

УДК 327.7:355.357

## THE “BRAHIMI REPORT” IN THE CONTEXT OF REFORMING THE PEACEKEEPING POLICY OF UN

Yamchuk A.M.

The article deals with the issue of importance of the “Brahimi report” for reform of the United Nations’ peace operations. Problems that UN is facing while conducting security and peacekeeping policy are discussed in the article. Studying the “Brahimi report” the author highlights the Panel’s positive recommendations and points out to certain shortcomings.

**Keywords:** the “Brahimi report”, peace operations, peacekeeping operations, peace-building, operation’s mandate, peacekeeping reform.

## «ДОКЛАД БРАХИМИ» В КОНТЕКСТЕ РЕФОРМИРОВАНИЯ МИРОТВОРЧЕСКОЙ ДЕЯТЕЛЬНОСТИ ООН

Ямчук А.М.

В статье анализируется «доклад Брахими» в контексте его значения для реформирования деятельности ООН в сфере реализации операций в пользу мира. Рассматриваются проблемы, которые возникли перед ООН в сфере политики безопасности и миротворчества. Автор, исследуя содержание «доклада Брахими», выделяет некоторые позитивные рекомендации, которые предлагались комиссией, а также характеризует отдельные просчеты и упущения.

**Ключевые слова:** «доклад Брахими», операции в пользу мира, операции ООН по поддержанию мира, миротворчество, мандат операции, реформирование миротворчества.

The 1990s saw enormous enlargement of UN peace activities usually by means of peacekeeping operations. This process was about both quantity and quality. First of all, the number of peacekeepers involved in UN operations grew significantly comparing to previous decade. Second of all, spectrum of activities and tasks

entrusted to “blue helmets” was much wider than it had ever been before. Some of these operations were tragic failures. This damaged seriously the image of the United Nations as an international institution. In particular we are talking about operations in Rwanda, Somalia etc. Many countries changed their attitude towards UN peacekeeping, especially regarding participation of their citizens in dangerous actions of the organization. That partially explains decreasing of peacekeeping activities in the second part of the 20th century. However, different local and regional conflicts at the beginning of the 21th century proved that UN cannot cease its work on maintaining international peace and security. Therefore past failures and future challenges motivated the UN for critical reevaluation of its peace operations strategy.

In March 2000 the Secretary-General Kofi Annan convened a high-level Panel to undertake a thorough review of the United Nations peace and security activities, and to present a clear set of specific, concrete and practical recommendations to assist the United Nations in conducting such activities better in the future [5].

The high-level decision of critical re-thinking of the UN peace activities created ground for positive development of peacekeeping reform process. The Panel’s report might become a stepping stone in this process. This is why the profound research of the report itself is an important and necessary task.

Working on this issue the author aims at determining the importance of the “Brahimi report” in the history of UN peacekeeping. In order to reach this goal it is necessary to emphasize the Panel’s positive recommendations and to find out shortcomings of the report. The author examines the influence of the “Brahimi report” on the following process of peacekeeping reforms and discusses the United Nations’ involvement into fulfillment of “Brahimi recommendations”.

The high-level Panel met for the first of three sessions on March 21, 2000. The Panel was formed from representatives of different countries with experience in peacekeeping, peace-building, humanitarian assistance etc. The members of the Panel were Mr. J. Brian Atwood (the USA), Ambassador Colin Granderson (Trinidad and Tobago), Dame Ann Hercus (New Zealand), Mr. Richard Monk (Great Britain), General Klaus Naumann ((retd.) Germany), Ms. Hisako Shimura (Japan),

Ambassador Vladimir Shustov (Russian Federation), General Philip Sibanda (Zimbabwe) and Dr. Cornelio Sommaruga (Switzerland). The Panel was chaired by Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, the former Foreign Minister of Algeria, and a participant of many UN peacekeeping operations. That is why the short title for the outcome of the Panel's work is "the Brahimi report".

The "Brahimi report" concerns both conceptual and institutional parts of UN peace activities. It is worth mentioning that the main attention was paid to peacekeeping operations, notwithstanding the fact that tasks, set up for the Panel, pertained to other kinds of UN peace operations as well. An explanation of such insufficient examination of other peace activities might be hidden in time limitation set up for the Panel. The "Brahimi report" was created in about five and a half months, which already was two months later than initially planned [3]. The production deadline for the "Brahimi report" was the Millennium Summit. That is why it was impossible to find additional time for more detailed research. On the other hand the emphasis upon peacekeeping operations might be explained by a great number of this peace activity at that certain time. Hence it was the kind of UN peace operations which required the most profound study and urgent reforms.

On August 21, 2000 the outcome of the Panel's work was sent to the President of the General Assembly and to the President of the Security Council to be brought to the attention of UN Member States. 58 pages of the report contained 280 paragraphs grouped into 6 chapters: "The need for change", "Doctrine, strategy and decision-making for peace operations", "United Nations capacities to deploy operations rapidly and effectively", "Headquarters resources and structure for planning and supporting peacekeeping operations", "Peace operations and the information age" and "Challenges to implementation".

Evaluating the "Brahimi report" it is necessary to point out certain positive remarks and suggestions of the Panel members.

For instance, notwithstanding the fact that not all aspects of UN peace operations were given the certain amount of attention, experts stressed upon necessity of complex approach towards addressing conflicts. The need for a link between

peacekeeping and peace-building was emphasized, since while the peace-builders may not be able to function without the peacekeepers' support, the peacekeepers have no exit without the peace-builders' work [5]. One cannot underestimate the importance of peace-building in post-conflict environment since there is always a danger of conflict resuming. 90% of conflicts that began in the 21st century were in countries that had suffered the civil war before. Moreover, each civil war in 2003 was the resuming of a former war [8]. The other important remark of the Panel was concerning bringing demobilization and reintegration programmes into the assessed budgets of complex peace operations for the first phase of an operation in order to facilitate the rapid disassembly of fighting factions and reduce the likelihood of resumed conflict [5]. Summing up recommendations on peace-building the Panel urged the Executive Committee on Peace and Security to recommend to the Secretary-General a plan of strengthening the capacity of the United Nations to develop peace-building strategies and to implement programmes in support of those strategies.

The "Brahimi report" is full of criticism concerning UN past peacekeeping operations. First of all, the Panel reevaluates the bedrock principles of peacekeeping in the modern era of peace operations. It is about consent of the local parties, impartiality and use of force only in self-defense. It's obvious that this doctrine required re-thinking a long time before the "Brahimi report". These principles were created for peacekeeping operations dealing with interstate conflicts. They don't meet challenges of intra-state conflicts that UN often has to address today. The Panel stated that in such cases impartiality must mean adherence to the principles of the Charter and to the objectives of a mandate that was rooted in those Charter principles. Such impartiality is not the same as neutrality or equal treatment of all parties in all cases for all time [5]. Otherwise the impartiality might be a policy of appeasement. Thus, once deployed, the UN peacekeepers should be capable of defending themselves, other mission components and the mission's mandate [5]. That means that the mission's mandate should give peacekeepers permission to use force against those, who renege on their commitments to a peace accord or otherwise seek to

undermine it by violence. In the same time, the Panel recognized that the United Nations did not wage war [5]. However, in intra-state conflicts a party or even parties of peace accords tend to deny their obligations after a short period of ceasefire necessary for them to gain more forces. If in such cases UN peacekeepers are to defend a mission's mandate, which roots in peace accords, then they have to use force against perpetrators. In many cases it may mean engagement in a war, which, according to the UN Charter and the Panels' statement, the organization does not wage. What should be done in such cases? It is still an open question which was unanswered in the "Brahimi report".

The other sub-chapter of the Report titled "Clear, credible and achievable mandates" concerned peculiarities of operation's planning and authorization. The Panel recommended the Security Council to leave in draft form resolutions authorizing missions with sizeable troop levels until such time as the Secretary-General had firm commitments of troops and other critical mission support elements from Member States [5]. The history of UN peacekeeping saw many examples when operations authorized by the Security Council were incapable of carrying out tasks entrusted them because of lack of personnel. For instance, in May 1994 the number of peacekeepers in Rwanda was about 450, notwithstanding the Security Council's authorization of mission's enlargement to 5500. This number could not be reached within a few following months.

Incapability of the UN to gather necessary personnel for a certain mission is still on the agenda as one of the pressing peacekeeping problems. Nowadays developed countries don't consider UN peacekeeping actions as their own obligation. For instance, 77 per cent of the troops in formed military units deployed in United Nations peacekeeping operations, as of end-June 2000, were contributed by developing countries [5]. The personnel problem pertained to not only military, but civilian positions as well. Working on the Report the Panel found out that about 50 per cent of field positions in substantive areas and up to 40 per cent of the positions in administrative and logistics areas were vacant [5]. That is why the Panel analyzed UN capabilities for improvement of work with contributing states in order to provide

missions with necessary amount of troops, police and civilian specialists. The Panel urged Member States to work in partnership with an aim of forming several coherent brigade-size forces, with necessary enabling forces, ready for effective deployment within 30 days of the adoption of a Security Council resolution establishing a traditional peacekeeping operation and within 90 days for complex peacekeeping operations [5]. The Panel urged the UN to revise conditions of recruiting civilian personnel with an aim of attraction the most highly qualified candidates and creation opportunities for careers prospects for those who have served with distinction [5].

The Panel paid special attention to renovation of work within the context of the United Nations Standby Arrangements System (UNSAS). There was a suggestion on creation of an “on-call list” of about 100 military and 100 police officers to be available on seven days’ notice to augment nuclei of DPKO planners with teams trained to create a mission headquarters for a new peacekeeping operation.

Another important institutional change suggested by the Panel was creating an entity that included all of the backstopping people and expertise for a mission, drawn from an array of Headquarters elements that mirrored the functions of the mission itself. The Panel would call that entity an Integrated Mission Task Force (IMTF) [6-5, p. 35]. IMTF should be the standard vehicle for mission-specific planning and a place to turn to for the answers and support that mission participants need especially in the critical early months.

The Panel recommended the Secretariat to send a team to confirm the preparedness of each potential troop contributor to meet the provisions of the memoranda of understanding on the requisite training and equipment requirements, prior to deployment. Those that do not meet the requirements must not deploy [5]. It is worth mentioning that in the past there were situations when personnel provided by a state-contributor was not properly prepared, equipped or even didn’t have enough drinking water, which made its effective functioning almost impossible.

At the first sight all of the above mentioned points are logical and their implementation might improve United Nations peacekeeping. However, there are some miscalculations that should be stated as well. The United Nations Standby

Arrangements System, which is suggested as a basis for solving the personnel problem, was established before the “Brahimi report” and didn’t prove to be an effective mechanism. One of the most important conditions regarding UNSAS is that the final choice whether to actually deploy the resources or not remains a national decision of contributing states. The personnel problem might be solved only in case of positive attitude to the issue from Member States. This positive attitude is still missing. States’ reluctance to participate in UN peacekeeping operations might be explained by the following reasons: the protection of state sovereignty, an unwillingness to sacrifice national interests for international concerns and a lack of financial commitment [2, p. 2]. Usually, if a potential contributor considers a conflict region as a strategically important one, troops are being sent to fulfill peacekeeping / peace-enforcement tasks, however not within the UN mission, but as a separate operation. Operations like this were held in Somalia (“Restore Hope” led by the USA), Rwanda (“Operation Turquoise” led by France) etc. In such cases states’ actions are more self-sufficient than in cases of their participation within UN peace operations.

If a question of lack of personnel is being brought to attention quite often, a question of the effective management is not discussed that active. However, according to statistic data in the “Brahimi report”, in summer 2000 all UN peacekeeping operations consisted of 27 thousand troops and the management was performed by 32 officers in UN Headquarter. The similar situation was with a police department: more than 8 thousand policemen were in a field and their leadership was provided by 9 specialists in a Headquarter. The Panel recommended a substantial increase in resources for Headquarters support of peacekeeping operations and making necessary changes so it was funded through the mechanism of the regular biennium programme budget of the Organization [5].

Structural changes, suggested by the Panel, pertained to many elements of the organization that were engaged in peace and security activities. There was a suggestion of restructuration of Military and Civilian Police Division, the Office of Military Adviser, enhancement of the Lessons Learned Unit, increasing the number

of Assistant Secretaries-General from two to three, establishing a unit for operational planning and support of public information in peace operations etc.

It is important that the Panel paid a lot of attention to the informational support of peacekeeping and strategic analysis. The Panel proposed creation of Information and Strategic Analysis Secretariat at the Executive Committee on Peace and Security [5]. Thus, not only could knowledge on conflicts be gathered, but it would be possible to form long-term strategies. The Report took note of the importance of public relations in places of UN peacekeeping activities. Experts said that a strategy of information campaign should be created in each peace operation, especially regarding key aspects of mission's mandate. This strategy and personnel for its implementation should belong to an advanced team of future operation [5]. Indeed, support and understanding of UN actions in the country by local population is one of key factors of operation's success. It's vitally important that population doesn't percept UN peacekeepers as neo-colonialists who came to impose "western" rule in their lands. In case of wrong information campaign or its absence at all, UN actions may be not understood by local people.

As it was mentioned before, the Report suggested setting time limitation for deployment of an operation (30 days from Security Council's resolution in case of a traditional operation and 90 days in case of a multidimensional one). Obviously, time frame might have contributed to improvement and systematization of UN peacekeeping. However, these deadlines are rarely met by any UN mission.

The "Brahimi report" was full with critical remarks concerning UN past peacekeeping operations. In particular, the Panel criticized activities of the UN Secretariat. Experts mentioned that "The Secretariat must tell the Security Council what it needs to know, not what it wants to hear, when formulating or changing mission mandates" [5]. The position of developed countries was critically evaluated as well, since the former used to refrain from complex support of peace operations. The research summed up that there was a need to rethink the historically prevailing view of peacekeeping as a temporary aberration rather than a core function of the United Nations [5].



There were many situations when “blue helmets” had to create peace rather than support it. Usually these operations were failures since a peacekeeping operation is not prepared to function in volatile environment. Unfortunately, there is no answer concerning the right course of actions in such situations in the “Brahimi report”. However there is an advice for the Security Council which says that “rather than send an operation into danger with unclear instructions, the Council should refrain from mandating such a mission” [5].

The “Brahimi report” is an attempt to reform UN peace activities. The early 21<sup>st</sup> century was a period of rethinking since it became obvious that there was a pressing need for reforms. However researchers are not unanimous about the role and significance of this report for the development of UN peace operations. The Panel criticized the UN actions in the sphere of peace maintaining, but many researchers have been criticizing the “Brahimi report” itself. For instance, there were many remarks concerning some recommendations being banal or repeating previous reports. It was obvious that many recommendations might not be implemented given to reluctance of Member States to provide necessary political, financial and human resources. Moreover, critics pay attention to the fact that the Panel neglected to include in its report many worthwhile initiatives for improving UN peacekeeping [2, p. 1]. For instance, it was about using of gratis military personnel, whose salaries are paid by Member States, in peacekeeping operations. The General Assembly introduced a ban on the use of gratis personnel in 1997 because much of the developing world feared that these individuals would remain loyal to their native governments, thereby increasing the level of influence that richer countries would have over peacekeeping policy [2, p. 4].

Critics of the “Brahimi report” argue that recommendations for rapid and full deployment have been presented long before the report itself. The main problem, however, is not because of time frame absence, but is about the absence of Member States’ aspirations to demonstrate the political will to resolve this issue.

The other shortcoming of the “Brahimi report” might be neglecting the issue of regional peacekeeping. There are many regional organizations that are engaged in

peacekeeping. For instance, Africa has witnessed many operations under auspices of the Economic Community of West African States and the Southern African Development Community. However, their actions, as remarked by Mark Malan, the head of the Peace Missions Programme of the Institute for Security Studies in Pretoria, had not really impacted on western-dominated thinking about the “division of labor” between the UN and regional organizations for the maintenance of peace and security [4]. Probably, the absence of “division of labor” issue in the report may be explained by unwillingness of the organization to look for general rules of engagement that were universal for all regional organizations and control their actions more strictly. However, remembering that the Panel left peace-enforcement actions as a prerogative of coalitions of willing states, absence of further explanation regarding rules for such operations in the report might be considered as a vivid shortcoming.

It was emphasized in the report that “there are many tasks which the United Nations peacekeeping forces should not be asked to undertake, and many places they should not go” [5]. Then the question is how should UN react on problems in conflict regions considering that the reason for its creation in the first place was to save succeeding generations from the war?

It’s worth mentioning that the “Brahimi report” lacks such serious issues as punishment for crimes committed by peacekeepers and its ramifications for the image of the UN.

Hence, the “Brahimi report” didn’t answer all the peace operations problems. However, as many researchers say “a willingness to engage in self-criticism is the starting-point for substantive reform of any institution” [1]. That means that UN is on the way of reform which raises hopes for future positive changes. A number of recommendations have already found its practical implementation. In particular, we are talking about adoption of rapid deployment concept, financing of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes, strengthening of missions’ leadership, enlargement of personnel at the UN Secretariat to work on peace issues etc.

The “Brahimi report” was the first important step on the way of UN peacekeeping reforms. However, the Millennium Summit, that the report had been prepared for, didn’t pay it the necessary attention. The United Nations Millennium Declaration stated that Member States “take note of the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations and request the General Assembly to consider its recommendations expeditiously” [7].

We cannot deny the fact of the “Brahimi report’s” influence on further development of UN peace activities. If we trace the history of the UN peacekeeping decade after the “Brahimi report”, we will notice a number of positive initiatives in peace operations field that was not happening before. In 2005 the Peacebuilding Commission was established at the World Summit. In 2006 the Department of Peacekeeping Operations prepared a reform strategy entitled “Peace operations 2010” that set out the policies and procedures necessary to enable it to support peacekeeping over the next decade. In 2008 the “Capstone Doctrine”, outlining the most important principles and guidelines for UN peacekeepers in the field, was adopted. 2009 saw preparation of the “New Partnership Agenda: Charting a New Horizon for UN Peacekeeping”. This non-paper, issued a year from the tenth anniversary of the “Brahimi report”, was prepared by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support and contained proposals to continue an on-going dialogue on the future of peacekeeping. Obviously, all these positive changes cannot be connected with the “Brahimi report” only. However the fact of its influence is undeniable.

In 2010 Mr. Alain Le Roy, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, giving a speech to the General Assembly said that “Brahimi report” was “landmark” and “farsighted” [6]. As Mr. Alain Le Roy emphasized, the UN would have not been capable of passing the years of peacekeeping enhancement and strengthening without the report. If in 2000 the level of deployment was 20,000, in ten years UN peacekeeping deployed over 124,000 peacekeepers in 16 missions around the world [6].

The “Brahimi report”, issued in 2000, is one of the key documents of the UN regarding strengthening its peace activities. The report was full of blunt criticism of UN peacekeeping and stated a number of institutional and conceptual problems, which had weakened UN capability to make a change in conflict zones. Unfortunately, the report provided the UN with recommendations on improvement of institutional shortcomings but didn't answer serious questions regarding enhancement of the UN peace activities concept. The Panel was more active in advising the Security Council regarding what should not be done than providing suggestions concerning certain steps to be taken in dangerous situations. Notwithstanding this we have no right to underestimate the influence of the “Brahimi report” for further reforms of UN peacekeeping. The high-level report put the foundation for changes and it was up to the Member States how to use this foundation in the future.

### **Bibliography:**

1. Berdal M. United Nations Peace Operations: the Brahimi Report in Context / Peace support operation: Lesons learned and future perspectives [Web resource] // Center for Security Studies. 2014. URL: <https://bit.ly/31ERkQa> (reference date: 05.12.2021).
2. Bratt D., Gionet E. Evaluating the Brahimi Report. Toronto: Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies, 2001. 4 p.
3. Durch W. Building a Better Peace Operation: Lessons from the Brahimi Report Process [Web resource] // The Henry L. Stimson Center [сайт]. 01.01.2004. URL: <https://bit.ly/300brRs> (reference date: 05.12.2021).
4. Malan M. African Peacekeeping Beyond Brahimi // African Security Review. 2001.Vol. 10. No 3. P. 120-122.
5. Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations. UN General Assembly, Security Council. A/55/305-S/2000/809, New York: United Nations, 21 August 2000 [Web resource] // United Nations. 21.08.2000. URL: <https://bit.ly/31BjVWC> (reference date: 05.12.2021).

6. Statement by Mr Alain Le Roy, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations General Assembly Thematic debate: “UN Peacekeeping – looking into the future” 22 June 2010 [Web resource] // United Nations. 22.06.2010. URL: <https://bit.ly/3ErWYNb> (reference date: 05.12.2021).

7. United Nations Millennium Summit Declaration, adopted by the General Assembly on the fifty-fifth session, A/RES/55/2. 18 September 2000 [Web resource] // United Nations. 18.09.2000. URL: <https://bit.ly/3xULzCQ> (reference date: 05.12.2021).

8. World Development Report 2011: Conflict, Security, and Development [Web resource] // The World Bank Group. 2014. URL: <https://bit.ly/3ErEfRz> (reference date: 05.12.2021).

**Сведения об авторе:**

Ямчук Анна Михайловна – соискатель кафедры международных отношений Черновицкого национального университета имени Юрия Федьковича (Черновцы, Украина).

**Data about the author:**

Yamchuk Anna Mykhailivna – postgraduate student of International Relations Department, Yurii Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University (Chernivtsi, Ukraine).

**E-mail:** [anna\\_yamchuk@ukr.net](mailto:anna_yamchuk@ukr.net).