elections must be produced and delivered in tight timeframes, and must be understandable and relatable for the targeted populations. This also requires good coordination with national electoral authorities, so that their needs are identified and communicated well ahead of time.

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94Interview DPKO official, 23 February 2012.
95UNMIT, *EAD NAM Final Report*.
96Interview DPKO official, 23 February 2012.
97Phone interview with Communications and Public Information officer (MINUSTAH), 30 March 2012.
98Phone interview with Communications and Public Information officer (MINUSTAH), 30 March 2012.
99Phone interview with Communications and Public Information officer (MINUSTAH), 30 March 2012.
● Develop the code of conduct for media and political parties well in advance of elections to ensure that the rules are well-understood.

● Facilitate information-sharing between communications and public information officers and electoral assistance officers. CPIOs have useful skills and experience working in the country that can be used by electoral assistance offices in their work on voter education. There should be more coordination between these groups to share resources and expertise.

● Use other mission resources to spread voter outreach resources (e.g. handing out pamphlets, promoting awareness of radio frequencies, and screening visual presentations) more effectively.

● Consider rethinking the mission’s chain of command regarding communications activities around elections. Following the 2007 elections in Timor-Leste, UNMIT also noted that the chain of command within the mission could create difficulties in communications work, as decisions may be required from individuals without the expertise in communications needed to evaluate this work. These challenges may be exacerbated during elections as more forms of coordination within the mission and with external actors are introduced.
Police and Military

Police and military are the aspects most commonly associated with a peacekeeping mission. While both are security apparatuses, military is meant to deal with external threats and police are meant to deal with internal threats. In the context of UN Peacekeeping, Police are not armed. As peacekeeping operations have become more multidimensional, missions’ police and military components are called upon to perform a wider variety of tasks.

Structure

The SRSG exercises operational authority over the military component of the mission, and the Force Commander has the primary responsibility for its operational organization and efficient functioning, as the Police Commissioner does for the police component. The division of responsibilities and command relationships between the SRSG, Force Commander and/or Police Commissioner in Peacekeeping has been carefully delineated in the respective official directives. The effective implementation of these responsibilities is critical to the success of the peacekeeping operation.

Key Electoral Activities

In an election, the most important role for the police and military of a mission is to protect UN staff, assets, and premises. In addition, they support the national authorities in charge of security in establishing a peaceful environment. The maintenance of this environment is critical if elections are to be deemed credible. In some circumstances, the police and military can be called upon to assist with the logistics of an election, due to their many mobile assets. In many of the interviews conducted for this report, the military’s logistical resources have been cited as a key factor in the comparative advantage of peacekeeping operations in elections100.

Police

Protection

UN Police’s main role in elections is protection. This involves, in support to the national security institutions, protection of polling stations, protection of candidates, and possibly the protection of civilians. In order to do this effectively, UNPOL must have comprehensive and timely operational planning. Their deployment plans should be based on JMAC and national security agency assessments, including identification of potential hot spots. One of the most important aspects of UNPOL protection is crowd management and rapid intervention.

100Interview with senior MINUSTAH representative, 26 January 2012; Interview with Political Affairs Officer (UNOCI), 17 February 2012, New York; Interview with senior UNMIL representative, 7 March 2012, New York.
**Training/ Support**
UNPOL must advise and train national police on election security and offer their support when the latter is overstressed in the electoral process.

**Coordination**
Lastly, UNPOL coordinates donors to police support programs, sometimes in collaboration with UNDP. They also assist and facilitate election security coordination among the many actors involved.

**Military**
While the military component of a mission has the overall responsibility for security, the military should not be dealing with civil disobedience. Rather, they are involved in threat assessment, planning and perimeter patrols. The military is often also asked to escort voting materials and recover of stolen materials.\(^{101}\) In cases where the police are not sufficient to counter unrest, the military may be called in to assist. The military also monitors political rallies during the campaigning period.

In UNMIL, during the elections, troops were deployed to give area security in line with international standards. Escorts were provided during the movement of electoral officials and materials throughout the country. Protection of VIPs, important government infrastructure, international staff, and electoral observers was also carried out. During this time, the main objective of the military component was to monitor political developments during the campaign and the elections. Forward Operational Bases (FOBs) were established in all sectors, while check points were set up to check for illegal arms and ammunition. Patrols were intensified and extensive ground and air reconnaissance were carried out to identify inaccessible areas in advance. At the end of the elections, UNMIL troops resumed their previous posture, and continued to mount robust patrols to deter any possible disturbances.\(^{102}\)

Military resources, which could provide leverage, could be sometimes overstretched due to lack of civilian resources, or be still short from what was initially projected to be available due to unforeseeable changes in circumstances. These examples in the boxes below highlight the importance of forward and contingency planning for the use of military resources.

**Overstretch of Military in UNMIL**
In UNMIL during the 2005 elections, the handheld radios which would have enhanced command and control of the electoral support were not enough to go round all the centers. Some had to resort to the use of cell phones which was hampered due to limited network coverage. Unfortunately, due to lack of adequate training, most of the electoral support staff did not know how to effectively handle the HF link. The military was therefore overstretched in an attempt to provide alternative means of communication.

\(^{101}\)MINUSTAH, *Military AAR, 1st and 2nd round elections*.
\(^{102}\)Senior UNMIL representative, *End of Assignment Report*.
There is need to provide sufficient communication resources and efficient communication system before embarking on such critical process in post conflict environment.\textsuperscript{103}

**Shortage of Military Helicopters in MONUCSO**

Due to the shortage of military helicopters compared to initial plans, the implementation of the MONUSCO mandate became challenging. Joint operations with the Congolese Armed Forces had to be postponed, investigations of allegations of mass human rights violations had to be delayed, and some deployments to protection hot-spots had to be deferred. This was made all the more important in the run-up to presidential and parliamentary elections scheduled in the DRC on 2011. The mission was no longer able to carry out critical parts of its priority mandated tasks, including in relation to the protection of civilians, providing support to the elections and putting an end to the presence of armed groups.\textsuperscript{104}

**Coordination with Other Units**

Since it is impossible to separate elections from other responsibilities and activities of the mission, integration and coordination between civilian, military, and police components is a priority.\textsuperscript{105} This process requires constant attention, because of the difficulty of the task and the frequent rotation of military contingents.

The deployment of an election liaison officer and the creation of Joint Election Security Taskforces and Joint Electoral Support Centers have increased the coordination between different components of the mission.

In UNMIL, the Electoral Working Group (EWG) met regularly to give directives and make major decisions to ensure a smooth electoral process. In addition, the Force Commander called conferences periodically taking into account the need to keep the force focused and ensure that the required support was delivered. This support was based on the Electoral Operational Plan developed by the Electoral Division (ED) and National Elections Commission (NEC). The Force Operational Order was subsequently prepared at all stages of the electoral process. In addition, the Sector and Battalion Commanders organized regular and routine conferences with representatives of UNMIL electoral Section, NEC, Civilian Police (CIVPOL), Liberian National Police (LNP), UNMIL Civil Affairs Section and Counties/Districts Administrators. The conferences were aimed at coordinating the selection of polling precincts and stations, deployment of electoral staff and LNP, movement of electoral materials and security support. Commanders’ operational plans provided for the execution of these activities. Furthermore, as the elections approached, an Electoral Cell was established in Joint Operation Cell (JOC) and the Security Coordination Committees, chaired by the Force Commander, met weekly to deliberate extensively on the security situation in the country.\textsuperscript{106}

\textsuperscript{103} Senior UNMIL representative, *End of Assignment Report*.

\textsuperscript{104} Ban Ki-moon, *Secretary General’s Letter to the President of the Security Council (S/2011/589)*.

\textsuperscript{105} Interview with senior MONUSCO representative, 5 February 2012, New York.

\textsuperscript{106} Senior UNMIL representative, *End of Assignment Report*. 
The Police and Military often work closely with public information units to ensure the spread of information about security concerns and to advocate for peaceful measures.

**UNMIL**

“UNPOL coordinated its support through the Joint Security Task Force, ETF, NEC, and ETT Logistics and Security meetings and weekly senior leadership and technical meetings with LNP. LNP Communications was merged with UNPOL at the LNP Joint Command Center. This enabled UNPOL to advise and monitor the competency and improvement of LNP communications and use UNMIL Radio as a means of informing and sensitizing the public as to the role of the police in security provision and expectations of conduct by political parties.”

In addition, the military and police often work closely with the Human Rights Unit to provide Human Rights training to their national counterparts, and to ensure that the crowd control police are trained on civil liberties. Human rights training is also provided within the mission. Because UNPOL and the mission military component are often spread to more hazardous and remote areas than the Human Rights Unit, they often report human rights abuses to the Unit and can potentially counteract them. In addition, depending on the arrangement with the Human Rights Unit, the military and police can establish an inquiry into human rights abuses during the election.

**Best Practices and Recommendations**

**Regarding Both Military and Police**

Best Practices:

- In MINUSTAH, during Haiti’s 2009 Senatorial Elections, a lessons-learned exercise was conducted between the first and second round of elections, which enabled the second round of elections to run much smoother. Some of these lessons were the enhancement of the military deployment as well as the increased involvement and cooperation with all the players involved in the electoral process.108

Recommendations:

- Develop a clear, joint security plan that defines the roles and responsibility of all security forces and how these forces are activated and interact. Begin this at the inception of the electoral process.109
- Add a permanent Liaison Officer to the JESC and an air operations Liaison Officer to the JOC during the election period110

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107Senior UNMIL representative, *End of Assignment Report*, UNMIL.
● Produce and develop a joint doctrine, interoperability framework and improve the flow of communication between UNPOL, UN military, National Police, and national military. These discussions should be initiated at the top level.\textsuperscript{111}

● Develop better methods of communication between police and military\textsuperscript{112}
  ○ It is essential for the military forces and UNPOL continue to work as interoperable units in order to achieve the mission mandate in a professional and timely fashion.
    a. Develop a Joint Military-Police Strategic Concept of Operations (CONOPS);
    b. Develop Joint Military-Police Standard Operating Procedures (SOP);
    c. Develop an Integrated Security Plan (ISP) between Formed Police Units (FPU)’s and Contingents
    d. Joint training at the firing range;
    e. Develop an SOP for the proper coordination of joint patrol;
    f. Promote the advantages of conducting joint patrols;
    g. Develop a short, medium and long term joint activity plan;
    h. Promote regular meeting with UNPOL, national police, local contingents and field headquarters;
    i. Developed an easily accessible list of lessons learned;
    j. Promote continuous improvement;
    k. Identify a common communication network;
    l. Standardization of Map and Grid reference;
    m. Creation of temporary joint operation cell to support major activities;
    n. Align the areas of responsibility (AORs) of both organizations;
    o. Improve the sharing of information;
    p. Production of a joint after action report;
    q. Conduct of joint briefing before going on operation;
    r. Conduct of joint Civil Military Coordination (CIMIC) activities;
    s. Have UNPOL representation at military morning briefing;\textsuperscript{113}

● Devise security plan and contingency planning jointly with the Electoral Affairs Division early in the process.\textsuperscript{114}

● Ensure clarity within mission as to the scope of the mission’s support and assistance.\textsuperscript{115}

● Maintain adequate staffing levels during elections.

● Headquarters should engage missions with lessons learned on elections from other missions in the initial stages of electoral preparation.\textsuperscript{116}

● Carefully plan for all phases of the election, including the support to second round of elections, planning cannot simply be stopped after the first round is complete.\textsuperscript{117}


\textsuperscript{112}MINUSTAH, \textit{Police Lessons Learned 2010 elections (FIRST ROUND) - HT4}.


\textsuperscript{115}Senior UNMIL representative, \textit{End of Assignment Report}.

\textsuperscript{116}Senior UNMIL representative, \textit{End of Assignment Report}.

\textsuperscript{117}MINUSTAH Military, \textit{After Action Report, 1st and 2nd round elections}. 
Police

Best Practices:
- UNMIL had a lead country approach to train rapid response and crowd control units. This is where a country (in this case the United States) takes the lead for training and provides significant funding. Even with the lead country approach, other countries contributed significantly. However, to make this effective, the lead country support should be formalized to prevent confusion and a more structure mechanism for donor coordination should be engaged.118
- UNMIT formed CE/CARE teams (Committee of Enquiry into Complaints and Allegations Regarding Elections). These UNPOL investigators were pre-positioned or quickly deployed into affected areas across the country to establish the facts behind allegations and reports of election-related offences.119
- UNMIT created comprehensive mentoring guidelines for UNPOL to combat issues of frequent rotation120
- Designation of a UNPOL/PNTL focal persons in the districts contributed to the high level of cooperation among the district key players for election making them a good source of relevant security information121
- UNMIS Handbook for Elections Security—Guidelines for Police during Elections Security Duties was distributed to all police personnel dealing with elections for UNMIS. It contained sections on basic principles of election security, national electoral laws, and tasks and possible challenges for each stage of the election.

Recommendations:
- Ensure rapid response and crowd control capabilities in the electoral period.122
- Secure proper funding for the national police where UNPOL is supposed to train police for elections.123
- Clearly define and agree upon in advance the respective roles to be played by national police and UNPOL before, during and after the elections.124
- Create election related training for all commanding officers, both of UNPOL and national police before the election.125
- Focus on institutional capacity building of the national police to counter uncertainties in the security sector reform process.126
- Curriculum development and train the trainers to enable the National Police Academy to deliver election training.127

118Senior UNMIL representative, End of Assignment Report.
121 UNMIT, Lessons Learned Paper.
122 MINUSTAH, Police Lessons Learned 2010 elections (FIRST ROUND) - HT4; Senior UNMIL representative, End of Assignment Report.
126 Senior UNMIL representative, End of Assignment Report.
127 Senior UNMIL representative, End of Assignment Report.
Many other important best practices and recommendations are in the newly created “DPKO/DFS Guidelines: United Nations Police Support to the Provision of Security in Electoral Processes” and therefore do not need to be reiterated here. This handbook should be widely distributed and operationalized, ensuring that those police in the field receive the guidance prior to electoral duties. Furthermore, a training module based on this handbook may be a good idea.

Military

Best Practices:

- MINUSTAH’s focus during the four months between the rounds of elections was on correcting the aspects of the first round that did not go according to plan and reinforcing the things that did.128
- It was useful to have a MINUSTAH military and UNPOL representative in the CEP office on Election Day as the Haitian National Police and a representative from Public Security were present. This greatly facilitated information sharing. Even if there were no calls for MINUSTAH reinforcements, the role of the LNO was important. If major demonstrations or riots had occurred, they would have been perfectly positioned to request reinforcements.129
- MINUSTAH performed rehearsal exercises for the deployment of the reserves and increased the military presence one week prior to election day.130
- UNMIL put in place security arrangements at the NEC and NIC for candidate nomination to react to unforeseen circumstances. These were coordinated with CIVPOL and LNP.131
- UNMIL established a Military Election Cell (MEC) to serve as an interface between the Force, ED and other agencies relevant to the conduct of the election. In addition, a G5 CIMIC officer was appointed to liaise with ED/NEC Headquarters. MEC ended up playing one of the most decisive roles leading to a flawless coordination of all election-related activities throughout the period.132
- UNMIL shared the plan for the provision of security throughout the electoral period with all UN agencies involved in the election. The instructions issued included a channel of communication to be followed in case of a breakdown of law and order during the election. In addition, a rallying point for monitoring elections all over the country was appointed.133

Recommendations:

- Keep all electoral documents in one central location since the military component rotates quite frequently.134

128 MINUSTAH, Military AAR, 1st and 2nd round elections.
129 MINUSTAH, Military AAR, 1st and 2nd round elections.
130 Senior MINUSTAH representative, End of Assignment Report, August 2009.
131 Senior UNMIL representative, End of Assignment Report.
132 Senior UNMIL representative, End of Assignment Report.
133 Senior UNMIL representative, End of Assignment Report.
134 Senior MINUSTAH representative, End of Assignment Report, 4 August 2009.
• Develop an ISP early in the planning process and jointly with all security partners. The ISP is the most critical document in planning for elections and is responsible for the success and overall understanding of how the various mission elements will collectively support elections.135
• Include election related materials in troop induction training.136
• Include the military in early mapping exercises, especially in cases where there was mass movement due to conflict, to ensure proper placement of voter registration and polling centers.137
• Ensure that at least some members of the military component have had experience supporting elections.138
• Make a handbook for election security similar to the one recently produced by UNPOL called the DPKO/DFS Guidelines: United Nations Police Support to the Provision of Security in Electoral Processes.

135MINUSTAH, Military AAR, 1st and 2nd round elections.
136Senior UNMIL representative, End of Assignment Report.
137Senior UNMIL representative, End of Assignment Report.
138Senior MINUSTAH representative, End of Assignment Report, 4 August 2009.
Conclusions

Supporting elections has become a core task of modern peacekeeping missions. This report notes some of the challenges for missions in providing effective electoral support in a cohesive and coordinated manner, and highlights the diverse range of actions taken by the security and substantive units of peacekeeping operations during electoral processes. While these activities are shaped by the contexts of each host country and mission, the acknowledgement of common experiences and goals have encouraged the sharing of best practices throughout peacekeeping. However, much of this information is shared through informal networks, and missions tend toward ad hoc approaches in preparing for the new tasks and issues raised by elections.

DPKO has already taken significant steps to improve knowledge-sharing generally, such as requiring officers to prepare end of year reports since 2006. Similar improvements could help to establish a culture within the organization that appreciates the importance of elections and the unique challenges that can arise in these periods, as well as encouraging more systematic approaches in missions’ support activities. As demonstrated in this report, many successes have already been identified. This set of examples can form the basis for a discussion on the minimum requirements and core principles on missions’ responsibilities in electoral processes.

Beyond these particular findings, this analysis of DPKO’s involvement in electoral processes has also identified the importance of thorough preparation. Elections are large undertakings that demand strategic and operational planning at the mission and unit level. UNAMA’s development of a work plan outlining specific benchmarks and key tasks for the 2004 elections was an effective response to this need that could be emulated in the future.

Elections present additional stresses and unique challenges for missions, meaning that preparation requires training, guidance, and expertise. If necessary, missions should bring on additional staff during the early preparations for elections, and should provide training on the new tasks and issues that may arise during the electoral process. Electoral support training for missions’ senior management could also be included in their induction training. All levels of staff training can be supported with elections-focused guidance materials, as is recommended repeatedly in this report.

The development of these responses first requires the creation of more consistent ways of reporting and sharing information. Important steps that can be taken in this regard include creating incentives to encourage the timely completion of After Action Reviews and mechanisms to review and edit guidelines with input from officers in the field. More ambitiously, an online community of practice could be developed, where practitioners can share recommendations and develop contacts with colleagues in other missions. The model of the Civil Affairs Network may be worth emulating or expanding.

Since each mission is different, flexibility is needed to allow missions to adapt to their individual contexts. However, the design of some general guidance should save resources and improve performance through reference to past experiences. The use of these tools and processes will also encourage DPKO to recognize the centrality of elections in its work, ensuring continued successes in its support to electoral processes.
Appendices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 1</th>
<th>Mission</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Year(s)</th>
<th>Mandate(s)</th>
<th>Paragraph</th>
<th>Key Wording</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 1: The most involved UN peacekeeping missions authorized nearly complete executive control over the election process. While helping develop national capacity and electoral institutions were often a priority, the ultimate responsibility remained with the mission and coordinating council it created.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>MINURSO</td>
<td>Western Sahara</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>690</td>
<td>Authorized implementation of Sec Gen Report S/21360</td>
<td>S/21360 47(a)</td>
<td>The Special Representative of the Secretary-General, acting under the authority of the Secretary-General and, as necessary, on instructions from an in consultation with him, will have sole and exclusive responsibility over all matters relating to the referendum, including its organization and conduct;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNTAC</td>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>745</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Decides that the UN Transitional Authority shall be established...&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNAMET</td>
<td>East Timor</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>1246</td>
<td></td>
<td>4(b)</td>
<td>&quot;an electoral component responsible for all activities related to registration and voting&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| UNMIK                                                                | Kosovo | 1999  | 1244    |                      | 11(c)     | "Organize and oversee the development of provisional institutions for democratic and autonomous self-government pending a political settlement, including the holding of elections."
| Level 2: The second level contains missions and mandates that are authorized to play a substantial role in the oversight of the election process and with the capacity to place judgment on the outcome if needed. This authorization has been interpreted differently by the various missions, but this unique authority has allowed these missions to verify or certify the process and final result of the election. |          |                  |         |                     |           |                                                                                                                                            |
| ONUMOZ                                                               | Mozambique | 1992 | 797     |                      | S/24892 Sec Gen Report para 30-41 | To verify impartiality of NEC, To verify freedom of expression of parties, to independently investigate irregularities... |
| UNOMIL                                                               | Liberia | 1993 | 866     |                      | 3 (c)     | To observe and verify the election process, including the legislative and presidential elections to be held in accordance with the provisions of the Peace Agreement; |
| UNTAES                                                               | Croatia (E.Slavonia, Baranja and W.Sirmium) | 1996 | 1037    |                      | 11e       | To organize elections, to assist in their conduct, and to certify the results as set out in paragraph 16 (g) of the Secretary-General’s report and in paragraph 12 of the Basic Agreement |
| UNMIT                                                                | Timor-Leste | 2006 | 1704    |                      | 4(b)      | To support Timor-Leste in all aspects of the 2007 presidential and parliamentary electoral process, including through technical and logistical support, electoral policy advice and verification or other means |


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Level 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNOCI</td>
<td>Côte d'Ivoire</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>1765</td>
<td>&quot;Decides to terminate the mandate of the High Representative for the Elections, decides therefore that the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Côte d'Ivoire shall certify that all stages of the electoral process provide all the necessary guarantees for the holding of open, free, fair and transparent presidential and legislative elections in accordance with international standards, and requests the Secretary-General to take all the necessary steps so that the Special Representative has at his disposal a support cell providing him all the appropriate assistance to fulfill this task.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ONUSAL</td>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>832</td>
<td>Level 3: Although national commission may be in place, their capacity is quite limited throughout level three missions. Therefore, this category is provided with mandated provisions to play an active role all aspects of the process. Monitoring, Observing, and Advising are all common themes but ultimately they defer to local authorities to ensure a free and fair result. They also are deeply involved in all aspects of logistical and technical support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MINURCA</td>
<td>Central African Republic</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>1201</td>
<td>Decides that the mandate of MINURCA shall include support for the conduct of legislative elections as described in section III of the report of the Secretary-General of 21 August 1998, and in particular: (a) The transport of electoral materials and equipment to selected sites and to the sous préfectures, as well as the transport of United Nations electoral observers to and from electoral sites; (b) The conduct of a limited but reliable international observation of the first and second rounds of the legislative elections; (c) Ensuring the security of electoral materials and equipment during their transport to and at the selected sites, as well as the security of the international electoral observers;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNAMSIL</td>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>1389</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNMIL</td>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>1509</td>
<td>3s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MONUC</td>
<td>DRC</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>1565</td>
<td>5f</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| MINUSTAH | Haiti | 2004 | 1542 | 7 II c | "To assist the Transitional Government in its efforts to organize, monitor, and carry out free and fair municipal, parliamentary and presidential elections at the earliest possible date, in particular through the provision of technical, logistical, and administrative assistance and continued security, with appropriate support to an electoral process with voter participation that is representative of the national demographics, including women;"
<p>| UNAMA | Afghanistan | 2004 | 1589 | Para 3-5 | 3. Stresses the importance of the provision of sufficient security and of significant donor support for the holding of credible national elections in accordance with the Afghan constitution and the Bonn Agreement and to this end urges member states and international organizations to coordinate closely with UNAMA and the Transitional Administration; 4. Encourages Afghan authorities to enable an electoral process that provides for voter participation that is representative of the national demographics including women and refugees and calls upon all eligible Afghans to fully participate in the registration and electoral processes; 5. Encourages UNAMA and the Afghan authorities, in this regard, to accelerate voter registration efforts in preparation for elections and urges close coordination between Afghan and UN authorities; |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 4</th>
<th>UNMIH</th>
<th>Haiti</th>
<th>1994</th>
<th>940</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>UNAMA</td>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>1868</td>
<td>4h</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>UNMIS</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>1590</td>
<td>4a (x)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>1870</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>UNMIL</td>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>1885</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Level 4: The forth level of involvement clearly places the missions in a supportive role in regards to the national institutions. Technical and logistical assistance will certainly be needed, and the mission is also are given the responsibility to coordinate international electoral involvement.**

- Requested also that UNMIH assist the legitimate constitutional authorities of Haiti in establishing an environment conducive to the organization of free and fair legislative elections to be called by those authorities and, when requested by them, monitored by the United Nations, in cooperation with the Organization of American States (OAS);

- Support, at the request of the Afghan authorities, preparations for the crucial upcoming presidential elections, in particular through the IEC, by providing technical assistance, coordinating other international donors, agencies and organizations providing assistance and channeling existing and additional funds earmarked to support the process.

- 1: To provide guidance and technical assistance to the parties to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, in cooperation with other international actors, to support the preparations for and conduct of elections and referenda provided for by the Comprehensive Peace Agreement;

- 2: Requests UNMIS, consistent with its mandate and within its current capabilities, to support the NEC in preparing for credible national elections, including through provision of assistance and advice, as required, with security preparations and coordinating UN election support efforts in close collaboration with UNDP, and ensuring that UNMIS’ efforts are complementary to those of the international community and the parties to the CPA, and urges the international community to provide technical and material assistance, including electoral observation capacity as requested by the GNU, to support credible elections;

- Authorizes UNMIL to assist the Liberian government with the 2011 general presidential and legislative elections, by providing logistical support, particularly to facilitate access to remote areas, coordinating international electoral assistance, and supporting Liberian institutions and political parties in creating an atmosphere conducive to the conduct of peaceful elections.
| MINUSTAH | Haiti | 2010 | 1927 8 | 1944 4 | Requests MINUSTAH to continue its support to the Haitian Government and to the Provisional Electoral Council, as requested, in the preparation and conduct of Haiti’s elections, and to coordinate international electoral assistance to Haiti in cooperation with other international stakeholders including the OAS; Recognizes that the successful holding of free, fair, inclusive and transparent presidential and legislative elections in accordance with the constitutional timetable is a key condition for the consolidation of a stable political environment in which recovery and reconstruction efforts can progress, reaffirms its call upon MINUSTAH to support the political process under way in Haiti, including through the good offices of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and encourages MINUSTAH to continue its support to the Haitian Government and to the Provisional Electoral Council, in the preparation and conduct of Haiti’s presidential and legislative elections and to coordinate international electoral assistance to Haiti in cooperation with other international stakeholders including the OAS and CARICOM; |
| UNAMIR | Rwanda | 1993 | 872 3(c) | To monitor the security situation during the final period of the transitional government’s mandate, leading up to the elections; |
| UNMIBH | Bosnia and Herzegovina | 1995 | 1035 | Annex 11 of General Framework Agreement for Peace | The Parties confirm their particular responsibility to ensure the existence of social conditions for free and fair elections, including the protection of international personnel in Bosnia and Herzegovina in connection with the elections provided for in Annex 3 to the General Framework Agreement. They request the IPTF to give priority to assisting the Parties in carrying out this responsibility. |
| ONUB | Burundi | 2004 | 1545 5 | To contribute to the successful completion of the electoral process stipulated in the Arusha Agreement, by ensuring a secure environment for free, transparent and peaceful elections to take place, |

Level 5: The term of the UN’s involvement is very limited, and only authorized if specifically requested by the host country. Ownership is completely given to the national authorities. These mandates also recognize the lack of interest and willingness to invest in the upcoming elections, and call on others to meet the election’s need.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Resolution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MONUSCO</td>
<td>DRC</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>1925</td>
<td>12 (q)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MONUSCO</td>
<td>DRC</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Provide technical and logistical support for the organization of national and local elections, upon explicit request from the Congolese authorities and within the limits of its capacities and resources.

Decides that MONUSCO shall support the organization and conduct of national, provincial and local elections, through the provision of technical and logistical support as requested by the Congolese authorities, by facilitating enhanced and regular dialogue with the CENI including through the Election Partnership Committee, by supporting the CENI in facilitating dialogue among various Congolese stakeholders, by monitoring, reporting and following-up on human rights violations in the context of the elections, and by using the good offices of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Democratic Republic of Congo as required.

UNMISS South Sudan 2011 1996 3a (ii)

(ii) Promoting popular participation in political processes, including through advising and supporting the Government of the Republic of South Sudan on an inclusive constitutional process; the holding of elections in accordance with the constitution; promoting the establishment of an independent media; and ensuring the participation of women in decision-making forums;

UNMIT Timor-Leste 2011 1969 3

Requests UNMIT to extend the necessary support, within its current mandate, for the preparation of the parliamentary and presidential elections of 2012, as requested by the Government of Timor-Leste; and in accordance with the recommendations of the planned electoral assessment mission, and encourages the international community to assist in this process.
Electoral Assistance Mandate Trends

- Level 1: Executive Ownership of the Electoral Process
- Level 2: Direct Involvement with an Additional Certification or Verification Role
- Level 3: Strong Advisory and Support Role to the National Electoral Commissions
- Level 4: Major provider of Technical/Logistical Support and Coordinator of International Assistance
- Level 5: Marginal Logistical/Technical Support Authorized, Encourages International Assistance

Timeline from 1989 to 2012, showing the number of mandates from 0 to 5.
List of Documents Consulted

Peacekeeping Missions

MINUSTAH

11. End of Assignment Report, Colonel Martin Girard (Canadian Army), Chief of Staff, Military Force, MINUSTAH, 4 August 2009.
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18. After Action Review, The Role and Support Provided by the MONUC Force to Congolese Authorities during the DRC Elections from 30 July 2006 (First Round of Elections) to 29 October 2006 (Second Round of Elections), DCOS Ops SP, Chief Info Ops, Chief LDP&OA.

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OTHER MISSIONS

Thematic Sections

CIVIL AFFAIRS

46. Civil Affairs Involvement in the Electoral Process, September-December 2011, MONUSCO.
47. Civil Affairs Role in the 2005 Elections held in Liberia.
49. MINUSTAH Civil Affairs Supporting the Electoral Process.
50. Préoccupations de la Société Civile, Elections, 25 November 2011, MONUSCO.

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52. Briefing on the support to women candidates’ during elections in Afghanistan, A UNIFEM Project on “Women as Decision-Makers” supported by CIDA support.

55. EAD Draft Matrix for Mapping Exercise, Mandates and Activities in the Field of Gender and Elections.
58. Gender Advisory Team Annual Progress Report 2010, DPKO/DFS.
59. Gender Checklist for Assessment Missions for Peacekeeping Operations.
64. Note. Summary of challenges for women candidates in the NER, UNAMA.
67. UNMIT Gender Affairs Unit, 2007 Elections.

HUMAN RIGHTS

71. Training Manual on Human Rights Monitoring, Chapter XIV: Election Observation, OHCHR.

PUBLIC INFORMATION

77. Annex 4, Coordination of UN Support to the 2012 General Elections, Timor-Leste.

VIOLENCE & POLICE

List of Interviews Conducted


BUSH, Dominique. Research and Right to Development Division, OHCHR. In-person interview, New York, 2 March 2012.

CAMPBELL, Scott. Representative of the OHCHR, Director of Joint Human Rights Office, MONUSCO. Phone interview from Kinshasa, 30 March 2012.

CHRISTOFIDES, Jack. Team Leader, Great Lakes Operational Team. In-person interview, New York, 26 January 2012.

COBOS, MÓRRISS, and O'SHEA. Integrated Electoral Assistance Consultant Team, UNDP/DPA/DPKO. In-person interview, New York, 9 March 2012.

DONATI, Marco. Civil Affairs Officer, DPKO. In-person interview, New York, 24 February 2012.

DRIET, Dirk. Political Affairs Officer, MONUSCO. In-person interview, New York, 15 February 2012.

DWYER, Kieran. Chief of Public Affairs, DPKO. In-person interview, New York, 23 February 2012.

Electoral Affairs Division Team, DPA. In-person interview, New York, 24 February 2012.

HUTCHINSON, Clare. Gender Affairs Officer, Gender Unit DPKO. In-person interview, New York, 15 February 2012.

KHAN, Asif. Deputy Director, Political Affairs Division, MINUSTAH. Phone interview from Haiti, 22 February 2012.


LØJ, Ellen. Former SRSG for Liberia, UNMIL. In-person interview, New York, 7 March 2012.

MEECE, Roger. SRSG for DRC, MONUSCO. In-person interview, New York, 5 February 2012.


SECKLER, Alain. Political Affairs Officer, Great lakes Operational Team. In-person interview, New York, 26 January 2012.

VAN DEN WILDEMBERG, Sylvie. Spokesperson at MINUSTAH. Phone interview from Haiti, 30 March 2012.
VAN QUICKELBORNE, Wouter. Political Affairs Officer, IOT for ONUCI. In-person interview, New York, 17 February 2012.
Sample Interview Questions for High Level Officials

Management and Mission Organization

- Was there a reorganization of the mission in preparing for elections?
  - Did you set up a special team? If so, who was it composed of? How did the various units report and evaluate their progress?

- What was your strategy towards ensuring that all components of the mission were working towards a common purpose, and in a coherent and holistic manner?
  - How did you ensure the coordination between civilian and military staff for the preparation of elections? Was there a particular tension between the two components of the mission?

- Did you request each unit to prepare a specific strategy for the preparation of elections? And what are your expectations for these strategies?

- How was information shared, and actions coordinated between the various units?

- How did you prepare for potential post-election violence? Were scenarios or early warning mechanisms developed ahead of time?

- Were there other key stakeholders involved in the electoral process cooperating with the UN? If any, what was their specific role? How was the distribution of tasks organized with your mission? How would you assess this example of institutional cooperation?

- How would you describe the distribution of responsibilities and coordination within the mission, in particular regarding other UN agencies? How would you assess this example in the light of the integrated mission concept?

- How would you describe the mission’s effort in finding balance between providing direct support, and strengthening national ownership and capacity building? How did you manage the expectations on the scope and role of the mission?

- What role did the SRSG play to improve the political climate before elections?

- What were the main challenges and top priorities to be addressed by the mission to ensure a credible and successful electoral process?

Lessons Learned

- In your view, what is the comparative advantage of a peacekeeping operation in the preparation, conduct and follow up of elections?
• From your experience, what are the best practices and lessons learned from your mission’s electoral assistance? What would you consider as the main achievement? What has been the biggest challenge?

• Elections put huge stress on a mission and any shortcomings often easily get amplified. In such a context, what is the impact of electoral assistance with regard to a mission, and how can they still fulfill their other mandating responsibilities, such as Security Sector Reform or DDR? What was your strategy to balance the ongoing efforts of substantive units and the needs arising from electoral assistance?

• With so many missions now engaging with elections, what are some of the critical pieces of information that the Office of Operations in New York can provide to the peacekeepers on the ground?
Sample Interview Questions for Desk Officer

- How does the work of your unit reorganize around preparation for elections? Are other responsibilities put on the sidelines during these periods?
- What specific tasks are carried out by your unit during the buildup to and transition after elections?
  - To what extent are these experiences common to all missions versus being unique to particular circumstances?
- How is information shared between headquarters and the mission on unit strategies and activities? Do units receive any guidance materials or instructions on election-related work?
- What is the relative importance of formal (institutional) and informal relationships in sharing information within the mission?
- What do you see as the comparative advantages of peacekeeping operations in providing electoral assistance? What are some of the challenges of peacekeeping operations in providing electoral assistance, and how could these be addressed by future missions?
- How is work divided between your unit and other aspects of the mission?
- How is guidance from the SRSG disseminated (e.g. through guidelines or regular meetings)?
- What guidance did you receive from the mission leadership or headquarters? What guidance would you have liked to receive?
- What was the strategy towards ensuring that all components directly related to your specific electoral activity were working towards a common purpose, and in a coherent manner? How was information shared, and actions coordinated among the various units within and outside of the mission?
- What are the lessons learned from your electoral assistance activities?
- Are there any activities that you think should be replicated by other missions?
- What are the best practices from your mission?