



Multinational Stand-by High Readiness Brigade for United Nations Operations

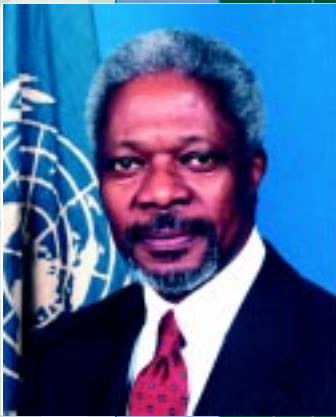


SHIRBRIG





Foreword by Secretary-General Kofi Annan



When crisis erupts, and the international community turns to the United Nations for a peacekeeping operation, the Organization must be able to respond quickly and effectively. Indeed, the early days and weeks following a cease-fire or peace accord are often the most critical period – for stability, for the credibility of a force, for peace in general.

Member States, the Secretariat and regional organizations have been working hard to enable the United Nations to deploy rapidly and to improve preparedness, training and logistical support for peacekeeping. SHIRBRIG, The Multinational Stand-by High-Readiness Brigade, is a rapid deployment formation available to the United Nations as part of the United Nations Standby Arrangements System. It has already proven its utility in the deployment of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea. There, a force that had trained together and developed a high degree of coherence was able to arrive and establish itself quickly in the theatre of operation, thereby sending a message of competence and commitment.

The SHIRBRIG concept merits further development. I encourage SHIRBRIG to share its experiences and to strengthen its working-level links with the United Nations. I call on other groups of nations to establish similar arrangements and to make forces available for the widest possible range of scenarios, as envisaged in the «coherent brigade group» concept contained in the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations. SHIRBRIG is an important element in the peacekeeping picture, and I look forward to close ties between SHIRBRIG and the United Nations in the years ahead.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'K. Annan', is located at the bottom of the page.

Kofi A. Annan



participated in this working group, while the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in the UN Secretariat took part as observer. The report from the Working Group was distributed to the member states of the UN.

An Implementation Group was subsequently formed in early 1996 with a mandate to prepare the various legal

and technical agreements needed for the creation of the multinational stand-by high readiness brigade. The most important achievement of the Implementation Group was an overall agreement on how SHIRBRIG should be managed politically as well as militarily. It was decided that the nations would exercise political control through a steering committee and that a military planning element would be established. The modalities and mandate of the Steering Committee (SC) and the military Planning Element (PLANELM) were reflected in two separate Memoranda of Understanding (MOU/ SC and MOU/PLANELM). In addition, a Letter of Intent (LOI) was agreed upon asking nations to commit themselves politically to the establishment of SHIRBRIG.



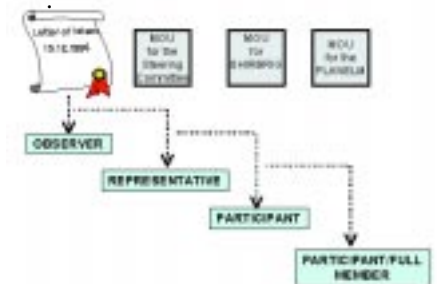
Background

The initiative for a Multinational Stand-by High Readiness Brigade for UN Operations (SHIRBRIG) was launched in 1994 following discussions between Danish authorities and then head of the United Nations Department for Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), Mr. Kofi Annan. During these discussions, it became clear that the UN would look favourably upon an initiative in which a group of countries would pursue efforts to reinforce the United Nations Stand-by Arrangements System (UNSAS), thereby enhancing its capability to react more rapidly, and with a greater degree of flexibility to developing situations. This capability would be realised through effective and continuous pre-deployment planning, training and preparation of units from different countries, and by promoting interoperability through the establishment of common operating procedures and joint training.

In 1995, Denmark established a multinational Working Group with the mandate to develop the concept for a multinational stand-by high readiness brigade that could be deployed for UN peacekeeping and humanitarian operations. Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Canada, the Czech Republic, Finland, Ireland, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland and Sweden

The United Nations Standby Arrangements System (UNSAS) is based on conditional commitments by Member States of specified resources that could be made available within the agreed response times for UN peacekeeping operations. These resources can be military formations, specialized personnel (civilian and military), services as well as material and equipment. The resources agreed-upon remain on standby in their home country. Where necessary, training is conducted to prepare them to fulfil specific tasks or functions according to UN guidelines. Standby resources are used exclusively for peacekeeping operations mandated by the Security Council.

When specific needs arise, standby resources are requested by the Secretary-General and, if approved by participating Member States, are rapidly deployed to set up new peacekeeping missions or to reinforce existing ones.





Council under Chapter VI of the UN Charter. The brigade has the capability of remaining in the area of operation for a maximum of six months before being replaced by other peacekeeping forces.



Although SHIRBRIG trains as a multinational brigade, each participating country will decide on a case-by-case basis whether they will take part in any given SHIRBRIG mission. Their national decision making procedures (and thereby their national sovereignty) is in no way affected by participation in SHIRBRIG. This is the reason why SHIRBRIG maintains a brigade pool comprising a number of similar units, exceeding the force requirement. This pool of units will normally ensure the deployment of the brigade, even if a participant decides to abstain from providing

The SHIRBRIG Concept

SHIRBRIG is a multinational brigade that can be made available to the UN, within the context of the UNSAS, as a rapid deployable peacekeeping force. The potential types of peace missions in which SHIRBRIG could be deployed include preventive deployments, monitoring of a cease-fire, separation of forces, humanitarian assistance and other scenarios in which the opposing sides have entered into an agreement and accepted an international presence in the area.

SHIRBRIG can be made available, on a case-by-case basis, for peacekeeping operations mandated by the Security





troops for a specific mission.

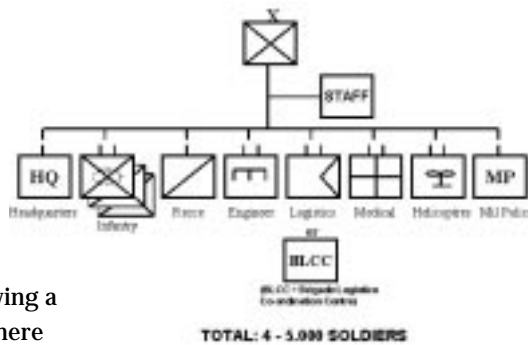
In principle, SHIRBRIG could be deployed anywhere in the world. When tasked, SHIRBRIG's advanced party can be deployed into the area of operation within 14 days, and the main force can be deployed within 30 days, following a national decision to participate. There could be extreme geographic or climatic conditions that would impose a limit on SHIRBRIG's ability to carry out a particular mission.



All SHIRBRIG units are part of the UNSAS-system and are based in their respective nations. SHIRBRIG operates with a set of standards and procedures. The SHIRBRIG Commander is responsible for the training of the SHIRBRIG staff and unit commanders, while it remains a national responsibility to train and prepare the units.

The organisation of the Brigade

When fully deployed, SHIRBRIG consists of about 4000 to 5000 troops comprising a Brigade Headquarters, a headquarters Company with communication facilities, infantry battalions, reconnaissance units, with medical, engineering and logistic support as well as helicopters and military police. A partial deployment of the brigade is also possible, as was the case in UNMEE. Participation in



UN peacekeeping operations is under the normal UN arrangements for command and control. Upon deployment, the element previously on stand-by as part of SHIRBRIG may provide all of the UN military capability or operate as an integral part of a larger UN force.

The Steering Committee

The Steering Committee, which held its first meeting in June 1997, is the executive body of SHIRBRIG. Prior to forces coming under UN command and control, it executes the political and economic control of the brigade, issues directives to the Commander of SHIRBRIG, approves military concepts, directs training and exercise programmes, oversees and audits budgets, and is responsible for the manning of SHIRBRIG positions. The Steering Committee also assesses future conflict scenarios. Furthermore, it is responsible for initiating, coordinating and controlling SHIRBRIG's decision making and force generation process. The SHIRBRIG force generation process supports that used by the UN. Once the capability is deployed under UN command and control there is no link between the Steering committee and forces in the field.

The Presidency of the Steering Committee rotates annually between

the member nations. It is held for one year and transfers every 1 June.

The Planning Element

The Planning Element is the permanent multinational military staff of the brigade. It was officially opened by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan on 2 September 1997, and is normally manned by 13 officers from ten different countries. During operations, the Planning Element serves as the nucleus of the brigade headquarters, and is augmented by 69 designated officers and NCOs from the member nations. When



SHIRBRIG was deployed to UNMEE, the staff consisted of 55 officers. The Planning Element is responsible for developing standard operating



procedures, carrying out operational preparations for deployment, and conducting operational and logistical



training of the SHIRBRIG staff. Also, the Planning Element monitors the training and readiness status of the various units, and carries out tasks assigned by the Steering Committee. The Chief of Staff of SHIRBRIG, a colonel, is in charge of day-to-day running of the Planning Element. All the members that have signed the MOU/PLANELM cooperate in financing the Planning Element. The Planning Element carried out its first training activities in 1998. The annual training programme includes commanders' conferences, staff exercises and a command post exercise. The Planning Element is only responsible for training unit commanders and staff in the brigade headquarters. The Planning Element



is located at Høvelte Barracks outside Copenhagen, Denmark.

SHIRBRIG made available to the UN and deployed to UNMEE

By the autumn of 1999, at the 10th Steering Committee Meeting in Stockholm, Sweden, member nations concluded that SHIRBRIG's force pool had reached a sufficient level - in terms of composition, size, training and equipment - to be declared available to the United Nations, effective by the end of January 2000.

In June 2000 Ethiopia and Eritrea signed a peace agreement. Through mediation by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), the two countries agreed that a UN peacekeeping force should be deployed to secure and monitor their common border. After an informal approach, SHIRBRIG officers were invited to participate in the UN planning process for the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE). After a thorough force generation process, it was decided that parts of SHIRBRIG would



participate in UNMEE in November 2000. The SHIRBRIG contribution consisted of a headquarters, an infantry battalion from the Netherlands, which was reinforced by an infantry company from Canada, and a headquarters company from Denmark. All SHIRBRIG member nations contributed officers to the UNMEE headquarters. SHIRBRIG spent six months in UNMEE and was re-deployed in May 2001.

The Future of SHIRBRIG

Up to this point SHIRBRIG nations,



under the supervision of the Presidency, have focused on assigning adequate force contributions to the brigade pool, making SHIRBRIG available for the conduct of operations. The Planning Element has placed emphasis on preparing joint operational and logistical procedures and training commanders and staff personnel.

In the wake of the successful participation in UNMEE, SHIRBRIG has initiated a comprehensive review process seeking to absorb the various lessons learned from their operation in Ethiopia and Eritrea. This process will form the basis for preparing SHIRBRIG for future deployments and ensure that it will steadily improve its

capabilities to become more adept at conducting peacekeeping operations. The overriding objective of the SHIRBRIG concept remains to rapidly contribute troops to UN peacekeeping operations, and to become available again as quickly as possible following redeployment.

The future for SHIRBRIG is very demanding, with potential increase in peacekeeping missions for the brigade. Multinational co-operative structures have numerous challenges. In order for SHIRBRIG to be successful, it needs to be inclusive in scope and pro-active in nature. This means that member nations must continuously and carefully review and update their contributions to the brigade pool. SHIRBRIG must also continue to bring in new member nations, which could both enhance its geographic representation and improve its capability. Furthermore, SHIRBRIG must improve both its decision making and force generation



capabilities. In addition, SHIRBRIG must continue to maintain and further develop its fruitful interaction with the United Nations Headquarters in New York. SHIRBRIG's effectiveness and its position as an important contributor to international peacekeeping will be determined by the results of these initiatives.

SHIRBRIG supports the recommendation contained in the Brahimi Report, calling for the creation of coherent brigade-sized forces for peacekeeping operations. SHIRBRIG remains ready to assist the UN in its efforts in this endeavour, and is ready to provide more details to other nations should they wish to obtain more information about the capability.

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