

DEFENSE INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL LEGAL STUDIES
Resident Course Report
Legal Aspects of Peacekeeping Operations (LAPKO)
14-31 August 2017, Newport, Rhode Island

Areas of Emphasis:

UN Authorities and Standards
 Human Rights Protection
 International Agreements
 Peacekeeper Conduct and Discipline
 Law of Armed Conflict (LOAC)
 Rules of Engagement (ROE)

Key Issues:

Protection of civilians
 Prevention of Sexual
 Exploitation and Abuse
 Preparation for
 participation in UN
 peacekeeping iaw the
 rule of law

Participants: 16	
Military:	14
Civilian:	2
Female	
Female	1
AFRICOM	3
CENTCOM	2
EUCOM	2
NORTHCOM	0
PACOM	9
SOUTHCOM	0

LAPKO Participants are prepared to:

- 1) Understand the organizations, structures and processes used to conduct United Nations peacekeeping military operations in accordance with the law of armed conflict and human rights law.
- 2) Identify legal questions that arise in the context of peacekeeping operations and know the major applicable provisions of international law that serve as standards for resolving these questions.
- 3) Determine how their country can contribute more effectively to lawful conduct of peacekeeping operations.

Background:

The inaugural offering of the LAPKO resident course offered a comprehensive analysis of the legal aspects of United Nations-sanctioned peacekeeping missions. It detailed the practical implications of the agreed legal basis for action on the mission, the rules of engagement challenges that derive from the respective UN authorities and the development of international agreements associated with peacekeeping missions. In addition, case studies and practical exercises enabled participants to exchange ideas and lessons learned from experience.

The LAPKO course featured an exceptionally high quality and well-qualified cadre of instructors from Nigeria, Uruguay and Kenya with recent experience as UN peacekeeping mission legal advisors, and an Australian officer with expertise in detainee operations in peacekeeping. Participants also received presentations from current UN staff working in the areas of conduct and discipline, investigations, refugees, human rights and other legal issues. DIILS staff instructors with years of experience researching and instructing on legal aspects of peacekeeping provided the overall course design. For example, one of the instructors was recently assigned as the senior legal advisor for a complex UN peacekeeping mission in Africa.

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The LAPKO course engaged participants with interactive exercises on the legal aspects of Security Council Resolutions, Misconduct Investigations, Status of Forces Agreements, the Law of Armed Conflict and Use of Force. Selected LAPKO participants were invited to make presentations about their recent experience as peacekeepers and on their national plans and policies regarding peacekeeping. Participants gained practical insights regarding operational law during exercises using a video-based Firearms Training Simulator (FATS).

In keeping with course objectives, LAPKO participants visited New York City and received briefings by United Nations officials, including the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) Military Legal Advisor and officials from the UN Office of Legal Affairs.

In accordance with IMET objectives, participants also took part in cultural familiarization activities in Newport, RI; Boston, MA; and New York City as part of the DIILS Field Studies Program. The visit to New York featured a guided tour of historical and cultural sites, such as the 9/11 Memorial. Participants also enjoyed a tour of the United Nations Headquarters. These visits helped the participants understand U.S. and international political and global free-market institutions within the context of a diverse society.

Course Outcomes:

Participants responded to the following post-course survey questions:

Post Course survey questions	Average Score (10=Excellent)
	Current
To what extent did the course provide useful skills and knowledge?	9.3
Would you recommend this course to your colleagues?	9.3

Participant Comments:

Highlights of the LAPKO Course

- “The course instructors and faculty members are outstanding. They provide clarity, search new angles and find better course material to teach and explain to the class.”
- “This course was very essential for us to understand and learn about legal aspects of UN PKO and included important subjects. One of the highlighted classes was held in New York. It allowed us to become familiarized with UN HQ staff.”
- “The course highlight was the trip to United Nations and the live interactive session with those office bearers who are working there.”

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Strengths of the LAPKO Course:

- “All instructors were approachable and also encouraged class participation.”
- “Participants were equipped with a basic legal foundation in United Nations peacekeeping in order to improve their ability to appreciate and handle all kinds of legal matters in a UN peacekeeping operations environment to be able to implement their mandate more effectively.”
- “Real time situations are being discussed in the course.”
- “Getting to know people from other parts of the world.”
- “Enthusiasm of DIILS.”

What they learned that can be used in the workplace:

- “As a military police officer I can utilize my skills in training other Officers and Staff members of my Defense Force.”
- “UN expectations with regards to legal issues, as I am dealing with my organization’s contribution to UN PKO I can provide solid advice to my commanders in terms of compliance with UN and International legal standards.”

Future plans:

- Provide more of the course curriculum to participants prior to their arrival through the DIILS GlobalNET web site.
- Develop new curriculum on UN Memorandum of Understanding.
- The next LAPKO course is scheduled for 13-30 August 2018.

For more information:

- See attached course schedule
- Go to WWW.DIILS.ORG or
- Email: ResidentPgm.DIILS@dsc.mil