PROTECTING CIVILIANS FROM VIOLENCE

A Threat-Based Approach to Protection of Civilians
in UN Peace Operations

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Foreword

Today, more than at any point in time, protecting civilians has come to the forefront of UN peace operations. Military forces, civilian and humanitarian actors are working in different ways to protect civilians from the catastrophic consequences of war and armed conflict. Through common strategies for the protection of civilians, military and civilian components are using different means to achieve this common goal. In this, mutual support, coordination and good communication are the keys to success. Tailor-made operational designs, flexible application of the full spectrum of relevant responses – always adapted to the context on the ground – can help improve future UN peace operations' ability to protect. The Threat-Based Approach to Protection of Civilians in UN Peace Operations applies these principles and provides practitioners at all levels with a new and innovative practical tool. There is no doubt that it will greatly help the UN's efforts to deliver better on what has become its core mandate: protecting civilians from the scourge of violence and war.

Hilde Frafjord Johnson

Former Special Representative of the Secretary-General to South Sudan and member of the UN Secretary-General's High Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations.

In spite of criticism and even distrust of them, UN peace operations have proven to be a relevant tool for maintaining and providing peace and stability in complex armed conflicts. Yet military leaders acknowledge the intrinsic limitations of military power and the use of force. Force alone cannot create lasting peace in conflicts in which armed actors target civilians. Yet, the ability to apply adequate force to protect civilians remains a prerequisite for lasting peace, in UN peace operations as well as any others. This demands an improved ability to understand the nature of threats against civilians. Why are civilians being attacked? What happens if the attackers succeed? How can military forces be used to protect them? The Threat-Based Approach to Protection of Civilians in UN Peace Operations provides the UN with a tool for more efficient peace operations, introducing a conceptual framework for military planners and practitioners that can easily be shared and used across missions.

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Table of Contents

List of Acronyms

ADF	Allied Democratic Forces
DFS	Department of Field Support
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
FARDC	*Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo* / Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo
FPU	Formed Police Unit
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
JMAC	Joint Mission Analysis Centre
JOC	Joint Operations Centre
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
POC	Protection of Civilians
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
UN	United Nations
UNMISS	UN Mission in South Sudan
UNSMIS	UN Supervision Mission in Syria
U2/J2	UN Intelligence Personnel

1   Introduction

User guide

This chapter introduces the threat-based approach to protection of civilians (POC), describes its purpose and scope, and outlines the structure of the document.

Background. Despite being a priority task, protection of civilians (POC) has proven difficult to implement on the ground due to a lack of theoretical and practical guidance for military actors. To fill these gaps, the United Nations (UN) has recently developed an overarching POC policy, as well as implementing guidelines, strategies and concepts, offering UN military components guidance on how to implement POC mandates (see Annex A: Recommended reading). However, more practical advice for military units at the operational and tactical levels is still lacking. This document therefore aims at complementing existing UN POC guidance with a threat-based approach to protection of civilians, focusing on the specific challenges that military commanders are confronted with in missions.

Definition. In UN peace operations, a POC mandate authorizes use of 'all necessary means, up to and including the use of deadly force, aimed at preventing or responding to threats of physical violence against civilians, within capabilities and areas of operations, and without prejudice to the responsibility of the host-government' (POC Policy, 2015). This definition implies that military forces play a crucial role in the implementation of POC mandates.

Joint responsibility. All components of a UN peace operation, including the military, have a joint responsibility to implement protection mandates. UN multidimensional peace operations have a range of instruments at their disposal that can be used to improve civilian security. This requires each component to consider how best to utilize its particular assets and capabilities in cooperation with other protection actors, both within and outside the UN. Some of the complementary components are discussed in this document, because they represent important partners and force multipliers for the military component.

Threat analysis. A key characteristic of current operational environments is that civilians are being deliberately targeted by armed actors. In some cases, such attacks on civilians result from specific strategies aimed at the extermination or expelling of entire groups or communities. However, in most cases, armed groups, abusive authorities and rogue militias use violence against civilians to survive, to undermine political opposition or to secure economic rewards and other benefits. Different types of perpetrators and rationales often co-exist within the same area of operation. Distinguishing between different types of threats and determining the potential role and utility of military force is therefore essential to improve UN military efforts to protect civilians.

1.1   Purpose

Enhanced understanding of military protection. The threat-based approach to POC is meant to help UN military commanders, planners and practitioners at all levels of the UN system to understand how the military component of a UN peace operation can use military force more effectively to protect civilians from different types of physical threats.

Shared understanding of threats to civilians. The threat-based approach may also provide other actors within and outside the UN with a structured and generic way of understanding threats to civilians. For example, it can be used at the strategic level in UN HQ to help identify different types of threats against civilians *before* deploying troops or designing an appropriate POC strategy.

Threat prioritization tool. UN military components should always prioritize the greatest and most imminent threat to civilians in order to protect as many people as possible. By using the threat-based approach, it is possible to make better sense of how perpetrators behave, which in turn may help identify and prioritize the most imminent threats as well as the most appropriate responses.

1.2   Scope

Physical protection. Physical protection not only includes eliminating threats, but also reducing civilian vulnerabilities. Protection can in other words be achieved in a variety of ways, for example by reducing the number of attacks against civilians, by facilitating everyday civilian life through area security, by reducing the presence of small arms, by removing illegal checkpoints, or by assisting humanitarian actors in their protection efforts.

The role of the military component. This document focuses on the role of the military component in UN peace operations with a POC mandate. The host-state will always have the primary responsibility for protecting its own population, but, when the host-state fails to do so, the military component is the UN mission's most important tool to provide physical protection to civilians.

1.3   Outline

Chapter 2: POC scenarios. This chapter presents eight generic POC scenarios that describe various types of threats ranging from the least violent situations (MOB VIOLENCE) to the most violent (GENOCIDE). These eight scenarios are based on an extensive number of case studies of former conflicts and operations over the past 25 years, and the different types of perpetrators that civilians and intervening military forces have been confronted with in these operations. In combination, the scenarios aim to capture the full range of potential physical threats to civilians (although new scenarios may emerge in the future).

Chapter 3: Threat analysis. This chapter proposes five questions and four factors that may help analysts identify which of these eight scenarios civilians are confronted with. It also offers a checklist containing early warning indicators. This chapter may be particularly useful for Joint Mission Analysis Centers (JMAC) / Joint Operations Centers (JOC) and UN intelligence personnel/U2/J2.

Chapter 4: Military planning. This chapter provides advice for military planners at the strategic and operational levels. The chapter outlines the aspects to consider during the 'mission analysis phase' and the 'courses of action development phase'.

Chapter 5: Tactical responses. This chapter lists different threats at the tactical level and suggests appropriate responses. It is structured according to the UN's four-phased response model (prevention, pre-emption, response and consolidation) and the eight POC scenarios introduced in Chapter 2. The main audience is military practitioners at the operational and tactical levels in-mission.

Chapter 6: Monitoring and evaluation. This chapter suggests five ways to monitor and evaluate efforts to protect civilians, and provides relevant metrics for each scenario. This chapter may be particularly useful for JMAC/JOC personnel and other practitioners with the task of reporting on the progress of UN military efforts to protect.

Annex A provides a list of recommended reading, including current UN guidance.

2   Scenarios

Categorizing threats. The eight POC scenarios introduced here systematize the complexity of violence against civilians by breaking it down into generic categories. This categorization is meant to facilitate systematic analysis of perpetrator behavior and strategies to inform POC planning, POC responses, and POC monitoring and evaluation within a whole-of-mission UN approach.

Key characteristics. The scenarios have been drawn up using five parameters that describe the characteristics of violent perpetrators: (i) actor type, (ii) rationale for attacking civilians, (iii) strategies and tactics used, (iv) relevant military capabilities to attack civilians, and (v) the expected outcome in terms of human suffering, if the perpetrators succeed.

The following section describes each scenario, ranging from the least to the most dangerous in terms of the scale and intensity of violence against civilians. Examples from previous UN operations are also provided for each scenario. The main characteristics of each of these scenarios are summarized in Table 2.1 at the end of the chapter.

Words of caution
The scenarios are only generic descriptions of what perpetrators of violence may do. In many armed conflicts, perpetrators display more than one strategic rationale for attacking civilians. Also, their rationales can vary across time and space. This mosaic of rationales can cause confusion to those aiming to protect civilians in a certain geographical area. Future conflicts may also see other types of scenarios emerge. For example, it is still unclear whether and how UN peace operations may provide protection against violent extremism (such as ISIS and Boko Haram).

2.1   Mob violence

In this scenario, rioting individuals and/or loosely organized groups of civilians (usually in mobs) destroy property and harm civilians. Personal gain, revenge and political discord may all form part of the rationale in this primarily opportunistic form of violence against civilians. Small-scale skirmishes prior to elections and/or major political events can trigger mob violence. Planned demonstrations may also get out of hand. In these situations, civilians can be targeted randomly or intentionally, but relatively few people are likely to be killed, because the perpetrators neither seek to maximize violence nor possess the means to do so. The presence of violent mobs will often lead to a general perception of instability, although national and/or international security forces are often able to defuse these situations effectively. Individuals or loosely organized mobs will generally have limited means to threaten UN troops. Freedom of movement is essential to such perpetrators, second only to the ability to gather together. This scenario rarely leads to more strategic violence against civilians, but can lead to more serious incidents if manipulated by political actors seeking to destabilize the security situation. It may also strain the mission's resources, which could be used to greater effect elsewhere.

Previous cases with UN involvement: Liberia (mid-2000s), DRC (2013, 2015).

2.2   Post-conflict revenge

This scenario typically occurs in post-conflict environments when former victims take revenge against previous violent perpetrators. This scenario can be triggered by a turn of events in which former perpetrators are dramatically weakened, overthrown or have capitulated. This type of post-conflict revenge violence is often enabled by weak state capacities unable to ensure basic security from criminal violence. The violence may also be accompanied by a general rise in other criminal acts of violence (e.g. murder, arson, looting, kidnapping). The perpetrators will usually be

individuals or loosely organized mobs seeking to settle scores on a personal basis. Targets are selected on the basis of previous culpability, especially in those areas where most abuses occurred before. Relatively few people will be killed in total (dozens or hundreds), but even low levels of violence can prompt many people to flee if the current victims share a common identity with former perpetrators.

Previous cases with UN involvement: Kosovo (post-1999), Iraq (post-2003).

2.3 Insurgency

In this scenario, civilians are targeted as a means to control the population or to undermine the ruling government or other armed groups. The perpetrators are typically armed groups fighting for political power. Government forces or rival groups are the primary targets of attack, but insurgents still employ a combination of selective violence (e.g. assassinations) to prevent the population from collaborating with the enemy and indiscriminate attacks (improvised explosive devices – IEDs) against civilians and rivals alike. Attacks may also be intended to prompt an overreaction from government forces. Often the perpetrators set out their justification for targeting individuals or groups of people who are legally defined as civilians (e.g. government officials, governors, police services who do not partake in military operations).

Such violence is mainly a concern for civilians in the contested areas; the majority of the civilian population will have other grievances (e.g. unemployment, corruption). The number of people killed will be relatively low compared to 'reversed' scenarios, i.e. where governments, not rebel groups, are the main perpetrator (GOVERNMENT REPRESSION, ETHNIC CLEANSING, GENOCIDE). When people flee, they usually flee from the presence of fighting rather than from the presence of insurgents per se. The scenario may see peaks in violence in certain areas or at certain times. Military operations against insurgent groups may increase the threat they pose to civilians because of the risk of retaliation for perceived collaboration. Also, case-specific variations, especially where the conflict runs along ethnic divisions, may lead to more violent insurgencies (such as happened in Syria). However, as long as the perpetrators target civilians only in order to undermine the government or other armed groups, it is likely that their use of violence against civilians will be relatively limited.

Previous cases with UN involvement: Mali (2013–present), DRC (2012–2013).

2.4 Predatory violence

In this scenario, armed groups attack the local population to ensure their own survival or profit. Perpetrators are typically insurgents who have failed to obtain their original political objectives, but have refused to demobilize or disarm. Being physically removed from the geographic areas in which they have support, they are less constrained from engaging in predatory behavior (pillage, forced recruitment, illegal taxation). The perpetrators may also be rogue government security forces that lack the logistical support and finances to feed and pay their own troops. Both perpetrator types will lack popular support and alienate the population in their areas of operation. All civilians are the potential victims of predatory violence. The use of excessive violence such as mutilation of body parts or torture is common to instill fear in the population. Attacks are usually launched on the basis of opportunity, preferring 'easy,' undefended targets, especially women and children. Relatively few people are actually killed, but the number of abductees and the displaced will often be high due to the brutality and unpredictability of attacks. There may be no clear geographical patterns in terms of where attacks take place, other than that they are in areas where potential rewards are high and resistance low. If predatory actors are also involved in communal conflict, this scenario can become very violent.

Previous cases with UN involvement: Lord's Resistance Army, FARDC, ADF and the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda in DRC (1999–present).

2.5 Communal conflict

Communal conflict may occur when whole communities engage in continuous cycles of violence, driven by a combination of revenge and self-protection. Because both parties of the conflict are loosely organized communities rather than highly organized armed actors, they do not possess the means required to settle conflicts permanently. Their armed strength is often similar. Neither party can afford not to retaliate, as this will invite further attacks upon themselves. Both parties perceive and portray their use of violence as necessary for self-defense. Conflict may persist for years or even decades, with periodic escalations in violence, beyond the 'normal' patterns of cattle raids, skirmishes, etc.

These escalations can be linked to rising tensions over access to land, water, cattle or other means of survival or political manipulation.

In communal conflicts, civilians are both the primary targets and the main perpetrators, as the roles of perpetrator and victim shift with each cycle. The targeting is based on the civilians' communal identity or perceived communal identity. Women and children are more often victims. Open declarations of intent to exterminate or expel the other community, as the only viable solution to defend themselves, may occur. In such cases, a high number of casualties relative to the community's total population can be expected, as well as rapid displacement of entire communities fleeing from impending attacks. The tactics used are often very destructive despite limited means (e.g. killing rather than capturing people, destroying homes and means of survival, targeting the most populated urban locations with indiscriminate bombs, sexual violence, etc.). If a communal actor gains the upper hand, this scenario may escalate into ETHNIC CLEANSING or even (acts of) GENOCIDE, as the objective may be to expel or exterminate the opposing community. However, as long as a balance of armed power is maintained, each side will lack the means to engage in ETHNIC CLEANSING or GENOCIDE. This dynamic of power balances has particular importance for protection actors during disarmament campaigns.

Previous cases with UN involvement: Mali (the Tuareg vs. Fulani), South Sudan (the Lou Nuer vs. Murle, between Dinka sub-clans in Lakes State), Abyei (the Misserya vs. Ngok Dinka) and DRC (Hema vs. Lendu).

2.6 Government repression

Government repression may occur when the ruling government or a de facto authority is pressured politically and resorts to violence to secure its own survival. Civilians are primarily targeted according to presumed or real affiliation with the political opposition, not on the basis of ethnic or sectarian identity, although communal identity may be used as a proxy for targeting political opposition. Violence will be most severe where opposition is perceived to be strongest, e.g. where known opposition members hide and/or operate. The principal threat to civilians comes from the indiscriminate tactics and means used to suppress both armed and unarmed resistance (e.g. conventional weapons against civilian areas). The number of people killed or displaced will first and foremost vary according to the local level of fighting. Combatants are equally or more at risk of being killed than civilians. This scenario may lead to ETHNIC CLEANSING or even acts of GENOCIDE, as long as the government's survival continues to be threatened.

Previous cases with UN involvement: Côte d'Ivoire (2010–2011), Syria (2012–present).

2.7 Ethnic cleansing

Ethnic cleansing may occur when a militarily superior actor (ethnic, tribal, sectarian or national) seeks to expel a certain group from a specific territory. The perpetrators are likely to be states or de facto authorities considering the nature of the objective and means required. Ethnic cleansing can be recognized by a rising number of ambiguous statements from political and military leaders about having to expel a certain community, seeking to inflame violence against another communal group, while avoiding outside interference. Other indications are preparations to permanently displace a specific population (e.g. by seizing political power in areas where the targeted community is present, or preparing documents requiring the targeted population to relinquish entitlement to their homes). Such preparations may also include the increased arming, support and incorporation of paramilitaries, militias or special units by government authorities.

Violence is most likely to occur in areas in which the balance of power between communities is relatively even, in border areas with the perpetrators' ethnic brethren, and in enclaves where the majority of civilians belong to the targeted community. The threat will be most imminent following seizures of new territory. Violence is primarily used as a demonstration at first to coerce the targeted group to leave. The destruction of homes can be used to prevent the return of the target population. Ethnic cleansing may be conducted simultaneously by different actors in the different areas that they control. Fewer people will die compared to GENOCIDE (only a few percent at most), but the number of displaced victims will usually be very high (about 90 percent). Ethnic cleansing may also escalate into isolated acts of GENOCIDE, especially if it further increases the targeted population's incentives to flee.

Previous cases with UN involvement: Former Yugoslavia (1992–1999), Darfur (2003–), The Central African Republic (2014).

2.8   Genocide

The most serious threat to civilians occurs when an actor aims to exterminate a national, ethnical, racial or religious group. Only governments or actors with considerable financial and military capabilities are likely to possess the means required to kill the number of people needed to achieve this objective. In its early phases, even pre-genocide, perpetrators will dehumanize the targeted group of civilians (for example through hate-speech). Political and military leaders (future perpetrators) will also seek to secure greater control over the armed forces and the security services. When genocide commences, perpetrators no longer pursue alternative solutions (e.g. expelling or controlling a population). Civilians from the targeted group will be under imminent threat of violence wherever they can be found, especially early in the crisis and in areas of large concentrations. Unlike with ETHNIC CLEANSING, genocidal violence is not intended to force people to flee, but is aimed at killing as many as possible before they can escape. Increased mobilization and arming of paramilitaries, militias or special units by state authorities will occur. Potential victims might be congregated gradually in certain locations (e.g. as a result of threats or rumors). If the perpetrators succeed, the expected outcome is that a majority of potential victims will be killed, sometimes as many as 60–70 percent. A failed genocide may convert into ETHNIC CLEANSING, GOVERNMENT REPRESSION and COMMUNAL CONFLICT.

Previous cases with UN involvement: Rwanda (1994), Srebrenica in Bosnia (1995).

Table 2.1 Protection of civilians scenarios

Scenario	Actor type	Rationale	Strategies and tactics	Necessary perpetrator capabilities	Expected outcome
Mob violence Liberia ('04, '05, '09, '11, '15) Ivory Coast ('04) Sierra Leone ('00, '02) DRC ('13, '15)	Individuals or mobs	To exploit mob dynamics for personal gain, revenge or political influence	Non- or semi-organized criminal acts, such as murder, arson, looting	Freedom of movement	Few killed, but possibly extensive material damage to property and general perception of insecurity
Post-conflict revenge Kosovo (post-'99) Iraq (post-'03)	Individuals or mobs	To avenge past crimes on a personal basis	Tit-for-tat score-settling through criminal acts of violence, such as murder, arson, kidnap-ping, looting	Freedom of movement for individuals and small groups to access victims	Few killed (doz-ens, hundreds), but groups associated with previous perpetrators may flee following relatively little violence
Insurgency Mali ('13–'15) DRC ('12–'13) S. Sudan ('12–'13)	Rebel groups (classic insurgents with political or ideological objectives)	To control populations upon which they depend and undermine trust in their rivals	Selective and indiscriminate violence, through threats, targeted killings, bomb-ings, retribution, depending on their level of control	Freedom of movement to pick time and place of attack, access to indiscriminate and explosive weapons	Fewer killed and injured than in many other scenarios, most due to indiscrim-inate weapons; gradual displace-ment from areas of heavy fighting
Predatory violence DRC ('99–'15)	Rebel groups (predatory behavior)	To survive or make a profit by exploiting civilians	Coerce civilians into compliance through plunder, taxation, forced recruitment, opportunistic rape, brutality, especially against 'easy targets'	Freedom of movement to pick time and place of attack, operational secrecy, often central command	Temporary, but large-scale, displacement in affected areas, disproportionate to the number of people actually attacked; many abductions, especially of young adolescents
Communal conflict Mali (the Tuareg vs. Fulani) South Sudan (the Lou Nuer vs. Murle) Abyei (Misserya vs. Ngok Dinka) DRC (Hema vs. Lendu)	Whole tribal, ethnic or sectarian communities (possibly with outside support)	To avenge a previous attack and to deter further retribution in order to protect their own community	Attempts to coerce other community into submission through massacres, abductions, raids, destruction of homes and means of survival, often seeking to maximize violence	Freedom of movement to reach other community, access to deadlier weapons is associated with higher number of deaths	Relatively high number of people killed and abducted on both sides, especially women and children; livelihoods stolen or destroyed; temporary displacement in homogeneous areas, gradual withdrawal to 'their own' in mixed areas

Scenario	Actor type	Rationale	Strategies and tactics	Necessary perpetrator capabilities	Expected outcome
Government repression Ivory Coast ('10–'11) Syria ('12–present)	Authoritarian regimes, or de facto authorities in an area	To control restless populations, on basis of real or perceived affiliation with opposition	Repress population, through selective and indiscriminate violence, threats, detention, rape as terror, destruction, occasional massacres	Command and control for governments, freedom of movement for regular forces, heavy weapons, special/irregular units in support	Mostly combatant deaths, gradual increase in civilian deaths due to heavy weapons and in accordance with intensity of fighting, large-scale displacement, widespread destruction of population centers
Ethnic cleansing Bosnia ('92–'95) Central African Republic ('14)	States, or the militarily superior actor	To expel a certain group from a specific territory	Force targeted group to leave through threats, highly visible killings, brutality, mass-rape, destruction of property	Command and control, freedom of movement for irregular units, regular units for military control	Only a few per cent killed, but the vast majority of the targeted population expelled (~90 %); destruction of victim homes and cultural buildings
Genocide Rwanda ('94) Srebrenica in Bosnia ('95)	States, or the militarily superior actor	To exterminate a certain group	Destroy existence of a group through several, simultaneous mass-killings, deportation, camps, systematic rape to prevent reproduction	Command and control, freedom of movement for special/ irregular units, sufficient small arms	Majority of members of the targeted group killed (50+ %), in relatively short time

3　Threat analysis

Analyzing the environment. During the early phases of any planning process, it is essential to gain awareness of and knowledge about the main characteristics of the crisis. In military terms, this phase is often referred to as the analysis of the operating environment. The purpose of this phase is to identify and analyze the factors that can influence mandate implementation.

Need for information. The threat-based approach may be helpful in developing and structuring information needs at the strategic level, although it is no substitute for deeper analyses of the crisis. At mission level, it can be used to develop collection plans and situational awareness through JMACs, JOCs, All-Source Information Fusion Units, U2/J2-capabilities and other mission components.

Common understanding across components. A common understanding of the operational environment and threats against civilians should ideally be shared across all components of a UN mission and at the different levels of the organization. The threat-based approach provides a structured and generic framework for threat analysis. This gives military planners a tool to ease the exchange of information across the various planning bodies involved in integrated planning processes.

3.1　Key questions

Threats against civilians. If civilians are being targeted, planners and analysts should at an early stage identify the particular nature of the perpetrator(s). Experience has shown that an armed actor may behave differently in various geographical areas. The conflict may also involve multiple perpetrators with various rationales for attacking civilians. Most perpetrators use a combination of violent tactics, but each particular rationale usually favors certain tactics. Analyzing the modus operandi of each perpetrator is therefore crucial to uncover the motivations for attacking civilians and identify the relevant scenario. Statements from both perpetrators and victims can often be misleading. Importantly, the roles of perpetrators or victims may also change when military actions to protect civilians are undertaken. Thus, monitoring changes in threats to civilians is vital.

Below are five questions that will help planners to identify the nature of the perpetrator, based on the characteristics from the scenarios described in Chapter 2. A list of possible answers provides clues as to which scenario(s) one may be faced with.

N.B. In most armed conflicts, the majority of threats to civilians will come in the form of injuries, sexual violence, displacement, threats, looting and abductions, not killings.

Actor type

What type of actor is responsible for the violence against civilians?
- States or the militarily strongest actors (GENOCIDE, ETHNIC CLEANSING, GOVERNMENT REPRESSION)
- Organized armed groups (PREDATORY VIOLENCE, INSURGENCY)
- Communities, such as ethnic, sectarian or tribal (COMMUNAL CONFLICT)
- Individuals/mobs (MOB VIOLENCE, POST-CONFLICT REVENGE)

> **N.B.** 'Who is killing whom' will be obvious in some cases, but not always. While all sides are often responsible for violence against civilians, past cases show that one party is usually responsible for the majority of casualties, especially early in a conflict.

Rationale

What is the perpetrator's rationale for attacking civilians?
- Extermination (GENOCIDE)
- Expulsion (ETHNIC CLEANSING)
- Control of population to crush political opposition (GOVERNMENT REPRESSION)
- Revenge for past crimes (POST-CONFLICT REVENGE)
- Deterrence and revenge for previous round of fighting (COMMUNAL CONFLICT)
- Survival and/or profit (PREDATORY VIOLENCE)
- Control of population for support and/or to undermine opponents (INSURGENCY)
- Revenge, protest, personal gain (MOB VIOLENCE)

> **N.B.** Planners should also assess how important the targeting of civilians is as part of an actor's overall strategy. Some strategies are more dependent on harming civilians (e.g. GENOCIDE) than others (e.g. MOB VIOLENCE).

Strategies and tactics

What strategies and tactics serve the perpetrator's rationale most effectively?
- Mass killing (common in GENOCIDE, ETHNIC CLEANSING, GOVERNMENT REPRESSION, COMMUNAL CONFLICT), targeted assassinations (GOVERNMENT REPRESSION, POST-CONFLICT REVENGE, INSURGENCY)
- Indiscriminate attacks resulting in civilian casualties, such as suicide attacks, car bombs, IEDs, mortars, artillery (INSURGENCY, GOVERNMENT REPRESSION)
- Scorched earth tactics, such as destroying populated neighborhoods, civilian buildings, fields and crops (COMMUNAL CONFLICT, ETHNIC CLEANSING, GOVERNMENT REPRESSION, GENOCIDE)
- Sieges, entrapment, starvation, blocking water, cutting electricity, blockage of humanitarian assistance (GENOCIDE, GOVERNMENT REPRESSION)
- Cruel treatment, such as mutilation, torture, forced limb amputation, starvation, unlawful detention (PREDATORY VIOLENCE, GOVERNMENT REPRESSION)
- Sexual and gender-based violence, such as rape, enforced pregnancy, sexual slavery (GOVERNMENT REPRESSION, ETHNIC CLEANSING, PREDATORY VIOLENCE, COMMUNAL CONFLICT, INSURGENCY)
- Pillage, looting (PREDATORY VIOLENCE)
- Abduction, kidnappings, disappearances, forced recruitment (PREDATORY VIOLENCE, COMMUNAL CONFLICT, POST-CONFLICT REVENGE)

> **N.B.** Many of these acts of violence are likely to occur in most conflicts. However, in each scenario, certain strategies and tactics will be particularly relevant for the perpetrator's rationale. A key lies in understanding the perpetrator's **modus operandi** and identifying which acts of violence serves the strategic purpose most effectively.

Capabilities

Which capabilities are relevant to the perpetrator's ability to attack civilians?
- Advance planning of violence, such as complete blueprints or preparations for isolated attacks (GENOCIDE, ETHNIC CLEANSING, GOVERNMENT REPRESSION)
- Top-down coordination of violence, such as command, control, communication, leadership (GENOCIDE, ETHNIC CLEANSING, GOVERNMENT REPRESSION)
- Ambiguity or secrecy surrounding intent to target civilians, while mobilizing the support necessary to execute the violence (GENOCIDE, ETHNIC CLEANSING)

- Freedom of movement for those executing the violence (all scenarios)
- Relevant armed units and weaponry, such as conventional armed forces, irregular units, small arms, IEDs (varies according to the characteristics of each scenario)

> **N.B.** All perpetrators need certain capabilities to use violence successfully. In order to reduce their ability to target civilians, planners must identify what capabilities are required and separate these capabilities from what are required to conduct other operations, such as fighting other armed actors, which may or may not be the same.

Expected outcome

What is the expected outcome if the perpetrator succeeds?
- Most members of the targeted group killed (+50 percent) (GENOCIDE)
- Relatively few civilians killed in total, but the vast majority of the targeted population flees (~90 percent) (ETHNIC CLEANSING)
- Mostly combatant deaths, but gradual increase in civilian deaths due to heavy weapons and in accordance with intensity of fighting, large-scale displacement, widespread destruction of population centers (GOVERNMENT REPRESSION)
- Relatively high number of people killed and abducted on both sides, especially women and children; livelihoods stolen or destroyed; temporary displacement in homogeneous areas, more gradual withdrawal to 'their own' community in mixed areas (COMMUNAL CONFLICT)
- Temporary, but large-scale, displacement of civilians in affected areas –disproportionately many relative to the number of people actually attacked; many abductions, especially of young adolescents (PREDATORY VIOLENCE)
- Few killed and injured compared to other scenarios, with most deaths due to the use of indiscriminate weapons; gradual displacement from areas of heavy fighting; occasional peaks in violence/brutality (INSURGENCY)
- Relatively few killed in absolute numbers (dozens, hundreds), but groups associated with the previous perpetrators may flee following relatively low scale violence (POST-CONFLICT REVENGE)
- Few killed in total, but extensive material damage to property and general perception of insecurity (MOB VIOLENCE)

> **N.B.** As outcomes and consequences for civilian security differ considerably, it is essential for commanders and military practitioners to be able to identify what kind of threat civilians are facing. Some scenarios are clearly more dangerous than others. Common to all is that failure to protect may jeopardize the legitimacy of the entire UN mission.

3.2   Key factors

To further understand the nature of the threat, planners and analysts should always consider when (time), where (space), and from what/whom (force) the threat to civilians will be greatest within the area of operations. Civilian coping strategies should also be considered, as each individual/community has its particular ways of surviving violence that may influence how force may be used most effectively against it. The following section further illustrates how these four operational factors (time, space, force and civilian coping strategies) are relevant for an understanding of the nature of the threat.

Time: How imminent is the threat to civilians?
A threat of physical violence against civilians may be considered 'imminent' when a potential aggressor is considered to have both the intent and capacity to inflict physical violence in a specific area or against a specific group of civilians.

The threat to civilians will be *most imminent* in those scenarios in which perpetrators are dependent on attacking civilians as quickly as possible to achieve their objectives (GENOCIDE, ETHNIC CLEANSING). Once a conflict has broken out, these perpetrators tend to escalate violence against civilians very quickly, because gradual escalation may allow their intended victims to flee or mobilize resistance, or allow international intervention to occur before the perpetrators have achieved their objectives. The time-frame available may only be days or weeks.

A threat to civilians may *suddenly become imminent and then subside* in situations where attacks against civilians are launched in response to certain conditions. Perpetrators may be driven to attack by the perceived loss of control over a population (GOVERNMENT REPRESSION, INSURGENCY), by the opportunity provided in an immediate post-conflict environment (POST-CONFLICT REVENGE), in retaliation for a previous attack (COMMUNAL CONFLICT), or by the lack of supplies (PREDATORY VIOLENCE). These actors do not pose an imminent threat in an entire area of operations, or at all times. Once the actors eventually do decide to attack, however, they will pose an imminent threat to civilians and require an immediate response from the military component.

Seasonal or environmental changes may also influence the imminence of a threat (e.g. rainy season preventing communities from launching attacks against distant neighbors or failed crops that may force rebel groups to prey on populations more often). Another relevant condition is local availability of early warning systems enabling information exchanges about imminent attacks both to victims and military forces (e.g. through text messages).

Space: Where is the threat most likely?
Identifying 'protection hot spots' is always recommended. A protection hot spot is an area in which civilians are more likely to be attacked than in other areas. This practice enables more effective allocation of resources to protect civilians. Hot spots are always population centers (cities, towns, villages or neighborhoods). However, some populated areas will be more exposed than others, depending on the criteria according to which perpetrators select their targets.

Perpetrators targeting specific ethnic or sectarian groups (GENOCIDE, ETHNIC CLEANSING, COMMUNAL CONFLICT) must attack *geographical locations in which this group is present*. The most likely hot spots in these scenarios will be minority enclaves inside perpetrator territory, corridors or pockets that link the perpetrator's communal areas together, and border areas close to their communal brethren. Perpetrators targeting civilians based on affiliation with certain actors will target *locations where this connection is strongest*. This is likely to be areas in which an actor's control is being challenged (GOVERNMENT REPRESSION, INSURGENCY) or past crimes were most frequent or severe (POST-CONFLICT REVENGE). In all these scenarios, it will be important to prioritize the deployment of forces to the most likely hot spots.

By contrast, perpetrators who target civilians more randomly – either to reap the immediate benefits (PREDATORY VIOLENCE) or simply to destabilize the security situation (INSURGENCY) – will be relatively *unlimited in where they may attack civilians*, thus making it much harder to identify potential hot spots. In such cases, concentrating deployment to certain areas is not likely to increase the protection of civilians at large.

The geographical shape of the operational theatre may also influence the location of attacks. Some scenarios are less likely under certain geographical conditions. For example, an island cannot be completely ethnically cleansed without organizing transport or killing the entire target group. Furthermore, local scenarios may evolve within a different scenario. For example, perpetrators may escalate violence in isolated areas of particular strategic importance, e.g. by expelling or exterminating certain groups of civilians rather than suppressing them, to minimize the potential for resistance. This will create local scenarios, e.g. the act of GENOCIDE in Srebrenica, Bosnia (1995).

Force: Which military units or weapons are responsible for the violence against civilians?
Planners should not restrict their analysis to the perpetrator's military capabilities vis-à-vis other armed actors or the UN's own personnel, but also *against civilians*. A key question is which military means (e.g. units, types of weapons, communication campaigns) are causing most of the violence against civilians. Denying the perpetrator access to these resources will have a protective effect.

When the perpetrator is a government or government-sponsored actor, the units responsible for violence against civilians will usually be conventional or irregular forces coordinated from above:

- During GENOCIDE and ETHNIC CLEANSING, the units conducting the killing and cleansing operations are usually *mobile and lightly armed special units or irregular forces*, while conventional forces play a more supporting role in terms of area control, logistical support and reducing risks. The irregular units usually have sufficient autonomy to permit authorities to have plausible deniability.
- During GOVERNMENT REPRESSION, *conventional forces and heavy weaponry* will play the main role in suppressing both armed and unarmed resistance, due to the massive and indiscriminate firepower required to crush all opposition. In authoritarian regimes, the best equipped and trained, most loyal and reliable military units are often dedicated solely to the protection of the regime from internal threats. Irregular forces usually play a supporting role as particularly loyal troops and force multipliers. They also serve to minimize risks for the conventional forces in urban areas.

When the perpetrators are organized armed groups, most killings are committed by regular members of these groups. In addition, particular types of tactics or weapons are used:

- During POST-CONFLICT REVENGE, COMMUNAL CONFLICT and PREDATORY VIOLENCE, the primary perpetrators of violence against civilians are *individuals or members of organized armed groups* who kill, plunder, destroy, brutalize or abduct civilians.
- During INSURGENCY, the principal causes of civilian death may be *the manner in which insurgents operate* (civilians as human shields, firing into crowds) or the indiscriminate *types of weapons* used (e.g. mortar fire, IEDs or suicide attacks).

Media control (e.g. state TV, radio or internet) enables perpetrators to mobilize support for violence, e.g. by spreading

hate messages or threats online. However, media may also be exploited by intervening forces to encourage defection among perpetrators, to counter radicalization of moderates and to reduce the perception of insecurity in situations where fear itself is a key driver of violence (COMMUNAL CONFLICT). Finally, the perpetrator's type of leadership (e.g. the degree of support from the armed forces and previous record of violence against civilians) and existing ethnic or sectarian fault lines within military ranks are also likely to influence their willingness to target civilians.

Civilians: What are the civilian coping strategies?
Civilian behavior may also influence the nature of the threat. Every person under threat follows his or her individual coping strategy, but, in general, individuals and groups usually follow one of three coping strategies: they flee, resist, or co-exist with, the perpetrators. Fleeing is most common in the most violent scenarios. Although fleeing saves many lives, it makes refugees/IDPs very vulnerable to other types of harm.

For civilian protection practitioners and military forces, protecting those on the run is very challenging. The causes and patterns of flight will, however, vary and should be taken into account:

- Civilians are likely to flee *the presence of particular perpetrators* in those scenarios where they are primary targets, e.g. on the basis of group identity (GENOCIDE, ETHNIC CLEANSING, COMMUNAL CONFLICT), affiliation with a previous perpetrator (POST-CONFLICT REVENGE), or because they are easy targets (PREDATORY VIOLENCE). In these cases, even rumors of a perpetrator's presence may prompt many to flee.
- In scenarios where specific groups of civilians are not as deliberately targeted (GOVERNMENT REPRESSION, INSURGENCY), but where the main targets for both sides are enemy combatants, civilians primarily flee *the presence of fighting* rather than the presence of one or another actor.

A key is to understand to *where* civilians are fleeing. Civilians often have very context-specific coping strategies, based on the available alternatives. In general, many people on the run tend to flee towards cities or towns, which can lead to multiplying population sizes in urban areas. Civilians are also likely to expect military forces to protect them by virtue of their presence. Consequently, military bases, including UN peace operation bases, often attract large numbers of IDPs. Both cities and camps may offer sorely needed resources such as medicine, water, food and so forth. Alternatively, civilians may disperse into the bush, which is common in parts of Africa.

In some cases, the civilian population will *co-exist* with the perpetrators. As long as they are not targeted on the basis of their identity, political affiliation or affiliation with previous perpetrators, it can make more sense to seek security and survival by finding ways to get by in the presence of potential perpetrators.

- Co-existence is most common in MOB VIOLENCE, POST-CONFLICT REVENGE and INSURGENCY. In the two first scenarios, the threat level is quite low (as long as civilians do not have a particularly strong connection with former perpetrators or find themselves at the center of the attention of a violent mob). In INSURGENCY, however, the threat level will often fluctuate according to who is controlling the area. The threat level increases significantly when one party loses control and another moves in.
- Some predatory actors will choose to live among the people they prey on, and, as such, may force potential victims to co-exist with them. Most predatory actors, however, stay away from communities and incite fear and flight among civilian populations in their vicinity.
- Co-existence is very unlikely in GENOCIDE, ETHNIC CLEANISNG, GOVERNMENT REPRESSION and COMMUNAL CONFLICT.

Civilian expectations of how the UN forces will protect them (or not) should influence the troops' responses. Ideally, UN forces should communicate to the civilian population what they can/will do, and make preparations to fulfill the expectations, or explain why they cannot do so. For example, some civilians might expect protection at a UN base, or that the UN mission together with the humanitarian community will be able to deliver assistance to their new location. Some might expect that the mission will not upset the compromise they have struck with the perpetrator or disturb the balance of power in the area by conducting military operations that change the armed actor's calculation about how to interact with the civilian population. Finally, some might even expect that UN troops will arm them or conduct joint operations together with them.

The spread of information technology has facilitated victim documentation of war crimes. However, a potential danger is that the rapid dissemination of information may cause violence to spread more quickly as conflict in one area may trigger conflicts along similar ethnic, sectarian or tribal lines elsewhere (e.g. how COMMUNAL CONFLICT broke out in numerous locations within days during the start of the crisis in South Sudan in late 2013/early 2014). The result may be a faster escalation of violence against civilians in future conflicts. There is therefore a need to be *prepared to protect* – including in missions that are not explicitly mandated to protect civilians in the first place.

Example of threat analysis

To help visualize the analysis of different threats, a fictional map is provided below, placing three different scenarios in different areas. Color coding can be utilized to indicate which threat is most dangerous and/or most likely to civilian security. In the example provided in the map, three different scenarios have been plotted and given different colors (green = least dangerous, orange = medium threat, red = most dangerous).

Empirical studies have shown that COMMUNAL CONFLICT, PREDATORY VIOLENCE and INSURGENCY have been the three most common scenarios in UN peace operations during the past 15 years. All three scenarios have been identified within the same mission in the example below. Insurgents are relatively limited in their violence against civilians as long as they only seek to undermine the control of other actors, so INSURGENCY is considered the least dangerous situation for civilians. Both predatory actors and communal militias can be very deadly and displace huge numbers of civilians. However, when whole communities engage in large-scale attacks, the scenario is one of the most deadly and is therefore considered the greatest threat to civilians. COMMUNAL CONFLICT is therefore considered the most dangerous and PREDATORY VIOLENCE the medium threat. Keep in mind that these are just examples. Context-specific conditions may lead to particularly brutal insurgencies or communal conflicts that are quite limited in terms of violence against civilians.
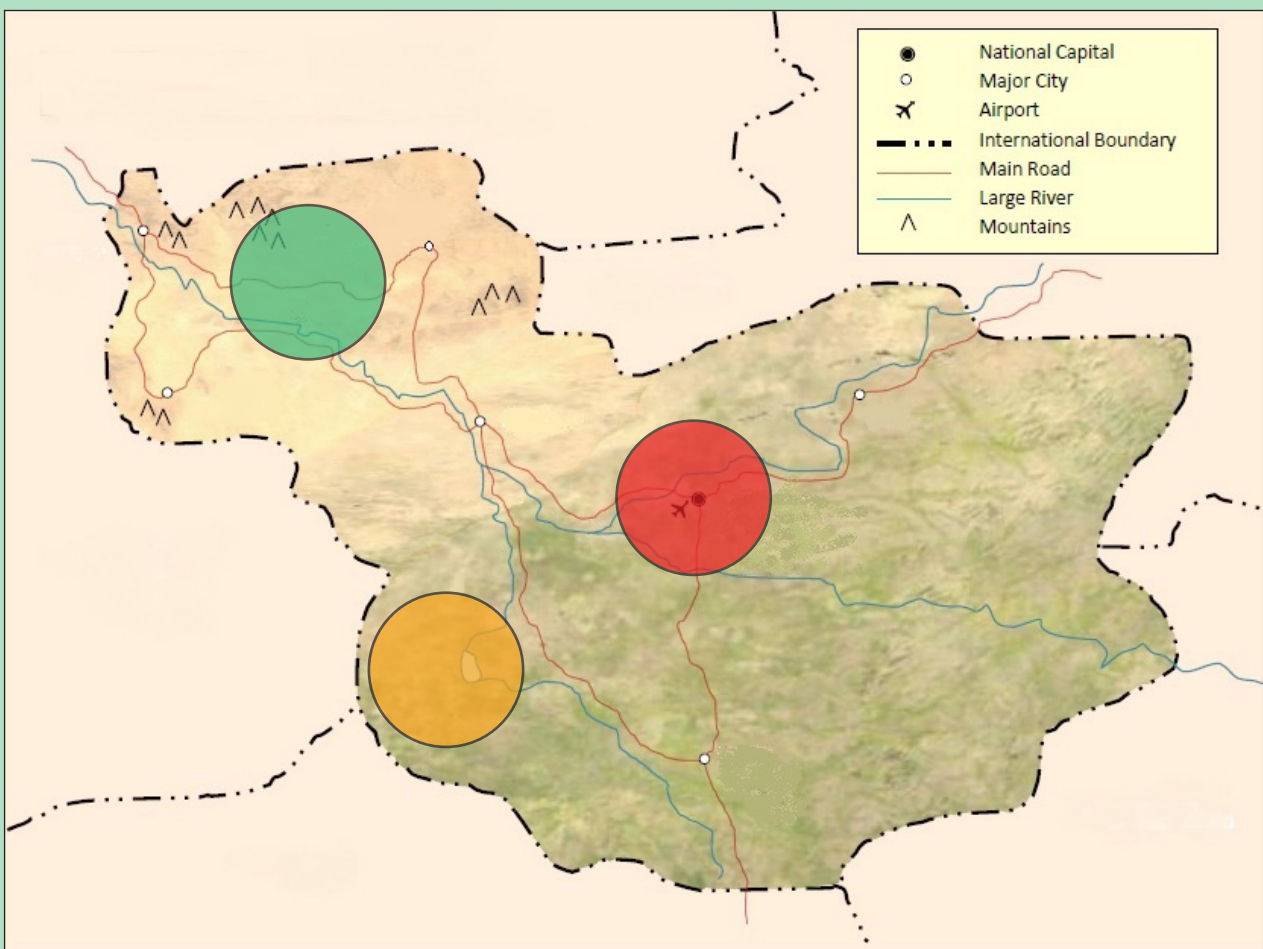
Copyright: USIP - United States Institute of Peace

🔴 COMMUNAL CONFLICT   🟠 PREDATORY VIOLENCE   🟢 INSURGENCY

3.3   Early warning indicators

In this section, a list of early warning indicators is provided for each scenario in Table 3.1.

Early warning indicators can be used to identify situations that may unfold, but have not yet fully developed. As UN peace operations are considered to be most effective in the early phases of a conflict – when prevention is still an option – early warning indicators may be very valuable to facilitate a timely response and to provide a better understanding of when one scenario is shifting towards the next.

Table 3.1   Early warning indicators for each scenario

Scenario	Early warning indicators
Mob violence	• Civilian crowds rioting • Allegations that may trigger large-scale riots, e.g. rumors of abductions, ritual killings • Perception among demobilized soldiers or former militias of being treated unfairly • Small-scale skirmishes prior to elections and/or major political events • Planned demonstrations (can get out of hand)
Post-conflict revenge	• Recent history of violence against civilians, which has created a desire for revenge • Turn of events in which former perpetrators are dramatically weakened, overthrown or have capitulated • Weak state capacities unable to ensure even a basic level of security from criminal violence • Rise in criminal acts of violence (e.g. murder, arson, looting, kidnapping) • Communal or political groups associated with former perpetrators targeted in particular
Insurgency	• Presence of armed actors with clear political objectives • Civilians targeted on the basis of political affiliation with government or rival armed groups • Expressed justification for targeting individuals or groups of people who are legally defined as civilians (e.g. government officials, governors, police forces who do not partake in military operations) • Indiscriminate attacks in populated areas against politically symbolic or militarily important areas • Peaks in violence against civilians in retribution for perceived collaboration with the government or rival groups
Predatory violence	• Presence of armed groups without clear political objectives or rogue government forces • Host-nation largely unable to prevent criminal exploitation of civilians • Culture of impunity and history of violence • Armed groups operating with seemingly unobtainable objectives, but refusing to disarm • Host-nation armed forces lack logistical support and finances to feed and pay own troops • Lack of popular support or alienated population in areas where perpetrators operate • Use of excessive violence, far beyond what is required to kill, harm or instill fear in the population (mutilation, torture) • No clear geographical patterns in terms of where attacks take place, other than in areas where potential rewards are high and resistance low • Particular targeting of 'soft' targets, such as humanitarian personnel and civilians, rather than military
Communal conflict	• Rising tensions over access to land, water, cattle or other means of survival • Escalating cycles of revenge attacks beyond 'normal' patterns of raids, etc. • Civilians targeted on basis of their communal identity, as opposed to targeted completely at random or primarily on basis of political affiliation • Relatively even balance of power between communities in terms of armed strength • Rising perceptions of an existential threat from the other community • Own acts of violence perceived and portrayed as necessary for self-defense

Scenario	Early warning indicators
	• Possible declarations of intent to exterminate or expel the other community as the only viable solution to defend themselves
	• Occasional attacks which are as destructive as possible (e.g. killing rather than capturing people, destroying homes and means of survival, targeting the most populated urban locations with indiscriminate bombs)
Government repression	• Rising political pressure on the government in power
	• The government perceives an increasing threat to its own survival
	• Increased violent targeting of individuals perceived to be in opposition to the government and civilians in general
	• Armed opposition groups emerging and/or military personnel defecting
	• Gradually more indiscriminate attacks in populated areas where support for the opposition is perceived to be strong
	• In mixed societies, communal identity may increasingly be used as proxy for targeting political opposition
Ethnic cleansing	• Relative military superiority of one ethnic, tribal, sectarian, national or racial community in potential conflict areas
	• Rising number of ambiguous statements about having to expel a certain community from political and military leadership, seeking to inflame violence against other communal group, while avoiding outside interference
	• Indications of preparations to permanently displace a certain population (e.g. by seizing political power in areas where the targeted community is present, or preparing documents requiring the targeted population to relinquish entitlement to their homes)
	• Increased perception of threat amongst minority populations
	• Centralization of power in the hands of nationalistic or extremist political and military leadership
	• Rising levels of violence in areas where balance of power between communities is relatively even, in border areas with the perpetrator's ethnic brethren, and in enclaves in which the majority of civilians belong to the targeted community
	• Particularly excessive acts of violence intended to make people flee, as opposed to non-communicative or disguised acts aimed at killing as many as possible before they escape (which could be early warning of GENOCIDE)
	• Increased arming, support and incorporation of paramilitaries, militias or special units by government authorities
	• One-sided disarmament causing uneven balance between communities in conflict
Genocide	• Gradual congregation of potential victims in certain locations (e.g. organized or as a result of threats or rumors)
	• Rising perception of threats among civilians from a certain communal group across the entire area of operation
	• Alternative solutions (e.g. expelling or controlling a population) increasingly seen as unfeasible from the perpetrator's perspective
	• Dehumanization of the targeted group of civilians
	• Increased mobilization and arming of paramilitaries, militias or special units by state authorities
	• Political and military leadership securing greater control over armed forces and the security services

4   Military planning

User guide

This chapter provides advice to military planners at the strategic and operational levels on how military force can be used to protect civilians in different situations. The following insights may be useful to consider during the mission analysis phase of a military planning process, where the focus shifts from analyzing threats to civilians towards how the threats may be addressed.

The biggest challenge for military planners lies in understanding **when to do what**. Thus, the chapter describes the role of the military component in providing physical protection for civilians and suggests potential courses of action in each specific scenario.

Understanding the role of military force. One purpose of this document is to provide a better understanding of the role of military forces within the whole-of-mission approach to the protection of civilians in UN peace operations. Understanding what the military component can and cannot do to protect civilians in different situations (scenarios) can help improve the planning and sequencing of and preparations for military, civilian and political efforts, based on what is likely to be required in order to protect civilians from various types of threats. The eight POC scenarios provide insights relevant to assessing the role and utility of military force and potential military courses of action.

This document focuses on the effects of the perpetrator's actions on *civilian* security, not on how the perpetrator might aim its capabilities towards the UN mission. Yet, this latter aspect is also an important part of the analysis, not least because such developments may in turn have negative effects on civilian security.

The UN's approach. According to UN policies, the range of multidimensional UN POC instruments fall into three distinct tiers that are mutually accommodating and reinforcing, and should be implemented simultaneously (see POC Policy, 2015):

- Tier I: Protection through dialogue and engagement
- Tier II: Provision of physical protection
- Tier III: Establishment of a protective environment

There is no inherent hierarchy or sequencing among the tiers, and action under all three tiers should emphasize prevention and pre-emption, as well as the primacy of the host-state's responsibility to protect civilians. All mission components have a role to play in each of the tiers. However, the military component has the primary responsibility within Tier II.

Utility of the UN military component. UN infantry battalions have often been considered the main providers of physical protection to civilians. The threat-based approach applies a broader understanding of the potential of military force to protect. Protection can best be provided through utilizing the capabilities of *all* military units and personnel in a mission. This includes capabilities under tasking authority of other than the Force Commander, such as supply units and enablers. This may include, but is not limited to, engineers, signals, supply units, ground transportation, military police, medical facilities, air transportation, aviation combat, fire support, intelligence assets, military geography, public affairs/outreach and maritime/riverine units.

In some situations, employing military force may be required to prevent or respond to threats of physical violence against civilians. The primary question is not whether to use more or less force, but *how* that force is used against specific types of threats. Based on previous cases in which force has successfully been used to protect civilians, *deterrence* and *coercion* are the two most relevant functions of force. Military forces may be deployed to *deter* violence by threatening the use of force against the perpetrator. When force is actually applied, it is used to *coerce* a perpetrator into changing his behavior.

Other essential capabilities and components. There is also a range of other resources and units essential to UN efforts to protect, such as mission support, logistics, civil affairs, JMACs, early warning mechanisms, JOCs, lessons learned units and so forth. There is still untapped potential in combining these capabilities in a more concerted manner to increase the utility of military force to protect.

Similarly, strategic communication may be used to trigger preventive and pre-emptive POC effects by influencing a target audience or through strategic messaging to perpetrators of violence, host-state actors and the civilian

population under threat. Strategic communication may include pro-active use of social media and networking platforms, imagery, videos and other mechanisms with the power to influence perception. In fact, all actions conducted by the military component should have an element of strategic communication. For example, a strong force posture is strategic messaging with the clear intention of achieving a POC effect, without having to employ lethal force. This document does not provide a blueprint for *how* to optimize strategic communication in UN peace operations in general. It rather considers the use of strategic communication in some of the scenarios for the specific purpose of protecting civilians.

Key questions. The purpose of mission analysis is to consider aspects that may impact all mission components. POC is the shared responsibility of many actors both within and outside the UN's structure. In UN peace operations, planning is typically performed in integrated planning teams, representing all substantial actors involved in POC. The mission analysis will include all aspects related to the particular mission's POC tasks, ranging from the specific mandate, to policies, strategies, guidelines and concepts. The development of courses of action focuses on how the military component can utilize its assets in response to specific threats within this framework. This chapter highlights two key questions essential for understanding how the military component can be used more effectively in conjunction with other components.

What is the potential role and utility of military force to protect civilians? What can and cannot the military component do to protect in different situations? Under what conditions should the military component assume leading vs. supporting roles in providing protection? What other UN components must support or be supported by the military component in different situations?

How can military force be more targeted towards protection in particular situations? Which courses of action will reduce the threat to civilians most effectively? Which courses of action may inadvertently increase the threat to civilians? What is the perpetrator's most likely coursea of action against civilians? What is the most dangerous perpetrator coursea of action against civilians? What are the risks to UN personnel?

Below follow suggestions on how these questions may be answered in each scenario.

4.1   Mob violence

The role of military force. Dealing with mob violence is first of all a *policing task*, but military UN forces may be the only units available. Military forces are generally not trained for law enforcement tasks, but this scenario can challenge the existing capabilities of the host-nation's security forces/UN police. Therefore, UN military troops must be prepared to assist local/UN police forces. Military units deploying into urban environments to prevent, deter or counter mob violence should therefore be trained and equipped for riot handling. Consider establishing riot-handling-capable Quick Reaction Forces in support of UN police (FPU) operations. As a last resort, military force may have to be used to contain and disperse violent rioting crowds. The military component's contribution to reducing freedom of movement may include the construction of physical barriers to deny access to vulnerable groups. Ability to apply non-lethal means is particularly relevant. Command and control arrangements to enable interaction with external units should be considered and reflected in framework documents such as Concepts of Operations. Detention policies are among the topics that require clarity for the military component.

Possible courses of action. Courses of action could include *deterring, controlling* and *dispersing* crowds, preferably through non-lethal means and always in compliance with gradual use of force. While this scenario may become the sole responsibility of military UN forces, close cooperation with police forces is essential. Key infrastructure/locations/ buildings must be *defended*, as there is potential for significant material damage to civilian property. The first echelon in dealing with rioting individuals or crowds should be police forces. Lack of ability or capabilities from local law enforcement authorities or UN police units must not lead to inaction by the military component. However, if military force is used, close cooperation with UN police and/or with local authorities must be ensured. Employing a gradual response when countering mob violence is of utmost importance, as a military response with the application of basic military principles may escalate a situation and spark increased violence. Finally, robust deployment of military forces, first and foremost through a *show of force*, may be required to contain and control violent crowds (which themselves may be comprised of civilians) when civilians are threatened. Any orders must provide clear instructions on Rules of Engagement, as military forces are generally ill suited for civilian law enforcement.
If coordinated with local authorities, apprehension of suspects must comply with the *UN Human Rights Due Diligence Policy* and the *DPKO/DFS Interim Standing Operating Procedure (SOP) on Detention in UN Peace Operations*. All actors involved must know the SOPs and regulations that apply to the apprehension and detention of perpetrators, which is especially likely in this scenario (as in POST-CONFLICT REVENGE).

4.2   Post-conflict revenge

The role of military force. Similar to mob-violence, post-conflict revenge is *mainly a policing task*, but UN troops may be the only units available to deter attacks against civilians in this scenario. If post-conflict revenge violence is left unaddressed, it may continue until most scores are settled or all potential targets have fled. Revenge killings may also create a new score to be settled. The opportunistic and individual nature of attacks makes early warning difficult, and the role of the military may become mostly reactive, assisting civilian authorities in arresting alleged perpetrators. Close cooperation with local networks will therefore be a critical precondition for successful prevention. Military units conducting operations aimed at countering or pre-empting post-conflict revenge should be given scenario-specific training in law enforcement situations to avoid excessive use of force. If potential victims are congregated in particular quarters/enclaves/camps and so forth – a strong deterrent posture will be needed.

Possible courses of action. Locations where potential victims reside must be *defended*. Military presence may *deter* perpetrators from attacking at a particular moment, but it is unlikely that the desire to settle scores can be deflected altogether. Most importantly, the military component must be prepared for large-scale attacks that include more organized avenging groups, as this may lead to massive displacement and a de facto separation of former warring communities. Cooperation with police forces is essential at all stages of the operations, regardless of which course of action is chosen. A high state of readiness and an ability to respond quickly when these situations occur will be decisive to protect those threatened. Traffic control posts between or around opposing groups likely to be attacked or attack can be a useful measure.

Perpetrators are critically dependent on freedom of movement to reach their intended targets. *Widespread military and/or police presence* will therefore be useful to deny opportunities to settle personal scores. Pre-empting these attacks is virtually impossible, as long as they consist of individual criminal behavior. Active use of *strategic communication*, through radio broadcasts, public information, visible military presence and outreach to populations, can be effective force multipliers and achieve deterrent and preventive effects on potential perpetrators. *Night patrols* may have a reassuring effect on the population, in both urban and rural areas. They may have an equally deterrent effect on possible perpetrators. Any orders must provide clear instructions on Rules of Engagement, as military forces are generally ill suited for civilian law enforcement. If coordinated with local authorities, apprehension of suspects must comply with the *UN Human Rights Due Diligence Policy* and the *DPKO/DFS Interim Standing Operating Procedure* (SOP) *on Detention in UN Peace Operations*. All actors involved must know the SOPs and regulations that apply to the apprehension and detention of perpetrators, which is especially likely in this scenario (as in MOB VIOLENCE).

4.3   Insurgency

The role of military force. In this scenario, the role of military force in protecting civilians from physical violence will be limited. In fact, physical safety is unlikely to be the primary concern for the majority of civilians, since the threat of violence is usually relatively low and selective. Military forces must at minimum be able to *hold and control areas that are wrested from insurgent control* until local security forces can establish a presence more permanently. If control is not feasible, clearing insurgent strongholds will only increase the threat to civilians, as retaliation against perceived collaborators is likely to occur if the area is recaptured by insurgents. UN military efforts to protect in this scenario should be distinguished from counter-insurgency efforts, usually undertaken by other actors.

Possible courses of action. Cooperation with government troops may provide valuable information on the perpetrators. This will also increase the risk of being perceived as partial in the conflict. As a result, insurgents might also target the military component and/or the UN mission at large. Beyond *defending* key population centers from insurgents, *monitoring government forces* in these same areas may be important to reduce risks of retaliation against civilians on the basis of perceived or real affiliation with insurgents. The chosen course of action should distinguish between actions that are aimed at protecting civilians from being directly targeted, and efforts to mitigate harm during operations against the insurgents (collateral damage). *Strategic communication* may be used to increase awareness among the population of how insurgents deliberately target civilians and how the mission attempts to protect civilians from this violence.

4.4   Predatory violence

The role of military force. The role of the military component is likely to be important in cases of predatory violence. *Offensive military operations* may be the only way of providing more permanent protection from perpetrators preying on the population. Temporary protection may be improved through dispersed presence and deterrence, as predatory actors are usually easily deterred by professional military forces. Failed attempts to defeat predatory rebel groups

may, however, backfire on the civilian population rather than on the military forces and generate more violence than if the armed actors had not been confronted in the first place. Members of militias and criminal gangs often include abducted young adolescents and children, both male and female – which makes ethical challenges particularly likely and acute when confronting perpetrators in this scenario. It is always necessary to consult Mission child protection actors in a timely manner if child soldiers/young abductees are present. The psychological effects of brutal perpetrator tactics may have an impact on the morale of UN troops and should be addressed as part of the training of all units.

Possible courses of action. Military *presence* may deter local attacks, but UN troops cannot protect everyone at all times. Predatory actors will most likely adapt to the operating pattern of the military component by attacking civilians in areas with no UN presence. Hence, a direct approach towards these perpetrators may become inevitable. *Disarmament programs* may be helpful to convince the rank and file to defect and demobilize. *Strategic communication* to encourage defections has worked in the past. Predatory violence may generate a high number of displaced civilians, with an increased need for physical protection compared to when they are in the areas in which they usually reside. This may tie down UN troops to static protection while the rebels continue to mount attacks in areas which have no military presence. *Defeating* predatory actors will most certainly create the need for deploying troops to newly seized areas on a semi-permanent basis, until some kind of state authority is established. Leaving areas where predatory rebel groups have been defeated may see the reoccurrence of new groups with even more hard-hitting tactics towards the local population. The UN Force may be well placed to provide initial area security to increase the level of protection for civilians. Cooperation with national security forces may be complicated by the fact that certain units may also be directly involved in the predatory violence, or collaborating with the armed groups. As such, always refer to the *UN Human Rights Due Diligence Policy*. Close interaction and cooperation with local communities to ensure early warning, combined with high readiness and mobility to reach out to population centers at risk, may have a deterrent effect on some perpetrators.

4.5   Communal conflict

The role of military force. Left to its own escalatory dynamics, communal conflict has the potential for sudden peaks in violence, with a high number of deaths relative to population. Military force may have a *decisive role to play in protecting either community* in the short to intermediate term. Military presence may have a positive deterrent effect, but will not be able to solve the dynamics driving the cycles of revenge/defense. The presence of small arms among previously primitively armed communities in conflict dramatically increases the deadliness of this scenario. As such, *parallel* disarmament and demobilization of all communities involved may be the only long-term solution to improving civilian security. However, disarmament in itself will not address the underlying motivations for communities to arm themselves in the first place. Direct dialogue and engagement of the key leaders can be effective, but may also be perceived as being partial, and is often better undertaken by e.g. Civil Affairs than the UN Force. Cross-component cooperation is essential, and any such approach must be justified through active engagement (strategic communication) with relevant target audiences.

Possible courses of action. Both sides, including their means of survival, must be *defended* from imminent large-scale attacks. Warring parties could be physically separated, although this may create the unintended long-term consequences of a de facto partitioning of a population. Maintaining a military *presence* among and between the affected communities may discourage attacks, but will not remove the threat permanently. Cooperating with one of the parties may be perceived as taking sides. As such, *inter-positioning* may therefore be the most effective approach. However, limiting the freedom of movement of potential perpetrators may generate undesired effects on trade, access to schools and so forth. Technical arrangements should be made to reduce such unintended consequences. Breaking the cycle of violence by disarming one of the parties first, is likely to leave one community more vulnerable to attack. This will enable the other community to escalate violence into ETHNIC CLEANSING or even acts of GENOCIDE. As such, militias and armed civilians from both sides must be *disarmed simultaneously*.

4.6   Government repression

The role of military force. This scenario involves situations that might require responses that fall outside the UN's capabilities. Government repression usually involves violations committed by the host-nation government. However, UN troops may still be deployed when such a scenario develops. In that case, a UN military presence can *limit the government's ability or willingness to use heavy weapons against its own population*, which is often a primary cause of civilian casualties in this scenario.

Possible courses of action. Areas of strong civilian opposition support and elites should be *defended* and the government's ability to crush its own population must be reduced. As such, any effort that may *hinder or reduce the*

perpetrator's access to heavy weapons will have effect. Doing so, however, may jeopardize the consent of the host-state, and lead to early exit of the UN operation. A *highly visible UN military presence* in protection hot spots may deter attacks, although this approach may significantly increase the risk to the UN personnel involved and attacks may just shift elsewhere. Offensive capabilities (special forces, attack helicopters, etc.) may be utilized to directly target assets that are being used to attack populated areas, but, again, this is a highly risky approach for most UN missions.

4.7 Ethnic cleansing

The role of military force. This scenario also involves situations requiring military responses that fall outside the UN's capabilities. Nonetheless, UN missions have previously been deployed to conflicts where ethnic cleansing is ongoing. As such, the military component may play a *decisive role, but confronting the units conducting the violence will often be required to reduce the threat to civilians*. More strategic use of violence may also be required against traditional military targets to influence the calculus of the perpetrators and force them to abandon ethnic cleansing as a strategy. Here, regional organizations may be the most relevant actors. Since civilians will be targeted on the basis of ethnicity, in-depth knowledge about communities and the human terrain is of utmost importance to guide when and where military action will be most useful.

Possible courses of action. Locations or larger geographical areas in which potential victims are gathered must be *defended*. The hot spots are likely to be where new territory has been recently seized, and in minority enclaves, corridors or pockets that link the perpetrating actor's ethnic areas together. Protecting masses of civilians on the run or in IDP/refugee camps must be done in close cooperation with the humanitarian actors present. In extreme cases, the most *vulnerable victims might have to be escorted out of an area* until the threat subsides, although this in practice assists the aim of the perpetrators. The perpetrators may be militarily *coerced into abandoning ethnic cleansing as a strategy* if their military superiority and territorial control is challenged. However, regional organizations, coalitions, or militarily strong actors are the only actors capable of performing military operations on this scale.

4.8 Genocide

The role of military force. In this scenario, the role of military forces is likely to be *decisive* in protecting civilians. However, genocide involves situations that most often will demand responses that fall outside the UN's capabilities, due to the sheer scale of the violence. Yet, UN peace operations have previously been deployed in this scenario (Rwanda), including in situations in which acts of genocides have been committed (such as in Srebrenica in Bosnia). The military component may play a particularly important role in protecting key locations where many potential targets are congregated, although this is not going to reduce the threat to civilians elsewhere. In previous cases, genocidal perpetrators have not stopped killing until they have been defeated or achieved their strategic aim.

Possible courses of action. An emerging genocide is likely to require agile military responses, strategic expeditionary mobility and war-fighting capabilities to match perpetrators at the strategic level. Regional organizations or militarily strong countries are the only ones capable of applying force at this level. Short of *confronting the perpetrators on the ground*, UN troops can help facilitate the *evacuation of civilians and limit suffering* by reducing their vulnerabilities. *Defending* areas or sites where many are congregated is likely to save many lives. UN military forces may also reduce the killings by *disrupting the freedom of movement and access to weapons* for perpetrators on the ground. Since this scenario is characterized by the fact that all civilians belonging to the target group are potential victims, it is necessary to prioritize protection efforts in areas where civilians are congregated in large numbers and the most lives can be saved.

5   Tactical responses

At the tactical level in UN peace operations, physical protection may be provided during four different phases: (i) prevention, (ii) pre-emption, (iii) response and (iv) consolidation, with a view to either eliminating a threat or mitigating the risks to civilians associated with it (see POC Policy, 2015).

Table 5.1   *The UN's POC response phases*

Response phases	Activities
Phase 1: Prevention (threat is latent)	These activities shall be conducted in areas where no clear threat to civilians has yet been identified.
Phase 2: Pre-emption (threat is identified)	When likely threats are identified and attacks against civilians are anticipated, pro-active measures are required to mitigate or eliminate them before violence occurs. This requires deterring a party or person(s) from committing hostile acts, or affecting their capacity to do so, including through the use of force. Activities under the prevention phase will continue to be implemented, particularly in areas under threat.
Phase 3: Response (threat is identified)	Whenever physical violence against civilians is apparent, missions will aim immediately at stopping aggressors from conducting hostile acts through political, security or legal means.
Phase 4: Consolidation (threat has been mitigated/eliminated)	When violence against civilians is subsiding, the mission will support the progressive return to stability and normalcy. These activities will be conducted as required in support of or in close coordination with host-state authorities and the UN Country Team and other partners.

These phases do *not* necessarily occur in sequential order and may be undertaken simultaneously or independently. Activities and objectives mentioned under these phases will vary along with the specific content of each country-specific mandate and the nature of each threat. A list of potential responses and potential challenges and pitfalls during each of these phases follows for each scenario.

5.1 Mob violence

Response phases	Potential responses	Potential challenges and pitfalls
Prevention	• Direct dialogue with key leaders • Military presence and deterrent patrolling to prevent mobs from gathering, growing and moving • Strategic communication	• Key leaders hard to identify • Difficult access to key leaders • Lack of legitimacy among population
Pre-emption	• Contain and control crowds • Large number of troops to display military power without the employment of deadly force • Strategic communication	• Pre-emption through the use of force may spark further violence
Response	• Use enabling capabilities to restrict movement, to establish barricades, and to funnel and control people and traffic • Disrupt the formation of crowds by establishing separation zones • Patrolling • Use relevant capabilities in the military component such as engineering companies, fire-fighting equipment, and containers	• Military forces often poorly trained and equipped for handling mob violence • Military force very often too blunt to respond to law and order challenges • Detention policy may hinder apprehension by UN troops
Consolidation	• Transfer responsibility to civilian police as soon as possible • Deterrent patrolling and military presence to increase the sense of assurance and security in the aftermath • Strategic communication	• Increased military presence may also increase a sense of insecurity

5.2   Post-conflict revenge

Response phases	Potential responses	Potential challenges and pitfalls
Prevention	• Establishing and maintaining own forces' freedom of movement in areas most affected by violence might restrict the freedom of movement for perpetrators • Presence in areas where likely targets congregate may deter violence	• Primarily the responsibility of law enforcement agencies • Military component probably not able to protect particular individuals, as they might be targeted whenever the opportunity arises
Pre-emption	• Once a threat has been identified, a pre-emptive effect may be achieved through apprehending instigators of violence • Assuring the populace in areas affiliated with previous perpetrators (through presence) may reduce the likelihood of large-scale displacement • Pre-positioning of troops and military assets in high-risk areas may deter attacks • A coordinated, early approach could pre-empt the situation from escalating into more organized violence	• Military presence may raise the expectations of a genuine ability to protect or deter attacks • All efforts to protect through force must be done in close cooperation with UN Police and FPUs • Legal/formal framework issues on joint UN military/police operations • Individuals may still be targeted despite successful efforts to stop escalation into more violent scenario
Response	• Coercive military responses against particular serious incidents could have a preventive effect in the future • Protected areas may be provided as a last resort to groups of civilians who feel particularly threatened	• Any response is likely to be reactive • Military responses may risk jeopardizing the consent of the host-state government • POC areas will demand commitment to the highest degree of safety and security, such as 24/7 close access control, internal control, disarmament of residents etc.
Consolidation	• Transfer responsibility to civilian police forces as soon as possible	• As in mob violence, the role of the military component is quite limited

5.3   Insurgency

Response phases	Potential responses	Potential challenges and pitfalls
Prevention	• Strategic communication can be used as a tool to set conditions for why and when the UN will use force to protect • The military component may provide indirect protection such as by removing IEDs, mines, etc	• Protecting civilians can blur the lines between protection of civilians and defeating the insurgents • Attacking insurgents may cause unnecessary harm to civilians (revenge attacks/collateral damage) • The UN may be perceived as part of the conflict • Insurgent strategy to undermine the government may be used against the UN mission • Available assets and resources must be used on self-protection measures
Pre-emption	• Search operations to find and destroy explosive device production sites and infrastructure supporting the insurgency may pre-empt attacks on civilians	• Any pre-emptive effort demands close cooperation with host-government troops
Response	• It is critical to be able to hold areas that have been cleared of insurgents	• Physical safety is unlikely to be the primary concern for the majority of civilians • Failure to hold areas increases incentive for insurgents to attack civilians
Consolidation	• The military component may be essential in (re)building host-state capability to address its own security concerns • Presence through patrolling in areas under government control may increase perception of stability	• Insurgency campaigns may last decades • Be careful in pushing local populations to take sides in areas that are contested • Perceived cooperation with one party to the conflict may lead to retaliatory attacks, including by host-nation security forces

5.4   Predatory violence

Response phases	Potential responses	Potential challenges and pitfalls
Prevention	• A decentralized deployment of troops, with a posture demonstrating and conveying willingness and ability to use force, is likely to deter rebels from moving freely • Strategic communication may be utilized to inspire fighters to demobilize • Pro-active use of surveillance assets such as Unmanned Aerial Vehicles may have preventive effects (on potential attacks)	• Predatory militias or criminal gangs will usually avoid confrontations with host-nation forces and UN troops • Deterrent presence will not be enough to stop attacks against civilians • If faced with resistance, these perpetrators may simply move on to the next undefended target
Pre-emption	• The most effective role of the military component will involve a pre-emptive, direct approach to the perpetrators • Speed and mobility is critical when early-warning indicators point to imminent attacks	• The military component must be prepared to be faced with juveniles when confronting such armed groups
Response	• Military operations into areas where attacks are ongoing will deter further attacks in that area	• Threat is highly likely to move elsewhere
Consolidation	• It may be necessary to hold areas that have been subject to attack to inspire civilians to move back home • The extension of state authority into areas troubled by predatory actors is crucial to establish lasting protection	• Predatory attacks often generate large-scale civilian displacement • Host-government security forces may also display predatory behavior

5.5   Communal conflict

Response phases	Potential responses	Potential challenges and pitfalls
Prevention	• Prolong the period between attacks through deterrent presence/inter-positioning/separation of the warring parties • Dialogue and engagement (e.g. by Civil Affairs) is essential in this phase. Support for conflict prevention/mitigation/ etc.	• Communal conflicts in urban areas are particularly challenging, as people may live in mixed communities or only be separated by roads and/or fences/walls • Difficult to address the drivers of conflict with military force
Pre-emption	• The military component can pre-empt large-scale attacks through deterrent actions and, if needed, coercive action	• The role of attacker and victim may change within a matter of days • Perpetrators are driven to attack both to defend themselves and to avenge last round of attack
Response	• Responding with both mass and speed may be necessary, as larger scale attacks may include thousands of fighters	• Applying force effectively to stop ongoing attacks will be very challenging • UN forces responding to an imminent threat may be perceived as partial in the eyes of the opposing party
Consolidation	• To reduce the perceived threat of insecurity among all parties, it will be important to establish security structures that balance the relative powers of the communities involved • Disarmament must be done in parallel to avoid creating an imbalance of power between communities	• The likelihood is that these conflicts linger on long after the exit of UN forces

5.6   Government repression

Response phases	Potential responses	Potential challenges and pitfalls
Prevention	• Preventive measures in this scenario are probably mostly found in Tier I (protection through dialogue and engagement) of the POC Policy • Military forces may help facilitate secure venues for political dialogue between the incumbent party and the political opposition • Distributed military presence may also decrease the opportunities to crack down on the opposition • The use of military forces to protect refugees and/or IDPs may be the only way to provide physical protection to civilians	• If the government sees violence as necessary for its own survival, the UN military presence will not be enough to deter escalation
Pre-emption	• Any pre-emptive military action to confront such a government and the military forces loyal to the leadership may trigger attacks against UN forces • If early-warning indicators point towards this type of scenario, it may be possible to decrease the government's ability to attack its own people by seizing control over heavy weapons before consent is lost	• Any consent from the host nation will be very hesitant
Response	• Any military response must be carefully orchestrated with all other UN efforts • Defensive operations aiming to protect civilians under attack from government forces may have an effect • Carefully planned and coordinated use of strategic communication may have deterrent effects	• Protecting civilians against government repression through tactical response operations may rapidly challenge the bedrock principle of consent
Consolidation	• The role of a UN military component may be significant in the aftermath of such scenarios • Impartial security provision and rebuilding state security structures may be essential	• The trust between the former warring parties will be low

5.7   Ethnic cleansing

Response phases	Potential responses	Potential challenges and pitfalls
Prevention	• Providing hard evidence that preparations for ethnic cleansing are actually being undertaken, e.g. through monitoring and reporting, is essential • The perpetrator may be coerced into abandoning ethnic cleansing as a strategy if the protector makes it too costly to proceed	• The UN will often be ill-prepared to respond effectively with force to ethnic cleansing • It may be difficult to legitimize preventative use of force before violence has actually escalated and the scale of violence does not need to be very high to make people flee
Pre-emption	• Pre-emptive military measures must primarily focus on confronting the units responsible for the actual cleansing (usually lightly armed, interior security or paramilitary units)	• Any pre-emptive response may trigger attacks on the UN mission to force its withdrawal
Response	• Perpetrators must be directly confronted before they have the ability to induce mass flight • Show of force, punitive strikes, and denying freedom of movement for irregular and paramilitary units on the ground will be most effective in protecting civilians from the threat of expulsion • Effective responses are largely beyond what the principles and capabilities of the UN will allow for in terms of using force to protect, but the military component can play a supporting role alongside other operations to protect	• The moment people flee, the perpetrators have already partly succeeded • The actual number of people killed may not be very high, but the number of displaced will be huge
Consolidation	• UN forces can have a significant role to play in the aftermath of this scenario • Securing the orderly return of refugees	• POST-CONFLICT REVENGE or reversed ethnic cleansing may occur in the consolidation phase

5.8   Genocide

Response phases	Potential responses	Potential challenges and pitfalls
Prevention	• In the early preparatory phases of genocide, UN forces may be present and be able to reduce the threat to civilians • Preventive measures may include distributed presence to deter escalation and defend against actual attacks in areas where many of the targeted civilians live or congregate (airports, stadiums, or public buildings)	• This scenario will always include a state or state-like perpetrator, which means that the UN will struggle to maintain consent
Pre-emption	• The greatest protection effect will be achieved by seizing weapons caches or denying freedom of movement so that the perpetrators are not able to achieve high killing rates • UN forces could conduct pre-emptive operations to deter mass killings, as they are likely to protect many, even though it may only be a small portion of the total number of victims	• Permanently reducing the threat to civilians will require coercive and/or destructive operations in numerous areas at the same time, which will fall outside the capabilities and domain of the UN • Mass killing of civilians can intensify and expand very quickly once it begins
Response	• Any military response should seek to target irregular forces and special units rather than regular armed forces/heavy weapons	• UN forces may become targets themselves the moment they seek to confront genocidaires • Consent may be lost
Consolidation	• There is much potential in the role of UN military forces to consolidate the situation • The principal contribution UN military forces can make is to prevent subsequent violence, especially communal conflict or post-conflict revenge	• The ability to consolidate depends on the role the UN has played during the actual events

6   Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is essential to measure the implementation of POC in any UN operation. According to the UN's POC Policy, joint military, police and civilian M&E teams will assess the mission's response to all major POC incidents or crises and report their findings to the mission leadership and UN Headquarters. Dedicated mission-wide monitoring activities related to the implementation of the POC mandate will ideally be undertaken regularly, based on clear benchmarks and indicators. The overall purpose is to identify trends that can help decision-makers understand how people are
being killed, displaced or harmed and whether the UN response requires adjustments. The DPKO and DFS have recently developed guidance on Protection of Civilians indicators (see Annex A).

Different ways to measure protection of civilians. Based on the key characteristics and expected outcomes of each scenario, it is possible to help identify *what* to monitor and *how* to assess whether protection of civilians is actually being achieved in different situations.

In general, there are at least five ways to measure physical protection of civilians:

• Civilian casualty figures (e.g. number of casualties, people displaced, people forcibly recruited)
• Civilian behavior (do civilians stay or flee? Who do they flee from, and where to?)
• Perception of security (what are the civilians' primary concerns? What do they fear the most?)
• Shifts in territorial control (as this is associated with increased violence against civilians)
• Perpetrator capabilities (e.g. the ability to conduct many large-scale massacres simultaneously, freedom of movement for regular forces, access to deadlier weapons)

Focus on relevant metrics. In general, monitoring civilian casualties will be relevant in *all* operations, but requires focus on the relevant numbers. When certain groups of civilians are targeted, their casualty figures must be measured against that group's population rather than the total number of civilians in the area. Civilian behavior, perception of security, and shifts in territorial control may provide additional metrics to assess protection of civilians in situations where violence is not overwhelming. Perceptions of security may in some cases be more important than the number of attacks, keeping in mind that the perception of what is meant by security may vary significantly. Combining these metrics with civilian casualty figures is likely to provide a more comprehensive assessment of whether the threats to civilians in different situations are actually being reduced or not.

From a strictly military-planning perspective, monitoring perpetrator capabilities is perhaps the most relevant task, because these capabilities represent the means by which perpetrators acquire the ability to attack civilians – and because these capabilities can be reduced by military presence and responses. Assessing perpetrator capabilities will be particularly relevant in the most violent scenarios, in which perpetrators are most dependent on numerous capabilities to execute the violence. By assessing a perpetrator's capabilities to conduct other forms of violence, it is also possible to measure the potential for further violence – or at least the perpetrator's ability to carry it out.

The table suggests how protection of civilians can be measured and effectiveness assessed in each of the scenarios.

Table 6.1   Monitoring and evaluating protection of civilians in each scenario

Scenario	Relevant metrics
Mob violence	• A reduction in the number and scale of riots is a primary indicator of success as these are pre-conditions for the perpetrator to use violence against civilians and destroy/loot property. • Very few civilians will be killed in this scenario, but the perception of threat amongst the population at large may be significant and could be monitored and evaluated to trace to what degree it changes and the extent to which affected communities feel threatened. • The level of material damage can be monitored, but any assessment should differentiate between 'regular' looting for profit and more targeted attacks against symbolic buildings/ structures. If the latter occur, it could point to a more strategic use of violence and the potential for escalation into post-conflict revenge or other more dangerous scenarios. • Interviewing victims of violence may help understand whether or not the violence is purely opportunistic or based on another motivation. It will be important to strictly follow humanitarian guidelines to avoid putting victims in more danger by association with protector/state.
Post-conflict revenge	• During post-conflict revenge, a reduction in the number of civilians subjected to criminal acts of violence (murder, arson, kidnapping, looting) will be the primary indicator of success in protecting civilians. • A reduction in the freedom of movement for individuals or mobs seeking revenge will be the principal (and perhaps only) indicator of success based on perpetrator capabilities. • Greater freedom of movement for civilians associated with former perpetrators (e.g. the ability to travel outside their 'safe sites') will be a key indication of successful reduction in the threat of post-conflict revenge. • The potential for escalation into other, more violent, scenarios can be assessed by monitoring the number of attacks against whole groups of civilians associated with the former perpetrators and their perception of threat. This may indicate how easily these groups may flee in large numbers if more violence breaks out.
Insurgency	• During insurgencies, the greatest indicator of protection success is a reduction in the total figure of civilians killed, injured or displaced – and not merely a reduction in civilian casualties caused by own military actions ('collateral damage'). A certain degree of success is achieved when physical security is no longer the primary concern of the civilian population. • Protection is also achieved when the number of shifts of territorial control and the fear of retaliation from both sides are minimized. • Reducing perpetrator capabilities to target civilians is possible by denying them access to particular types of weapons that are responsible for civilian casualties (such as IEDs or suicide bombs). However, the weapons or tactics used will be very context specific and likely to change over time as the insurgents adapt to the protector's counter-measures.
Predatory violence	• During predatory violence, the greatest indicator of success is a general reduction in the number of civilians killed, injured, displaced and abducted. • Protection is also achieved if the number of civilians fleeing as a result of violent incidents nearby is falling and their general perception of threat is reduced, as predatory perpetrators rely on spreading fear to coerce civilians into submission. • Protection is also achieved by destroying the perpetrator's ability to operate. However, this may lead to retaliation against civilians nearby, which needs to be monitored closely.

Scenario	Relevant metrics
Communal conflict	• During communal conflicts, a reduction in the number of retaliatory attacks is perhaps the greatest indicator of protection success. • The perception of threat in both communal groups may be more important than the actual number of civilians killed during each round, as fear of being attacked is the principal motivation for launching attacks by both sides. • If the cycles of revenge attacks start to slow and the perception of threat from the other community is reduced, the primary threats associated with communal conflict are being addressed. However, if threat perceptions only decline for one of the communities involved, this may indicate a lack of protection of the other community. It may also indicate that one community is gaining the military superiority required for more decisive violence, such as ETHNIC CLEANSING. • Successful protection through reducing perpetrator capabilities depends on restricting the freedom of movement for communal militias from both sides to attack the other community, and denying access to more deadly weapons than are currently available to them.
Government repression	• During government repression, a general reduction in the total number of civilians killed, injured, displaced or arrested will be the most basic indicator of success. Here, the overall figure of civilians harmed will be more important than that of a particular group, as civilians are first and foremost targeted on basis of perceived affiliation with the opposition. • Reducing the number of territorial shifts of control and the civilian population's perceived threat of retaliation from either side will be another indicator of success. • Protection is also achieved by denying perpetrators the use of regular forces and heavy weapons (e.g. air forces, tanks, heavy artillery), and disrupting the command and control over these forces, and access to weapons of mass destruction. • The potential of other unfolding scenarios, such as COMMUNAL CONFLICT, ETHNIC CLEANSING, or GENOCIDE, can be assessed by monitoring the degree to which civilians begin to flee the mere presence of certain perpetrators and the number of attacks against civilians based on their communal identity. However, in order to conduct the violence characteristic of these scenarios, perpetrators need control over and freedom of movement for other types of military units (e.g. paramilitaries, militias and special units).
Ethnic cleansing	• During ethnic cleansing, the majority of civilians targeted (~ 90 percent) are likely to be expelled from specific geographical areas. Therefore, a reduction in the number of targeted civilians displaced and the number of their homes destroyed will be primary indicators of success in protecting civilians against ethnic cleansing. The number of civilians killed is a less useful indicator in itself, as this may constitute only a very few of the civilians actually under threat of expulsion. • A reduction in the particularly brutal acts of violence that make people flee in advance and their perceptions of threat may provide better indicators of success. • Fewer shifts of territorial control will be another critical indicator of success, as this is a prerequisite for conducting cleansing operations and is associated with peaks in violence. • Successful protection based on reducing perpetrator capabilities includes denying freedom of movement for the irregular or special forces (e.g. paramilitaries, militias, police units) that usually conduct the violence on the ground, disrupting perpetrator channels of communication through which expulsion is legitimized, and reducing their ability to coordinate attacks in geographical patterns to create contiguous ethnically pure territories.

Scenario	Relevant metrics
	• The number of civilians returning to areas from which they have previously been expelled is a key indication of a reduced threat of expulsion. • The potential for escalation to GENOCIDE may be assessed by monitoring the potential support for a 'final solution' (whether among the perpetrator leadership or the population in general).
Genocide	• During genocide, the majority of civilians targeted (50+ percent) are likely to die if the perpetrator succeeds. Therefore, a reduction in the number of large-scale massacres of civilians belonging to the targeted group will be a primary indicator of success in protecting civilians. • Protection of civilians is being achieved when the perpetrator's military superiority in victim areas is weakened and the number of killers or highly destructive weapons needed to achieve high death rates is reduced. • At the tactical level, preventing or stopping attacks against locations or areas where potential victims are congregated in large numbers is likely to save many lives, because one could reasonably assume that the majority of them would otherwise have been killed. • Changes in civilian behavior or threat perceptions will have least relevance as indicators of successful protection in situations where civilians are already faced with imminent threats of physical extermination.

Annex A   Recommended reading

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This document aims to complement existing UN POC guidance with a threat-based approach to protection of civilians, focusing on the specific challenges military commanders are confronted with on the ground. A key characteristic of current operational environments is that civilians are being deliberately targeted by armed actors. In some cases, such attacks on civilians result from specific perpetrator strategies involving the extermination or expelling of entire groups or communities. However, in most cases, armed groups, abusive authorities and rogue militias use violence against civilians to survive, to undermine political opposition, or to secure economic rewards and other benefits. Different types of perpetrators and rationale often co-exist within the same area of operation. Distinguishing between different types of threats and the potential role and utility of military force is therefore essential to improve UN military efforts to protect civilians. The threat-based approach should help UN military commanders, planners and practitioners at all levels of the UN system to enhance their understanding of how the military component of a UN peace operation could use force more effectively to protect civilians from different types of physical threats.