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Legal Parameters for the Use of Force within the Context of Peace Operations

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(p. 169) 6.3 Legal Parameters for the Use of Force within the Context of Peace Operations

6.08 The conduct of peace operations with the consent of the Receiving State excludes any use of force other than in self-defence. According to UN doctrine, this includes any force which is authorized and necessary for mission accomplishment and the protection of civilians (see Chapter 22). In cases of such authorization, self-defence may extend beyond mere reaction to direct threat of force against the peacekeeping forces and can include reactions in response to armed threats against the integrity of the mission and the protection of civilians accompanying the mission and of the civilian population of the Receiving State within the capability of the mission.

1. The UN doctrine of self-defence has evolved over the years from a strictly personal level of self-defence in response to acts directed against individual peacekeepers into a significantly broader concept of self-defence which allows for the use of force in response to armed actions directed against UN personnel, equipment, installations, and to the extent possible within the capabilities of the mission in the protection of civilians and the execution of the mandate.¹ This concept of self-defence has its legal basis in the UN's powers in the realm of maintaining international peace and security and in the terms of the mandate.

2. For a more detailed discussion relating to the application of force in the context of UN Peace Operations and the UN doctrine of self-defence see sub-Chapter 6.1 'Characterization and Legal Basis for Peace Operations', sub-Chapter 6.4 'Application of Force and Rules of Engagement in Peace Operations', and Chapter 24 'Force Protection, Unit Self-Defence, and Personal Self-Defence: Their Relationship to Rules of Engagement'.

¹ See Findlay, *The Use of Force*, 87 *et seq.*, especially at 89–93. See also Section 24.05 and supporting commentary.