

**Peter Nadin, Patrick Cammaret and Vesselin Popovski, *Spoiler Groups and UN Peacekeeping*
(London: The International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS), 2015), 148.**

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Secretary General of the United Nations (UN) in a summit on UN Peacekeeping in September 2014 said, “The world is changing and our support to peacekeeping, and indeed all peace operations, must keep pace.” Nadin, Patrick and Popovski, in their book talk about the changing role of UN peacekeeping around the world, and how its role has evolved since the WWII. Peace operations of today are situated in more complex working environments, inflexible political situations and high-risk settings. The book is intended to read like a manual for the UN peacekeepers in the field or for future peacekeeping missions through systematic analyses in its six chapters, citing examples of past missions and pacts, which in most cases, according to the authors, hampered the UN peacekeeping missions. The book acts as a policy guide for the UN, and is part of the IISS Adelphi Book Series which is based on key security issues.

The Spoilers Group, according to the authors, are those which act out against the work done by the UN missions and the government institutions to restore peace and order. These groups are mostly non-state actors and, therefore, act out in a bid to spoil peaceful environment until their demands are fulfilled, and are willing to use violent means against anyone to achieve their own set of goals. The nature of conflict is ever shifting with the inter-state wars that catalysed the creation of the world-body dedicated to maintain international peace and security, giving way to internationalised civil wars of today. Nadin, Cammaret and Popovski in the Chapter 1 of their book, talk about the armed non-state actors who have become a major nuisance for UN peacekeepers in modern conflict zones especially in African countries. The authors go into a great detail to provide better interpretation of these Spoiler Groups regarding recruitment, resource generation, motivation, logistics, command and control structures, and receiving of popular support especially from rural

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areas. These armed groups adapt to the changing situations and are, therefore, able to sustain and survive for such a long period of time and create countless challenges for the UN missions to deal with. Understanding them and how they operate is therefore critical.

In the pursuant chapters two and three, the authors talk about the creation of UN peacekeeping force, which came about after the Suez Canal incident in Egypt (1956). Both Britain and France used their veto power status in the United Nation Security Council (UNSC), leading to a situation of deadlock in the UN. After putting the matter to the General Assembly of the UN, the Canadian Secretary of State (L.B. Pearson), under the 'Uniting for Peace' resolution, came up with the idea of an international force to manage the ceasefire situation in Egypt, known as the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF). According to the guiding principles of this doctrine the UN force would be impartial, and would only use force in circumstances where self-defence becomes absolute necessity. This doctrine would stay in effect till the end of the Cold-War in the 1990's. According to the authors in Chapter 2, this guideline for the UN Missions states that the UN could persuade, discuss and show indignation but it could not compel parties to the conflict or to do its bidding. This according to the authors meant that the UN had to show complete detachment, and even could not impose a UNSC mandated settlement, without the consent of the involved parties. This according to the authors greatly weakened the way UN peacekeeping missions worked across the world, in different conflict zones.

The UN Operations in the Congo (ONUC) were established to assist the Congolese Authorities in restoring order. After a civil war in Congo in the 1960's, the ONUC were faced with questions of use of force to protect civilians, other than act out in self-defence for once. ONUC according to Nadin, Cammaret and Popovski, laid the foundation for future multidimensional peacekeeping and use of force through intrusion into the conflict. The post-Cold War era missions were defined by ONUC as multidimensional missions, which acted as a foundation for the further UN Missions in the 1990s. The UN was better able to establish military realities on the ground, with robust peacekeeping emerging as a winner. Robust peacekeeping was the term which was allowed use of force at a tactical level justified under the 'Capstone Doctrine.' This indirectly caused lesser civilian casualties in the war

zones as the Peacekeepers were better informed about how to take necessary precautions and when to save lives.

In Chapter 4, the authors talk about that the concept of robust peacekeeping that was only applied in specific situations, rather than becoming a universal strategy for the UN to adopt for its peacekeeping missions. Efforts to make the UN mission more robust have been ineffective, even though Brahimi and Capstone Reports did increase the powers of the peacekeepers specially to use force, but a defined concept was never articulated and the idea of robustness just remained that. UN peacekeepers act under Chapter VII provides them the strategy to wisely use robust force for deterrence and coercion and be proactive on the ground. Nadin, Cammaret and Popovski, in Chapter 5, talk about how the Brahimi Report outlined a role for the peacekeepers for the Protection of Civilians (POC). After some devastating protection failures in various missions, the UN has now managed to attain some credibility in POC. It is widely expected that whatever the situation the peacekeepers will prioritise POC over everything else in the mission state, with or without the local governments help. The Spoiler Groups involved in the use of violence are the main impediment to POC, and understating the motivation behind their violent tactics can go a long way in helping out the peacekeeping missions. Another challenge for the peacekeepers is the no clear and unified definition of the 'Resolution 1265' defining the role of UNSC in regards to conflict prevention. This creates confusion for the peacekeepers, as they do not know who exactly they need to protect and what kind of protection to provide. Peacekeepers still face difficulties in POC but the Department of Peacekeeping Operation (DPKO) has tried to fill some gaps and the UNSC is also coming on board regarding the use of robust force.

In conclusion, the authors suggest that the armed Spoiler Groups are created out of conflict and will continue to exploit weak governments, and take advantages of the security vacuums that are created. Meaning Spoiler Groups are continuously evolving, becoming more violent and finding new habitats for themselves, without compromising on any of their ideals and continue to maintain the status quo. While the UN peacekeepers find themselves in non-permissive environments and need to come up with fresh ideas and policy guidelines to tackle the evolving threat. It implies that they have to evolve themselves and the UNSC

cannot afford to make any more miscalculations or misjudgements while dealing with UN missions abroad. The authors believe that the DPKO should be merged with the Department of Political Affairs (DPA), and the Peace building Support Office (PBSO), to create a new department called the Department of Peace and Security. This new creation would lessen the red tapes, make faster decisions, be more flexible and peacekeeping and peacebuilding would be done in the context of the country where the mission would be sent and therefore be funded and politically managed accordingly. The confusion around robust peacekeeping also needs to be cleared and right personnel need to be put in place to deal with such a situation. The UN body on a whole envisions a secure and peaceful world, and this captures the spirit of all peacekeeping missions: courage, perceptiveness and creativity. According to Nadin, Cammaret and Popovski, these virtues should be carried out in the field, and no Spoiler Group should be able to hinder them, while pursuing myriad aims.