

2025 Peace Operations Review Week Findings: Implications for Future Education and Training

New York Peace Operations Review Week Workshop co-organized by the Permanent Missions to the United Nations of Pakistan and Switzerland, Geneva Centre for Security Policy, Centre for International Peace and Stability of Pakistan, United Nations University-Center for Policy Research, and Coventry University.

Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the United Nations, 8 East 65th Street, New York 10065,
Friday 7 November, 1200-1330

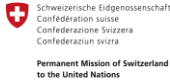
Background

Building on the positive synergies generated through interdisciplinary and global collaborations - including initiatives such as the Challenges Forum, the Effectiveness of Peace Operations Network, the Global Alliance for Peace Operations, the International Association of Peace Operations Centres, and other partners- Peace Operations Review Week 2025 convened a global community of experts focused on strengthening peace operations and interventions. The primary objective of the inaugural Review Week was to bring together a critical mass of expertise to support and inform the Review on the Future of All Forms of Peace Operations, as mandated by the 2024 Pact for the Future. The effort took into account the broader context of the UN@80 process and the prevailing challenge of resource constraints. Building on the deliberations of the IAPTC Annual Conference 2024 in Islamabad, the outcome of the week will also help inform further deliberations at the Annual Conference of the International Association of Peacekeeping Training Centres (IAPTC), focused on “Peace Operations Training in a Dynamic World: Fostering Cooperation, Inclusivity and Efficiency”, and the UNPOL Day, hosted by COESPU from 9-14 November in Vicenza, Italy.

Workshop – Purpose and Focus

On Friday, 7 November, a workshop titled “2025 Peace Operations Review Week Findings: Implications for Future Education and Training” was held in the concluding parts of the Review Week. The aim was to bridge the gap between the latest cutting-edge analysis and actionable policy recommendations in the field of education and training. It drew on insights from 15 seminars and workshops held during Review Week, focusing on their respective implications for the education and training of civilian, police and military peacekeepers.

Successive reviews, doctrines, and reform processes – from the Brahimi Report (2000), through New Horizons (2009) and HIPPO (2015), to Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) and A4P+ agendas, and the recent independent study on Future of Peacekeeping (2024) – have consistently underscored the importance of training, emphasizing that the effectiveness of training and, by extension, mandate delivery, depends on approaches that are needs-driven and sustainable. However, concerns persist that training pledges often mirror mandate keywords (e.g., protection



of civilians, community policing) without tackling the underlying capacity challenges. Moreover, given that TCCs and PCCs bear primary responsibility for pre-deployment training, ensuring coherence and comparability across training systems remains an ongoing priority. Furthermore, within this landscape, civilian training modalities, including those aimed at building leadership and adaptive decision-making skills, have received comparatively less systematic investment. This gap becomes more pressing as overall resource constraints tighten, further reinforcing the need to maximize coherence, coordination, and sustainability across training efforts.

Against this backdrop, the workshop provided an opportunity to pull together the implications for education and training emerging from the Review Week, to identify overlaps and gaps, draw on evidence from training needs assessments and mission feedback, and thus help shape a more comprehensive and coherent training framework.

Building on the IAPTC 2024 findings, the workshop generated insights of relevance for assessing how different actors, TCCs, PCCs, UN entities, and training centres, can best align their respective roles and resources in support of effective education and training. The outcome of the deliberations also contributes to strengthening training modalities for both uniformed and civilian staff, including in leadership and adaptive decision-making.

The guiding question for the workshop was: What implications for education and training arise from the policy recommendations generated during Review Week sessions? The follow-on questions for this project that will be assessed during the IAPTC 2025 and UNPOL Day deliberations, include: 1) In what ways are current training programmes aligned with needs identified, and how could this connection be reinforced? 2) What structures or partnerships could help overcome fragmentation in training provision and strengthen sustainability and coherence? and 3) How might uniformed and civilian training modalities be better balanced and integrated into a comprehensive framework?

Participation

Hosted at the Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the United Nations, organizational lead representatives of the co-organizers of the Review Week, namely Challenges Forum, EPON, GAPO, IPI, GCSP, as well as workshop partners including CIPS Pakistan, UNU-CPR, Coventry University, the Chief of UN DPO's Integrated Training Service (ITS), and representatives of UN DPO and DPPA, Permanent Missions to the United Nations, COESP (host of IAPTC 2025), and civil society and think tank organizations, participated either in person or online. The hybrid format allowed for inclusive and impactful deliberations, involving those who were not able to be present in New York.

Initial Workshop Findings

From a training and capacity-building perspective on the Peace Operations Review Week in general and the dedicated workshop in particular, four key thematic considerations emerged, which



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Confédération suisse
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Confederaziun svizra
Permanent Mission of Switzerland
to the United Nations



CIPS
CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL
PEACE & STABILITY



GCSP
Geneva Centre for
Security Policy



UNU
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have implications for the design and delivery of future training and capacity building for peace operations. These include:

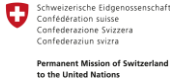
- 1) Leading with integrity through change – strengthening leadership and building partnerships.
- 2) Increasing and strengthening the adaptability of systems and peacekeepers.
- 3) Reflective, learner-centred training mechanisms requires broader application.
- 4) Innovation areas with particular potential for development of training, include:
 - a. Embracing and operationalizing new technologies to the advantage of missions,
 - b. More effectively addressing mis- and disinformation and hate speech,
 - c. Scaling up training for mitigating climate risk and its impact, and
 - d. Strengthening the mental health and resilience of peacekeepers.

Leading with Integrity through Change – Strengthening Leadership, Building Partnerships

The central role of trust and trust building to the success of peace operations has emerged as a recognized critical factor requiring further attention in the wake of recent challenges to missions and the calls for their downsizing or closures in recent years. It was posited that in understanding peacekeeping effectiveness, a voice which is often missing from analyses is the voice of those who are at the front end of peacekeeping practice: namely the citizens who engage on a day-to-day basis with peacekeepers. UN DPO's ITS has identified that a key area of required support is the need to amplify evidence to justify investment in training. A better understanding of methodologies to gain citizen perspectives, and the incorporation of citizen voices into training programmes, could offer substantial benefits to peacekeepers in understanding the impacts (positive and negative) of the training they receive. Speakers suggested that peacekeeping training centres could pilot feedback mechanisms that collect structured input from host communities on peacekeeper conduct, cultural sensitivity, and communication, using these insights to inform future training design. This complements the ITS's suggestion that field-based impact studies could offer valuable data to better understand the effectiveness of peacekeeping.

Furthermore, valuable considerations were offered by partners who work in the field of Unarmed Civilian Protection (UCP). UCP offers a valuable addition to Protection of Civilians (POC) practice, by offering different perspectives that can inform leadership development in the areas of protection strategies, consensus-building and community-based trauma care. As a result, the incorporation of UCP methodologies into POC training could benefit POC training at all levels, as could an appreciation of the tools that UCP relies on to build consensus.

Moreover, participants discussed the need to raise greater awareness of how the recruitment of leaders can be informed through enhanced understanding of personality traits, particularly the ability to find consensus, act with empathy, and build teams. Speakers also underlined the importance of developing leadership handover processes to allow overlap between incoming and outgoing senior staff. This is critical, as the ITS identified “strengthened leadership training” as another of the three key priority areas.



Increased and Strengthened Adaptability of Systems and Peacekeepers

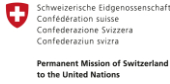
The peacekeeping training system needs to become more adaptable. As budgets shrink, and defence and security priorities change, peacekeeping training centres may be put under further pressure. ITS outlined the value of mobilizing political will and Member State buy-in for aligning training standards among training providers. It is therefore imperative that the models in which training is undertaken are re-envisioned. This includes training in the virtual space, the digitisation of training resources, and the use of mobile training teams. The digitalisation of core materials, such as through Switzerland's work on the e-CPTM, was cited as a practical step to sustain access and standardisation despite financial constraints. Participants further cautioned that while technology offers new possibilities for training delivery, it should be used to complement rather than replace in-person, scenario-based learning.

Furthermore, the UN DOS Triangular Partnership Programme (TPP) was highlighted as a mechanism to enhance adaptable training provision. Moreover, it was also suggested that with diminishing resources, fewer peace operations, and hence fewer peacekeepers, those who do undertake engagement in UN operations will have to be more adaptable to new operating environments. Speakers also noted that this adaptability extends to the growing diversity of operational actors, with training increasingly required to prepare personnel for coordination and liaison across parallel mission or coalitions.

Building on the IAPTC 2024 key findings, the importance of proactively pursuing and strengthening the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda in peace operations was raised as a continued priority, especially as the agenda has come under stress during the current geopolitical turmoil. It was suggested that as budgets for enabling women's meaningful contribution to peace operations may decrease, the importance of mainstreaming gender perspectives and WPS-related training modules as part of broader or more comprehensive training programmes become a complementary and significant development, should specialized training courses and programmes be dismantled.

Reflective, Learner-centred Training Mechanisms Requires Broader Application

Training for peace operations, be it military, civilian, or police, relies on skills associated with problem-solving, empathy, collaboration, and adaptability. Sessions highlighted senior mission leadership training, the need to collaborate with partners on the ground (host countries, other organisations, conflict actors, host-state representatives), considerations over the protection of civilians, and decision-making processes concerning the use of force. Participants underlined that uniformed personnel in particular are often forced to make split-second decisions with mission-wide ramifications, especially around POC and use-of-force thresholds, which be rehearsed repeatedly during training. With this in mind, a repeated call was made for mission staff to act with empathy, humility, and respect for their operational surroundings, those with whom they work, and those who they serve. Speakers were keen to stress that in the most difficult situations, there is no



blueprint as to what is a “right” and what is a “wrong” answer. A related leadership challenge identified was the gap between being tasked to “ensure coordination” across many actors and lacking directive authority. Senior leadership training should therefore focus on skills for leading through influence, facilitating cooperation, and guiding joint decision-making among partners who operate outside the mission’s direct chain of command.

The impact on training requirements is clear. Primarily, this requires further consideration of the role of learner-focused exercises such as simulations, tabletop exercises, and reflective questioning to be integrated into training, alongside more traditional formats of knowledge transfer. These learner-led, or “elicitive” forms of training emphasise the experience, knowledge, and capabilities of the individual peacekeeper. They should include scenario drills on communication with civilians (cultural humility, local power-mapping, and basic language skills) for contexts where the force is constrained and align POC concepts across organisations (UN/AU/sub-regional) to reduce confusion among troops rotating between frameworks. Elicitive methods can also be delivered online to enhance realism without costly field set-ups and should incorporate “safe failure” simulations, plus post-exercise reflection that draws explicitly on feedback from those at the receiving end of performance (host communities and civil society). Finally, mental-health and duty-of-care content (see also below) should be blended (online and in-person) and backed by Head of Mission endorsement to ensure uptake. These methods help trainees prepare for high-stress environments, and apply the knowledge gained in other parts of the training cycle.

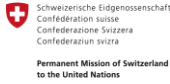
Innovation Areas with Particular Potential for Development of Training

a. Embrace and operationalize new technologies to mission advantages

The growing use of new technologies requires a proactive approach to new design and delivery of training for peacekeepers. Digital literacy and technology integration are among the three strategic priorities of ITS. A proposal was made to scale up introduction of awareness training on AI-driven platforms to enhance operational planning and learning efficiency. This proposal illustrated the need to ensure safe and informed use of digital tools and data. Expanding partnerships such as the Triangular Partnership Programme to deliver training in specialised fields, including engineering, field medicine, environmental management, and telemedicine, was highlighted as a practical way to integrate technological and adaptation into training.

b. More effectively address mis and disinformation and hate speech

An area of particular attention and relevance is the need for effective design and delivery of training to better understand Misinformation, Disinformation and Hate Speech (MDH) and to enable peacekeepers at all levels to both understand its nature and counter its impact on the mission and mission environment. It was suggested during the workshop that training in this area should incorporate media literacy, community engagement, and more broadly, and updated and upscaled approach to Strategic Communications. Due to a combination of geopolitically intensified polarization and technological capabilities advancing at lightning speed, the impact on missions



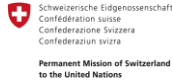
has been transformative. UN DPO ITS has identified developing the ability of peacekeepers to effectively counter MDH as a critical component under the strategic priority of “Safety and Security, and Protection of Civilians”.

c. Scale up training for mitigating climate risk and its impact

There was a call to deepen peacekeepers’ understanding of climate-related risks in peace operations. Training should strengthen understanding of how climate affects conflict and influences mission deployment, ranging from conflict drivers and displacement to operational adaptation to flood- or drought-affected areas, including through the use of technologies such as solar panels. Speakers emphasized that climate change should not be viewed as a “new task” but as a growing obstacle to the fulfilment of core mandates such as POC and humanitarian delivery. What is new is the need for specialised training devoted to preparing units to use unfamiliar mobility equipment and to prioritise undertaking participatory planning and analysis with local actors.

d. Strengthen mental health and resilience of peacekeepers

There is a need for peacekeepers (uniformed and non-uniformed, and at all levels) to be trained in approaches that support mental health and wellbeing to promote the resilience of peacekeepers. Related to the need to be adaptable to tough situations is the need for follow-up training on how to better understand signals of high stress, depression, and anxiety. Training to identify such signals among peacekeepers could both offer a duty of care to interveners, but also increase the possibility that peacekeepers are fit to undertake their role. It was noted that blended formats combining online and in-person crisis-areas training have proved effective when supported by mission leadership, as shown in recent pilots. Leadership endorsement was identified as a key factor in normalising psychological and duty-of-care training.

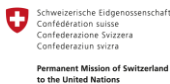


Considerations for the UNPOL Day, 9 November, Italy

On 6 November, a UN Peace Operations Review Week Workshop on the “The United Nations Police and the Future of UN Peace Operations”, was co-organised by the International Peace Institute (IPI), the Challenges Forum, the Permanent Mission of Sweden, the Swedish National Police, the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP), and the Centre for International Peace Operations (ZIF). A more detailed report will be shared in due course, but for the purpose of sharing immediate impressions to inform the UNPOL Day deliberations at the IAPTC in Italy later in the week, three key points are summarized here: two overall trends that emerged and one related proposal that, if implemented, would have significant impact on capacity-building, education and training for future UNPOL missions.

First, the peace operations community participating in the Review Week and the UNPOL Workshop has gone from despair to determination. From June 2023, when the closure of MINUSMA triggered an “end of peacekeeping?” debate, discussions moved on to focusing on “doing less with less”. By the time the Future of UNPOL Workshop was held, speakers referred instead to “doing less, but differently”, “doing smarter, faster and together”, “doing differently and better”. Despite current headwinds, Review Week participants, including the police, were focused on the future - not defeatist, but determined. Some countries are doing less; as space opens up, others are stepping up. Participants also stressed that in times of down-sizing, it is essential “to keep the pilot light burning” to retain competence, skills and capabilities for when upscaling becomes required and when demand increases again, whether in the Middle East, Ukraine, Sudan, or elsewhere. With fewer field operations, this would allow an enhanced focus on training and capacity-building of UNPOL and its supporting structures, so that peacekeepers remain sharp and systems ready to deploy when the request comes.

Second, the focus on UN Police as a system-wide service provider has finally become normalised. The debate is no longer whether UN Police should be a system-wide provider or not, but how that can best be implemented. Essentially it is about operating smarter, more focused, and more often, but not always- light footed, and most importantly, more global in application. Not just operating within and serving the UN system itself, but also beyond, by supporting regional organisations, and the broader Member States community. As proposed at the UN Police Division Leadership Team Retreat 2024 on Strategic Reflections on the Future UN Policing, given the worldwide increase in crime, corruption, public disorder, trafficking, cyber-crime, etc., the question is not only what can UN policing can do for the peacekeeping and special political mission host countries, but for any of the 193 Member States that require support. As the UN moves towards more specialised expertise and capacities, UN Police - with its unparalleled experience and expertise gained in the most challenging conditions over the past 65 years - could and should be leveraged by all countries, as needed. Supporting police development in non-mission settings and environments is ultimately a valuable tool of prevention.



Third, a proposition was made that an independent study on the Future of UN Policing, 31 Models, and Related Capabilities should be undertaken. Such a study would be similar in scope to the 2024 *Independent Study on Future Peacekeeping: New Models and Related Capabilities*, but with an explicit focus on UN policing. There is a need to review and reassess the very broad range of functions, capabilities and areas of expertise that UN policing models have designed and delivered to date and can continue to provide with new areas emerging. The Independent Study on Peacekeeping and its 30 models helped shift the general perception that there is much more to UN peace operations than three conventional types – traditional, multidimensional or SPMs – by unpacking 30 different functions that missions undertake or potentially could undertake. That debate enabled a better understanding of the broad range of functions and competences available and the expertise required to support them. Similarly, it was proposed that UN policing is often perceived as either Individual Police Officers (IPOs) or Formed Police Units (FPU). By undertaking a similar assessment to the broader study of 2024, but focused on UNPOL, the much broader specialised expertise and capabilities within UNPOL could be better communicated and appreciated. In consequence, such an assessment would support future recruitment efforts and design and delivery of training to serve the current and potential future models defined.

Peace Operations Review Weeks Workshop on Education and Training – POCs:

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The note is a summary of discussions held and key proposals made. It does not necessarily reflect or represents the views of the co-hosting organizations, but is intended as a contribution to the ongoing reflections on the future of UN peace operations.

Vicenza, Italy, 9 November, 2025