

**United Nations**

**Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Field  
Support**



**Ref. 2013.03**

---

## **DPKO/DFS Guideline**

---

# **United Nations Police Support to the Provision of Security in Electoral Processes**

---

Approved by: USG/DPKO  
USG/DFS

Effective Date : 15 February 2013

Contact: DPKO/OROLSI/Police Division

Review date: 15 February 2016

---

---

**DPKO/DFS GUIDELINE ON UNITED NATIONS POLICE  
SUPPORT TO THE PROVISION OF SECURITY IN ELECTORAL PROCESSES**

---

|                  |           |                                  |
|------------------|-----------|----------------------------------|
| <b>Contents:</b> | <b>A.</b> | <b>Purpose</b>                   |
|                  | <b>B.</b> | <b>Scope</b>                     |
|                  | <b>C.</b> | <b>Rationale</b>                 |
|                  | <b>D.</b> | <b>Procedures</b>                |
|                  | <b>E.</b> | <b>Terms and Definitions</b>     |
|                  | <b>F.</b> | <b>References</b>                |
|                  | <b>G.</b> | <b>Monitoring and Compliance</b> |
|                  | <b>H.</b> | <b>Contact</b>                   |
|                  | <b>I.</b> | <b>History</b>                   |

- Annex:**
1. Checklist for UN Police Support to the Provision of Security in Electoral Processes
  2. Diagram: Providing Security throughout the Electoral Cycle

---

**A. PURPOSE**

1. Supporting host-state authorities in organising national and local elections is a recurring and central responsibility of DPKO- and DPA-led missions, and its police components are commonly tasked to assist host-state police and other law enforcement agencies in providing security in electoral processes.
2. The purpose of this guideline is to describe the guiding principles for UN Police support to the provision of security in electoral processes and the steps UN Police should take in planning, coordinating and delivering their support as well as to set out good practices to guide UN Police in supporting host-state police and other law enforcement agencies.<sup>1</sup>

---

**B. SCOPE**

3. This guideline applies to relevant personnel of police components of DPKO- and DPA-led missions, and to all personnel at both the mission and Headquarters levels who are involved in planning, overseeing and implementing the work of police components.
4. Senior mission leadership, personnel of military, political, civil affairs, legal, human rights, SSR, justice, corrections and other components of peacekeeping operations, in particular personnel of electoral components, as well as Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), Department of Field Support (DFS), and Department of Safety and Security

---

<sup>1</sup> UN Police support goes beyond a narrow interpretation of security to include contributions to protecting and promoting human rights by host-state police and other law enforcement agencies through functions such as mentoring, advice and training.

(DSS) senior managers, and relevant United Nations (UN) agencies and programmes should be made aware of this guideline. Other affected international organisations, such as the International Office of Migration (IOM), should also be made aware of this guideline.

---

## **C. RATIONALE**

5. The maintenance of a safe and secure environment is critical to credible elections. Without security and respect for human rights, candidates and parties may not be able to campaign freely; the media may be restricted in its reporting; the voters may not feel safe to register and vote; electoral management bodies may not be able to function effectively; observers may not be able to monitor comprehensively; and overall confidence in and commitment to the elections may be weakened.
6. Post-conflict contexts represent particularly challenging environments for providing effective security for elections. A range of factors such as political volatility, the presence of armed groups and former combatants, displaced persons who are entitled to register and to vote, a proliferation of small arms, the presence of landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW), ongoing human rights violations, gender discrimination and violence against women, the absence of a functioning justice system, and a weak economy can render the security situation more fragile. Typical post-conflict processes such as disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR), refugee return, security sector reform (SSR), and transitional justice can also affect electoral security.
7. At the same time, governments may lack capacity and democratic legitimacy. Host-state police and other law enforcement agencies often struggle with organisational, infrastructure and resource constraints, as well as weak oversight and management functions. In some instances, officials who were involved in serious human rights violations are not removed, former warring factions continue to wield significant power, remain a source of opposition and instability, and both represent a potential source of intimidation in the electoral process. As a result, host-state police and other law enforcement agencies are frequently not fully able to provide effective and human rights compliant security for elections.
8. Security Council resolutions regularly task peacekeeping operations to assist host-state authorities in preparing for and conducting elections, including by supporting the establishment of a secure environment. In addition to UN Police, this primarily includes the electoral component but also the military, civil affairs and human rights components.
9. The UN electoral component in a mission, normally headed by a chief electoral adviser (CEA), has the lead role in all UN electoral support activities. Activities of UN Police should be planned and carried out in close coordination with the UN electoral component, as part of a mission-wide support strategy developed under the latter's direction.
10. The military often has specified and clearly delineated roles in supporting security in electoral processes which might include escorts of voting materials, perimeter patrols or similar. Military components are usually involved in the planning and assessment phases together with international and host-state police and electoral authorities, at which time different security roles and responsibilities may be assigned to the military component, the UN Police component or the host-state police and other law enforcement agencies. How these roles are assigned will be determined by the legal framework of the host country, international standards on the exceptional use of military forces in domestic law

enforcement functions and the overall level of threat or volatility of the security situation and by the human and material resources available to the different participating organisations including the military, the host-state authorities, including police and electoral bodies, and UN Police. Roles will also vary at different stages of the electoral cycle.

---

## D. PROCEDURES

### D.1 Framework for UN Police Support to Security in Electoral Processes

#### Overall UN Electoral Assistance Framework

11. In general terms, the UN provides assistance to electoral processes in the following six ways:
  - 11.1. In the majority of cases, the UN provides *technical assistance* to the national election authority and other election stakeholders and institutions, including in the following areas:
    - (a) Deployment of technical assistance experts or teams: Technical assistance could include advice and support on operations, voter registration, legal issues, logistics, voter/civic education, public information, ballot design and production, procurement, management/administration, training, development of procedures, security, gender mainstreaming, and many other aspects. Such assistance may be implemented through electoral components within missions and/or through different UN funds and programmes such as United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS);
    - (b) Mobilization and coordination of financial resources for electoral support, and procurement through projects based on trust funds or basket funds;
    - (c) Coordinating donors and international organisations involved in supporting the electoral process;
    - (d) Assessing threats to the election process and advising on security measures that can be taken to reduce the potential for election-related violence and prevent human rights violations.
  - 11.2. In rare cases, the UN takes the lead in the *organisation and conduct* of elections. This happens when such a role is requested by the host-state authorities or mandated by the General Assembly or Security Council.
  - 11.3. Election observation is another important way to promote the credibility of elections. The UN rarely undertakes election observation, which is now commonly carried out by regional organizations, as well as by international non-governmental and domestic civil society organisations.<sup>2</sup> However, the UN can provide *operational*

---

<sup>2</sup> Most international bodies involved in election observation have signed up to the "Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation" (commemorated at the United Nations in New York, in October 2005).

*support and coordinate international observers* based on a request from a Member State and accredited international observer groups.

- 11.4. On rare occasions, the Security Council or General Assembly may ask the Secretary-General to play a "*certification*" role. In such cases the United Nations is requested to certify the credibility of all or specific aspects of an electoral process conducted by the national election authority.
  - 11.5. In a handful of instances, and at the request of a Member State, the UN has appointed a *panel of political and/or electoral experts* to follow and report on an electoral process. The assessment is generally provided to the Secretary-General or the UN Focal Point for Electoral Assistance.
  - 11.6. The UN can also *support in creating a conducive environment* for the implementation of various tasks listed in their mandate. In countries where the UN has such a mandate, they may use their good offices and political role to contribute to creating a conducive environment for the holding of elections.<sup>3</sup>
12. The Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs is the designated UN focal point for electoral assistance activities. The Electoral Assistance Division (EAD) of the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) supports the focal point in the handling of requests for assistance and is responsible for ensuring consistency and coherence in its provision.<sup>4</sup> EAD is also responsible for deploying needs assessment missions to consider whether UN electoral support should be provided, and if so, what form it should take.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, EAD maintains a roster of international electoral experts that are deployed to peacekeeping operations and provide technical advice and support to peacekeeping operations and UNDP field projects.
  13. Independent and impartial monitoring of human rights during electoral processes is also essential to identify threats and advise on measures to prevent human rights violations. It contributes to confidence-building and to the overall credibility of the electoral process. In recent years, the UN, notably the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has increasingly dispatched teams of human rights monitors to countries undergoing elections. In DPKO- and DPA-led missions, human rights components normally enhance their monitoring on election-related human rights violations during electoral processes and are required to work closely with UN Police colleagues to advise on preventive measures and anticipate, plan and prepare for possible crises.

#### Types of UN Police Tasks in Supporting Electoral Processes

14. UN Police support to electoral processes is provided within the above overall framework of UN electoral assistance and falls into two broad categories:
  - 14.1. UN Police can directly contribute to the provision of security.
  - 14.2. UN Police can support the host-state police in their role through advice and capacity-building.

---

<sup>3</sup> For more details, see: United Nations Focal Point for Electoral Assistance Policy Directive on Principles and Types Of UN Electoral Assistance, FP/01/2012, May 2012

<sup>4</sup> A/Res/46/137 (1991).

<sup>5</sup> United Nations Focal Point for Electoral Assistance Guideline on United Nations Electoral Needs Assessments, FP/02/2012, May 2012.

15. In the infrequent cases that a UN mission is responsible for all aspects of the elections or shares responsibility with the host state, such as in UNTAC and UNTAET, UN Police together with the UN military peacekeepers cover a broad range of executive policing functions, including direct overall responsibility for providing security in electoral processes, in addition to supervising and building the capacity of host-state police and other law enforcement agencies. Depending on the mandate, UN Police may only be responsible for certain limited aspects of security such as public order management by formed police units.<sup>6</sup>
16. More often, the UN mission is mandated to provide technical assistance and logistical support to the electoral process. This includes – among other things – co-locating with host-state police and other law enforcement officials, mentoring, advising and monitoring their operational activities, including on gender-related issues, training, logistical support and support to their long-term institutional development, as well as monitoring the overall security situation. In performing all these functions, UN Police personnel is required to promote respect for human rights and support integration of human rights norms and standards into host-state police instructions, procedures and operational activities<sup>7</sup>.

## **D.2 Good Practice and Guiding Principles in Supporting Electoral Processes**

17. While the tasks assigned to UN Police are dependent on the Security Council mandate, the good practice listed here can guide UN Police in translating those tasks into precise roles and responsibilities in a wide range of situations.
18. Planning for security in electoral processes can and should begin well in advance. Although elections might sometimes be called at short notice, timelines of an electoral cycle are usually set in advance in a peace agreement or Security Council resolutions. Provisions for logistics support should be coordinated with the Chief Electoral Adviser. All election support requirements should be reflected in the mission's Results Based Budget and the associated cost included in budget formulation. Additionally, UN Police should provide inputs into the Concept of Logistics Support for the Election Process. The logistics support for UN Police should be clearly defined and resources should be made available to support UN Police in accordance with operational and security requirements.<sup>8</sup> Advance planning and preparation should include in-house training for UN Police on the electoral process, their responsibilities and issues related to their personal safety and security.
19. Planning for security in electoral processes needs to leave room for flexibility. While elections can be planned well in advance, election plans should take into account the volatility of post-conflict situations, be regularly reviewed and provide for various scenarios and joint exercises.
20. Security support should be coordinated with the electoral component. UN Police component should nominate a focal point for elections and the electoral component should

<sup>6</sup> Formed Police Units are integral parts of UN Police components and have three core functions: public order management, protection of UN mission personnel and facilities, and provision of support to police operations that require a formed response or are beyond the capacity of individual UNPOL. All three functions are critical throughout an election cycle. See DPKO/DFS Policy (revised) on Formed Police Units in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, 01 March 2010.

<sup>7</sup> Human rights roles and responsibilities of UN Police personnel are further described in the DPKO/OHCHR/DPA/DFS Policy on Human Rights in UN Peace Operations and Political Missions, September 2011.

<sup>8</sup> This would also cover supply chains (rations, fuel etc.) and other administrative inputs where FPUs and UNPOL are involved in public order and security tasks.

have a liaison for security-related matters. The electoral component is the primary contact for UN police to understand operational and logistical plans of the electoral component and the host-state electoral institution, such as establishing polling stations and warehouses, moving staff, voters, observers and party agents, moving materials such as ballots and ballots boxes, and transmitting results and other sensitive records. Any security plan must be based on a thorough understanding of the above plans and processes. The electoral component and UN Police should brief each other on all electoral and security preparations respectively. On important or sensitive best practice issues, UN Police should seek guidance from headquarters including from EAD (through the UN Police chain-of-command). Other close partners in the mission are likely to be Political Affairs, Human Rights, Logistics, as well as the Joint Mission Analysis Centre (JMAC) and the Joint Operations Centre (JOC). UN Police should also liaise with UN entities undertaking electoral assistance activities such as OHCHR, UNDP, and/or UN Women.

21. Security must be assured throughout the electoral cycle not just on Election Day. Elections are often understood as one-off events. But different phases of the electoral cycle require different security responses, not least as most incidences of election violence take place before and after Election Day. In addition, it is critical that UN Police transfer knowledge and build capacity between elections so that host-state authorities are able to fully take over the responsibilities with respect to security in electoral processes, (subject to agreement on training and capacity-building plans). In some cases, the electoral cycle may be defined in national legislation. Typically it includes the range of UN Police tasks shown in the graph in Annex 2.
22. Advice and capacity building is the preferred option. Rather than taking on direct executive responsibility for providing such security and in line with a given mission's mandate, UN Police should focus on advising and building the institutional and operational capacities of host-state police and other law enforcement agencies, as well as of related governance and electoral management bodies (such as relevant ministries, electoral commissions, electoral dispute resolution mechanisms, etc) in providing effective and efficient security in electoral processes.
23. Security should be provided by police and other law enforcement agencies, not the military. This is also true of managing public order more generally and goes for both host-state and international security providers. In post-conflict contexts, the military (international or host-state) may have to play a supportive role because the police lack public order capacity and resources. It is nonetheless a basic function of post-conflict peacekeeping to promote the separation of roles of the host-state military and police.<sup>9</sup>
24. Security must be provided impartially. UN Police must adhere to and promote the principle of impartiality and avoid any activity where their role might be questioned. For example, they should not handle election materials or enter polling stations, unless authorised or asked to do so under the national electoral legal framework, elections staff or the person in charge of the station.
25. Security support must be provided in compliance with the Secretary-General Policy on Human Rights Due Diligence on UN Support to non-UN Security Forces (HRDDP). The HRDDP sets out principles and measures to ensure that the support provided by UN entities to non-UN security forces is consistent with the UN Charter and international humanitarian law (IHL), human rights and refugee law. According to this policy, the UN

<sup>9</sup> In some cases, the host-state security framework might foresee a limited internal security role for the military, such as stipulated in the National Security Law (2010) in Timor-Leste.

cannot provide support to security forces that could commit grave human rights, IHL or refugee law violations and must conduct a risk assessment and ensure the adoption of mitigating measures to reduce the risk that such violations may happen<sup>10</sup>.

26. Security must be provided in compliance with international human rights norms and standards. Ensuring respect for human rights must be fully integrated into mentoring, advising and all other UN Police functions, consistent with international human rights law, which is an integral part of the normative framework for DPKO- and DPA-led missions. This is not only a policy requirement, but also a key element to ensure the legitimacy of elections. The behaviour of host-state police and security forces during elections and respect for human rights is fundamental to the credibility of the electoral process. Allegations of human rights violations by host-state police or other security officials should be carefully recorded and shared with human rights components for further investigation and follow up. Timely action by peace operations to prevent and stop human rights violations, including those targeting opposition members, journalists, human rights defenders, women candidates and voters, as well as gender-based violence, is crucial for confidence building among the parties and to prevent a further escalation of violence.
27. Security in electoral processes must be gender, culture and group-sensitive. UN Police should pay attention to gender and other group-specific considerations, especially those of vulnerable and other marginalised groups, when providing support and identifying security needs. This includes taking into account and developing responses to the differences in women's and men's issues, conditions and experiences. Security forces may need to be sensitized to the diverse forms of Political Violence Against Women in Elections (PVAWE) including physical, psychological, sexual and economic violence, and adapt appropriate responses. The special security needs of female candidates and voters, such as threats and acts of sexual violence, psychological harassment and intimidation, have to be adequately addressed and included in security assessments to ensure equal participation of women in the electoral process. For instance, women or members of minorities may be afraid to vote because they were previously targets or have little confidence in the host-state police. The presence of female police officers near polling sites may increase the confidence of female voters. Special security arrangements may also need to be put in place to allow disarmed combatants in cantonment sites to register and vote. Finally, measures should be put in place to minimise any tensions related to displaced electorates.
28. Security in electoral processes must be environmentally conscious. UN police should minimise its environmental impacts in its deployment areas to ensure good relations with the local community as well as safeguard the UN's reputation. For instance, in water-scarce area, attention has to be paid to using water in accordance with local needs so that the UN is not perceived as a potential resource competitor. Waste and wastewater management has to be implemented as per UN standards. Throwing UN waste improperly may create possible tension with the local community. Knowledge of cultural, religious and historical sites is important to adopt appropriate behaviour around those sites.
29. Security in electoral processes is an opportunity for security sector reform (SSR). Electoral processes are hugely time, capacity, and resource-consuming and can draw a large part of available funding and resources to the detriment of other development and reform processes but they also bring together many relevant actors. That is why discussions about security in electoral processes should also be used as an opportunity to reinforce security sector reform (SSR), justice reform and other reform processes for example to

---

<sup>10</sup> Secretary-General Policy on Human Rights Due Diligence on UN support to non-UN security forces (HRDDP) – July 2011.



conduct training or a census and identification of police, law enforcement and other security personnel ahead of the elections. This may include gender-sensitive security sector reform (GSSSR).

### **D.3 The Process of Providing Security throughout the Electoral Cycle and Examples of Potential UN Support Activities**

30. This section sets out specific steps that should generally be followed in providing security in electoral processes. Although there cannot be a one-size-fits-all approach to the provision of security for elections, and each process depends on context-specific conditions and on the available capacity and expertise in the UN Police component, experience shows that certain fundamental procedural steps apply to all contexts.
31. The process of providing security in electoral processes includes five phases of activities:
  - 31.1. *Clarify the role UN Police play in providing security to a given electoral process, conduct initial internal analysis and planning.* If support to local police is contemplated, conduct a risk assessment on whether the recipient entities may commit grave human rights violations and identify mitigating measures to prevent such risk, consistent with the HRDDP (see D.3.a);
  - 31.2. *Research the domestic legal and operational framework for elections and identify the key domestic actors* (see D.3.b);
  - 31.3. *Prepare security plans with other mission components, in particular establish joint coordination structures, conduct a security assessment, draft a security plan, review codes of conduct, train police and other law enforcement officials, and conduct a public information campaign* (see D.3.c), also involving the UNCT;
  - 31.4. *Provide security throughout the election period, including during voter registration, candidate nomination, and electoral campaigning, on Election Day, during the counting, tabulation and announcement of results and, in the post Election Day period by monitoring the deployment of the security personnel* (see D.3.d); and
  - 31.5. *Review lessons for future elections* (see D.3.e).
32. The phases are explained in greater detail below and the possible UN Police activities to be conducted in each of these phases are clarified with concrete examples below.

#### **D.3.a Clarify the UN Police role in providing security to a given electoral process and conduct initial internal analysis and planning**

33. Clarify UN Police tasks and assign dedicated staff. As a first step, the UN Police component should clarify its role within the overall electoral mandate of the mission, identify the tasks assigned to it, and assign dedicated staff to election-related security support tasks such as an internal UN risk analysis, as well as planning, liaison and coordination functions.
34. Clarify the type of UN Police support that may be provided to host-state security forces and assess whether there are risks of grave human rights violations within the parameters of the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy – in close consultation with the human rights component. This assessment can be based inter alia on the human rights record of the recipient, its record in taking remedial steps, the UN ability and leverage to monitor and

advise on remedial measures. Identify mitigating measures to prevent such risks and communicate to the recipients of support in which framework UN support will be provided.

35. Conduct internal UN Police planning for the election-related security mandate. Under guidance of the senior management of the mission, the UN Police component will conduct its own internal planning on the basis of its mandate, best practice, the risk analysis and the security needs of the electoral process. As early as possible, a preliminary assessment should identify available human and material resources within the UN Police component and whether additional resources can be contributed by partners or other mission components, or whether they may have to be requested.
36. Conduct an initial, internal UN election risk analysis. The UN Police component should feed into an elections risk analysis that will be conducted by the Joint Mission Analysis Centre (JMAC) or its equivalent in cooperation with the electoral and other relevant components. It should consider the following:
  - 36.1. Early risk identification helps to manage the risks in the best possible way and ensure that adequate preparations are made for all eventualities. Risks include possible escalation of violence and an upsurge of elections related human rights violations.
  - 36.2. Special attention should be given to specific election-related threats against UN mission personnel, material and facilities: which UN organisations are vulnerable? How and why might threats affect electoral programmes? Which other threats are present, but less likely to affect the UN?
  - 36.3. Special attention should be given to mapping the security risks to specific groups, including women and minority groups.
  - 36.4. The analysis should draw on information received from various mission components, other international agencies, and host-state authorities including the Election Management Bodies (EMBs) and parties to the conflict.
  - 36.5. The analysis should be based on the operational plan of the electoral process and construct a comprehensive picture of programme activities and associated risks.

#### ***D.3.b Research legal and operational framework and identify key actors***

37. Research the legal and operational framework. UN Police need to understand the applicable legal framework, particularly concerning human rights, which can usually be found in documents, such as the Constitution, electoral laws, procedures, codes of conduct, government decrees or orders by electoral authorities, as well as in a peace agreement and related Security Council resolutions. But provisions might also be non-existent, vague or non-compliant with international human rights norms and standards, for example in the area of political violence against women in elections. Specific legal arrangements governing the UN Police presence and role may also exist. Where UN Police has an executive role, internal guidance such as Directives on search, detention, use of force and arrest procedures should be consistent with national law and in accordance with UN norms and standards.
  - 37.1. UN Police should request a briefing from the UN Electoral component/EMB on the legal framework and other subsequent electoral processes, in order to ensure UN Police can effectively brief host-state police.

- 37.2. UN Police, working with the electoral and human rights components, may assist host-state police and other law enforcement agencies in identifying, collecting and interpreting relevant legal provisions on security in electoral processes as well as national and international human rights standards relating to elections.
- 37.3. UN Police may also work with host-state police academies to ensure the relevant law is covered in the training curriculum for recruits. They can assist academies in organising specialised courses for serving police and other law enforcement officials.
38. Identify key host-state and international actors. It is important for UN Police to know these actors, identify potential partners for providing security, and initiate coordination efforts. All of the following actors should be taken into account when providing security in electoral process.

| Overview over Key Actors   |           |
|--|-----------|
| • Election Management Bodies (EMBs)                                  | • Par. 39 |
| • Host-state police and other law enforcement agencies               | • Par. 40 |
| • Non-state security providers, including private security companies | • Par. 43 |
| • Political parties  | • Par. 44 |
| • Displaced voters   | • Par. 45 |
| • Independent election observers (international and domestic )       | • Par. 46 |
| • Media (international and domestic)                                 | • Par. 47 |
| • Human rights actors(international and domestic )                   | • Par. 48 |
| • International development and humanitarian assistance actors.      | • Par. 49 |

39. *Election management bodies (EMBs)* are usually either an independent election commission or a branch of government, such as the Ministry of Interior, or mixed. An EMB is generally divided into national and lower level offices. Its mandate involves an array of responsibilities including the administration of the election process, electoral monitoring and planning for security in electoral processes in cooperation with the police and others. Any interaction with the EMBs should take place in close coordination with the UN electoral component.
- 39.1. UN Police may discuss and/or advise the EMBs on its role in terms of security in electoral processes and its relationship with the police and other relevant law enforcement agencies.
- 39.2. UN Police could also provide briefings on security in electoral processes to members of the EMBs, as well as other election stakeholders such as political parties and civil society organisations.
- 39.3. UN Police should always respect the separate mandate of the EMBs and not interfere in their activities. For example, control of access to electoral sites, such as warehouses, lies with the EMBs unless a specific request is made to UN Police to take on this responsibility.
40. *Host-state police and other relevant law enforcement agencies.* Ideally, the host-state law enforcement agencies and other security agencies working closely with the EMBs will take the overall lead on security planning and should be responsible for implementing the security plan.

41. As the capacity of law enforcement agencies can be limited and the military may have to take on a support role, UN Police should map the host-state security actors and assess their integrity and capacity to effectively address election-related security threats. This mapping should also include a preliminary appraisal of the relationship between security agencies and the population, including their human rights record and the extent to which they enjoy popular trust or may be subject to political interference.
  - 41.1. UN Police may discuss and/or advise host-state police, law enforcement and other relevant security agencies on the role of the EMBs and the agencies' own role vis-à-vis the EMBs.
  - 41.2. UN Police may also encourage host-state police and other law enforcement agencies to cooperate with the EMBs and facilitate meetings.
  - 41.3. UN Police should generally not take the lead in interactions with the EMBs but support host-state police and other law enforcement agencies as the primary interlocutor with the EMBs.
42. *Non-state security providers.* In post-conflict contexts, the state does not always have authority over its entire territory, and security in some regions may be provided by de facto authorities, customary authorities, or other non-state actors, taking into account any tendency that these authorities might have to impede free, fair and violence free elections. The role of these non-state security providers must be taken into account in the security planning for elections. Given that non-state security providers are not sufficiently factored in host-state authorities' security plan and strategies, it is important to explain to authorities the importance of engaging with these non-state actors.
43. *Private security companies* may be used by the host-state government or a bilateral donor to support the provision of security in electoral processes. This can be problematic and special attention needs to be given to the means by which they were selected, the legality and content of their contracts, the duration of their mandates, their areas of competence and terms of reference, their command and control structure, provisions ensuring oversight by and ultimate responsibility of state authorities, and the role they are to play in the overall security framework.
  - 43.1. Where they have requisite capacity, UN Police could assist host-state authorities in identifying and mapping non-state security providers and private security companies. UN Police could also discuss with or advise host-state authorities on a regulatory framework for these actors.
  - 43.2. UN Police may assist host-state authorities in engaging, training and monitoring non-state security actors.
44. *Political parties.* Political parties and candidates are obviously key actors in electoral processes. Their election campaigns, in particular rallies and other big public events may require extra security measures. Members of political parties may also become targets of intimidation and threats and require protection. Security needs of female and minority candidates need to be addressed to encourage their participation in the electoral process. Providing security under these circumstances can be sensitive, hence utmost impartiality is required and the situation needs to be thoroughly assessed.
45. *Displaced Voters.* Depending on how the election is structured, displaced persons often face unique security challenges. Mechanisms for voter registration and participation should

be designed so as to minimise threats to their physical safety at different stages of the electoral process.<sup>11</sup>

46. *Election observers.* The use of election observers – often from regional or non-governmental organisations – is common in post-conflict settings. Domestic observation is likely to be undertaken by local civil society organisations, including also religious bodies. In general, domestic organisations tend to deploy greater numbers of election observers than international bodies. Many electoral laws now contain provisions on electoral observation, including accreditation procedures.
47. *Media.* The media can help to reduce security risks by informing the public about the electoral process. Host-state police will be called upon to guarantee the freedom of expression and movement of journalists during the electoral process. International journalists may have particular security needs. Host-state police should be briefed on the role of the media and certification.
48. *Human rights actors.* Host-state human rights institutions and NGOs play an important role in monitoring the human rights situation during an election process. Their presence and monitoring can deter human rights violations and generate confidence in the electoral process. While these actors usually liaise with the human rights component, they may come under attack and may require protection by host-state authorities – who have the primary responsibility to protect – the UN.
49. *International development and humanitarian assistance actors.* International assistance to post-conflict reconstruction efforts often result in the presence of many international staff, who may have been supporting the electoral process by assisting the EMBs or civil society organisations. They may have particular security needs.
50. With respect to election observers, media, human rights and international development and humanitarian actors, UN Police may do the following:
  - 50.1. UN Police may brief observers, the media, and international development actors on security aspects of the elections. The Mission Public Information Office, in coordination with the electoral component and in consultation with host-state authorities and media, should take the lead in any media campaign.
  - 50.2. UN Police may advise host-state police and other law enforcement agencies on the special security needs of these groups and help to draw up tailored security plans.
  - 50.3. UN Police may also advise or train host-state police and other law enforcement agencies on the security aspects of the legal framework governing the activities of observers and the media.
  - 50.4. UN Police should respect the independence of election observers, the media and human rights organisations and not interfere with their activities. Similarly, UN Police may need to advise host-state police or security forces not to obstruct the role of such actors.

---

<sup>11</sup> IOM *Enfranchising Displaced Electorates: A Course on Policy and Best Practice*. Overall responsibility for the security of voters from abroad remains with the respective host government. Providing electoral support for Out of Country Voting (OCV) operations is only relevant for UN Police, where external voters are in a neighbouring country in which there is also a peacekeeping operation.

### **D.3.c Prepare for security in electoral processes**

| <b>Overview over Tasks in Preparing for Security in Electoral Processes</b>   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establish election security teams.</li><li>• Establish and/or participate in coordination structures.</li><li>• Conduct an election security assessment.</li><li>• Develop a security plan.</li><li>• Develop, revise and distribute codes of conduct.</li><li>• Train host-state police and other law enforcement personnel.</li><li>• Ensure voting procedures for host-state police, law enforcement and other security personnel are followed.</li><li>• Participate in public information campaign on security in electoral processes.</li><li>• Ensure gender considerations are included in all the tasks above.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Par. 51</li><li>• Par. 52</li><li>• Par. 56</li><li>• Par. 57</li><li>• Par. 58-59</li><li>• Par. 60</li><li>• Par. 61</li><br/><li>• Par. 62</li></ul> |

51. Establish election security teams within host-state police and other law enforcement agencies. Such teams represent the primary points of contact on all electoral matters and participate in the planning process on behalf of their agencies.
- 51.1. UN Police officers could function as security advisers to these election security teams.
52. Establish and/or participate in coordination structures. Coordination mechanisms organise UN Police cooperation with relevant components within the mission, other international actors, and host-state authorities.
53. Within the mission, the electoral component provides overall guidance to electoral assistance activities. In general, a dedicated coordination mechanism (sometimes chaired by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General) is established within the mission in the lead up to an election. Commonly, the coordination mechanism includes a sub-cell that focuses on election-related security, including representatives of the military, police, justice, UN security, administrative component, human rights, gender and electoral components. This mechanism can help to clearly define roles and responsibilities of UN Police, human rights and other components in response to possible crises, and to develop rapid response strategies.
54. At the level of other international actors, the UN Police component should ensure its participation in relevant coordination mechanisms especially when elections involve displaced electorates. Dedicated UN Police liaison officers should be appointed to participate in these mechanisms.
55. In relation to domestic agencies, the EMBs and the host-state police and other relevant law enforcement agencies should establish a joint structure to conduct the security assessment and develop the elections security plan. The joint coordination structure should also establish a procedure which clearly defines the responsibilities of the different actors involved in the provision of election-related security.
- 55.1. UN Police could participate in the joint coordination structure, provide advice to its members, take on secretariat functions, and provide logistical support.
- 55.2. UN Police should, however, only take on functions within their mandate and that host-state police and other law enforcement officials cannot fulfil themselves. In

most missions, the primary function of UN Police is to advise and build the capacity of host-state police and other law enforcement officials.

56. Conduct an election security assessment. An election security assessment should be conducted (and regularly updated) by the host-state police and other relevant law enforcement agencies together with the EMBs. Issues to be considered are laid out in the table below.

| <b>Election-related factors that affect security</b> |   |
|--|---|
| State structure                                      | Threats might arise from weak democratic institutions, a poorly developed political party system, weak judicial system and politicised or unprofessional security forces and lack of political will on the part of the state authorities to run a credible process can increase the potential for election-related violence.  |
| Election framework and system                        | Violence can be spurred by an election framework that does not encourage inclusiveness, transparency or confidence in the process and an electoral system that does not mirror the diversity of society. The capacity and effectiveness of election dispute resolution mechanisms should also be assessed.  |
| Economic inequality and unemployment                 | Inequality and corruption can produce high levels of discontent among marginalized groups. High unemployment among young males, who are susceptible to recruitment by those intent on fermenting violence or threatening opponents is also a risk factor, as is gender-based violence and targeting of women.   |
| Degree of societal divisions                         | Political leaders and others may exacerbate tensions by exploiting social divisions, for example by using hate speech or inflammatory political rhetoric and increase the potential for election-related violence.  |
| History of conflict and political violence           | Countries that have developed a history of election-related violence are at greater risk of entering a cycle of violence.   |
| Assessment of conduct of past elections              | Shortcomings in the electoral process can lead to insecurity where there is a lack of confidence in the election administration, inaccurate voter lists, lack of transparency in the results processes, and lack of efficiency of the complaints and appeals process.   |
| Prevailing human rights environment                  | Security and the whole electoral process can be compromised if fundamental freedoms of expression, assembly and association are not respected, if the media and human rights defenders are unable to carry out their work free from intimidation; if police and security forces fail to respect human rights and engage in politically-motivated arbitrary arrests, torture and other human rights violations, and where levels of sexual and gender-based violence are high. |
| Political risks and events                           | Political events can affect security or delay elections, such as the sudden return of a political leader, issuance of an arrest   |

|   |   |
|---|---|
|   | warrant against a candidate, coup attempts, or other security and human rights incidents.   |
| High stakes, close outcomes and zero sum politics             | At times, winning public office provides a livelihood not just for an individual but for their constituency. When the outcome of an election is uncertain, especially when margins are close or political parties and groups in society fear exclusion, the potential for election-related violence increases.                                  |
| Hot spots   | Places with increased security risks may require specific precautionary measures. <sup>12</sup>   |
| Vulnerable groups   | Tensions could arise over the participation of women, minority groups and displaced persons in the electoral process.   |
| Election stakeholder analysis                                 | Security plans need to take into account the number, type, gender and mandates of the actors involved and assess the availability of qualified personnel, logistics and resources.  |
| Electoral operations and logistics                            | Plans should consider the number and location of warehouses, polling stations, electoral offices, and counting centres, the movement of ballots and other sensitive materials and of staff and voters, and related logistical issues.   |
| Physical, climatic, geographical and environmental conditions | Note must be taken of the distances involved, the availability of road access, seasonal factors, the existence of ethnic enclaves, the state of infrastructure, and related issues, as well as of environmental issues as a possible driver of conflict, possible scarcity of natural resources, existence of historical and cultural heritage. |

- 56.1. UN Police may advise host-state police and other law enforcement agencies on how to conduct a security assessment, pointing out useful indicators, sources of information, and other relevant considerations.
- 56.2. UN Police and other relevant mission components may provide information to the security assessment conducted by the host-state police and other law enforcement agencies.
57. Develop a security plan. A detailed security plan should be developed by the host-state police and other law enforcement agencies addressing the identified risks prior, during and after the elections. This plan should be based, where possible, on lessons learned from previous elections and other large-scale events. It is important that police and other law enforcement agencies, donors, observers and other relevant actors commit to providing the necessary resources to implement the security plan. A security plan should also consider the safety of UN Police, in cooperation with the UN Department for Safety and Security (UNDSS). The plan should:

<sup>12</sup> Assessments of hotspots often exist already or are produced by the mission.



|  |
|--|
| <b>➤ Clarify roles, reporting and mapping</b>  |
| Define clear roles and responsibilities (at local and central levels), in particular among EMBs, security agencies, observers and other relevant bodies.   |
| Establish clear reporting lines and channels of communication (at local and central levels), including a central control/operations room.  |
| Map all registration, voting, counting and tabulation sites, as well as all sensitive warehouses and storage sites.  |
| Define geographic areas of responsibility (AOR), taking into account that electoral areas may not be identical with the AORs of security agencies.   |
| Assess and plan for the deployment and use of resources: human resources, logistics, communications and financial resources.   |
| Define the signs and symbols identifying personnel providing security for elections.   |
| <b>➤ Develop contingency plans</b>   |
| Establish procedures to provide security to public rallies undertaken by political parties and candidates.   |
| Define the regular and emergency response tasks prior, during and after elections, such as security and human rights incidents involving people (candidates, electoral staff, voters, observers etc.), incidents related to access to polling stations, incidents related to the security of ballots and other voting material, and incidents related to the announcement of election results.   |
| Develop specific emergency response plans for hot spots and other high risk situations.  |
| Address any threats to EMB premises, material and members prior, during, and after the elections. Unless for reasons of <i>force majeure</i> police should only enter polling locations if asked to do so by election officials.   |
| <b>➤ Provide for special interest groups</b>   |
| Assist in establishing and enforcing security procedures and guidance for host-state police and other law enforcement agencies to relate and deal with civil society representatives, including media and human rights, prior, during and after the elections.   |
| Support host-state police in establishing security procedures to assist particular categories of voters, such as displaced persons, with special security needs.   |
| Tailor security plans to meet the specific threats faced by women including sexual violence, psychological, physical and economic forms of electoral violence and to ensure that women have free access to registration and polling sites. Where possible, make sure that female police officers are among those deployed to protect polling sites, or that police officers receive gender awareness training. Also ensure that female candidates can carry out their campaign activities in a secure environment. |

- 57.1. UN Police may advise host-state police and other law enforcement agencies and provide a methodology on how to develop a security plan.
- 57.2. UN Police may assist host-state police and other law enforcement agencies in drafting the security plan.

58. Develop, revise and distribute codes of conduct. The host-state police and other law enforcement agencies, as well as other relevant security agencies, should develop a code of conduct, in consultation with the EMB and the UN electoral component. Codes of conduct are especially important when former combatants or others with limited police background have been integrated into the police and other law enforcement agencies. A code of conduct should take into account the level of literacy and education of its users. It should address issues such as core human rights principles, impartiality, cultural sensitivity, gender-based discrimination, professionalism, rules of and implications for the use of force and firearms, the chain of command, reporting procedures, disciplinary regulations and relates issues. Reference should be made to electoral obligations, principles and commitments.
59. It may also be useful to develop and distribute to all relevant security personnel a short *aide memoire* in a pocket-size format that summarises the main rules and regulations from the code of conduct (for example in the shape of "Dos and Don'ts").
- 59.1. UN Police may advise on and assist in developing and revising the codes of conduct. UN Police should encourage that reference be made to norms and principles for elections outlined in international human rights instruments. The UN electoral component or EAD can provide comment and advice on draft codes of conduct from an election perspective. It is essential that such information be provided in the local language(s).
- 59.2. UN Police may also consider summarising key information contained in this guideline into a pocket-sized *aide memoire* for their own use. Where they have an operational role, the UN Police may wish to sign a code of conduct as well.
60. Train host-state police and other law enforcement personnel. Where necessary, a training programme should be developed on security in electoral processes for relevant host-state security personnel. The training should be based on human rights standards relating to elections and any relevant codes of conduct. It should offer separate courses for high and low ranking officers. The training should not be conceived in the context of overall capacity-building. UN Police is likely to work with other partners in providing training.
- 60.1. Where possible, UN Police may work with the host-state police academies, EMBs and UN electoral component to develop and implement such training courses.
- 60.2. Host-state police assisted by UN Police, the UN electoral component and EMBs may promote a training of trainers approach with a rollout strategy to train the largest number of security personnel possible.
- 60.3. Training should include a simulation exercise with case scenarios based on the security assessment and the hot spots analysis. Where present and available, UN formed police units may be used as training partners in joint exercises and simulations. Training may engage gender experts to provide specialist information, including on PVAWE.
61. Ensure voting procedures for security personnel are followed. Host-state police, law enforcement and other security personnel are citizens who generally have the right to vote. The modalities for such personnel to register and vote at elections should be clearly regulated within the electoral legal framework to avoid confusion and tensions at polling sites. The EMBs, assisted by the UN electoral component, are responsible for putting in place the necessary regulations.

62. Participate in public information campaign on security in electoral processes. Host-state police and other law enforcement agencies should participate in a coordinated public information campaign to sensitise the citizens to election-related security issues including the role of the police and other law enforcement agencies, their duties, how to identify them, and how to launch a complaint including about human rights violations. Such a campaign, which should be coordinated with general civic education campaigns, will also help to overcome disinformation about the role of relevant security agencies, and assist in building confidence among the voters.

62.1. UN Police, through their own or the mission's press and public information office, may advise on and provide technical assistance to a host-state public information campaign.

62.2. Such efforts should be linked to wider efforts to strengthen the press and public information capacity of host-state police and other law enforcement agencies.

#### **D.3.d Provide security in electoral processes**

| <b>Overview over Tasks in Providing for Security in Electoral Processes</b> |              |
|---|--------------|
| • Ensure pre-voting security.   | • Par. 63-68 |
| • Ensure security and the protection of fundamental rights on voting day.   | • Par. 69-77 |
| • Ensure security and the protection of human rights after the elections.   | • Par. 78-81 |

63. Ensure pre-voting security. During the period running up to elections, particular attention should be paid to election rallies and other campaigning activities (see below par. 64); the close protection of candidates (par. 65); provision of security for officials, observers, etc. (par. 66), voter registration (par. 67-68); and the transport of ballots and other voting material (par. 68).

64. Election rallies and other campaigning activities. Securing rallies and other campaigning events is a major security task during the campaign period. Political parties and candidates should be encouraged to provide details to host-state police and other law enforcement agencies about their campaign activities in advance. Where necessary, efforts should be made to avoid rallies by conflicting candidates in the same area at the same time.

64.1. Where present, UN formed police units may be called upon to manage public order and facilitate peaceful protests or provide advice and operational support to host-state police and other law enforcement agencies to the same end.

64.2. UN Police may advise host-state police and other law enforcement agencies on which civilian partners to engage to secure rallies and other electoral campaigning events.

64.3. UN Police should advise host-state police and other law enforcement agencies to prepare for increased rates of sexual harassment and assault that may occur during large public gatherings in order to provide a safe environment, especially for women participating in events.

64.4. At all electoral campaigning events, UN Police should remain impartial, focus on supporting the provision of security in electoral processes while ensuring respect for human rights. They should not express any political views or opinions.

65. *Close protection of candidates.* Certain candidates may need or request protection, including 24/7 close protection.<sup>13</sup>
- 65.1. UN Police should assist the host-state police in developing objective criteria to define who should enjoy protection arrangements (in consultation with the political and electoral components of the mission) with due consideration for the specific threats faced by women candidates.
  - 65.2. UN Police may help develop host-state capacity for close protection through advice and training.
  - 65.3. Only in exceptional circumstances, such as where UN Police have an executive mandate and have been requested to do so by host-state authorities, will UN Police provide close protection of candidates.
66. *Protection of election officials, international and domestic observers and international advisers.* During an election period, protection may need to be provided for some or all of these persons.
- 66.1. The host-state police and UN Police may assist in developing host-state capacity for providing this protection through advice and training.
  - 66.2. Consistent with the mission's directives on the use of force and mandate as well as their specific roles, responsibilities and limits of their competence and capacity, UN Police personnel are expected to be able to recognise a human rights violation and intervene to protect election officials, international and domestic observers, or other individuals who may be at risk of human rights violations during the elections. These interventions must take place within the parameters of UN Police instructions and procedures, which by policy must be issued in all peace operations and political missions to more generally guide UN Police personnel when confronted with human rights violations.<sup>14</sup>
67. *Voter registration.* The political situation during registration may be tense. Also the criteria for registration (such as citizenship) may be controversial and disputed. Voter registration not only presents its own security challenges and should be carefully prepared for, but also represents a "pilot scenario" to test the election security plan.
- 67.1. EMBs, host-state police, UN Police and UN electoral component may cooperate on the development of a security plan for the registration process, mapping political tensions and consulting with community leaders and women's groups.
  - 67.2. Through its formed police units, UN Police may support public order management by the host-state police and other law enforcement agencies where necessary during voter registration.
  - 67.3. UN Police may also monitor and report on the provision of security during the voter registration process in order to assist the relevant authorities to learn operational lessons.

<sup>13</sup> Protection arrangements can vary depending on the situation and can include office, escort, resident protection etc. When protection is required 24/7, it becomes a close protection operation.

<sup>14</sup> See DPKO/OHCHR/DPA/DFS Policy on Human Rights in UN Peace Operations and Political Missions, September 2011 (par. 90).

- 67.4. UN Police should advise host-state police and other law enforcement officials that they should not enter the registration stations, unless they are requested to deal with a disturbance. UN Police officers should follow the same rule.
68. *Secured storage and transport of ballots and other voting material.* Depending on the specific geographic and political conditions, specific measures should be taken to secure the printing and transfer of ballot papers, as well as the transport of other materials, to the polling sites. Information on the storage and transportation of sensitive electoral material should be closely coordinated with the UN electoral component and the EMB.
- 68.1. UN Police may advise the host-state police and other law enforcement agencies on effective measures to secure voting material, in consultation with the EMBs and UN electoral component.
- 68.2. UN Police may also advise on the security of the storage facilities (warehousing), secure means for transfer of materials to polling stations, and their safe return to the designated location.
69. Ensure security and the protection of fundamental rights on voting day. On Election Day, it is critically important to ensure that security personnel can be clearly identified (see below par. 70); polling stations are protected and freedom of movement is secured (par. 71); weapons exclusion zones are respected (par. 72); ballots are protected during storage and transport (par. 73); incidents are prevented, dealt with and reported (par. 74-75); special categories of voters are assisted and security personnel are provided opportunities to vote (see below par. 76); and regular law enforcement functions continue to be provided (see below par. 77).
- 69.1. On voting day, UN Police are likely to focus on monitoring the conduct of host-state police and other law enforcement agencies, providing advice where necessary. Effective coordination mechanisms should be established with UN electoral, political, human rights and other components of the mission to ensure timely sharing of information and an appropriate coordinated response.
- 69.2. If requested by the host-state police, the UN Police may be co-located in operations centres of host-state agencies to monitor developments and may accompany host-state police and other law enforcement officials to meetings with elections officials and other events.
- 69.3. Where present, UN formed police units may be called upon on Election Day to assist in public order management as necessary.
- 69.4. If required, UN Police should advise host-state police and other law enforcement officials that they should not interfere in any way with the voting, counting and tabulation processes. UN Police officers should follow the same rule.
70. *Visibility of host-state police, law enforcement and other security personnel.* Depending on the specific context and the level of uncertainty about the status and number of host-state police and law enforcement and other relevant security personnel, those involved in the elections should be required to clearly identify themselves with a special armband, badge, fluorescent jacket, or other device.
71. *Site protection and freedom of movement.* Security measures at polling stations should ensure the safety and freedom of movement to and from the station for polling station staff,

voters, observers, party agents and candidates. Adequate measures should also be taken to ensure the prevention and effective response to any attempts to disrupt access to voting. In some instances, the counting sites are different from the polling stations and should be protected separately. In any case, the safety of persons represents the highest priority.

72. *Respect of weapons exclusion zones.* The establishment of temporary weapons exclusion zones – particularly around registration, campaigning and polling sites – should be considered. Respect for these zones should be enforced by the host-state police and other law enforcement agencies. At the same time, these agencies should not be present inside polling stations unless invited inside by election officials to deal with a disturbance.
73. *Protection of ballots during storage and transport.* The security measures should also ensure the safe storage and transport of the ballot papers, ballot boxes and other voting material. They should enable electoral staff to appropriately handle sensitive materials. Arrangements should include measures to protect voting materials at voter registration and polling sites, the movement of election materials to and from voter registration/polling stations and storage of materials at warehouses, data processing/counting and tabulation centres and other locations.
  - 73.1. UN Police involvement in protecting these materials will depend on the legal framework and the division of responsibilities with the host-state and UN military, who may play a significant role in tasks related to site and physical protection.
  - 73.2. UN Police should advise host-state police and other law enforcement agencies that they should not be present inside the polling stations, and UN Police should not enter and move around in the polling sites.
74. *Management and reporting of incidents.* There is a need for clearer rules and procedures for managing and reporting incidents, including human rights violations. Such cases will generally be referred to the EMBs, other electoral body or the election complaints mechanism where appropriate, unless a criminal offence is involved.
75. A special mechanism should be put in place to report and investigate misconduct and human rights violations by any security personnel involved in the electoral process.
  - 75.1. Depending on their mandate, UN Police may provide support to, or advice on, high profile investigations.
76. *Voting of host-state police, law enforcement and other security personnel, assistance to special categories of voters, and contacts with the media.* The procedures and guidance defined in the relevant legal framework, rules and procedures should be followed.
77. *Continued provision of regular host-state policing and other law enforcement functions.* The provision of security in electoral processes tends to draw resources away from regular law enforcement functions. While election-related security is of primary concern, it cannot be to the detriment of ongoing security needs. Senior management needs to underline that regular policing and other law enforcement functions should also be provided on Election Day.
78. Provide security and protection of human rights after the elections. Security remains of concern after Election Day. Security and human rights risks can increase in the waiting period until the final results are announced (see below par. 79) and immediately after the

announcement of the election results (see below par. 80). The investigation of malpractice can also heighten security risks (see below par. 81).

79. *Awaiting the results.* Depending on the electoral system, the country's infrastructure, the logistical capacity and other factors, the announcement of the final election results could take days or even weeks. The results may also be challenged and disputed requiring a decision by the EMBs or the courts further delaying the announcement of the final results. Measures should be taken to ensure the security of the candidates, EMBs staff and of any legal body involved in resolving disputes, as well as of other election stakeholders. International and domestic observers, including journalists and human rights defenders, may also be at risk including during this period.
- 79.1. UN Police should advise and mentor host-state police and other law enforcement agencies in implementing special security measures when necessary or appropriate.
- 79.2. UN Police should coordinate its area security activities with the host-state police, EMBs and UN military. It should maintain close cooperation with other mission components such as electoral, human rights, gender, JMAC and Political Affairs.
- 79.3. UN Police should not be involved in and not interfere with the handling and counting of the ballots.
80. *After the announcement of the results.* The official announcement of the final results, or a decision to recount the ballots or conduct an investigation, may also generate demonstrations, unrest, and violent incidents. In accordance with the security plan, established security procedures should be followed to respond to such incidents with a special attention to hot spots.
- 80.1. Where present, UN formed police units may be called upon to support host-state police and other law enforcement agencies in public order management and to protect people at risk of human rights violations.
- 80.2. Depending on the national context, UN Police may assist in putting in place mechanisms to regulate handing over responsibility to the host-state military or the international peacekeeping force should violence reach a level that goes beyond a criminal threat.
81. *Investigation of malpractice.* Investigations of alleged fraud and other electoral malpractice are generally directed by the EMBs or another relevant body. In some cases, where the alleged irregularity also involves a criminal offence, the assistance of the host-state police and other law enforcement agencies may be requested. Such investigations may involve very specialized electoral technical issues. They are also delicate and may have to be conducted under high political and time pressures. PVAVE may require special support to ensure incidents are investigated equally and that investigations, especially into delicate cases involving sexual violence, are conducted in a sensitive manner protecting the victims. Dedicated host-state police and other law enforcement personnel may be made available to participate in such investigations.
- 81.1. UN Police may support or advise on such investigations, after obtaining advice from the UN electoral component.

#### **D.3.e Debrief to learn lessons for future elections**

82. When an election is over and special security arrangements can be lifted, all relevant actors should be debriefed to identify lessons learned in order to make any necessary improvements in the provision of security at future elections. A report should be produced and added to the generic election security plan. Elections are not a one-off exercise but a continuous cycle of recurring elections.
- 82.1. UN Police may provide advice on how to conduct evaluations and how to assess the performance of host-state police and other law enforcement agencies.
- 82.2. UN Police should also conduct its own after-action review to identify any improvements that can be made by the UN to the provision of security for elections. Where deployed, this should be done in cooperation with the Best Practices Officer.
- 

## **E. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS**

83. The following terms and definitions apply to this guideline:
- 83.1. *Security in electoral processes*: The provision of security to promote an environment in which a peaceful and credible election can be conducted, in accordance with obligations, principles and commitments outlined in international human rights instruments. In electoral processes, security is required for a) people,<sup>15</sup> b) premises, and c) materials. This includes the provision of security on an equitable basis to election stakeholders, including voters, candidates, political parties, election officials, media representatives, civil society representatives and observers, as well the provision of security for the transportation and protection of election materials, in particular ballot papers, ballot boxes and results information.
- 83.2. *Human rights*: Rights inherent to all human beings, without distinction as to race, colour, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. The right of citizens to take part in the conduct of public affairs, particularly through elections, requires, to be exercised meaningfully, the enjoyment of a number of other internationally protected rights. Among these are the rights to freedom of expression association and assembly.<sup>16</sup>
- 83.3. *Police and other law enforcement agencies*: Any domestic police and other law enforcement agency that exercises police powers, especially the powers of arrest and detention.
- 83.4. *Police and law enforcement official*: Any officer of the law, appointed or elected, who exercises police powers, especially the powers of arrest or detention. In countries where police powers are exercised by military authorities, whether uniformed or not, or by state security forces, the definition of a police or other law enforcement official shall be regarded as including such services.
- 83.5. *Non-state security actor*: Any non-state institution or group that participates in the provision, management or oversight of security, including de facto authorities,

---

<sup>15</sup> Separate logistical arrangements for women may be needed in some contexts.

<sup>16</sup> Human Rights and Elections: A Handbook on the Legal, Technical and Human Rights Aspects of Elections, Professional Training Series No.2, 1994, OHCHR.



private military and security companies, and community-based self-protection groups.

- 83.6. *Rule of law*<sup>17</sup>: A principle of governance in which all persons, institutions and entities, public and private, including the state itself, are accountable to laws that are publicly promulgated, equally enforced and independently adjudicated, and which are consistent with international human rights norms and standards. It requires, as well, measures to ensure adherence to the principles of supremacy of law, equality before the law, accountability to the law, fairness in the application of the law, separation of powers, participation in decision-making, legal certainty, avoidance of arbitrariness and procedural and legal transparency.
- 83.7. *Security agency*: Any state institution that is responsible for the provision, management or oversight of security, particularly defence, police, intelligence services, border management, customs and civil emergencies, as well as related ministries and legislative, management and oversight bodies.
- 83.8. *Political Violence against Women in Elections (PVAWE)*: Any random or conspiratorial act to discourage, suppress, or prevent women from exercising their electoral rights. This includes women's participation as voters, candidates, party supporters, election workers, observers, journalists, or public officials.

---

## F. REFERENCES and SOURCES

### F.1 Key Universal obligations/standards/principles/commitments

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948
- Convention on the Political Rights of Women, 1954
- Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, 1955
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, 1965
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966
- Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials, 1979
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, 1979
- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, 1984
- Declarations of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power, 1985
- Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment, 1988
- Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989
- Principles on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions, 1989
- Basic Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners, 1990
- Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials, 1990
- Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, 1992
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2006

---

<sup>17</sup> Report of the Secretary-General on "The Rule of Law and Transitional Justice in Conflict and Post-Conflict Societies" (S/2004/616), 23 August 2004, par. 6.

- General Comment 25: The right to participate in public affairs, voting rights and the right to equal access to public service (Art. 25), UN Human Rights Committee Re: Article 25 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- General Recommendation 23: Article 7 (political and public life) of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, 1997.

## **F.2 Key Regional obligations/standards/principles/commitments**

- American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man, 1948
- [European] Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, 1950
- American Convention on Human Rights, 1969
- Declaration of Commonwealth Principles, 1971
- African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, 1981
- Document of the Copenhagen Meeting of the Conference on the Human Dimension of the CSCE [OSCE], 1990
- The Harare Commonwealth Declaration, 1991
- Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance Supplementary to the Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security, 2001
- Organization of African Unity [African Union] Declaration on the Principles Governing Democratic Elections in Africa, 2002
- New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance, 2002
- Convention on the Standards of Democratic Elections, Equal Rights and Freedoms of the Member States of the Commonwealth of Independent States, 2002
- Arab Charter on Human Rights, League of Arab States, 2004
- Southern African Development Community (SADC) Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections, 2004
- Charter of the Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), 2007

## **F.3 Normative or Superior References**

- Secretary-General's decision No. 2005/24 on Human Rights in Integrated Missions, 26 October 2005
- Secretary-General Human Rights Due Diligence Policy on UN Support to non-UN Security Forces, July 2011

## **F.4 Related Guidance**

- United Nations Focal Point for Electoral Assistance Guideline on United Nations Electoral Needs Assessments, May 2012
- United Nations Focal Point for Electoral Assistance Policy Directive on Principles and Types of UN Electoral Assistance, May 2012
- United Nations Focal Point for Electoral Assistance Policy Directive on UN Electoral Assistance. Supervision, Observation, Panels and Certification, January 2013
- DPKO/DPA/OHCHR Policy Directive on Public Reporting by Human Rights components of United Nations Peace Operations, June 2008
- DPKO/OHCHR/DPA/DFS Policy on Human Rights in UN Peace Operations and Political Missions, September 2011
- DPKO/DFS Environmental Policy for UN Field Missions (2009.6), June 2009

## F.5 Other References

- ACE. *The Electoral Knowledge Network*, at <http://aceproject.org>
- Afghan-UN Joint Electoral Management Body, *Afghanistan Presidential Election: Operational Plan Outline*, 2004
- African Union, *African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance* (African Union: Addis Ababa, 2007)
- Article 19, *Guidelines for broadcast coverage of election campaigns in transitional democracies*, 1994
- Bardall, Gabrielle. *Breaking the Mold: Understanding Gender and Election Violence*. IFES. 2011.
- Davis-Roberts, A. and D. Carroll, *Identifying Obligations for Elections*, (Carter Center: Atlanta, February 2009)
- EISA, *Security of elections in Southern Africa*, Occasional paper 41, 2006
- European Commission, *Compendium of International Standards for Elections*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (Brussels: European Commission, 2007)
- European Commission, *Handbook for European Union Election Observation*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (Brussels: European Commission, 2008)
- European Commission on Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) *Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters*, 2002
- Fischer, J., *Elections and International Civilian Policing: History and Practice in Peace Operations*, IFES White Paper (IFES: Washington, 2002)
- Global Programme for Election Cycle Support/UNDP. *Political Violence Against Women on Election: A framework for analysis and prevention*, 2013.
- Graham, A., *Preparing Police Services in Democratic Regimes to Support the Electoral Process: A Survey of Leading Practice* (Queens University: Kingston, 2006)
- Human Rights and Elections. *A Handbook on the Legal, Technical and Human Rights Aspects of Elections*, Professional Training Series No.2, United Nations, 1994
- Human Rights Integration in the Work of UN Police Components, Report of the OHCHR Workshop – Geneva, 28-29 April 2010
- Human Rights and Law Enforcement. *A Manual on Human Rights Training for the Police*, Professional Training Series No. 5, United Nations, 1997
- Lyons, T., *Post-conflict Elections: War Termination, Democratization, and Demilitarizing Politics. Working Paper No. 20* (George Mason University: Fairfax, 2002)
- Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR), *Fifth Edition*, (Warsaw, OSCE.ODIHR, 2005)
- UN Development Programme, *Electoral Assistance Implementation Guide* (New York: UNDP, 2007)
- UN Development Programme, *Electoral Systems and Processes. Practice Note* (New York: UNDP, 2004)
- UN Development Programme, *Elections and Conflict Prevention: A Guide to Analysis, Planning and Programming* (New York, UNDP, 2009)
- UN General Assembly, *Strengthening the role of the United Nations in enhancing the effectiveness of the principle of periodic and genuine elections and the promotion of democratization. Report of the Secretary-General*, UN Doc. A/64/304 (August 2009)
- UN Office for West Africa, *Ballots not Bullets. Elections and Security in West Africa. The Role of Security Institutions during Electoral Processes*, UNOWA Issue Papers (May 2009)
- United Nations, *Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation and Code of Conduct for International Election Observers* (New York: United Nations, 2005)
- UNOGBIS, *Guidelines for Elections Security and Prevention of Election Malpractices*, 2008

---

**G. MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE**

84. Implementation of this guideline shall be overseen by the Police Adviser. The Heads of Police Components will oversee implementation within their respective missions.

**H. CONTACT**

85. The contact for this guideline is the Police Division, Office of the Rule of Law and Security Institutions, Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

---

**I. HISTORY**

86. This is a new guideline that has been prepared by the Police Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) in close consultation with the Interagency Coordination Mechanism for UN Electoral Assistance, chaired by the Electoral Assistance Division of the Department of Political Affairs.

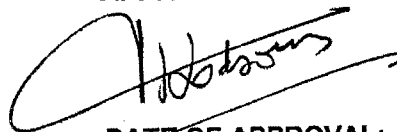
---

**APPROVAL SIGNATURE:**



**DATE OF APPROVAL:**

**APPROVAL SIGNATURE:**



**DATE OF APPROVAL:**

---

---

## **Annex 1: Checklist for UN Police Support to the Provision of Security in Electoral Processes**

---

### **Best Practices and Key Principles**

- ✓ Planning for security in electoral processes can and should begin well in advance
- ✓ Planning for security in electoral processes needs to leave room for flexibility
- ✓ Plan and provide security support in close coordination with the electoral component
- ✓ Focus on the entire electoral cycle rather than on Election Day only
- ✓ Advice and capacity building is the preferred option
- ✓ Security in electoral processes should be provided by police and other law enforcement agencies
- ✓ Security in electoral processes must be provided impartially
- ✓ Security support must be provided in compliance with the Secretary-General Policy on Human Rights Due Diligence on UN Support to non-UN Security Forces (HRDDP)
- ✓ Security in electoral processes must be provided in compliance with international human rights norms and standards
- ✓ Security in electoral processes must be gender, culture and group-sensitive
- ✓ Security in electoral processes must be environmentally conscious
- ✓ Security in electoral processes is an opportunity for security sector reform
- ✓ Coordination of post-conflict security in electoral processes is complex but of high priority

### **The Process of Providing Security throughout the Electoral Cycle**

1. ***Clarify the UN Police role in providing security to a given electoral process and conduct initial internal analysis and planning***
  - ✓ Clarify UN Police tasks and assign dedicated staff
  - ✓ Clarify the type of UN Police support that may be provided to host-state security forces and assess whether there are risks of grave human rights violations within the parameters of the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy
  - ✓ Conduct internal UN Police planning for the election-related security mandate
  - ✓ Conduct an initial, internal UN election risk analysis
2. ***Understand legal and operational framework and identify key actors***
  - ✓ Understand the legal and operational framework
  - ✓ Identify key host-state and international actors
    - Election Management Bodies (EMBs)
    - Host-state police and other law enforcement agencies
    - Non-state security providers, including private security companies
    - Political parties

- Displaced voters
- Independent election observers (international and domestic)
- Media (international and domestic)
- Human rights actors (international and domestic)
- International development and humanitarian assistance actors.

### **3. *Prepare for security in electoral processes***

- ✓ Establish election security teams.
- ✓ Establish and/or participate in coordination structures.
- ✓ Conduct an election security assessment.
- ✓ Develop a security plan.
- ✓ Develop, revise and distribute codes of conduct.
- ✓ Train host-state police and other law enforcement personnel.
- ✓ Ensure voting procedures for security personnel are followed.
- ✓ Participate in public information campaign on security in electoral processes.

### **4. *Provide security in electoral processes***

- ✓ Ensure pre-voting security.
  - Election rallies and other campaigning activities
  - Close protection of candidates
  - Protection of election officials, international and domestic observers and international advisers
  - Voter registration
  - Secured storage and transport of ballots and other voting material
- ✓ Ensure security and the protection of fundamental rights on voting day.
  - Visibility of host-state police, law enforcement and other security personnel
  - Site protection and freedom of movement
  - Respect of weapons exclusion zones
  - Protection of ballots during storage and transport
  - Management and reporting of incidents
  - Voting of host-state police, law enforcement and other security personnel, assistance to special categories of voters, and contacts with the media
  - Continued provision of regular host-state policing and other law enforcement functions
- ✓ Ensure security and the protection of human rights after the elections.
  - Awaiting the results
  - After the announcement of the results
  - Investigation of malpractice

### **5. *Debrief to learn lessons for future elections***

## Annex 2: Providing Security throughout the Electoral Cycle

