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# Contemporary Peace Support Operations: The Primacy of the Military and Internal Contradictions

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## Abstract

In this article the authors examine two set of issues that constrain contemporary peace support operations (PSOs): one centered on the kinds of knowledge prevalent in PSOs and the second involving the organizational structures that characterize them. The authors' aim is to show the deep discursive and structural limitations and contradictions that continue to characterize the actions of armed forces and the dominance of militaristic thinking within PSOs. This article centers on multidimensional peacekeeping marked by emphasizing two main points in regard to the complex nature of such peacekeeping. First, Western military thinking is still dominant in the professional discourse of peacekeeping despite the fact that in many cases it is less relevant to the arenas where it is applied (in weakened or failed states). Second, forces in second-generation peacekeeping missions are by definition a form of hybrid organizations, and therefore conceptual changes in regard to PSOs not only involve the realm of knowledge but also entail practical consequences for the very organizational means used to achieve their aims. The authors' analysis demonstrates the blending, hybridization, and linkages that are an essential part of PSOs as processes that carry both advantages and disadvantages for organizational action.

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