

Box 3.4 HIV/AIDS and UN Peacekeeping

It has been eleven years since the UN Security Council passed the landmark Resolution 1308 (2000), recognizing the impact of HIV/AIDS on international peace and security. The resolution stressed that HIV/AIDS, if left unchecked, can pose great risks to global security and stability, and in the most severe instances can contribute to state breakdown. It also noted that violence and instability play a significant role in exacerbating the pandemic and spreading the disease. Resolution 1308 mandated the Secretary-General and the UN's Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) to take relevant steps to raise awareness and provide training to peacekeeping personnel on HIV prevention.

Since the adoption of Resolution 1308, over 186 reports of the Secretary-General to the Security Council have cited HIV/AIDS-related concerns. DPKO has sought to train its peacekeepers to raise awareness of the disease and has made it a priority to curb the transmission of HIV among peacekeepers and host communities. To do so, DPKO established pre-deployment training, induction training on arrival, and continuing education for peacekeepers. It has also integrated HIV prevention and awareness into its

peacekeeping missions, with HIV/AIDS units in larger missions and focal points in smaller peacekeeping and political missions.

In 2011 DPKO and the Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) released a report reviewing progress in implementing Resolution 1308. *On the Front Line* assesses progress since 2005, the last time a review of this type was conducted.¹ During this period, HIV induction training increased from 11 to 55 percent, an especially significant increase given an overall increase in the number of peacekeeping troops. Voluntary confidential counseling and testing (VCCT) services also increased significantly, with the number of personnel requesting these services increasing from 1,830 in 2005 to over 14,000 by the end of 2010. Moreover, the number of sites at which VCCT is available increased from two to thirteen over the same period. DPKO has also prioritized the training of HIV peer educators, with 1,500 trained in 2010. In addition, many current troop-contributing countries provide mandatory HIV testing policies for their uniformed personnel before or after deployment.

However, the report also notes that major challenges remain in effectively

implementing Resolution 1308, including low funding for HIV/AIDS programs and the need for a greater focus on prevention. Continued stigma around the disease may also discourage individuals from educating themselves and being tested. The report also acknowledges that the increase in induction training has been inconsistent across missions.

In June 2011 the Security Council met to discuss HIV/AIDS for only the second time, and unanimously adopted Resolution 1983. The resolution welcomed efforts by DPKO and other actors to strengthen HIV awareness and prevention and noted the important role of peace operations in providing a holistic response. Shortly thereafter, the UN General Assembly adopted a political declaration on HIV/AIDS that stressed the critical role of mission leadership in prevention, treatment, and care.

DPKO's efforts to integrate HIV prevention and awareness into peacekeeping operations have helped to mitigate the risks posed by the spread of the virus. However, the prevalence of HIV and AIDS worldwide still remains a concern to global stability and security, particularly in vulnerable postconflict environments.

Note: 1. The report is available at http://www.unaids.org/en/media/unaids/contentassets/documents/document/2011/20110519_OnTheFrontLine.pdf.