

MOTIVES FOR PARTICIPATION IN UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS: THE CASE OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

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INTRODUCTION

UN peacekeeping operations (UN PKOs) constitute one of the most interesting and most controversial areas in international security collaboration. Despite more than 60 years of peacekeeping activity, no universally acceptable definition of the term exists. To a great extent, this is linked to the fact that, although the UN has used peacekeeping as a tool for conflict management and resolution, this use is not explicitly anchored in the UN Charter. Contemporary peacekeeping by the UN may be characterized as *“the multidimensional management of a complex peace operation, usually following the termination of a civil war, designed to provide interim security and assist parties to make those institutional, material, and ideational transformations that are essential to make peace sustainable”* [1].

Besides their peacekeeping functions, UN PKOs provide a means for countries, irrespective of their power category, to raise their profile in the foreign and security policy domains. Since the end of the Cold War, there has been a significant rising trend in the number of countries participating. This gives rise to the question: What is their motivation for taking part in UN PKOs? It is a question that figures into an endless debate over whether countries take part in peacekeeping operations as a way to defend the values of the global community—such as peace and collaboration among nations— or whether they instead see such operations primarily as vehicles for reinforcing their own power and promoting their own interests [2]. To explore this, this paper will focus on the Czech Republic’s participation in UN PKOs. Within the confines of the debate alluded to, it will investigate the matter and motivation for Czech participation in UN PKOs.

PARTICIPATION BY COUNTRIES IN UN PKOs: CURRENT PATTERNS

Since the UN itself has no standing army, military and police personnel for UN PKOs must be provided by the UN’s member states. They are bound to do so on the basis of Article 13 of the UN Charter, which states: *“All Members of the United Nations, in order to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security, undertake to make available to the Security Council... armed forces, assistance, and facilities...,*

necessary for the purpose of maintaining international peace and security.” Personnel from a total 123 countries currently serve in UN PKOs [3]. This sounds an impressive number, but it is deceptive. The numbers of personnel contributed by individual countries differs significantly. Some countries contribute thousands of units, while the contribution of others is essentially symbolic—on the order of several individuals.

Over time, the structure of the participating countries has changed substantially, as have their profiles. During the Cold War, it was held that the major powers, because of their geopolitical interests, should not contribute to UN PKOs; preference was given instead to neutral countries, typically small- to midsize developed countries that had midrange military capacity and adequate diplomatic influence. Once the Cold War had ended, such restrictions fell by the wayside, and more powerful countries began to take a direct part in UN PKOs. Another trend arose which was even more significant—the number of troops from less developed countries began to increase. Currently, the top contributor to UN PKOs in terms of military and policing personnel is Ethiopia, with 8 321 individuals; it is followed by India with 7 696, Pakistan with 7 298, Bangladesh with 7 051, and Rwanda with 6 141 [3].

While developing countries are the dominant providers of human resources for peacekeeping operations, the developed countries offset their lower HR contributions by delivering more funding to the UN for maintaining the peace. Funding PKOs is a collective responsibility of all UN member states under Article 17 of the UN Charter. The proportional contribution owed by individual countries is determined using a special scale that takes into account mainly the economic power of the country. The greatest proportion of funding must be provided by the permanent members of the UN Security Council because of their special obligation to maintain international peace and security (although practice often deviates from theory in this case). The top providers of assessed contributions to UN PKOs for 2013-15 include the United States (28.38% of the total UN PKOs budget), Japan (10.83%), France (7.22%), Germany (7.14%), and the United Kingdom (6.68%) [3].

Participating countries contribute to total of 103 510 uniformed personnel to UN PKOs [3]. This represents an approximate tenfold increase since 1990. Nor have personnel numbers increased linearly; quite the contrary: the trend has oscillated, particularly as a function of fluctuations in the number of peacekeeping operations underway and their scope. This in turn has been reflected in the individual development phases of UN peacekeeping. Examples include an unprecedented boom in numbers in the early 1990s, followed by a crisis stemming from the failure of some UN PKOs, then rebounding once again in the late 1990s to the present day.

THE LOGIC OF APPROPRIATENESS AND THE LOGIC OF CONSEQUENCES AS A FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS

Suitable frameworks for analysing countries' participation in UN PKOs are given by the logic of appropriateness, and the logic of consequences. The first of these appears primarily in constructivist theories of international relations; the latter, in rational choice

theory. In analysing countries' participation in UN PKOs, it is important to note that these two theories are not mutually exclusive: they may coexist in many and varied forms.

The logic of appropriateness emphasizes actions motivated by the rules of appropriate or exemplary conduct. These rules are adhered to because they are seen as natural, justified, anticipated, and legitimate. Actors strive to meet obligations that come to them from a particular role, from their identity, or from membership in a political community or group. In so doing, they act in a manner they view as appropriate given their mutual relationships in a given type of situation [4]. States whose behaviour is motivated by the logic of appropriateness participate in UN peacekeeping because they see the action in question as correct, appropriate, and exemplary. For them, participation in UN PKOs is a moral duty, a way of meeting obligations that stem from their role, their identity, and their membership in a particular political community. In this case, the chief obligation is that of safeguarding the international peace and security that states agreed to upon joining the United Nations. Participation is not primarily tied to the anticipated future outcome of these actions nor upon any calculation of profit, but instead relies upon interpretations of what is reasonable, natural, and good. Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink [5] relate the motives for their behaviour in this case to altruism, empathy, legitimacy, reputation, acknowledgment, and conformity. In this respect, states' participation in UN PKOs may be interpreted as an example of altruistic behaviour and a way for the state to demonstrate "good international citizenship". Support for UN PKOs may also be engendered by an effort to gain or keep respected international relations, to create or promote one's own image and prestige, or to receive acknowledgment that would otherwise be hard to obtain.

If, by contrast, states' actions are led by the logic of consequences, their actions may be supposed to stem from rational choice. The logic of consequences relates to an instrumental conception of rationality: actions are chosen not further primary purpose, but instead to allow a particular goal to be efficiently achieved. This logic implies that UN peacekeeping is viewed as a tool by which states endeavour to achieve their goals and maximize their gains. In deliberating the costs and benefits of different behaviours, they will estimate the likelihood that a particular action will lead to a desirable result. This consideration of anticipated consequences is tied to the way actors' actions derive from their preferences and interests. These function as driving forces for actions and are viewed as stable and externally given. In other words, if states believe the gains from their actions in supporting UN PKOs will outweigh the costs, they will elect to participate. If on the other hand potential losses are unacceptably high, they will abstain from participation [6].

The interests countries wish to pursue in participating in peacekeeping operations take various forms. Most significant are security interests. A conflict in one country can to greater or lesser degree influence the security interests of a number of other countries [7], whether this be due to the threat of violence spilling over borders,

massive waves of refugees, or the rise of radical, extremist, terrorist, or organized crime groups—countries in conflict harbour favourable conditions for all of these. Participating countries may have a natural interest, then, in stopping the conflict via a UN PKO.

Participation in UN PKOs also offers a way for armies to be rehabilitated after an era of authoritarianism in which the army's integrity and professionalism has been compromised. In countries whose army is not under civilian control, participation may be perceived as a means of focusing the armed forces outside the country's own borders, thus preventing it from interfering in domestic issues [8]. Countries may benefit from participating in UN PKOs from a military perspective, as well: soldiers who take part in UN PKOs gain military experience from action in a multinational environment under difficult conditions, and at the same time deepen their contact with the armies of other participating countries.

Finally, the economic interests of participating countries may come into play. A conflict in the target country may form an obstacle to commercial exchange or investment. The effort to stabilize the security situation in the country thereby contributes to creating conditions favourable for the resumption of economic collaboration. Participation in UN PKOs may bring a "return on investment" in the form of exclusive access to markets, to advance information, and other economic benefits. For developing countries, one such benefit is undoubtedly an effort to take advantage of compensation paid by the UN for the provision of military personnel. This compensation may frequently represent a significant foreign income for the countries in question.

As has been noted above, the logic of appropriateness is not mutually exclusive with the logic of consequences. Participation by countries in UN PKOs may therefore not be amenable to description using either alone. To the contrary: any explanation will likely include elements of both. It may even be assumed that combining these logical approaches may increase the probability that the intervention will be a success. Countries' determination to successfully complete the action may be reinforced, thereby ensuring sufficient support for UN PKOs. The logic of appropriateness, that is, may bring results if supported by the logic of consequences.

PARTICIPATION BY THE CZECH REPUBLIC IN UN PKOs FROM 1990 UNTIL PRESENT

The significance ascribed by the Czech Republic to its participation in UN PKOs has undergone significant evolution since the early 1990s. Searching for its place among democratic countries after the Velvet Revolution of 1989, Czechoslovakia declared its wish to be a stabilizing element in Central Europe, and to be a part of modern European civilization. The catchphrase "Back to Europe" demonstrated Czechoslovakia's historical, cultural, and economic affinity with the West. Czechoslovak foreign policy was strongly UN-oriented, and was reflected in virtually down-the-line support for UN PKOs. The participation of Czechoslovakia, and later the Czech Republic, in UN PKOs

in the early 1990s was presented as an expression of the country's effort to maintain international peace, security, and stability, as well as its willingness to take responsibility for peacekeeping. Its participation may be viewed as an expression by the country of its willingness to take an active part in the international community and to support collaboration among nations, fulfil its obligations deriving from UN membership, and contribute to the protection of common values. It also confirmed the country's fidelity to Western civilization by demonstrating that it held identical (Western) norms and values.

From this, it is clear that during the early 1990s, the country was acting in step with the logic of appropriateness. During this period, participation achieved a scope never seen nor even approximated since. The peak came in December 1994, when 1 028 Czech soldiers took part in UN PKOs. During this same period, the country engaged in the largest number of UN PKOs of the entire post-revolution era to the present day. It may be deduced that Czechoslovakia (later the Czech Republic) was striving significantly to put into practice motives derived from the logic of appropriateness. It was rewarded with respect and recognition, especially owing to its participation in UN PKOs in the Balkans.

But this active participation phase was short-lived. Soon the country reoriented itself towards NATO membership, which was now seen as the best way to guarantee the Czech Republic's security, forcing its UN peacekeeping role into the backseat [9]. Substantial criticism of the UN's peacekeeping ability was voiced and the attitude turned sceptical. In strategic foreign and security policy documents concerning involvement in foreign military operations, the Czech Republic continued to present itself as an integral part of the international community, aware of its obligations and ready to shoulder its share of responsibility for global security and the protection of common values. But this stance was belied by the country's contribution to UN PKOs. By 1996, the number of Czech troops participating in UN PKOs had dropped from the hundreds to the dozens, and subsequently, to a few individuals.

An analysis of the key primary sources of Czech security policy as regards participation in UN peacekeeping shows that Czech interests were given greater heft than the norms and values of the international community. The period of the early 1990s is the sole exception. In accordance with the logic of consequences, the instrumental concept of Czech participation in UN PKOs has prevailed—participation has served as a means for attaining set goals, in this case, fulfilling the country's own interests. In other words, participation in peacekeeping efforts has been seen not as an objective per se, but rather as a tool to be used to maximize the Czech Republic's benefit.

The key strategic security documents analysed reveal that most significant for the country's participation have been its security interests. Maintaining peace and security in the region of interest has repeatedly been presented as an optimal means of minimizing the impact of threats to the Czech Republic's security. During the 1990s, in particular, involvement by Czech troops in UN PKOs was seen as important from the

standpoint of acquiring military experience and demonstrating a readiness to be integrated into transatlantic security structures. But later, the approach to participation in traditional PKOs became more low-key. More value was ascribed to larger deployments capable of using force, so-called robust peacekeeping operations [10].

In addition to security and military interests, Czech economic interests have played a significant role. Many Czech Republic's security and strategy documents recognize the dependence of the country's economic prosperity on conflict-free development in Europe and the region in which the Czech Republic is located. Participation is therefore perceived as contributing to the elimination of the negative impact of conflicts on economic relationships; at the same time it creates a favourable environment for the Czech Republic's economic interests to be implemented.

Taking into account other aspects of Czech participation in peacekeeping operations, the logic of consequences seems more applicable than does the logic of appropriateness. Although in principle there are no geographic restrictions on the use of Czech troops, and though they have been deployed at significant distances from the Czech Republic, with two exceptions they have been utilized¹ in only two regions: Europe² and Africa³. This points to a selective manner of participation. The academic literature has considered participation of this sort support for the thesis that peacekeeping participation is mercenary in nature.

Of the eight total operations in which the Czech Republic has taken part in Europe, fully seven were in the Balkans. This testifies to the priority given by the country to this region, and is further reinforced by the troop numbers involved—more than a thousand. The Western Balkans have been a long-term objective for Czech interests because of their geographic proximity and the traditional historical, economic, and security ties among the countries. Because conflicts in this region were repeatedly viewed to present a threat to Czech security during the time they were in place, it was in the Czech Republic's sovereign interest to contribute to stabilizing the security situation in the region. Participation by Czech soldiers in resolving the Balkan conflicts also contributed to creating a favourable atmosphere for the resumption of economic relationships which had been crippled by them.

The other group of countries in which the CR has taken part in peacekeeping operations lies in Africa. Here, the level of contribution was significantly lower than had been the case in Balkan operations, but in spite of this, sub-Saharan Africa may be considered a long-term priority area for Czech military observers. It should be noted at the outset that the individual African operations in which Czech troops have taken part do not provide a clear picture of the logic motivating the Czech participation. The

¹ UNDOF on the Golan Heights and UNMOT in Tajikistan

² UNPROFOR in the former Yugoslavia, UNCRO, UNTAES and UNMOP in Croatia, UNPREDEP in Macedonia, UNMIK in Kosovo and UNOMIG in Georgia

³ UNAVEM I and II in Angola, UNTAG in Namibia, UNOSOM I in Somalia, ONUMOZ in Mozambique, UNOMIL and UNMIL in Liberia, UNAMSIL in Sierra Leone, MONUC and MONUSCO in DR Congo, UNMEE in Ethiopia and Eritrea and MINUSMA in Mali

intensity of the relationships between the individual countries and the Czech Republic varies greatly. But an analysis of the operation of Czechoslovak and later Czech soldiers in these countries reveals in many cases a common denominator—the economic interests of Czechoslovakia, later the Czech Republic. Most of the countries in question possess mineral resources, and the Czech Republic targets them for the export of goods and services, as well as investments by Czech economic entities. In many cases, an effort has been declared to improve local conditions and develop economic relationships. This inclines one to the assumption that calculated potential benefits provide strong motivation for Czech participation in African peacekeeping missions.

As has been demonstrated above, it is nevertheless not always trivial to separate a country's own interests from the collective interest. Participation motivated by the fulfilment of private interests by individual states also ends up contributing to the fulfilment of the collective interest, and in such a case the logic of appropriateness and the logic of consequences overlap. In this sense, strategic security policy documents repeatedly emphasize that Czech troops should serve to protect national interests, as well as those of the Alliance and international associations such as the UN. The utilization of Czech soldiers abroad is thus seen as being aligned with both Czech interests and broader human interests. The country's contribution to UN PKOs thus expresses support for the norms and values of the international community at the same time it represents a way of satisfying Czech interests. This is made clear by the basic criteria for deploying Czech troops in UN PKOs, criteria on which key actors in Czech foreign and security policy agree: 1) a strong mandate by the international community, 2) operations for which the logistics have been provided, 3) concurrent participation by allies with whom the Czech Republic wishes to collaborate, and 4) tasks which are sufficiently attractive in nature [11].

Changes are currently underway in Czech foreign and security policy that contrast with the mostly symbolic participation so far in UN PKOs. Because of reduced military activity by NATO in Kosovo and Afghanistan, freeing up military capacity, there has been unprecedented interest in sending Czech troops to take part in UN PKOs. It is recognized that deploying units in UN PKOs may get the Czech Republic good marks in foreign policy, potentially with economic benefits [12]. In 2015 this led the Czech Republic to get involved in a UN peacekeeping operation in Mali (MINUSMA) by sending a group of soldiers (<25) from the 601st Special Forces Group, an elite military unit within the Czech army. In the same year, the country contributed three positions to the UNDOF mission command structure in the Golan Heights in the Middle East [13], and there are plans to substantially expand Czech participation by sending an additional 30 to 40 army engineers to the north of the buffer zone between Israel and Syria. At the moment, however, their fate is unclear. The broader consequences of these changes for the CR's profile as a UN PKO participant may be assessed only in hindsight.

CONCLUSION

Those aspects of Czech participation in peacekeeping examined here and the available data indicate that the logic of consequences is more applicable than is the logic of appropriateness. On the basis of the instrumental concept, Czech participation in UN PKOs serves to fulfil the interests of the Czech Republic, and these play a greater role than do norms and values in Czech discourse. Based upon the principle of undivided security, particular accent is given to security interests, since maintaining stability and security is generally understood as the optimal way of minimizing the impact of threat to the country's own security.

In addition, economic interests play a key role. Engagement in UN peacekeeping operations is understood as a contribution to eliminating the negative impact of conflicts on economic relationships the Czech Republic holds with target countries. Emphasis is also given to the benefits gained by Czech troops in the form of experience in international military operations carried out under the exacting conditions present in conflict areas.

In summary, then, over the period studied, Czech participation in UN PKOs has been motivated primarily by the logic of consequences, although there has also been perceptible influence by the logic of appropriateness, particularly in the early 1990s. The latter's role currently, however, is secondary; it functions as a complementary strategy to the logic of consequences.

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