

# MODULE 3

## LEARNER’S HANDOUT

### Mission Rules of Engagement

### Role of the Military Component

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#### AIM

This exercise is intended as a review of Modules 1 to 3. The aim of the exercise is to enhance learners’ understanding of how military contingents may respond to situations at the tactical level to protect children’s rights and promote an integrated and comprehensive response to child protection in the mission area.

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Discuss the role of the military component at the tactical level in support of child protection in the United Nations mission area
- Recognize appropriate military responses to realistic situations at the tactical level and identify legal sources of authority and obligation to take action
- Describe the operational framework for collaborating with host country forces and partners and the approach to be adopted to share concerns and take action, as appropriate
- Discuss the roles and functions of other mission components and external partners in dealing with child protection issues
- Recognize the processes and issues related to coordination among mission actors
- Identify the military tasks involved in an integrated mission response to mitigate threats to children and reduce their vulnerabilities

#### BACKGROUND

Below are six scenarios depicting incidents that actually occurred in United Nations peacekeeping mission areas.

For scenarios A and B, use *Mission Y Rules of Engagement* and *MONUSCO Force Commander’s Directive – Protection of Children by MONUSCO Force (2021)*.

For scenarios C and D, use *Mission X Rules of Engagement* and the *Force Commander’s Directive on the Protection of Children by UNMISS Military Forces (2020)*.

For scenarios E and F, use *Mission Z Rules of Engagement*, and *MINUSCA Force Commander’s Directive on Child Protection (2018)*.

For scenarios G and H, use *Mission W Rules of Engagement*, and *Force Commander’s Directive on the Protection of Children by MINUSMA Force (2020)*.



**Note:** Since the rules of engagement for current operations cannot be distributed, all references to specific missions have been removed from the handouts for this exercise.

### SCENARIO A

The area of Wula in South Kivu is hilly with bush, open agricultural land and small villages — most of them are secluded. Legal and illegal mining is carried out in several places, many of which are highly disputed. Local teachers, village elders, female groups and priests play an important role in the communities. Infrastructure is very poor and the area is easily infiltrated. Armed groups, such as the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (known by their French acronym, FDLR), Interahamwe, Rasta, Mayi Mayi, dissident splinter groups and non-aligned groups (henceforth referred to as “armed groups”) harass the local population. The United Nations does not have a sufficient number of troops in South Kivu to cover the whole province. Armed groups move relatively freely in certain areas and harass the local population. Elements of the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (known by their French acronym, FARDC) have been conducting joint operations with the MONUSCO Force. Although incidents resulting from their indiscipline and human rights violations have been gradually decreasing, they are still common.

You are a Platoon Commander on a four-vehicle patrol. About halfway through your patrol, your lead vehicle comes to a halt because a girl is stumbling into the middle of the road. She is bleeding profusely and her clothes are ripped. The female platoon medical officer applies first aid, but the girl will need more medical assistance. Once the girl, who looks about 14 years, has calmed down, she volunteers the information that, about an hour ago, she was assaulted and raped by four men in uniform. The armed men had suddenly arrived in her village, started shouting at everyone and demanded food. She is very worried about her younger sister and is not sure if she was able to escape. The village is about a kilometre away.

The Force Commander of the mission has issued directions that, in order to accelerate decision-making, rules 1 to 5 of the Rules of Engagement apply and he has authorized their application.

### SCENARIO B

You are a United Nations Battalion Commander in MONUSCO and based in the Kivus. Late one night, you receive an urgent phone call from one of your company commanders requesting your advice. You are aware that there have been a number of raids by armed groups on villages in the southern part of your area of responsibility. According to the Company Commander, yesterday, an armed group attacked the village of Toku, which is within the area of responsibility of his/her company. In addition to food being stolen, some buildings, including the village school, were burned down, and three girls and a boy were abducted.

The Company Commander informs you that, owing to the medical assistance and support that the company and other components of the mission have provided to villages in the area after recent raids, a level of trust has been established with the village leader in Toku. The village leader has informed the company that a 15-year-old girl from Toku knows where the armed



group has its camp. The girl believes that it is the FDLR and she can show the United Nations troops the route. The village leader has asked the Company Commander to rescue the children abducted by the FDLR, as soon as possible.

The Company Commander is uncertain about what action to take and is seeking your guidance. Before issuing guidance, you recall that there is a host government military battalion (FARDC) nearby, which should be taking the lead in this; however, it is suspected of being sympathetic to FDLR.

### SCENARIO C

Sudan has been plagued by conflict for decades. In 2011, various referendums led to the creation of South Sudan as the world’s newest country. Decades of conflict in the area has made South Sudan one of the least developed countries in the world, even though it is rich in oil and the land is fertile. The country enjoys an equatorial climate with a rainy season from May through October.

Communications and infrastructure are poor in this landlocked country, and the river Nile, which flows through the central parts of the country, is an essential waterway for transporting goods and people. Herding cattle is a way of life for many South Sudanese and a person’s wealth is measured by the size of their herd.

In December 2013, serious fighting broke out between followers of President Salva Kiir, who is from the Dinka tribe, and followers of Riek Machar, the Vice President, who is from the Nuer tribe. The ongoing violence, often along tribal/ethnic lines, which targets civilians, has led to thousands of civilians being killed and three million people displaced. The increase in violence has led to a large portion of the population seeking refuge in the vicinity of United Nations compounds. Overwhelmed by the crisis, the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) established, together with humanitarian partners, eight protection of civilians (POC) sites, including in the capital and throughout the country.

Despite efforts by the United Nations and the international community, the conflict along tribal and communal lines continue to pose a serious threat to civilians, including children. Sexual violence is rampant, and thousands of children are used as soldiers by armed groups and host government security forces.

Unity State is the most volatile area where UNMISS peacekeepers operate. The southern Unity region, in particular, has experienced a high level of violence. Attacks against civilians, including humanitarian workers, and recent killings of humanitarian personnel have forced NGOs and humanitarian agencies to evacuate their staff from the region.

Based on intelligence reports and assessments, UNMISS plans an integrated patrol to one of the most affected villages in the region to investigate and assess the extent of the aftermath of the fighting between host government and opposition forces.



You are the Patrol Leader. The integrated patrol consists of the patrol escort, one platoon of UNMISS military troops (40 soldiers and 4 armoured personnel carriers (APCs)), a Civil Affairs Officer, a Human Rights Officer, a UN police officer and two language assistants. As required during an integrated patrol, the requisite clearance has been obtained from the force controlling the area that the patrol is visiting, and the patrol proceeds to the affected village.

Along the way, the integrated patrol encounters a checkpoint manned by five children armed with AK-47s and wearing the uniform of the host country’s military (Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA)). They appear to be intoxicated. The children will not allow the patrol to proceed. You explain to the checkpoint leader that the patrol has been granted clearance by the host country’s military leadership in the area. The children respond that they are not under the command of any other military leader but the checkpoint leader. The children demand that the integrated patrol discontinue the patrol and return to their base. The children also attempt to extort money from the civilian members of the integrated patrol, but the patrol members explain that they are United Nations staff and that they do not give money to soldiers. Unable to convince/negotiate with the children, you decide that the integrated patrol should turn back and report the incident to the Field Integrated Operations Centre.

#### SCENARIO D

Unity State has the largest protection of civilians (POC) camp hosting an estimated 112,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs). The camp residents leave the POC camp every day to look for utilities such as firewood, grass and soil to thatch their “tukuls” (grass huts). UNMISS Forces provide protection for the residents three times a week when they go to collect firewood between 0800 hours and 1200 hours at pre-identified locations. Some residents do not come out with the firewood collection patrols or some do not fetch enough firewood and have to venture out by themselves without force protection (FP). One day, six girls, aged between 12 and 16 years, and three boys, aged between 13 and 15 years left the POC camp through the southern side, which is located a few kilometres from the nearby town, where the host government army’s regional force is headquartered. On the way to the collection site, armed men wearing the uniform of the host government army abducted the children. Two girls managed to escape and ran back to the southern gate of the POC camp, and reported the incident to the security guards and UN police (UNPOL) personnel manning the gate. The information was also relayed to the UNMISS Force Sector /Brigade Headquarters for action.

#### SCENARIO E

The Central African Republic, a landlocked country in Africa, is bordered by the Sudan to the northeast, South Sudan to the east, the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the south, the Congo to the southwest, Cameroon to the west and Chad to the north. It has a population of 4.6 million people, divided into 80 different ethnic groups. The majority of the population is Christian (89%), while Muslims constitute a minority (approximately 9%).

The country enjoys a tropical climate with a rainy season from June to September. The Central African Republic has two official languages, French and Sango. The country is rich in minerals, oil and uranium; however, it is one of the poorest countries in the world.



Since gaining independence in 1960, the Central African Republic has been plagued by instability. The situation worsened in 2012–2013, when a Muslim rebellion, under the name of Seleka, took control of the capital, Bangui, and seized power.

A band comprised of mostly Christian militias, many of which were self-defence groups in various villages, was formed to counter Seleka. It became known as the anti-Balaka. The ensuing sectarian violence along religious lines caused tremendous suffering; thousands of civilians were killed and hundreds of thousands have been displaced.

The Security Council responded by authorizing the deployment of MINUSCA, a United Nations integrated peacekeeping mission with the priority task of protecting civilians under threat of physical violence, in particular women and children affected by the conflict.

Despite peaceful presidential and parliamentary elections in late 2015, the Central African Republic continues to experience serious violence along religious lines throughout the country. Attacks on humanitarian workers and peacekeeping personnel are on the increase, with MINUSCA taking an alarming number of casualties.

You are a Contingent Commander deployed in the vicinity of a United Nations Field Office. You have one Company Operating Base deployed 100 km away, and two infantry companies co-located in the area, which provides security for the Field Office and conducts protection operations.

In recent weeks, a large reactionary internally displaced persons (IDP) site has grown outside the Field Office, and an armed group of the same ethnicity and religious affiliation as the residents has established a base outside the site. A smaller local village of the opposing religious affiliation is located 5 kilometres away from the Field Office.

You have just been informed by the Field Office Joint Operations Centre (JOC) that the armed group has carried out an operation within the IDP camp. Two humanitarian workers associated with a local UNICEF programme have been abducted and are being detained illegally by the armed group. This armed group was on a rampage; it passed through the village and grabbed three children: two girls aged 9 and 11 years, and a 14-year-old boy. The armed group is known for sexual violence and it is likely that the civilians and the children are seriously mistreated. The armed group’s camp location is known; in the past, United Nations negotiations with this armed group have proved unsuccessful.

You, as a Contingent Commander, coordinate a response with your Sector/Brigade HQ and carry out an operation aimed at rescuing the humanitarian workers and the children, and detaining the base commander of the armed group and his followers. During the operation, you manage to rescue the civilians and the three children. The children seem traumatized.



All but one of the armed elements escaped your cordon. You bring the captured rebel to your battalion HQ and inform Sector/Brigade HQ so that further investigations can be undertaken. You expect the authorities to arrive in a few hours or by the next morning. After several hours and questions, the member of the armed group you are holding states that he is 16 years old.

### SCENARIO F

South-eastern Central African Republic has been ravaged by armed conflict over the last decade, since Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA), led by Joseph Kony, was dislodged from northern Uganda and started operating in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic. The group has committed heinous crimes against the population of both countries, including looting and pillaging villages, killing and maiming across borders. Adults and children have been abducted and used as porters, sex slaves, messengers and in other functions. In most cases, the adults are released after a few days, while the children (both boys and girls) are retained for the purposes mentioned above.

Between 2014 and 2017, the United Nations Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting (UNCTFMR) on grave violations against children verified 120 victims of abduction by the LRA. This number does not reflect the scale of violations by the LRA, as victims are mostly interviewed when they escape from the group and recount their ordeals to child protection actors. Many incidents go unreported and unverified for several reasons, including insecurity and remoteness of the localities where they occur.

You are the Commander of a Temporary Operating Base (TOB) in a remote town in southeast Central African Republic, 227 km from the nearest Field Office with a civilian Child Protection staff. Early one morning, a village chief informs you that a group of strangers, comprising a 32-year-old man, an 18-year-old woman, two girls aged 16 and 12 years, and a 2-year-old boy are in his home. They claim that they escaped from the LRA. The man has an AK-47 and three magazines of ammunition; the 18-year-old woman and the 16-year-old-girl are both pregnant; and the man says they are his wives. Further information reveals that the 18-year-old woman is of Congolese nationality and was abducted by the LRA in a Congolese village bordering the Central African Republic when she was 13 years old, and has since been used by the LRA as a sex slave and for domestic chores. She became pregnant two years ago and delivered the 2-year-old boy. The 16-year-old girl is of Central African nationality, but also claims to be of Congolese (DRC) nationality; she was abducted by the LRA in 2015. She says she was raped continuously by LRA leaders. The 12-year-old girl told the village leader’s wife that she had been abducted by the same group in January 2018 in a village in Central African Republic, and was also raped by LRA members. The 32-year-old man (a member of the LRA), says he spent 18 years in the group and that he, himself, had been abducted at the age of 14 years from northern Uganda. He decided to leave the group and take along the others who he refers to as his family, as the 18-year-old and 16-year-old girls have “fulfilled their duties” as wives.

Your base has only one unoccupied tent, which is reserved for accommodating visitors. The nearest NGO office is located 80 km away.



## SCENARIO G

In recent years, Mali has been confronted by a profound crisis with serious political, security, socio-economic, humanitarian, and human rights consequences. The crisis stems from long-standing structural conditions such as weak state institutions, fragile social cohesion, deep-seated feelings among communities in the north of being neglected, marginalized, and unfairly treated by the central Government.

On 22 March 2012, a mutiny by disaffected soldiers resulted in a military coup d’état. A military junta took power, suspended the Constitution, and dissolved the government. The interim government adopted a political roadmap in the spring of 2013 and further consultations with the UN led to a proposal to establish an integrated peacekeeping mission in Mali.

The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) was established by Security Council resolution 2100 of 25 April 2013, and tasked with support to the political process, security stabilization including the protection of civilians, human rights monitoring, the creation of conditions for the provision of humanitarian assistance and the return of displaced persons, the extension of state authority and the preparation of free, inclusive, and peaceful elections.

Since its establishment, MINUSMA has faced serious challenges in providing a safe and secure environment throughout Mali. The host government struggles to establish state authority in the North and the mission often finds itself a target for terrorist groups attacking both MINUSMA convoys and bases. In April 2021, four peacekeepers from Chad were killed and 19 injured when a UN camp was attacked in Northern Mali.

Threats against civilians are on the rise due to several factors. For instance, the weak central government, the proliferation of self-defense groups, and tensions within and between communities contribute to civilians being targeted. Illicit trafficking and jihadist insurgencies also make Mali a very volatile and dangerous environment. Women and children are especially at risk due to the lack of security at the community and provincial level.

Ansongo is a small town in the Gao Region in Eastern Mali, which has a center of mining and agricultural market (e.g., antimony, grains, livestock). A richness in natural resources (e.g., gold, uranium, and gas) has fueled armed groups activities in this area.

Extremist groups, which operate in central and northern Mali and neighboring regions in Burkina Faso and Niger, are also identified in Ansongo. Moreover, the main Malian-based umbrella group Jama’at Nusrat ul-Islam wa al Muslimin (JNIM), which is linked to Al Qaeda, has claimed attacks in Burkina Faso and Niger. Likewise, Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS), a part of Islamic State in the West Africa Province (ISWAP), operates in North-Eastern Mali and adjacent areas in Burkina Faso and Niger. Conversely, Burkina Faso-based Ansaroul Islam has also staged attacks in neighboring Central Mali. Despite the continuing fights between JNIM and ISGS in Sector East, it is likely that JNIM redirected their focus on international forces, mainly Barkhane, in Sector East, in retaliation to their counter-terrorist operations.



You are the Battalion Commander and staff of a battalion in Sector East. One morning, you received information from local and security sources indicating that unidentified armed individuals on several motorcycles burst into the village of Intiguart, and terrorized the villagers. This incident led to rape, sexual assault, and robbery. The assailants allegedly raped nine people at gunpoint. Three of them were girls between the ages of ten and eighteen. This zone is part of your area of responsibility.

### SCENARIO H

The urban villages of Inadiatafane and Ti-n-Baradyan in Gourma Rharous cercle are administrative subdivisions of Timbuktu region. While agriculture has been introduced for poverty reduction, it is still highly labour-intensive due to the lack of investment in agricultural technology, resulting in the low level of agrarian capital per household.

You are the Battalion Commander and staff in Sector West. Your area of responsibility includes the villages of Inadiatafane and Ti-n-Baradyan. You just received a JMAC report from Sector/Brigade HQ in Timbuktu. This report highlights that nine families arrived in Timbuktu urban communities from Inalatafane and Ti-n-Baradyan. According to the report, they were fleeing from an extremist group, threatening to behead teachers and take students as hostages in school premises.

Hundreds of children do not go to school owing to the absence of teachers who are afraid of losing their lives. The escaped families said three of their daughters aged below fifteen were abducted because they refused to marry members of the extremist group. Forced marriage and abduction have become more prevalent in Gourma Rharous and Goundam cercles in Sector West, particularly in the areas controlled by armed groups. Families with children flee from these areas due to the heightened risk of forced marriage, abduction and the lack of access to education.

### REQUIREMENTS

Working in assigned groups, learners should discuss and analyse the scenario(s) and prepare a 10-minute presentation to be delivered in plenary, taking into account the following:

- 1) Is it an imminent and/or a physical threat? What would happen if no action is taken?
- 2) What actions should the military tactical commander facing the situation on the ground (e.g., patrol or company commander) take, considering the mission’s mandate and rules of engagement? Should the military response be different if the alleged perpetrators represent host government forces or non-State armed groups?
- 3) What specific action(s) should the Force take with respect to the victim(s)?





- 4) Which mission components and external actors should be informed of this event, and why? Also, explain how you would share information with the stakeholders concerned.
- 5) Recommend actions to take to reduce threats to children and prevent similar violations against children from recurring in the future. Identify other child protection actors and stakeholders that should be involved, and explain why.
- 6) What are the key observations of the events that you would include in your report?

### CONDUCT OF THE EXERCISE

Learners should be divided into groups for this exercise. The exercise will be conducted over six periods, with a minimum of two scenarios for each group. To begin, the trainer(s) should introduce the exercise and explain the requirements in plenary. Then the groups should separate to discuss the scenarios, formulate responses and prepare the 10-minute PowerPoint presentations highlighting the key issues. Emphasize the need to be concise in the presentations. 300 minutes (5 hours) will be allocated for this exercise.

### TIMING

- Introduction of exercise and requirements: 30 minutes
- Group discussions on scenarios and preparation of responses and presentations: 180 minutes
- Presentations of responses in plenary (maximum 10 minutes per group)  
question period after each presentation (5 minutes/presentation)  
concluding remarks after all presentations delivered (5 minutes): 90 minutes

