Communicating peace operations: the role of peacekeeping deployment maps in a United Nations field mission

Ayako Kagawa [a,*]

[a] *United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), Ayako Kagawa – kagawa@un.org*

* Corresponding author

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Abstract:

Following the devastation of the Second World War with one central mission of the maintenance of international peace and security, the United Nations has strived to prevent conflict, assist parties in conflict make peace, deploy peacekeepers and creating the conditions to allow peace to hold and flourish. Cartographers in the United Nations have been reflecting these efforts through deployment maps since its initial deployment of peacekeepers.

This paper explores the role of deployment of the United Nations peacekeeping through the thematic maps of peacekeeping deployment maps with specific reference to the case of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). Whilst critically reflecting the role of United Nations deployment maps, the paper will delve into aspects of military deployment symbols such as its function, adaptability, use, application and its challenges and opportunities of its use as an evidence-based communication tool.

Additionally, the paper also investigates emerging alternative cartographic communication methods and medium in an environment of continuous technology transformation as the Organization enters an era of the digital transformation for the United Nations peacekeeping.

Based on the above, the author examines the extent UNIFIL is leveraging cartographic and geospatial information technology in its decision-making process and whether this trend will allow to expand the currently existing cartographic communication discourse within the Organization.