



## Overview of the United Nations Police

### Lesson at a Glance

#### Aim

To provide participants with a clear understanding of the mission and mandate of United Nations Police (UNPOL).

#### Relevance

United Nations Police Peace Operations differ fundamentally from domestic policing as UNPOL officers deploy to an unfamiliar, post-conflict environment and work with Police officers from many different countries and policing backgrounds. This special context requires UNPOL officers to understand the role of UNPOL in UN Peace Operations and the guiding principles to follow.

This lesson introduces UNPOL, explains its place in the overall UN Peace Operations architecture and clarifies its mandate and structure. The lesson also provides an overview of the Strategic Guidance Framework for International Policing (SGF) and explains the role of the UNPOL as the system-wide service provider and focal point on policing and other law enforcement matters within the United Nations system.

#### Learning Objectives

Learners will be able to:

- Reflect how the work of UNPOL differs from domestic policing
- Illustrate the mission and mandate of United Nations Police
- Identify the core functions of UNPOL
- Explain how UNPOL performance should reflect the principles identified in the Strategic Guidance Framework for International Policing (SGF)

## Lesson Map

Learning Activity: 1.1 Domestic Policing vs. International Policing in a Post-conflict Context	Slide 5
UNPOL Mission and Mandate	Slides 6-8
UNPOL at a Glance	Slides 9-14
Strategic Guidance Framework for International Policing	Slides 15-16
Coordination of UNPOL Activities from UN Headquarters	Slides 17-20

## The Lesson

**Duration: 60 minutes total**

30 minutes: learning activity

30 minutes: interactive presentation



### Starting the Lesson

*Learning Activity 1.1 provides an interactive start to the lesson and sets the stage for several important topics covered in this lesson, such as UNPOL mission and mandate, concrete tasks of UNPOL in the field and the rationale for the Strategic Guidance Framework (SGF).*

*Before starting the learning activity introduce the following (using slides 1-4):*

- Aim
- Relevance
- Learning Objectives
- Lesson Overview

*Note the particular language of the UN. Learning will involve some words, terms and phrases which may be unfamiliar and/or seem awkward. Note to the learner: "Do not let the language get in the way of learning". As you move through the training, review the definitions of key words and phrases.*

## Learning Activity

1.1

### Domestic Policing vs. International Policing in a Post-conflict Context

#### INSTRUCTIONS:

- Ask participants to work in small groups.
- Ask the groups to discuss the following questions:
  - How does domestic policing differ from international policing in a post-conflict environment?
  - What are the differences with regard to context, authority, professional background and culture?
- Ask the groups to present their findings in plenary.
- If necessary, supplement the discussion using the debriefing notes on the following page.


**TIME:** 30 minutes

- Group work: 15 minutes
- Discussion: 15 minutes

#### RESOURCES

- Slide with instructions to participants.
- Flipcharts and markers.

### Learning Activity: 1.1



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**Instructions**

- Discuss in your groups (10-15 minutes):
  - *How does domestic policing differ from international policing in a post-conflict context?*
  - *How do you think your work in the mission will be different than what you do at home?*
- Record your answers on a flipchart paper.
- Present your ideas to the plenary.

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*This learning activity can alternatively be facilitated as a Fishbowl group discussion.*

**Key Message:** UNPOL peace operations differ fundamentally from domestic policing with regard to context, authority, professional background and culture.



*If not mentioned by participants in the plenary, add the points below.*

- **UNPOL Peace Operations differ fundamentally from domestic policing.** *The difference derives from the context of deployment; that is, a **post-conflict situation** and fragile environment that are often characterised by widespread human rights violations in which authority, power and rules for social interaction are fluid.*
- *In most countries, officers can take several conditions for granted in their domestic policing role: that they have the authority to enforce the law, that they represent the legitimate authority of a state and a clear set of laws, that they understand the culture and speak the language of the communities they serve and that their police colleagues' training and service are similar to their own.*
- *UNPOL cannot presume any of these; instead, UNPOL officers frequently work in unfamiliar environments while navigating the varying approaches to policing of colleagues from many different countries and agencies.*



Before presenting the UNPOL mission and mandate play the video “60 years of UN Police” (01:51 min) to illustrate how the role of UNPOL has changed over time:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ms1Gjw9-UEI>

Ask learners how they would characterize the role of UNPOL in Peace Operations.

## Slide 6

A slide titled 'UNPOL Mission' with the United Nations logo in the top right corner. The text describes the mission of the United Nations Police and includes a citation to a 2016 report.

**UNPOL Mission**

The mission of the United Nations Police is to enhance international peace and security by supporting Member States in conflict, post-conflict and other crisis situations **to realize effective, efficient, representative, responsive and accountable police services that serve and protect the population.**

*~2016 Report of the Secretary-General on United Nations Policing (S/2016/952)*

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**Key Message:** The Mission of UNPOL is to support Member States in crisis situations to realize effective national police services that serve and protect the population.

Reinforce the points from the video by explaining that the mission of UNPOL is to enhance international peace and security by supporting Member States in conflict, post-conflict and other crisis situations to realize effective, efficient, representative, responsive and accountable police services that serve and protect the population.

## Slide 7

## UNPOL Mandate

Build and support, or, where mandated, **act as a substitute or partial substitute for, host-State police capacity to prevent and detect crime, protect life and property and maintain public order and safety** in adherence to the rule of law and international human rights law.

**Pursue community-oriented and intelligence-led policing** approaches to contribute to the **protection of civilians and human rights; address, among other things, sexual and gender-based violence, conflict-related sexual violence and serious and organized crime;** and conduct investigations, special operations and electoral security.

*~2014 Policy on the United Nations Police*

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*This is the first time the 2014 Policy on the United Nations Police is mentioned in this presentation. Introduce this Policy as a constitutional level document for UNPOL and refer to it when explaining the mandate:*

The UNPOL builds capacity (or, in Peace Operations with an executive mandate, substitutes for host-State police) to prevent and detect crime, protect life and property and maintain public order and safety in adherence to the rule of law and international human rights law.



*Ask participants to explain what an executive mandate is and what the difference is for missions without such a mandate. How does this affect the tasks of UNPOL? Emphasise that most UN Missions today do not have an executive mandate and UNPOL's main tasks are therefore to build and support local police capacities.*

Executive mandates involve complete responsibility for the maintenance of law and order and the performance of the whole spectrum of activities associated with policing, including powers of arrest and detention, collecting evidence, investigation of crime and assistance in criminal investigations, border security, riot and crowd control, robust patrols and so on. Under this kind of mandate UNPOL serves as the national police service until domestic capacities are developed. Executive mandates have rarely been authorized due to political sensitivities about host-State sovereignty and the operational challenges associated with this kind of mandate for UNPOL.

In the absence of an interim executive mandate, the authorisation of mandates with operational responsibilities or with special powers (like MINUSCA in Central African Republic) may provide UNPOL with the tools necessary to make important contributions

toward law enforcement and to overcome some of the constraints associated with non-executive mandates. In contrast to executive mandates, however, host-State cooperation to perform these tasks remains a legal requirement.



Slide 8



As per the 2014 Policy, UNPOL has **two core functions**:

**1. Operational support/interim executive policing and other law enforcement:**

Operational support for—and when mandated, delivery of—effective prevention, detection and investigation of crime; protection of life and property, the maintenance of public order and

**2. Capacity-Building and Development:**

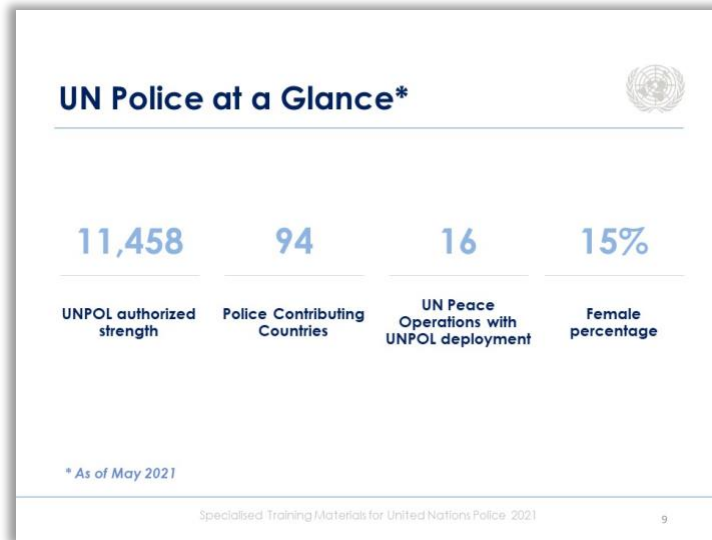
Support for the reform, restructuring and rebuilding of host-State police and for the development of effective host-State police capacity to provide representative, responsive and accountable police service of the highest possible professional standard.

In addition, police components may be called upon to support related mission mandates, including but not limited to provisions for the protection and promotion of human rights, especially those of vulnerable groups; promoting the rule of law, fostering good governance, transparency, accountability and protecting civilians (especially women and children).



**UNPOL at a glance.** Slides 9-14 define the categories of UNPOL personnel, explain the legal status of UNPOL officers, list the deployment modalities and the current field operations, and highlight the importance of gender balance within the UNPOL component. Highlight that the list of missions and authorized UNPOL strength is presented as of May 2021 and may be different at the time of the lesson delivery.

**Slide 9**



As of May 2021, UNPOL is deployed in 16 UN Peace Operations with a total authorised strength of 11,458. Female percentage of deployed UNPOL is 15 per cent and UNPOL is recruited from 94 police-contributing countries.

Current deployment numbers and numbers of police-contributing countries can be found at <https://police.un.org/en/police-contributors>.

## Slide 10



Where does UNPOL work? The above map illustrates numbers of UNPOL officers deployed to the different UN Peace Operations led by the Department of Peace Operations (DPO).

DPO is dedicated to assisting Member States and the Secretary-General in their efforts to maintain international peace and security. DPO provides political and executive direction to UN Peace Operations around the world and maintains contact with the Security Council, troop, police and financial contributors; and parties to the conflict in the implementation of Security Council mandates.



*Highlight that the list of missions and authorized UNPOL strength is presented as of May 2021 and may be different at the time of the lesson delivery. Detailed information on the history and mandate of each mission can be found at <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en>. Each mission has a dedicated website which contains the latest information. Encourage participants to browse these websites and to read about the mission to which they will deploy.*

## Slide 11



The above map illustrates numbers of UNPOL officers deployed to Special Political Missions (SPMs) led by the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA). DPPA manages SPMs engaged in conflict prevention, peace-making and post-conflict peacebuilding around the world. These field operations include country-specific missions and regional offices. They are headed by senior representatives of the Secretary-General and provide a forward platform for preventative diplomacy and other activities across a range of disciplines, helping to prevent and resolve conflict and supporting complex political transitions in coordination with national actors, UN development and humanitarian entities on the ground. Tasks and daily work of UNPOL in SPMs may vary from DPO missions depending on the specific mandate. Recently, UNPOL has increasingly become involved in prevention efforts beyond Peace Operations.



*Highlight that the list of missions and authorised UNPOL strength is presented as of May 2021 and may be different at the time of the lesson delivery. Detailed information on the history and mandate of each mission can be found at <https://dppa.un.org/en/dppa-around-world>. Each mission has a dedicated website containing the latest information. Encourage participants to browse these websites and to read about the mission to which they will deploy.*

## Slide 12



As per the 2014 Policy on United Nations Police in Peacekeeping Operations and Special Political Missions, United Nations Police components consist of Individual Police Officers (IPOs), Specialised Police Teams (SPTs) and Formed Police Units (FPUs). Regardless of category, these forces all serve as “experts on mission” meaning they are awarded specific privileges and immunities in order to fulfil their functions under the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations.

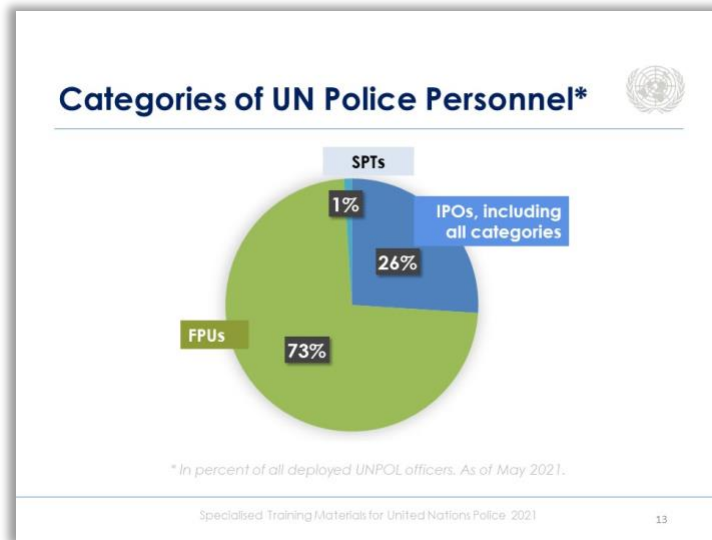
As of May 2021, IPOs with 55 skill sets are deployed to the field missions. IPOs can be Police Officers or Civilian Experts with specialised skill sets. As with Police Officers, Civilian Experts can be recruited, nominated/ loaned by a Member State or serve on professional posts.

UNPOL deploys **Specialised Police Teams (SPTs)** comprised of Individual Police Officers to support host-State police with specialised policing expertise. Depending on the mandate and needs of the mission and host-State police, these teams can provide capacity-building and/or operational reinforcement to host-State police, conduct deterrent patrols or respond independently to non-military physical threats against civilians through use of force. Each team consists of experts from one (or a limited number of) Member State(s), with special skills in areas such as investigations, serious and organised crime, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) or community-oriented policing. SPTs may include Civilian Experts.

The majority of Police Officers serving in United Nations Peace Operations are deployed as part of a **Formed Police Unit (FPU)**. An FPU consists of approximately 140 Police Officers, trained and equipped to act as a cohesive unit capable of accomplishing policing tasks that individual Police Officers could not address. Well-trained FPUs can operate even in “high-risk” environments.

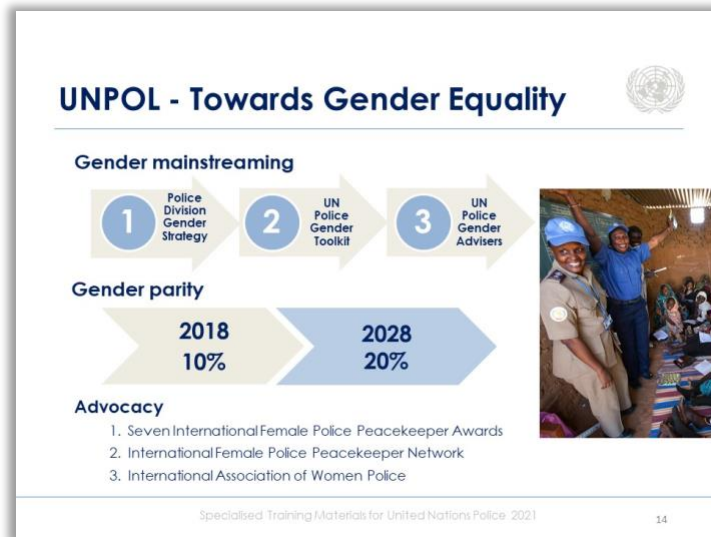
FPU have three core duties: public order management, protection of United Nations personnel and facilities and support of such police operations that require a concerted response. FPU do not respond to military threats.

Slide 13



As of May 2021, the total number of UNPOL Officers deployed in field operations is 8,868. Out of them, there are 2,185 non-contracted and 166 contracted Officers (IPOs); 6,468 Officers in FPUs, and 49 members of seven SPTs.

## Slide 14



UN Secretary-General António Guterres launched the “System-wide strategy on gender parity” in September 2017. This strategy included recommended actions to reach gender parity by 2028. The strategy addressed targets and accountability, special measures, enabling environment, senior appointments, and mission settings.

Achieving gender parity is an urgent priority, not only as a basic human right, but also as an essential component of the United Nations' efficiency, impact and credibility. As the principal international standard-setting institution, the United Nations bears a special responsibility to lead by example and leave no one behind.

The UN Police Division has developed its own Gender Strategy for UNPOL, including training UNPOL Officers on Gender for UNPOL and stationing Police Gender Advisers at HQ and in missions. UNPOL has committed to achieving 20 percent female officers by 2028. At the advocacy level, UNPOL awards an annual International Female Police Peacekeeper Award, in addition to promoting networks and associations of female Police Peacekeepers.

The United Nations ensures gender-sensitive policing as an operational necessity throughout the work of United Nations Police to address the differentiated security needs of women, men, girls and boys. United Nations Police integrates the different concerns and vulnerabilities of these persons into the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all police activities.

The participation of female police officers in the full spectrum of UNPOL activities is critical to the promotion of rule of law, intelligence, planning, leadership, investigations, public order management, capacity-building of host-State police, community-oriented policing, gender awareness raising and engaging communities.



Female officers additionally act as role models for gender equality, inspiring women and girls to advocate for their own rights and pursue careers in law enforcement. Moreover, female police officers provide a greater sense of security to women and children and improve local women's access to and support from law enforcement agencies. They also help the United Nations address and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse.



In a plenary discussion, recap with participants the mandate and tasks of UNPOL discussed at the start of the session and the variety of policing backgrounds from which UNPOL officers are recruited. Link these to the presentation of the Strategic Guidance Framework (SGF) for International Policing. Ask participants why they think the SGF is needed. Emphasise that the SGF guides UNPOL in “how” it should perform its tasks.

## Slide 15



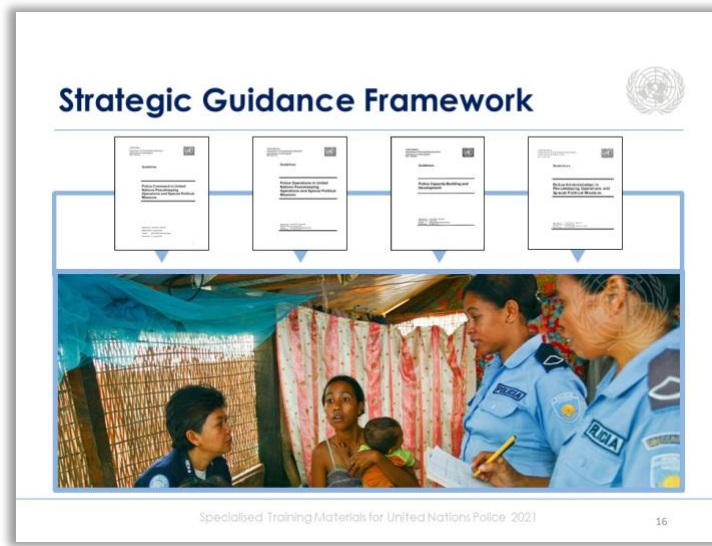
**Key Message:** UNPOL operates in accordance with the SGF (Strategic Guidance Framework for International Policing). The SGF provides standardised approaches to the provision of public safety and police reform, as well as support to national police and other law enforcement agencies.

Following the adoption of the United Nations Police in Peace Operations Policy in January 2014, a comprehensive set of guidelines was elaborated as the **Strategic Guidance Framework (SGF) for International Policing**. As of 2021, these guidelines cover Police Command, Police Operations, Police Capacity-Building and Development and Police Administration, which are the four core elements of the Policy.

SGF guidance is intended to benefit not only the UN, but also any organisation or Member State that deploys police and law enforcement personnel to international, multidimensional peace operations. The documents were developed in consultation with, among others, the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the African Union and the European Union. These parties have drawn from SGF materials for their own planning, development and training efforts.

The SGF should lead to a shared understanding among all UNPOL Officers. To that end, the SGF is being translated into detailed job descriptions for UNPOL and standardised training programmes in order to monitor and evaluate mandate implementation.

Slide 16



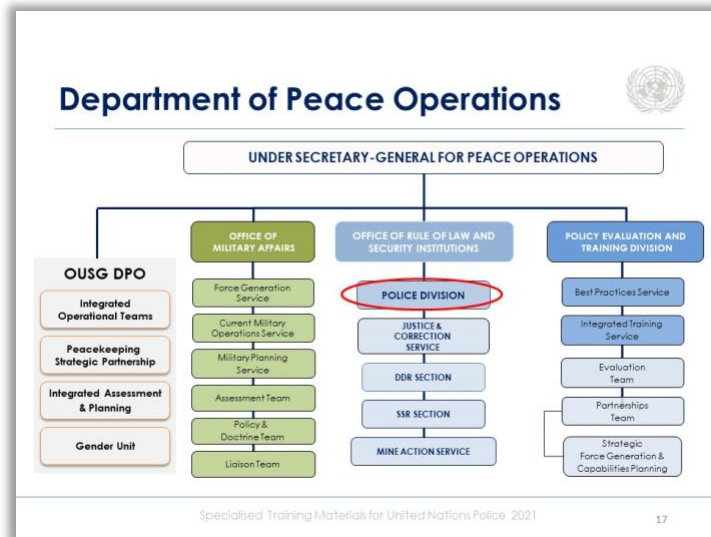
The **SGF** aims to enhance the effectiveness of UN policing through more consistent and standardised approaches to the provision of public safety, police reform and support to national police and other law enforcement agencies.

The SGF guidelines and related manuals are the framework that should guide all UNPOL officers in their everyday work. The SGF is not the only guiding set of documents for UNPOL, but rather serve as a gateway to other UN rules and regulations.



Emphasise that the SGF and other direction to UNPOL in the field comes from the UN Police Division at UN Headquarters in New York. The following slides will outline the responsibilities of the UN Police Division.

Slide 17





The UN Police Division is part of the **United Nations Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions (ORLSI)**, established within the Department of Peace Operations in 2007. ORLSI deploys peacekeepers who, as early peacebuilders, assist conflict-affected countries in re-establishing the rule of law and the security institutions necessary to build and sustain peace.

ORLSI includes five components: the Police Division, the Justice and Corrections Service, the Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Section; the Security Sector Reform Unit, and the UN Mine Action Service.

The Police Division comprises the Office of the Police Adviser, the Strategic Policy and Development Section, the Selection and Recruitment Section, Mission Management and Support Section and the Standing Police Capacity. The Police Division is led by the United Nations Police Adviser.

Slide 18

**Police Division Core Responsibilities** 



- Planning for the deployment of UN Police
- Selection, recruitment, deployment and rotation of UN Police personnel
- Development of policy and guidance
- Operational support, strategic advice and guidance to field missions
- Advocacy with Member States, partnership-building and strategic communication

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One component of the Police Division is located in United Nations Headquarters in New York, USA, while another (Standing Police Capacity) is situated in the United Nations Global Service Centre in Brindisi, Italy.

UN Police Division is tasked to support UN Police components in the implementation of mandated tasks through the:

- planning for deployment of UN Police to UN Peace Operations, Special Political Missions and other non-mission settings, including via the Global Focal Point mechanism.
- selection, recruitment, deployment and rotation of UN Police personnel to UN Peace Operations and Special Political Missions, as well as other contexts.
- analysis and development of policy and guidance on international police Peace Operations to ensure coherence.
- provision of operational support, strategic advice and guidance to field missions, including assessments and back-stopping.
- advocacy with Member States, coordination, partnership building and consolidation and strategic communications.

## Slide 19



The United Nations Police Standing Police Capacity (SPC) is an operational component of Police Division situated in Brindisi, Italy. The component is led by the Principal Officer, who reports to the Police Adviser. The unit is comprised of 36 officers with various policing and other technical expertise. SPC was created in 2007 to fulfil the strategic mission of the UN Police by providing effective, coherent and rapidly deployable policing expertise to UN Peace Operations during the start-up, reinforcement and transition phases in post-conflict and other crisis situations.

The SPC has **two core functions**:

1. providing the **start-up capability** for the police components of new UN peace operations, and
2. providing **advice, expertise and assistance** in the field of institutional law enforcement capacity building.

The SPC provides officers with specialist knowledge and experience including police reform and restructuring, public order, transnational organised crime, community-oriented policing, legal affairs, analysis, training, planning, logistics, budget and funds management, human resources, information and communication technology, investigations and gender advisory and other expertise. The experts are seconded officers from Police-contributing countries and professional civilian staff.

Slide 20

**Coordination of Policing Activities in Host-States**



- UNPOL is the system-wide service provider and focal point on policing and other law enforcement matters
- Global Focal Point arrangement for Police, Justice and Corrections areas in the Rule of Law in Post-Conflict and other Crisis Situations (GFP) allows United Nations entities to deliver as one

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UNPOL is the **system-wide service provider** and focal point for policing and other law enforcement matters for UN agencies, funds and programmes. This ensures coherence in the provision of policing expertise and technical assistance.

Recognizing the need to deliver complementary responsibilities under one umbrella and to integrate the political and development dimensions of these efforts, the Secretary-General designated the UN Department of Peace Operations (DPO) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to implement a business model focused on joint United Nations operational country support in conflict and crisis settings.

Since 2012, an arrangement known as the **Global Focal Point (GFP)** for Police, Justice and Corrections Areas in the Rule of Law in Post-Conflict and other Crisis Situations has provided a unified solution for overall UN assistance in these areas. This arrangement allows United Nations entities to “deliver as one”, overcoming systemic fragmentation in the process and working together in the pursuit of one set of goals.

Slide 21

### Summary of Key Messages

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United Nations police peacekeeping differs fundamentally from domestic policing with regard to the context, authority, professional background and culture.

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UNPOL mission is to support Member States in crisis situations to realize effective national police services that serve and protect the population.

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UNPOL operates in accordance with the SGF. The SGF provides standardised approaches to the provision of public safety, police reform and support to national police and other law enforcement agencies.

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*Emphasize the key points from this lesson. Ask participants to reflect on how each of these points will apply to their roles as IPOs.*



## Reference Materials

- DPKO/DFS Policy on United Nations Police in Peacekeeping Operations and Special Political Missions (2014.01)
- DPKO/DFS Guidelines on Police Administration in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations and Special Political Missions (2016.26)
- DPKO/DFS Guidelines on Police Operations in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations and Special Political Missions (2015.15)
- DPKO/DFS Guidelines on Police Command in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations and Special Political Missions (2015.14)
- DPKO/DFS Guidelines on Police Capacity Building and Development (2015.08)
- DPKO/PD Guidelines for United Nations Police Officers on Assignment with Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO/PD/2006/00135)
- DPKO/PD Guidelines for Formed Police Units on Assignment with Peace Operations (DPKO/PD/2006/00015)
- DPO/DOS Guidelines for Specialized Police Teams on Assignment with United Nations Peace Operations (2019.34)
- United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UN DPKO), Handbook on United Nations Multidimensional Peacekeeping Operations, (2003, 92.)