



NHSMUN

Background Guide | C34

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Dear Delegates,

I want to start by congratulating you on joining the NHSMUN conference of 2026! We live in interesting yet demanding times. There are changing international dynamics, conflicts beyond and within borders, and a rapidly changing landscape for the United Nations to navigate. I cannot think of a more important skill to develop than that of diplomacy, resolution orientation, and communication. NHSMUN is the perfect place to start, or further develop, your journey into the confusing world of politics. For taking initiative and for daring to open your minds and question what you know, you should be proud of yourselves. I am also so very excited to get to know you all, and to hear what kinds of resolutions and thoughts you have on our topic for this year's conference.

My name is Solaia, and I am from Norway. I am currently finishing my bachelor's degree in politics, psychology, law, and economics (PPLE) in Amsterdam. My major is political science, as I find the world of politics and especially international relations very interesting. Aside from that, I also enjoy much of the usual stuff: cooking, eating, running, hiking, and skiing (cross-country, of course).

The topic that I wrote about is Pre-Deployment Training for UN Peacekeepers. I find it fascinating in part because I spent one year in the Norwegian Army as an infantry border ranger guarding the Russian border. One of the first things we learned there was that you never rise to the occasion; you always sink to your level of training. In essence, there is no magic switch. When you are under pressure, you will only be as good as your training.

Both of the topics we will be discussing are challenging issues. This guide will not always be an easy read. Our hope is that you will learn more about the complexities of UN peacekeeping and the direction it is currently heading in. I encourage you to read with an open mind, and to further research and explore both of these topics, as this background guide naturally does not paint the full picture.

Lastly, even as I am sure you all have a good deal of knowledge already, I want to encourage you all to enter this year's conference with a mindset and a wish to learn the most you can from the other delegates around you as well. None of us know it all, but together we all know a bit more.

I cannot wait to meet you all in March, and the best of luck with your preparations!

Solaia Lund

Director of C34

Session I

nhsmun.c34@imuna.org



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Dear Delegates,

What's up, y'all! My name is Johannsen Paulino; however, most people know me by my nickname "Jojo," and I'm pleased to welcome you all as the Session II Director for the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations of the United Nations, otherwise known as C34! I am a junior at CUNY Hunter College right here in New York City, studying both history and political science as part of the Thomas Hunter Honors and Pre-Law programs. I am a native-born New Yorker, raised in the Bronx for most of my life, and later moved to Westchester County, graduating from Ardsley High School in 2023. I speak fluent English and Spanish and some very rusty French. I love spending time with my friends and family, watching documentaries about the American Revolution and the Civil War, and going on hikes. It is a personal goal of mine to climb the tallest peaks in every state in the United States. However, one of my favorite activities must be playing with my black cat, Sable.

Before being on NHSMUN staff, I was a two-time delegate of NHSMUN as part of my high school's Model UN team. I was a part of the Legal Committee in 2023 and, before that, the Union of the Mediterranean in 2022. Last year, I directed the UNICEF committee during Session II. Although Hunter College does not have a Model UN team, I still participate in researching global politics through active engagement in my classes and my love for studying current events that are happening on a worldwide scale.

At the conference, you must be knowledgeable about both of the topics at hand. This involves thoroughly reading and analyzing the provided material to understand the nature of issues present not only in C34 but also internationally. However, the most essential step to achieving a stimulating time in committee relies on three factors.

First, the respect of your fellow delegates. At NHSMUN, we expect delegates to be courteous and take the initiative to respect and collaborate with their peers. Secondly, the knowledge gained from discussing solutions to problems and effectively presenting them in a committee. Lastly, to have fun. Obviously, at NHSMUN, we expect you to be professional statespeople; however, my previous experience as a delegate is the same as yours.

As much as I am adamant that you as delegates be professional, I want everyone to have fun. Without further delay, we hope to see you all at the conference, and if you have any questions, do not be a stranger and feel free to reach out!

Keep smiling gang,

Johannsen "Jojo" Paulino

Director of C34

Session II

nhsmun.c34@imuna.org



A NOTE ON RESEARCH AND PREPARATION

Delegate research and preparation is a critical element of attending NHSMUN and enjoying the debate experience. We have provided this Background Guide to introduce the topics that will be discussed in your committee. We encourage and expect each of you to critically explore the selected topics and be able to identify and analyze their intricacies upon arrival to the conference.

The task of preparing for the conference can be challenging, but to assist delegates, we have updated our [Beginner Delegate Guide](#), [Advanced Delegate Guide](#), [Research Guide](#), and [Rules of Procedure Guide](#). In particular, these guides contain more detailed instructions on how to prepare a position paper and excellent sources that delegates can use for research. Use these resources to your advantage. They can help transform a sometimes overwhelming task into what it should be: an engaging, interesting, and rewarding experience.

To accurately represent a country, delegates must be able to articulate its policies. Accordingly, NHSMUN requires each delegation (the one or two delegates representing a country in a committee) to write a position paper for each topic on the committee's agenda. In delegations with two students, we strongly encourage each student to research each topic to ensure that they are both prepared to debate throughout the committee. More information about how to write and format position papers can be found in the Research Guide. To summarize, position papers should be structured into three sections.

I: Topic Background – This section should describe the history of the topic as it would be described by the delegate's country. Delegates do not need to give an exhaustive account of the topic. It is best to focus on the details that are most important to the delegation's policy and proposed solutions.

II: Country Policy – This section should discuss the delegation's policy regarding the topic. Each paper should state the policy in plain terms and include the relevant statements, statistics, and research that support the effectiveness of the policy. Comparisons with other global issues are also appropriate.

III. Proposed Solutions – This section should detail the delegation's proposed solutions to address the topic. Descriptions of each solution should be thorough. Each idea should clearly connect to the specific problem it aims to solve and identify potential obstacles to implementation and how they can be avoided. The solution should be a natural extension of the country's policy.

Each topic's position paper should be **no more than 10 pages** long double-spaced with standard margins and 12 point font size. This is a maximum; **3–5 pages per topic is often a suitable length**. The paper must be written from the perspective of your assigned country and should articulate the policies you will espouse at the conference.

Each delegation is responsible for submitting position papers on or before **February 20, 2026**. If a delegate wishes to receive detailed feedback from the committee's dais, a position must be submitted on or before **January 30, 2026**. The papers received by this earlier deadline will be reviewed by the dais of each committee and returned prior to your arrival at the conference. Instructions on how to submit position papers will be shared directly with faculty advisors.

Complete instructions for how to submit position papers will be sent to faculty advisers via email. If delegations are unable to submit their position papers on time, please contact us at nhsmun@imuna.org.

Delegations that do not submit position papers will be ineligible for awards.

COMMITTEE HISTORY

Established in 1965, the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C34) operated under the umbrella of the General Assembly Fourth Committee. The General Assembly usually refers to the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), which is one of the six main organs of the United Nations. It is the central forum where all 193 member states of the UN have equal representation (each state has one vote). Its purpose was and is to analyze, check, and provide recommendations on the United Nations peacekeeping operations.¹ The committee's mandate calls for "a review of peacekeeping operations to assess past actions and explore new ways to improve the UN's role."² In other words, the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C34) develops various proposals for peacekeeping operations worldwide to fulfill its responsibilities. Furthermore, in every suggestion it makes, C34 strives to uphold the standards and values set forth by the Charter of the United Nations.³ C34 remains unique as a committee thanks to police, civilian, and military officials involved in negotiations, each of whom brings a different approach and perspective to the issues facing the committee.⁴

Originally, C34 had only 34 member states, but it now includes a total of 155 members. Membership first expanded in 1997, and more countries can join by participating as observers for three years or by contributing personnel to peacekeeping missions. The resolution opened up membership to contributors and long-term observers.⁵ In addition, fourteen other organizations, including the African Union, the European Community, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the International Criminal Police Organization, act as observers to the committee.⁶ Occasionally, there are disagreements among member states because of different politics, ideas and cultures concerning C34's mandate, which can often lead to late substantive reports and a failure to meet deadlines for their proposals. One of the main disagreements regards C34's "role in directing peacekeeping policy, whether certain issues belong on its agenda (e.g, Environmental Sustainability of Peacekeeping Operations), and how it should interact with the Fifth Committee, UN Security Council, and Secretariat."⁷ However, through their annual meetings, there is a forum for discussions not only concerning peacekeeping policy, but also their interactions with other organs of the UN.

The C34 completes the majority of its work at its annual substantive session, which occurs in February and March at the UN Headquarters in New York.⁸ There, delegates engage in general debate for two days and become briefed on various topics relating to the proceedings of the prior year's session. The ultimate aim of the yearly session is to produce a comprehensive report on suggestions and specific areas of improvement in peacekeeping operations.⁹ Although the C34 only officially convenes every year, it does hold an informal meeting in October in which the Secretariat updates delegates on a vast array of issues. The need for this, however, has recently been called into question, as critics argue that it would be more time-effective for delegates to receive written briefings without having to travel at all.¹⁰

1 "Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C34)," Peace Women, 2019, accessed 18 August 2025, www.peacewomen.org/content/special-committee-peace-keeping-operations-c34

2 A/RES/71/314, "Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 19 July 2017," United Nations, 2017, accessed 20 August 2025, www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/71/314

3 A/72/19, "Report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations," United Nations, 2018, accessed 20 August 2025, digitallibrary.un.org/record/1627951?ln=en

4 "General Assembly and Peacekeeping," United Nations, 2019, accessed 17 September 2019, [web.archive.org/web/20171009193143http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/ctte/CTTEE.htm](http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/ctte/CTTEE.htm)

5 United Nations Peacekeeping, "Recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations," n.d. peacekeeping.un.org/en/recommendations-of-special-committee-peacekeeping-operations-c34

6 "Recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations."

7 "How Peacekeeping Policy Gets Made: Navigating Intergovernmental Processes at the UN," International Peace Institute, 2018, accessed 25 August 2025, www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/1805_How-Peacekeeping-Policy-Gets-Made.pdf

8 International Peace Institute, "How Peacekeeping Policy Gets Made: Navigating Intergovernmental Processes at the UN."

9 International Peace Institute, "How Peacekeeping Policy Gets Made: Navigating Intergovernmental Processes at the UN."

10 International Peace Institute, "How Peacekeeping Policy Gets Made: Navigating Intergovernmental Processes at the UN."



Pre-deployment Training for Peacekeepers

Photo Credit: MONUSCO

The United Nations (UN) was founded in October of 1945, after the end of WWII. The main goal of the 50 countries working on the UN charter was to promote peace and prevent another world war.¹ In 1948, the UN Security Council authorized an entirely new organization in international conflict resolution. The UN Truce Supervision Organization was created and allowed for the deployment of UN military observers in the Middle East.² This first mission marked the start of more than 70 peacekeeping operations to come. Since then, peacekeeping has evolved. As conflicts grew more complex, so did the task of keeping and enforcing peace.³ Early missions focused on upholding already established peace agreements. Later, they expanded to rebuilding countries after the conflict was over, making sure parties were disarming, and overseeing elections.⁴ Today's missions, such as those in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the Central African Republic (CAR), have what are

called "Robust Mandates." This allows UN peacekeepers, or "Blue Helmets," to use deadly force when they need to protect themselves and civilians.⁵

One of the most important factors influencing mission success is the quality of Pre-deployment training.⁶ Pre-deployment training (PDT) is the preparation peacekeepers receive before being sent on a UN mission. It covers UN rules and values, specialized skills like first aid or communication, and training specific to the conflict zone.⁷ However, the UN itself does not directly train soldiers or police officers before they are deployed to a mission. This is the job of each member state who contributes troops and personnel. While the UN provides training standards and materials, it is up to each country to train their own peacekeepers.⁸ This uneven preparation has sometimes left peacekeepers unready for complex crises. A lack of moral training and screening has also resulted in scandals involving sexual and physical assault of civilians by those meant to protect them.⁹

Another major development is the increase in Blue Helmets being actively targeted and killed during their deployment.¹⁰ UN peacekeepers are no longer seen as a neutral and untouchable part of conflict. As a result, many experts and reports are arguing that the Blue Helmets need to be more aggressive in their conduct.¹¹ They should not only keep peace but also enforce it. Instead of simply observing or patrolling, they are expected to make sure a peaceful situation does not evolve into a conflict. This sometimes means they must create peace in unstable situations. This raises the demands on UN peacekeepers. Therefore, many people wish to see more specific PDT and better equipment provided before peacekeepers are deployed.¹² This "Robust Peacekeeping" is controversial. Some argue that peacekeepers should not be deployed in active and highly complex conflicts. These critics say that it makes peacekeeping missions almost impossible to conduct.¹³ The mission in the DRC reflects this.

1 "History of the United Nations | United Nations," United Nations, accessed August 17, 2025, www.un.org/en/about-us/history-of-the-un.

2 "Our History," United Nations Peacekeeping, accessed August 17, 2025, peacekeeping.un.org/en/our-history.

3 United Nations Peacekeeping, "Our History."

4 United Nations Peacekeeping, "Our History."

5 United Nations, "Security Council Renews Mandate of Stabilization Mission in Democratic Republic of Congo, Unanimously Adopting Resolution 2765 (2024) | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases," news release, December 20, 2024, press.un.org/en/2024/sc15949.doc.htm; "MINUSCA," United Nations Peacekeeping, accessed August 17, 2025, peacekeeping.un.org/en/mission/minusca.

6 "Improving Security of United Nations Peacekeepers: We Need to Change the Way We Are Doing Business," United Nations Organization, December 19, 2017, peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/improving_security_of_united_nations_peacekeepers_report.pdf.

7 "Peacekeeping Resource Hub: Peacekeeping Resource Hub: Pre-Deployment," United Nations Organization, accessed August 17, 2025, peacekeepingresourcehub.un.org/en/training/pre-deployment.

8 United Nations Organization, "Peacekeeping Resource Hub: Peacekeeping Resource Hub: Pre-Deployment."

9 Naomi Conrad, Arafatul Islam, and Birgitta Schülke, "Torturers Deployed as UN Peacekeepers," *Dw.com*, February 27, 2025, www.dw.com/en/torturers-deployed-as-un-peacekeepers/a-69139732.

10 "Reforming Peacekeeping," United Nations Peacekeeping, accessed August 17, 2025, peacekeeping.un.org/en/reforming-peacekeeping.

11 United Nations, "Robust Diplomacy, Adaptable Peacekeeping Missions Key to Foster Peace in Increasingly Complex Security Environment, Fragmented World, Speakers Tell Security Council | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases," news release, July 29, 2025, press.un.org/en/2025/sc16132.doc.htm.

12 United Nations, "Improving Security of United Nations Peacekeepers: We Need to Change the Way We Are Doing Business."

13 Martin Kleiven Jørgensen, "Robust Peacekeeping and Its Unintended Consequences," *E-International Relations*, February 27, 2023, www.e-ir.info/2023/02/27/robust-peacekeeping-and-its-unintended-consequences/.

After more than 20 years, the mission is viewed as a failure, and it is deeply unpopular with both the population and the government.¹⁴

Some member states question the legitimacy and effectiveness of UN peacekeeping. The criticism comes at a time when global conflicts are at their highest levels since the UN's founding.¹⁵ In addition, the UN is facing budget cuts due to member states' unwillingness to pay their

part of the peacekeeping budget.¹⁶ The UN is also facing a crisis of consent. Many host countries with UN peacekeeping missions inside their borders are now turning away from the UN and instead prefer local peacekeeping solutions to address their conflicts.¹⁷

PDT is central to addressing these challenges. Conflicts are much more complex now. Soldiers need training for real situations.

They must learn how to stay safe and make good decisions. When countries doubt missions because of scandals or failures, training helps peacekeepers act better. Improving and implementing PDT will not be easy. It is hard to balance costs and needs. If UN peacekeeping missions are to stay effective and trusted, PDT is an essential reform that must be implemented.

TOPIC BACKGROUND

The Role of Pre-deployment Training in UN peacekeeping

The number of UN peacekeeping missions has increased significantly since the first mission in 1948. The nature of how these missions are conducted has evolved too. In the first peacekeeping operations of 1948, peacekeepers were deployed in the Middle East and along the border of India and Pakistan. In these regions, peacekeepers worked only as military observers.¹⁸ These were unarmed military personnel whose main job was to be the neutral “eyes and ears” of

the UN. They reported back on the situation in certain missions and made sure agreements were upheld on both sides.¹⁹ In addition, UN peacekeeping missions were originally deployed to monitor wars that occurred between two states. This meant they only focused on conflicts that happened between official governments of states recognized by the UN. After the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s, UN peacekeeping missions began to focus more on internal conflicts within member states.

Missions began to focus more on insurgencies and civil wars between different warring factions within a state, instead of between

governments. Interstate wars were becoming much rarer. Civil wars and conflicts within a national border, called intrastate conflicts, have become much more common after the 1960s.²⁰ The increasing complexity of conflicts that the UN peacekeepers were dealing with also led to an increase in the expectations of the UN missions. A good example of this is the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) during 1992-1993. Here, the UN peacekeepers did more than just observe. They monitored a peace agreement, supported human rights, helped organize elections, assisted refugees, and contributed to rebuilding

14 Osama Alshantti, “The United Nations Peacekeeping Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo Has Been, and Always Will Be, Impotent,” *Spheres of Influence*, December 7, 2024, spheresofinfluence.ca/monusco-un-drc-peacekeeping/.

15 “As Funding Cuts Bite, UN Chief Announces New Dawn for Peacekeeping,” *UN News*, May 13, 2025, news.un.org/en/story/2025/05/1163171.

16 *UN News*, “As Funding Cuts Bite, UN Chief Announces New Dawn for Peacekeeping.”

17 John Karlsrud, “UN Peacekeeping and Impartiality: A Fading Relationship,” *Ethics & International Affairs* 38, no. 4 (January 1, 2024): 433–43, doi.org/10.1017/s0892679425000036.

18 United Nations Peacekeeping, “Our History.”

19 National Defence, “United Nations Military Observers,” *Canada.ca*, March 19, 2018, www.canada.ca/en/departement-national-defence/services/operations/allies-partners/united-nations/military-observers.html.

20 “Understanding Intrastate Conflict,” *CFR Education From the Council on Foreign Relations*, May 16, 2023, education.cfr.org/learn/reading/understanding-intrastate-conflict.

Cambodia's infrastructure.²¹ Instead of just observing, the peacekeepers were expected to deal with a wide range of tasks such as human rights monitoring, peacebuilding, improvement of institutions, and demobilization of armed groups.²²

The success of earlier missions led to very high expectations of the peacekeepers. In the 1990s, peacekeeping missions were deployed in areas experiencing ongoing conflict. However, UN peacekeepers were not trained well enough for these new and more demanding missions. The consequences were more civilian deaths and a growing international distrust in the UN and peacekeepers.²³ The clearest example was the Rwandan genocide in 1994, which resulted in over 800,000 civilian deaths, and up to 250,000 women who faced sexual violence in just 100 days.²⁴ Before the conflict, UN peacekeepers were already stationed in the country, and the UN Security Council had been warned that a genocide was potentially brewing. The leader of the peacekeeping mission in Rwanda asked for more troops to be sent, but these warnings and requests were ignored by the Security Council.²⁵

United Nations Peacekeeping UN missions with the most peacekeepers fatalities Fatalities since 1948 - April 2025



UN missions with the most peacekeepers fatalities (1948-2025) (Credit: Maps. interlude)

On the first night of the genocide, 10 Belgian peacekeepers were brutally murdered while they were tasked to protect the prime minister of Rwanda. Instead of increasing the number of troops, Belgium instead withdrew the rest of their forces and other countries followed.²⁶ The UN cut its military troops from 2,500 to 270 to protect the peacekeepers' lives. Those who stayed were told to stand down or focus on evacuating foreigners. The UN was heavily criticized for this decision, and it later acknowledged that stronger and earlier action

might have prevented much of the loss of life.²⁷ Since the Rwandan Genocide was framed as an internal conflict, the UN left when civilians needed them the most and the consequences were severe for civilians. The genocide in Rwanda, as well as the genocide in Bosnia, marked a shift in UN peacekeeping. It now became more important to protect civilian lives, even if that meant engaging in warfare for the UN soldiers.²⁸ In practice, this now means that most UN peacekeeping missions have a mandate to use all necessary means, including deadly

21 "UNITED NATIONS TRANSITIONAL AUTHORITY IN CAMBODIA (UNTAC)," United Nations, accessed August 19, 2025, peacekeeping.un.org/en/mission/past/untac.htm.

22 United Nations Peacekeeping, "Our History."

23 United Nations Peacekeeping, "Our History."

24 "Outreach Programme on the 1994 Genocide Against the Tutsi in Rwanda and the United Nations," United Nations, accessed June 24, 2025, www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/rwanda/historical-background.shtml.

25 "Pleading for Help - United States Holocaust Memorial Museum," United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, accessed August 19, 2025, www.ushmm.org/genocide-prevention/countries/rwanda/pleading-for-help.

26 United Nations, "Outreach Programme on the 1994 Genocide Against the Tutsi in Rwanda and the United Nations."

27 United Nations, "Outreach Programme on the 1994 Genocide Against the Tutsi in Rwanda and the United Nations."

28 Chris McGreal, "What's the Point of Peacekeepers When They Don't Keep the Peace?," The Guardian, September 17, 2015, www.theguardian.com/world/2015/sep/17/un-united-nations-peacekeepers-rwanda-bosnia.

force, to protect civilians from harm.²⁹

However, this new mandate has consequences. The challenges and security threats of global conflicts are rising and there is very low trust in peacekeepers themselves. This, alongside the broader mandate to use deadly force, has led to the Blue Helmets being attacked more frequently.³⁰ An example is the 2003 bombing of the UN headquarters in Baghdad, Iraq. The explosion killed 22 UN peacekeepers as well as the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Sergio Vieira de Mello. The bomber specifically targeted the UN peacekeeping mission in Iraq.³¹ The UN reports that missions have often lacked the resources and the personnel to deal with these heightened threats and developments.³² These heightened threats and the loss of lives show that the PDT for UN peacekeeping must change as the missions change.

In addition, UN peacekeepers have not only struggled to protect themselves during conflicts in recent times, but also civilians. The most recent example is the heavy critique of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

(MONUSCO). MONUSCO, one of the UN's most extensive and longest lasting peacekeeping missions, has been heavily criticized for failing to protect civilians plagued by several rebel groups in the province of Kivu. The Blue Helmets in the DRC have withdrawn several times during offensives from the strongest rebel group, the March 23rd Movement (M23). As a result, the M23 now has control over large parts of the eastern DRC. The local population is now facing a humanitarian crisis, a severe food shortage, and millions of internally displaced people.³³ This has left the civilian population and the government frustrated and disappointed in the UN.³⁴ The DRC government formally requested MONUSCO's withdrawal in 2023, and the mission is now in the process of drawing down its forces.

There is a growing complexity of UN peacekeeping missions and greater risks faced by peacekeepers on the ground. These developments, alongside recent failures to protect civilians, all show that the UN urgently needs to improve peacekeeping operations.³⁵ Better and more in-depth PDT

is essential to prepare soldiers for these complex missions. The first step toward improvement of UN peacekeeping missions may therefore be better PDT for all UN peacekeeping personnel.

The Recruitment Process and Pre-deployment Training

United Nations peacekeeping missions include both military troops as well as civilian members, such as police officers, staff members, and experts on the mission. The UN does not have a standing army and instead relies on member states to send troops.³⁶ Among the countries contributing the most troops to the UN are Nepal, Rwanda, Bangladesh and India.³⁷ The UN heavily relies on member states to screen the peacekeeper candidates. The goal of screening is to make sure that the soldiers have clean records and are fit for service. However, member states have previously sent military personnel who did not meet the UN standards.³⁸ This results in UN peacekeepers not only failing to protect civilians but also causing harm. When this happens, there

29 "Protection of Civilians Mandate," United Nations Peacekeeping, accessed June 24, 2025, peacekeeping.un.org/en/protection-of-civilians-mandate.

30 "Reforming Peacekeeping," United Nations Peacekeeping, accessed June 24, 2025., peacekeeping.un.org/en/reforming-peacekeeping.

31 "Iraq 2003," *Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights*, United Nations Human Rights, accessed June 24, 2025, www.ohchr.org/en/about-us/memorial/iraq-2003.

32 United Nations Peacekeeping, "Reforming Peacekeeping."

33 "DR Congo: Record Numbers Face Acute or Emergency Hunger," UN News, March 27, 2025, news.un.org/en/story/2025/03/1161606.

34 Antonio Cascais, "Blue Helmets in Eastern Congo: Unloved, but Still Needed," Dw.Com, February 3, 2025, www.dw.com/en/blue-helmets-in-eastern-congo-unloved-but-still-needed/a-71470315.

35 United Nations Peacekeeping, "Reforming Peacekeeping."

36 "Working With Us," United Nations Peacekeeping, accessed June 30, 2025., peacekeeping.un.org/en/working-with-us.

37 "Troop and Police Contributors," United Nations Peacekeeping, accessed June 30, 2025, peacekeeping.un.org/en/troop-and-police-contributors.

38 Naomi Conrad, Arafatul Islam, and Birgitta Schülke, "Torturers Deployed as UN Peacekeepers," Dw.Com, February 27, 2025, www.dw.com/en/torturers-deployed-as-un-peacekeepers/a-69139732.

is a question of accountability. International law is unclear on if the responsibility lies on the UN, the member state providing the peacekeeper, or the peacekeeping mission's commander to hold peacekeepers accountable.³⁹

A recent scandal revealed that some Bangladeshi peacekeepers from the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) had been sent to UN peacekeeping missions. This is controversial, because the RAB is an elite paramilitary force in Bangladesh that has been accused of human rights violations, including torture, unlawful killings, and corruption, on behalf of the government.⁴⁰ Thus, several UN experts and Human Rights Watch organizations have called for better screening processes when deploying peacekeepers.⁴¹ In response, the UN has implemented extra screening of peacekeeping candidates, or “screening plus,” but they have implemented this in a few cases. The UN still does not have a clear and consistent way to screen all peacekeepers that are provided by member states for missions.⁴²

The PDT starts once a soldier has been accepted as a UN peacekeeper. The length and focus of the training vary depending on the mission and country, but the UN has laid out some general knowledge for



Peacekeepers from Pakistan training with their iconic blue headwear (Credit: Aasimroy)

all peacekeepers. This is called the Core Pre-deployment Training Materials (CPTM). The CPTM includes materials to help everyone understand the basic rules, values, and goals of UN peacekeeping. It also teaches peacekeepers how to work together and what is expected from them when helping countries move from conflict to peace.⁴³ The CPTM covers important topics, such as human rights, sexual abuse, gender rights, discipline, civilian protection and child protection.⁴⁴ Peacekeepers start with an Integrated Mission Introduction Training (IMIT). The

IMIT is required for everyone—staff, military, UN volunteers, and civilians alike. This training is meant to give newcomers a basic understanding of the mission's goals and the expected UN standards. Lastly, peacekeepers can take self-paced online courses before or during the mission to learn about important topics like UN core values, UN mission structure, and respect for diversity.⁴⁵

Pre-deployment Training is an important part of recruiting and preparing UN peacekeepers but there are several concerns raised by

39 Namie Di Razza and Jake Sherman, *Integrating Human Rights into the Operational Readiness of UN Peacekeepers* (New York: International Peace Institute, April 2020), www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/2004_Integrating-Human-Rights.pdf.

40 Conrad, “Torturers Deployed as UN Peacekeepers.”

41 “UN: Ban Abusive Bangladesh Unit From Peacekeeping,” Human Rights Watch, January 20, 2022, www.hrw.org/news/2022/01/20/un-ban-abusive-bangladesh-unit-peacekeeping.

42 Di Razza and Sherman, *Integrating Human Rights*, [6].

43 Peacekeeping Resource Hub, “Peacekeeping Resource Hub: Pre-Deployment.”

44 Peacekeeping Resource Hub, “Peacekeeping Resource Hub: Pre-Deployment.”

45 “Peacekeeping Resource Hub: In Mission,” Peacekeeping Resource Hub, accessed June 30, 2025, peacekeepingresourcehub.un.org/en/training/in-mission.

UN experts and the Human Rights Watch.⁴⁶ Other than the lack of a standardized screening process for peacekeeping candidates, member states also have limited incentive to make sure they send well-qualified peacekeepers to the UN missions. Member states are reimbursed by the number of peacekeepers provided instead of the quality or effectiveness of the individual soldiers. The lack of oversight and independence in the screening process also allows member states providing peacekeepers to certify that their soldiers are qualified, without any independent verification. The training process itself also continues to have issues.

Sexual Exploitation and Abuse: Measures and Gendered Training.

Sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) are a longstanding issue in UN peacekeeping missions. This abuse can come in the form of physical and psychological threats and harm. It can also come in more serious forms, such as forced prostitution and rape.⁴⁷ There are many serious cases of peacekeepers sexually exploiting and harming the people they were deployed to

protect. In 2024 alone, there were over 100 sexual abuse allegations against UN peacekeepers.⁴⁸ This is traumatizing and life changing for the people who are abused and it also undermines UN missions and values. The UN loses credibility as a protector and becomes a part of the problem they were trying to solve.

Since UN peacekeepers have immunity in the country where they are deployed, it is up to the peacekeepers' home country to hold them accountable for crimes they have committed. This has also proved ineffective and difficult in practice. In severe cases, the Secretary-General can lift a peacekeeper's immunity, which allows them to be tried in the country where a crime happened. Yet, this has also been problematic, since many of the countries hosting peacekeeping missions do not have a stable or available legal system, as there are other pressing issues.⁴⁹

Since 2003, the UN has had a "Zero-Tolerance Policy" regarding SEA. There are also measures to prevent SEA from happening. One of the UN measures is targeted PDT on SEA and a mandatory online training course too.⁵⁰ There are also measures like informing local society about where to report

abuse and implementing certain rules for peacekeepers. These rules include curfews, restricted areas, and rules which promote proper identification. For instance, all peacekeepers must wear their uniform outside their barracks and on patrols.⁵¹ Despite all these measures, the number of abuse cases is still too high. Between 2010 and 2023, there were almost 1,000 allegations of sexual abuse and exploitation made against UN peacekeepers.⁵² However, this number is likely underestimating the true extent of these problems.

Another approach from the UN has been to deploy more women in peacekeeping missions. In 2018, the UN launched a goal to get more women to serve as peacekeepers. More precisely, they wanted the number of female military peacekeepers to be 15 percent by 2028.⁵³ Currently, the UN is far from reaching this goal. Deploying more women will not only lead to better and more diverse staff, but it can also be easier for female peacekeepers to connect to the women in the countries they are deployed.⁵⁴ Some member states oppose this goal or lack political will to work toward it. Permanent members of the UN

⁴⁶ Human Rights Watch, "UN: Ban Abusive Bangladesh Unit From Peacekeeping."

⁴⁷ *Core Pre-deployment Training Materials (CPTM), Version 2017, Lesson 3.4: Sexual Exploitation and Abuse*, (United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support, 2017), resourcehub01.blob.core.windows.net/training-files/Training%20Materials/003%20CPTM-EN/003-133%20FINAL%20Lesson%203.4%20SA100517.pdf.

⁴⁸ "Sexual Misconduct Allegations in UN Missions Topped 100 in 2024, UN Says | AP News," AP News, March 19, 2025, apnews.com/article/un-sexual-abuse-peacekeeping-children-victims-exploitation-fd190f443409edc04492bc0f5f36b48d.

⁴⁹ Kelly Askin, "Global: Ending Impunity for Crimes Committed by UN Peacekeepers," International Bar Association, accessed July 2, 2025, www.ibanet.org/article/cebc5f69-a238-49bb-b85a-5e8d878fe485.

⁵⁰ "Training," Conduct in UN Field Missions, March 14, 2019, conduct.unmissions.org/prevention-training.

⁵¹ "Conduct in UN Field Missions," *UN Missions*, United Nations, accessed August 19, 2025, conduct.unmissions.org/prevention

⁵² "Allegations of Sexual Exploitation Made Against Peacekeepers 2010-2023, by Personnel," Statista, May 30, 2025, www.statista.com/statistics/1419053/sexual-exploitation-allegations-world-un-mission-peacekeeping-personnel/

⁵³ "The Elsie Initiative Fund," The Elsie Initiative Fund, March 25, 2021, elsiefund.org/un-strategies-eifund/.

⁵⁴ "Women in Peacekeeping," United Nations Peacekeeping, accessed July 15, 2025, peacekeeping.un.org/en/women-peacekeeping.

Security Council, such as Russia and China, have not yet taken on this responsibility.⁵⁵ Additionally, many countries who send large numbers of troops to the UN, such as Bangladesh and India, have few female soldiers and police officers to offer. This is often due to cultural norms, since only recently has it become more common for women to join the military and police forces.⁵⁶ When the UN has tried to make changes to improve gender balance, some decisions turn into complicated political debates by member states which have prevented real progress from being made. National pride, politics, and long-standing traditions all can prevent progress toward gender equality.⁵⁷

The organization Women in International Security published a report stating that even though the United Nations requires all peacekeepers to undergo gender inclusive training, there are still big problems with how this training is done. The quality of training is different in each country, and sometimes it is too short or too general to really help. Due to cultural differences and weak training, many peacekeepers do not fully understand gender issues



Peacekeeper injured and evacuated to a MONUSCO hospital after an operation in Bunia, Democratic Republic of the Congo (Credit: MONUSCO)

or the importance of including women in peace and security work. Many peacekeepers report that they learn about trauma, gender, and abuse theoretically, but there is not enough training on how to deal with victims of said violations in real life missions. In addition, there is a stereotype that women “naturally” know how to talk to traumatized victims of violence, so men do not always try. Additionally, women and men both need more practical training to be able to

do so effectively.⁵⁸ Training that happens after peacekeepers arrive in their mission is often rushed and does not go very deep. The report suggests that gender training should be more practical and use real-life examples, so peacekeepers can better understand and use what they learn. Gender issues should be included in all parts of PDT, as it is essential to protecting people, stopping abuse, and helping to build real lasting peace.⁵⁹

55 Kristine Landau, “UNSCR 1325 and the Ratio of Female&Nbsp; Peacekeepers: Why Has Progress Stalled? — THE INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS REVIEW,” THE INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS REVIEW, September 22, 2020, www.iaar-gwu.org/print-archive/l3pof4s7px6qzxfj17g30oke8ih4f8.

56 Landau, “UNSCR 1325 and the Ratio of Female&Nbsp; Peacekeepers: Why Has Progress Stalled? — THE INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS REVIEW.”

57 Hannah Davies, “Nationality Versus Gender? The Administrative Politics of Gender Parity in the United Nations and the Implementation of SCR1325,” *Global Studies Quarterly* 1, no. 3 (September 1, 2021), doi.org/10.1093/isagsq/ksab013.

58 Sarah Harrop, “Female Military Peacekeepers Left Feeling Overwhelmed After Inadequate Training,” *Connecting Research*, November 15, 2021, research.reading.ac.uk/research-blog/2019/06/03/female-military-peacekeepers-left-feeling-overwhelmed-after-inadequate-training/.

59 Velomahanina T. Razakamaharavo, Luisa Ryan, and Leah Sherwood, *Improving Gender Training in UN Peacekeeping Operations* (Washington: Women In International Security Policybrief, 2018) wiisglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/Improving-Gender-Training-in-UN-Peacekeeping-Operations-.pdf.

Rethinking UN Peacekeeping: The Changing Meaning of the Blue Flag

Since the first UN mission in 1948, over 1,000 peacekeepers have been killed in action.⁶⁰ In Mali alone, more than 303 UN personnel have been killed since the start of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission (MINUSMA) in 2013. These acts range from targeted attacks on UN patrols to improvised explosives devices laid out in the terrain.⁶¹ The UN presented a report in December of 2017 widely known as the “Santos Cruz Report.”⁶² This report aimed to change how member states and peacekeepers approach missions. Authors went on several field visits to high-risk missions, conducted over 160 interviews with UN staff and leaders, and analyzed available data.⁶³ Their findings found that the “Blue Helmets” and the UN blue flag are no longer seen as neutral protectors, but as targets. Peacekeepers must now expect hostility, and the UN must prepare

them accordingly to prevent further casualties.⁶⁴ The report also notes that Troop and Police Contributing Countries (T/PCCs) such as Bangladesh, Rwanda, and Niger are still suffering under the “Chapter VI syndrome.”

This term refers to Chapter VI of the United Nations Charter that addresses how countries should solve disputes and conflicts. This chapter says that any conflict within or between countries should be solved through peaceful methods such as negotiation, mediation, or going to court.⁶⁵ If this does not work, the problem can be brought to the UN Security Council. The UN Security Council cannot force any country to do as they say, but it can implement peacekeeping missions and try to solve the issue.⁶⁶ If the UN implements a peacekeeping mission based on Chapter VI, there are a few important features. The first is that the host country must agree to the presence of peacekeepers. The second is that peacekeepers can only use force to defend themselves or defend the mandate (like protecting civilians), not to impose peace. Finally, the peacekeepers’ main role

is said to be monitoring ceasefires, supporting peace talks, and helping keep things calm while leaders work toward a political solution.⁶⁷ A well-known example of this is the peacekeeping mission in Cyprus. The mission stays on the island with the permission from both the Turkish and the Greek Cypriot sides of the island.⁶⁸ The peacekeeping mission, known as the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), was deployed in 1964 to prevent further conflict between the Turkish and the Greek communities on the island.⁶⁹ UNFICYP has a main task of monitoring the ceasefire that happened in 1974. The mission also controls a 180 kilometer long “buffer zone” dividing the island in two.⁷⁰

The Santos Cruz Report says that peacekeeping has to move away from the Chapter VI approach. This means that peacekeepers must adopt a more assertive stance and recognize that force may be necessary to succeed in their missions. Instead of relying only on defensive measures, peacekeepers should be prepared to use “overwhelming” force when

60 Agathe Sarfati, *Accountability for Crimes Against Peacekeepers* (International Peace Institute, 2023), www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Accountability-for-Crimes-Summary.pdf.

61 “At Least 11 Peacekeeping, Associated Personnel Killed in Malicious Attacks During 2023, United Nations Staff Union Committee Says | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases,” May 3, 2024, press.un.org/en/2024/org1738.doc.htm.

62 Administrator GO, “Strengthening UN Peacekeeping: Placing the Santos Cruz Report in Context,” IPI Global Observatory, June 7, 2019, theglobalobservatory.org/2018/02/strengthening-peacekeeping-cruz-report-context/.

63 United Nations Organization, “Improving Security of United Nations Peacekeepers: We Need to Change the Way We Are Doing Business,” December 19, 2017, peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/improving_security_of_united_nations_peacekeepers_report.pdf.

64 United Nations, “Improving Security of United Nations Peacekeepers: We Need to Change the Way We Are Doing Business.”

65 “Chapter VI: Pacific Settlement of Disputes (Articles 33-38) | United Nations,” United Nations, accessed July 16, 2025, www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/chapter-6.

66 Bwc Admin, “The Language of Peacekeeping: Decoding Chapters 6 and 7 of the UN Charter,” Better World Campaign, December 5, 2024, betterworldcampaign.org/blog/between-the-lines-of-peacekeeping-breaking-down-chapters-6-and-7-of-the-un-charter.

67 Admin, “The Language of Peacekeeping: Decoding Chapters 6 and 7 of the UN Charter.”

68 Admin, “The Language of Peacekeeping: Decoding Chapters 6 and 7 of the UN Charter.”

69 “UNFICYP,” United Nations Peacekeeping, accessed July 20, 2025, peacekeeping.un.org/en/mission/unficy.

70 “About,” UNFICYP, December 18, 2023, unficy.unmissions.org/about.

needed.⁷¹ The report also identifies that bad and insufficient PDT is one of the main reasons for deaths and injuries among peacekeepers. Many troops arrive unprepared, lacking the right equipment, training, and mindset. Many are also not prepared for the specific situation of the missions they are training for. Some do not know how to deal with the equipment they have or the equipment is not well-suited for the environment. Training for certain missions should therefore be more specific. For example, training on jungle warfare before troops are deployed in the DRC could be quite beneficial.⁷²

In response to this report, Secretary-General António Guterres launched a major UN initiative called Action for Peacekeeping (A4P). Its main goal was to make UN peacekeeping missions stronger, safer, and more effective in today's complex and dangerous environments.⁷³ This initiative was based on an agreement called the Declaration of Shared Commitments that was broadly supported by more than 150 member states and important organizations. It listed 45 promises in eight main areas.⁷⁴ One overarching goal was to include member states, the UN Security Council, varied troops, and police



Peacekeeping forces of Indonesia at the UNIFIL mission in Lebanon. (Credit: Freya Kama Juno)

from different states. All involved could aim to work together and take shared responsibility. These commitments centered around improving political solutions, promoting women, peace and security, ensuring security for peacekeepers and civilians, and making sure that peacekeepers are acting correctly.⁷⁵

The A4P has been somewhat successful. For example, between January 2018 and November 2019, 19 enhanced pre-deployment visits happened. This was where the UN checked peacekeeping

troops abilities. This has led to a great improvement in unit readiness.⁷⁶ Between December 2017 and September 2019, the percentage of women in military unit groups in UN peacekeeping missions also went up, from 3.6 percent to 4.4 percent. During the same time, the number of women working as staff officers and military observers doubled, growing from 7.6 percent to 14.5 percent.⁷⁷ However, improved PDT and military performance is not enough on its own to sustain peace. The Santos Cruz Report received

⁷¹ United Nations, "Improving Security of United Nations Peacekeepers: We Need to Change the Way We Are Doing Business."

⁷² United Nations, "Improving Security of United Nations Peacekeepers: We Need to Change the Way We Are Doing Business."

⁷³ "Action for Peacekeeping (A4P)," United Nations Peacekeeping, accessed July 20, 2025, peacekeeping.un.org/en/action-for-peacekeeping-a4p.

⁷⁴ "Action for Peacekeeping (A4P): Our Core Agenda for Better Peacekeeping," United Nations Peacekeeping, 2018, July 7, 2025, peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/what-is-a4p.pdf.

⁷⁵ United Nations Peacekeeping, "Action for Peacekeeping (A4P)."

⁷⁶ Information Management Unit, DPPA-DPO, "Performance, Safety and Security Politics and Peacebuilding Highlights of Key Achievements," accessed July 20, 2025, peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/191101_a4p_achievements_one_pager.pdf.

⁷⁷ Information Management Unit, DPPA-DPO, "Performance, Safety and Security Politics and Peacebuilding Highlights of Key Achievements."



IDP camp appeared around MONUSCO base in Kitshanga after heavy fighting broke out (Credit: Sylvain Liechti)

criticism for focusing too much on the militaristic side of peacekeeping. One question that the report did not even touch upon was whether peacekeeping missions should be deployed at all in such dangerous environments, where there is still ongoing conflict.⁷⁸ For peace to be achieved, there needs to be a political solution as well as well-trained military personnel. There will also only be peace if both sides agree to it.

To account for this, the Secretary General launched Action for Peacekeepers plus (A4P+) in March of 2021. A4P+ was made to improve and accelerate the commitments of A4P.⁷⁹ The A4P+

focuses on the political strategy behind peacekeeping, as violence often escalates when the political process towards peace collapses.⁸⁰ In addition, the A4P+ focuses on better communication between member states, host countries, and UN staff deployed in peacekeeping missions. Lastly, a major part of the A4P+ is ensuring accountability, both for peacekeepers and of peacekeepers themselves. This means that when peacekeepers are harmed and killed, the member states, the UN, and the host countries should work together to hold perpetrators accountable. The same holds for peacekeepers themselves. When peacekeepers

commit crimes against civilians or others, they should also be held accountable. The A4P+ is working on this through prevention measures, zero-tolerance policies, and regular assessments of performance.⁸¹

To prevent peacekeepers from being killed or perpetrating crimes during a mission, PDT is crucial. A peacekeeping mission is more than just soldiers on the ground. It is a network of cooperation. Civilian staffers can work on finding political solutions toward peace, while soldiers patrol high-risk areas where civilians are in danger. Other UN staff oversee displaced people and refugees in refugee camps. If the soldiers cannot maintain security, the diplomats cannot secure peace. If the diplomats cannot secure political peace agreements, conflict will continue no matter how well trained the soldiers are. Therefore, all members of a peacekeeping mission must be trained, understand the environment they are entering, and be ready to work towards stability.⁸²

Case Study: Democratic Republic of the Congo

The UN has deployed three peacekeeping missions in the DRC since their independence in 1960. The DRC is a country that has been plagued by conflict and exploitation since it was colonized

⁷⁸ GO, "Strengthening UN Peacekeeping: Placing the Santos Cruz Report in Context."

⁷⁹ "Action for Peacekeeping," United Nations Peacekeeping, accessed July 20, 2025, peacekeeping.un.org/en/action-peacekeeping.

⁸⁰ "A4P+ Priorities for 2021-2023," *A4P+ Priorities for 2021-2023*, United Nations, accessed July 20, 2025, peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/a4p_background_paper.pdf.

⁸¹ United Nations, "A4P+ Priorities for 2021-2023."

⁸² GO, "Strengthening UN Peacekeeping: Placing the Santos Cruz Report in Context."

by Belgium in 1885.⁸³ The Belgian rule was marked by extreme brutality and atrocities. Millions of Congolese lost their lives due to slavery, famine, and abuse.⁸⁴ Soon after gaining independence in July 1960, the DRC faced a political crisis. Two mineral-rich provinces, Katanga and South Kasai, tried to break away from the country. South Kasai received help from Belgium and other foreign groups who wanted to keep control of the DRC's valuable resources.

In 1961, the country's first Prime Minister, Patrice Lumumba, was killed. To help bring peace, the United Nations sent a mission called the United Nations Operation in the Congo (ONUC) in July 1960.⁸⁵ The peacekeeping mission played a key role in making sure Belgian troops withdrew from the country and also helped the Congolese government gain stability. The mission was withdrawn in 1964. The second time the UN deployed peacekeepers in the DRC was after 30 years of rule by Mobutu Sese Seko. The country, then called Zaire, went through two conflict periods: the First Congo War (1996–1997) and the Second Congo War (1998–2003).⁸⁶ In 1996, Rwanda, with the help of Burundi and Uganda,

entered eastern DRC. They said their goal was to draw out Hutu military groups. The Hutus are an ethnic and military group in Rwanda who helped carry out the 1994 Rwandan genocide and were hiding in the region.⁸⁷ From the start, rapidly shifting alliances and cross-border dynamics demanded PDT that stressed intelligence-sharing, rules of engagement under ambiguity, and coordination with regional actors

With the help of Rwanda, Uganda, and Burundi, Laurent-Désiré Kabila took power in 1997, sending Mobutu Sese Seko into exile. In 1998, Kabila turned on his former Rwandan allies. Kabila told all foreign troops to leave the Congo and let Hutu groups gather near the border again. In response, Rwanda invaded in 1998 to protect itself from Hutu fighters.⁸⁸ The DRC, helped by Angola, Namibia, and Zimbabwe, fought against Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi, and several rebel groups. In 2001, Kabila was killed by his own guards and his son, Joseph Kabila, became president. The Second Congo War officially ended in 2003, but by 2004, more than three million people had died because of the conflict and its consequences.⁸⁹ The UN Organization Mission in DRC

(MONUC) was deployed in 1999 to oversee the implementation of a ceasefire agreement. These crises illustrate why PDT must include contingency planning for mandate escalation and inter-operability drills among units that have never trained together.

In 2010, the MONUC mission was expanded to the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in DRC, known as MONUSCO.⁹⁰ Despite the war's official end in 2003, the eastern DRC has remained unstable because of ongoing rebel activity. The most prominent rebel group in eastern DRC is called the M23 and is made up primarily of ethnic Tutsis.⁹¹ Between 2012 and 2013, the M23 rebel group gained significant power in eastern DRC. The Congolese government accused Rwanda of supporting M23, which increased tensions between the two countries. In response to the growing threat, the UN Security Council gave MONUSCO a rare mandate to form an offensive brigade to help the Congolese army fight M23. With MONUSCO's support, the Congolese army was able to defeat M23, and the group ended its campaign. However, evidence that Rwanda backed M23 has caused

83 "Why Have UN Peacekeepers Been in DR Congo for 65 Years?," UN News, February 5, 2025, news.un.org/en/story/2025/02/1159766.

84 "Colonial Rule, Dictatorship, Civil War," Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, accessed July 25, 2025, www.bmz.de/en/countries/democratic-republic-of-the-congo/historical-background-56144.

85 UN News, "Why Have UN Peacekeepers Been in DR Congo for 65 Years?"

86 Center for Preventive Action, "Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo | Global Conflict Tracker," Global Conflict Tracker, last updated June 9, 2025, www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/violence-democratic-republic-congo.

87 UN News, "Why Have UN Peacekeepers Been in DR Congo for 65 Years?"

88 Center for Preventive Action, "Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo | Global Conflict Tracker."

89 Center for Preventive Action, "Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo | Global Conflict Tracker."

90 UN News, "Why Have UN Peacekeepers Been in DR Congo for 65 Years?"

91 Center for Preventive Action, "Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo | Global Conflict Tracker."



Police officers listen during celebrations ahead of International Women's Day where Female Peacekeepers were celebrated (Credit: David Mutua)

lasting damage to relations between Rwanda and the DRC.⁹²

Recent developments in the DRC are violent and serious. Since 2022, M23 has regained power and control over a huge portion of the eastern DRC. It is widely recognized and reported that Rwanda is supporting the rebels, with an estimated 4,000 Rwandan troops currently in the DRC.⁹³

The conflict has led to over seven million Congolese people being internally displaced, due to the constant threat of violence. People who have been forced to leave their

homes urgently need protection, medical help, and other aid. New UN data shows that serious crimes against children in eastern DRC went up by 30 percent in the first three months of 2024, compared to the end of 2023. Right now, 23.4 million people in DRC do not have enough food, making it the country with the worst food crisis in the world.⁹⁴

Despite this, MONUSCO peacekeepers have been asked to withdraw from their deployment after heavy criticism of the mission's ineffectiveness. The Congolese

have widely lost faith in the ability of the UN and peacekeepers to protect them. There have even been several anti-UN demonstrations demanding that the peacekeepers leave. These demonstrations have led to dozens of deaths, including four peacekeepers, and even more wounded.⁹⁵ Public confidence is not only about outcomes, but also about conduct during a mission. PDT that prioritizes community engagement, incident communication, and de-escalation at protest sites can reduce lethal confrontations and rebuild trust.

From the beginning of this peacekeeping mission in 1999, it has been extremely complex and challenging. The country has very little infrastructure and there were many rebel groups controlling mineral rich areas. Even though this was known, the UN sent fewer than 100 military observers and police personnel.⁹⁶ This was a huge miscalculation, and the UN had to keep sending more and more personnel. This made the mission reactive instead of proactive, and it was seen as unprepared and ineffective.⁹⁷ Many believe the UN faced an almost impossible job trying to bring peace in such difficult conditions with a history of weak governments, regional conflicts, and ongoing violence.

⁹² Center for Preventive Action, "Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo | Global Conflict Tracker."

⁹³ Associated Press, "DR Congo Wants UN Peacekeepers Gone, but War Around Minerals Complicates That," *Voice of America*, Voice of America News, October 29, 2024, www.voanews.com/a/dr-congo-wants-un-peacekeepers-gone-but-war-around-minerals-complicates-that/7843019.html.

⁹⁴ Center for Preventive Action, "Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo | Global Conflict Tracker."

⁹⁵ VOA Africa, "Officials: Over 40 People Killed in DRC Anti-UN Protest Crackdown," *Voice of America*, Voice of America News, September 1, 2023, www.voaafrica.com/a/officials-over-40-people-killed-in-drc-amid-anti-un-protest-crackdown/7250366.html; Alexander Stoney, "'24 Years of Missed Opportunities': How the UN Failed to Secure Peace in the DRC," UN-aligned, October 9, 2023, un-aligned.org/un-in-focus/how-the-un-failed-to-secure-peace-in-the-drc/.

⁹⁶ Stoney, "'24 Years of Missed Opportunities': How the UN Failed to Secure Peace in the DRC."

⁹⁷ Stoney, "'24 Years of Missed Opportunities': How the UN Failed to Secure Peace in the DRC."

However, the reactive approach meant the mission often failed to achieve its goals.⁹⁸ PDT should be extensive enough so that missions don't spend their first year catching up.

In addition, there have been reports that the UN peacekeeping forces do not protect civilians when they are in need of help. Even when peacekeepers are present in cities being attacked by rebel groups, they reportedly fail to act.⁹⁹ Many Congolese also ask why there are still 120 active rebel groups in the east of the DRC when MONUSCO forces have been in their country for over 25 years. Lastly, the MONUSCO peacekeeping mission has been the subject of several allegations of sexual abuse against the civilian population. Along with being severely traumatizing the victims of abuse, these allegations severely harm the UN's reputation. They have also created mistrust between peacekeepers and local communities, making it harder for the peacekeeping mission to do its job effectively.¹⁰⁰

MONUSCO is one of the longest-lasting and most extensive peacekeeping operations of the UN. Their annual budget reaches around USD one billion. In 2016, a national survey found

that 63 percent of Congolese thought MONUSCO was doing a good job protecting civilians. Recently, that number has dropped sharply to about 24 percent.¹⁰¹ MONUSCO's experience has taught the UN important lessons, especially the need to clearly separate peace enforcement from peacebuilding. Mixing these goals in one mission has caused confusion and problems.¹⁰² Even marginal improvements in stronger PDT, with faster response times, fewer civilian casualties, and reduced misconduct, can yield strategic returns.

The case study of the DRC shows why peacekeeping may fail. A persistent issue has been the gap between the mission's ambitious goals and the actual preparedness of peacekeepers on the ground. One example of this lack of preparedness is the problem of language skills relevant to host countries. In the DRC, this issue is especially clear: most peacekeepers are from India and Bangladesh and do not speak French or local languages. This language barrier makes it difficult for Blue Helmets to effectively engage with local communities and can increase mistrust or hostility.¹⁰³

A peacekeeping mission is only as effective as its training and abilities of the personnel. PDT is essential

for a mission's success and for the protection of civilians and the credibility of the UN. With more targeted training for peacekeepers on the ground in the DRC, troops might have been better able to tackle the jungle terrain or the guerilla fighting. With more specified and in-depth training on sexual assault and its consequences, more innocent civilians might not have been victims of abuse. With better case-study and scenario-based training, the UN personnel might be better able to comfort, and help traumatized victims of war. And with better language skills, the UN peacekeepers could have built trust with the local communities and avoided much of the mistrust and disappointment that has grown over the years of MONUSCO missions. To improve future missions, the UN should learn from MONUSCO and make sure training is practical and fits the real challenges of each country. If PDT is not just an exercise on paper, it can be a very powerful tool for the UN when lives are on the line.

98 Stoney, "24 Years of Missed Opportunities: How the UN Failed to Secure Peace in the DRC."

99 Osama Alshantti and Osama Alshantti, "The United Nations Peacekeeping Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo Has Been, and Always Will Be, Impotent," Spheres of Influence, December 7, 2024, spheresofinfluence.ca/monusco-un-drc-peacekeeping/.

100 Alshantti, "The United Nations Peacekeeping Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo Has Been, and Always Will Be, Impotent."

101 Alshantti, "The United Nations Peacekeeping Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo Has Been, and Always Will Be, Impotent."

102 Stoney, "24 Years of Missed Opportunities: How the UN Failed to Secure Peace in the DRC."

103 "CIOL (Chartered Institute of Linguists)," Chartered Institute of Linguists, accessed August 1, 2025, www.ciol.org.uk/hearts-and-minds.

CURRENT STATUS

The Impact of Budget Cuts on Pre-deployment Training for Peacekeepers

Under the current Trump Administration, the United States (US) has significantly cut its funding to UN peacekeeping missions.¹⁰⁴ The US's expected contribution is around a quarter of the peacekeeping budget.¹⁰⁵ This percentage is calculated by the UN and mostly depends on the member state's wealth, GDP, debt burden, and population.¹⁰⁶ In addition, the US is part of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council. This also leads to a bigger obligation to financially support the UN. Despite these obligations, the Trump Administration sent a reduced budget to Congress that included no funding for peacekeeping operations.¹⁰⁷ This development is part of a bigger trend where the UN is facing severe budget cuts, with unpaid bills from member states creating a USD 2.7 billion

deficit.¹⁰⁸ Due to the shortfall, the UN plans to cut around 20 percent of staff in both the Department of Peace Operations (DPO) and the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA).¹⁰⁹

The UN's Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) has over 500 staff in New York, and it oversees missions with about 4,000 people working in regions like Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. The Department of Peace Operations supports around 120,000 military, police, and civilian personnel in 77 peace missions around the world. Together, these departments involve more than 124,000 people. A 20 percent cut in staff would affect a huge number of people and operations.¹¹⁰

Other member states are not able to replace the financial contributions of the US. In response, the UN Secretary-General António Guterres launched a reform plan called the "UN80" initiative. It is meant to cut costs and make big structural changes by the UN's

80th anniversary.¹¹¹ Part of the plan includes merging departments and cutting staff. As mentioned above, peacekeeping-related offices are expected to lose about 20 percent of their staff. Most countries agree that the UN needs to become smaller and more efficient, but it is unclear what "doing less with less" will really mean for the UN's work and priorities in the future.¹¹² The cuts risk downsizing current and future peacekeeping missions. This comes in a time with the highest number of conflicts and displaced people since 1945. The UN seems to be failing to respond to humanitarian crises, while at the same time, is getting less money to deal with them.¹¹³

The cut in funding naturally affects resources available for PDT and UN peacekeepers. The Santos Cruz Report from 2017 mentioned there was already a lack of funding for good PDT, before these current budget cuts happened.¹¹⁴ Without funding for standardized UN training, more responsibility falls on the T/PCCs to train deployed troops. However, because of budget

104 "Doing 'Less with Less' at the UN," International Crisis Group, last modified May 20, 2025. www.crisisgroup.org/global-united-states/doing-less-with-less-un.

105 International Crisis Group, "Doing 'Less with Less' at the UN."

106 CFR Editors, "Funding the United Nations: How Much Does the U.S. Pay?," Council on Foreign Relations, March 1, 2025, www.cfr.org/article/funding-united-nations-what-impact-do-us-contributions-have-un-agencies-and-programs.

107 International Crisis Group, "Doing 'Less with Less' at the UN."

108 "As Funding Cuts Bite, UN Chief Announces New Dawn for Peacekeeping," UN News, May 13, 2025, news.un.org/en/story/2025/05/1163171.

109 International Crisis Group, "Doing 'Less with Less' at the UN."

110 "Careers at UN DPPA - Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs | UNjobnet," UN Job, accessed August 1, 2025, www.unjobnet.org/organizations/UN%20DPPA; "Actors in Peace Operations | ZIF Berlin," ZIF Berlin, accessed August 1, 2025, www.zif-berlin.org/en/actors-peace-operations.

111 International Crisis Group, "Doing 'Less with Less' at the UN."

112 International Crisis Group, "Doing 'Less with Less' at the UN."

113 UN News, "As Funding Cuts Bite, UN Chief Announces New Dawn for Peacekeeping."

114 Lotta Hagman, "Peacekeeping Pre-deployment Training: A Shared Commitment and Responsibility," *The COESPU Magazine* 1, (2019): 27–32, doi.org/10.32048/COESPUMAGAZINE1.19.2

cuts, the UN has struggled to reimburse these countries. This has reduced member states' incentive to invest in training, equipment, and resource-heavy exercises.¹¹⁵ This creates a vicious cycle. It leaves peacekeepers unprepared for the high risk and highly complex mission they face.

Despite the challenges, in April and May of 2025, the UN conducted Core PDT Materials in South Korea and Kenya. This “Training for Trainers” had a goal to introduce the new UN Core PDT Materials (UN CPTM) to African and Asian T/PCCs.¹¹⁶ The course brought together 23 military and police trainers from 15 different countries who contribute troops and police to UN peacekeeping.¹¹⁷ Topics ranged from how UN peacekeeping works, its main tasks- like protecting civilians- and important guidelines on conduct and health. PDT initiatives are still being implemented. However, the budget cuts the UN is facing will make these initiatives more difficult to do. Budget cuts might also make them smaller in scale when they should be scaled up with the rising complexity of today's peacekeeping missions. If this trend continues, it will not just undermine the Peacekeeping missions that are



UN Peacekeepers Day celebration in the DR Congo (Credit: Myriam Asmani)

crucial to save lives and support displaced peoples, but also the effectiveness of UN peacekeeping missions as a whole.

The Consent Crisis, Loss of Impartiality, and UN Peacekeepers as Targets

One of the biggest crises that UN peacekeeping is facing is the crisis of consent. Peacekeeping missions distinguish themselves from other military intervention

with three core principles: consent of the fighting parties, impartiality, and the limited use of force.¹¹⁸

The consent of the fighting parties means that the UN needs approval of the main groups in the conflict before they conduct peacekeeping missions.¹¹⁹ Without this consent, the UN cannot work effectively and might even become part of the conflict. However, the UN cannot always get consent on every local level. This becomes impossible when there are many different armed groups involved in the conflict.¹²⁰

115 United Nations, “Discussing Organization’s Financial Situation, Speakers in Fifth Committee Worry Restricted Spending Due to Liquidity Crisis Is Impacting Mandate Delivery | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases,” news release, October 17, 2023, press.un.org/en/2023/gaab4430.doc.htm

116 “Training of Trainers in New Peacekeeping Core Pre-deployment Training Materials Conducted for member states | United Nations,” United Nations, accessed August 1, 2025, www.un.org/en/delegate/training-trainers-new-peacekeeping-core-pre-deployment-training-materials-conducted-member.

117 United Nations, “Training of Trainers in New Peacekeeping Core Pre-deployment Training Materials Conducted for member states | United Nations.”

118 Administrator GO, “A Crisis of Consent in UN Peace Operations,” IPI Global Observatory, August 2, 2022, theglobalobservatory.org/2022/08/a-crisis-of-consent-in-un-peace-operations/.

119 “Principles of Peacekeeping,” United Nations Peacekeeping, accessed August 1, 2025, peacekeeping.un.org/en/principles-of-peacekeeping.

120 United Nations Peacekeeping, “Principles of Peacekeeping.”



A little boy at one of the refugee camps in Goma (Credit: Steve Evans)

The impartiality of peacekeeping missions refers to the peacekeepers treating every party fairly in a conflict. This does not mean that the peacekeepers can be completely neutral or that they should be passive, but they should avoid actions that question the impartiality of the peacekeepers, like only supporting or helping one side in the conflict.¹²¹ Lastly, the peacekeepers should use limited amounts of force and should only be used in an act of self-defense. Force can also be used to protect civilians, if the specific peacekeeping mandate allows for it.¹²²

Recently, the three core principles of UN peacekeeping have weakened. In missions like Mali and the DRC, peacekeepers are no longer seen as impartial. Their role has shifted from monitoring ceasefires to protecting civilians in dangerous conflicts. This often means supporting host governments in maintaining power and order while fighting rebel and insurgent groups. Blue Helmets are increasingly viewed as biased forces. A clear example of this is the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).

In October 2024 alone, 30 incidents of attacks on UNIFIL soldiers and property were reported. 20 the attacks were carried out by the Israeli military.¹²³ Further, in February and May of 2025, UNIFIL patrols and vehicles were attacked by civilians.¹²⁴ In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Mali, and many more countries where UN peacekeeping missions are active, there have been reports of several deliberate attacks targeting UN soldiers, leaving many Blue Helmets dead.¹²⁵ The MINUSMA mission has been the deadliest for UN peacekeeping troops in history.¹²⁶ These examples show consequences of UN peacekeeping not being seen as impartial anymore.

When impartiality and the limited use of force is missing, consent becomes even more important. The UN was founded to serve people, not just governments. Its mission is to protect human dignity and prevent suffering.¹²⁷ Since 1999, many peacekeeping missions have included mandates to protect civilians, reflecting this people-centered approach. However, peace cannot be built from the top down. Local activists and researchers argue that lasting peace happens when the needs of communities are prioritized and

¹²¹ United Nations Peacekeeping, "Principles of Peacekeeping."

¹²² United Nations Peacekeeping, "Principles of Peacekeeping."

¹²³ Al Jazeera, "UN Peacekeeping Mission in South Lebanon Targeted 30 Times in October," *Al Jazeera*, October 31, 2024, www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/10/31/un-peacekeeping-mission-in-south-lebanon-targeted-30-times-in-october ; "UNIFIL Statement (14 February 2025)," UNIFIL, February 14, 2025, unifil.unmissions.org/unifil-statement-14-february-2025.

¹²⁴ UNIFIL, "UNIFIL Statement (14 February 2025)."

¹²⁵ "Two UN Peacekeepers Killed in Mali, Four Wounded," UN News, March 9, 2022, news.un.org/en/story/2022/03/1113442 ; "DR Congo: Over a Dozen UN Peacekeepers Killed in Worst Attack On," Operational Support, accessed August 3, 2025, operationalsupport.un.org/en/dr-congo-over-dozen-un-peacekeepers-killed-worst-attack-blue-helmets-recent-history.

¹²⁶ Administrator GO, "A Crisis of Consent in UN Peace Operations," IPI Global Observatory, August 2, 2022, theglobalobservatory.org/2022/08/a-crisis-of-consent-in-un-peace-operations/.

¹²⁷ GO, "A Crisis of Consent in UN Peace Operations."

space is made for political solutions which come from the ground up. When missions focus too much on protecting state power, rather than supporting local people, peacekeepers risk becoming seen as backing governments instead of helping those most affected by violence.¹²⁸

Lastly, even as UN peacekeeping missions have increasingly started to support the host-governments, many governments are becoming more skeptical of UN peacekeeping missions. These leaders see the UN as being too intrusive with their power and politics and are turning to local and regional actors for help instead.¹²⁹ For new or unstable governments, teaming up with regional military coalitions has obvious benefits. These coalitions usually involve troops from the host country and its neighbors, so the government has more control over how they operate. There is also less strict oversight compared to UN peacekeepers, making them easier to coordinate. And because these coalitions often act in their own self-interest, their goals tend to closely match those of the host government.¹³⁰

These trends lead certain observers to believe that the time for UN-led peacebuilding missions is coming to an end. If neither host governments nor the civilian populations want

peacekeepers in their country, the principle of consent fades away. Further, if peacekeepers keep being targeted and attacked, especially by national armies, then it will no longer be possible for peacekeepers to minimize their use of force. And if the member states of the UN cannot pay their due of the budget, then peacekeeping will not have the funding to be able to deploy missions.

It is important to be aware of the fundamental crisis facing UN peacekeeping, to know how to address and tackle it. While strengthening and updating PDT is always important, it cannot fix the deeper crisis of legitimacy, consent, and purpose facing UN peacekeeping today. If missions lack host-country cooperation and peacekeepers are seen as combatants rather than neutral actors, even the best-trained personnel will struggle to fulfill their mandates, or they may not be deployed at all.

Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals, or SDGs, are a set of 17 global objectives adopted by all United Nations member states in 2015, as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.¹³¹ The goals were developed to

address the world's most pressing challenges, ranging from poverty, war, climate change, and equality. The SDGs are universal and apply to each Member State equally. This means that every country has a responsibility to work toward these goals, no matter the country's income level or situation.¹³² The overall goal is to create a fairer and better world. While all of the Sustainable Development Goals are important, Goal 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions is most reflective of this issue.

Goal 16 aims to “Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels.” However, in 2024, the number of deaths linked to conflict increased by 40 percent from the previous year, reaching at least 48,384. This was the third year in a row with a sharp increase.¹³³ Sadly, civilians made up most of the victims, but heavy fighting often made it difficult to tell exactly who was affected. In 2023 to 2024, there were about three times more children (up 337 percent) and more than double the number of women (up 258 percent) killed, compared to 2021–2022. The majority of these deaths, eight out of 10 child fatalities and seven out of 10 for female

¹²⁸ GO, “A Crisis of Consent in UN Peace Operations.”

¹²⁹ Karlsrud, “UN Peacekeeping and Impartiality: A Fading Relationship.”

¹³⁰ Karlsrud, “UN Peacekeeping and Impartiality: A Fading Relationship.”

¹³¹ “THE 17 GOALS | Sustainable Development,” *Sustainable Development Goals*, United Nations, accessed August 4, 2025, sdgs.un.org/goals.

¹³² United Nations, “THE 17 GOALS | Sustainable Development.”

¹³³ “Goal 16 | Department of Economic and Social Affairs,” *Sustainable Development Goals*, United Nations, accessed August 4, 2025, sdgs.un.org/goals/goal16.

fatalities, happened in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.¹³⁴

Target 16.1 aims to “Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere.”¹³⁵ The alarmingly high number of deaths linked to conflict shows that peacekeeping is more important than ever before. The number of displaced people and refugees are also at an all-time high.¹³⁶ UN peacekeepers can still mean the difference between life and death

for people in conflict all around the world and they are still a sign of international action. They can sustain and work toward peace.¹³⁷ However, peacekeeping missions must be better conducted, with troops and personnel who are ready and equipped to tackle demanding situations.

Target 16.a aims to “Strengthen national institutions, especially in developing countries, to stop violence and fight crime and

terrorism.”¹³⁸ Russia’s war in Ukraine and the US pulling back from treaties and aid are examples of weakening international cooperation. These problems make it harder for UN peacekeeping to get the funding they need. Thus, trust between countries and in international groups is falling.¹³⁹ Peacekeeping, which helps weak countries improve security, is under more pressure, making Target 16.a increasingly difficult to achieve.

BLOC ANALYSIS

Points of Division

While most countries agree that peace and stability is what the UN should strive for, there are disagreements on what rules and steps should be taken to achieve this goal. Different countries have different preferences and diplomatic goals, depending on what role they play when it comes to PDT and UN peacekeeping missions. Some focus on providing funding, others send their troops into conflict zones, and some are directly affected by conflict and host peacekeeping missions in their territory. These categories are not exclusive, and many countries can

be included in multiple categories. China, for example, is the world’s tenth largest troop-contributor to peacekeeping and also the world’s second largest financial contributor to the UN, after the United States.¹⁴⁰ However, usually there is usually a divide between the countries giving money and the ones giving soldiers. Therefore, the blocs of this topic will generally be divided into one bloc of Troop and Police Contributing Countries (T/PCCs), one bloc of the top financial contributors to UN peacekeeping missions, and lastly one bloc of host countries for UN peacekeeping missions.

Host Countries for UN peacekeeping missions

A host country in this context is a country that is currently, recently, or could possibly host a UN peacekeeping mission in the future. Countries in this bloc are the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali, South Sudan, and Cyprus. As mentioned before, there are currently many host countries who are disappointed and not pleased with the way the UN peacekeeping missions are conducted. A clear example is the peacekeeping mission in Mali, MINUSMA. The mission was established in 2013 to protect civilians and stabilize the country,

¹³⁴ United Nations, “Goal 16 | Department of Economic and Social Affairs.”

¹³⁵ “Goal 16 | Department of Economic and Social Affairs,” *Sustainable Development Goals*, United Nations, accessed August 4, 2025, sdgs.un.org/goals/goal16#targets_and_indicators.

¹³⁶ UN News, “As Funding Cuts Bite, UN Chief Announces New Dawn for Peacekeeping.”

¹³⁷ UN News, “As Funding Cuts Bite, UN Chief Announces New Dawn for Peacekeeping.”

¹³⁸ United Nations, “Goal 16 | Department of Economic and Social Affairs.”

¹³⁹ International Crisis Group, “Doing ‘Less with Less’ at the UN.”

¹⁴⁰ “Small Eagle, Big Dragon: China’s Expanding Role in UN Peacekeeping,” Royal United Services Institute, accessed August 5, 2025, www.rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/commentary/small-eagle-big-dragon-chinas-expanding-role-un-peacekeeping.

which was experiencing civil unrest and many acts of terrorism.¹⁴¹ After 10 years, however, the government in Mali asked the UN peacekeepers to leave, as the situation had not improved enough.¹⁴² The head of the UN mission responded that it is almost impossible to conduct a good peacekeeping mission without the consent of the host country.¹⁴³ In June 2023, the Security Council voted unanimously to terminate the mandate of MINUSMA and the peacekeeping mission officially ended in 2023.¹⁴⁴ As of July 2025, Mali is still unstable; the country is plagued by terrorist groups and civil conflict.¹⁴⁵

This is one of many rising examples of host countries losing trust in the UN peacekeeping missions and their effectiveness. This leads to extremely difficult circumstances for the peacekeeping missions to be successful. Host countries would want peacekeepers to get the best training possible, and the most mission-specific training possible. However, with the rising mistrust, the governments of conflict-torn countries might also want to minimize the amount of political influence the UN has in its missions. The government

of South Sudan, for example, is said to treat the United Nations Mission in South Sudan as their opponent and has accused them of taking sides. They also restrict their movement and ability to fulfill their mandate.¹⁴⁶

Some of the PDT for UN personnel takes place after the deployment in the host country. To rebuild trust in peacekeeping missions, host countries will want PDT to be as specific and thorough as possible. However, they might also want to have as much influence as possible on how the mission is conducted and trained throughout the stay of the mission.

Troop and Police Contributing Countries (T/PCCs).

These countries contribute directly with the soldiers and police staff on the ground on peacekeeping missions. Since peacekeeping missions began in the 1940s, most contributing countries have been in Europe, Asia, and Africa.¹⁴⁷ These countries usually have their own interests in PDT for peacekeepers, as the member states themselves

train the troops for peacekeeping missions, and not the UN.¹⁴⁸

Effective and mission-specific PDT will reduce the risk of casualties from the T/PCCs.¹⁴⁹

In addition, a well-deployed mission with well-regarded troops will increase the national reputation and influence of the T/PCCs. However, failed training and scandals involving peacekeepers will harm the T/PCC's reputation and standing, as well as the faith that the countries can provide PDT which meets the UN standards. Examples of countries that would fall in this bloc include Bangladesh, Rwanda, Nepal, India, and Pakistan. Bangladesh, for example, currently contributes over 5,600 police and soldiers to current peacekeeping missions.¹⁵⁰

Troop and Police Contributing Countries (T/PCCs) have strategic reasons for taking part in UN peacekeeping. For many, it is a way to improve their international reputation, build diplomatic connections, and give soldiers real-world experience. The UN also pays countries for each person they send, which helps both the soldiers and their governments.¹⁵¹ However, T/

141 "History," MINUSMA, July 23, 2018, minusma.unmissions.org/en/history.

142 Al Jazeera, "Mali Asks UN to Withdraw Its Peacekeeping Mission 'Without Delay,'" *Al Jazeera*, June 27, 2023, www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/6/16/mali-asks-un-to-withdraw-its-peacekeeping-mission-without-delay.

143 Jazeera, "Mali Asks UN to Withdraw Its Peacekeeping Mission 'Without Delay.'"

144 "UN Security Council Terminates Mali Peacekeeping Mission," UN News, June 30, 2023, news.un.org/en/story/2023/06/1138257.

145 David Dembele, "'No One Is Safe': Civilians, Foreigners Caught in Escalating Mali Violence," *Al Jazeera*, July 10, 2025, www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/7/10/no-one-is-safe-civilians-foreigners-caught-in-escalating-mali-violence.

146 "The Mixed Record of UN Peacekeeping in South Sudan | Humanitarian Practice Network," Humanitarian Practice Network, February 14, 2022, odihpn.org/en/publication/the-mixed-record-of-un-peacekeeping-in-south-sudan/.

147 "Troop and Police Contributors," United Nations Peacekeeping, accessed August 5, 2025, peacekeeping.un.org/en/troop-and-police-contributors.

148 "Training," Conduct in UN Field Missions, March 14, 2019, conduct.unmissions.org/prevention-training.

149 United Nations, "Improving Security of United Nations Peacekeepers: We Need to Change the Way We Are Doing Business."

150 "Troop and Police Contributors," United Nations Peacekeeping, accessed August 5, 2025, peacekeeping.un.org/en/troop-and-police-contributors.

151 "Deployment and Reimbursement," United Nations Peacekeeping, accessed August 5, 2025, peacekeeping.un.org/en/deployment-and-reimbursement.

PCCs often say they are not part of making big decisions, like setting the mission's goals, even though their troops take the biggest risks on the ground.¹⁵² Article 44 of the UN Charter says that if the Security Council asks a country that is not on the Council to send troops, that country should be invited to join discussions about how their troops will be used. Countries who contribute troops have argued that they should get a chance to help decide on the missions their soldiers are sent to. But in reality, the Security Council has not made this happen very often.¹⁵³

When the T/PCCs lack political influence, the focus might be financial benefits gained from contributing peacekeepers. States do not get paid by the UN for preparing their troops before a peacekeeping mission starts. They are only reimbursed for costs while their soldiers or police are actually serving in a mission. As a result, countries have little financial reason to spend money on training or getting ready before the mission begins.¹⁵⁴ This will affect this bloc's motivation for improving PDT, as they may focus on other priorities.

The Top Financial Contributors to UN peacekeeping missions

This bloc is composed of the member states who finance the UN peacekeeping missions. The amount of money given will depend on the economic wealth of each Member State. The permanent UN Security Council members are obliged to pay more to UN peacekeeping.¹⁵⁵ The United States is the biggest financial supporter, paying 26.95 percent of the total budget. China pays 18.69 percent, and Japan, Germany, and the United Kingdom pay 8.03 percent, 6.11 percent and 5.63 percent respectively.¹⁵⁶ These countries, with the notable exception of China, are less likely to contribute police and troops on the ground for peacekeeping missions.

The financial budget for the peacekeeping missions is currently declining, going from 6.1 billion in 2023-2024 to 5.6 billion in 2024-2025. This is an annual decrease of 8.2 percent.¹⁵⁷ This development represents an ongoing skepticism from financial contributors that peacekeeping kept getting more

and more expensive, while more and more missions seemed to be failing.¹⁵⁸ The countries of this bloc will likely be concerned with how to appropriately and effectively use monetary funds for peacekeeping.

The UN has even struggled to collect the money for yearly budgets. Some countries refuse to pay in time, while others urge them to do so. This has led to “bickering” between major financially contributing countries. Some claim they are paying too much, and others complain that there is a sudden reduction in contributions from major contributors. The UN overall urges member states to pay their due, as unpaid bills from member states might lead to the UN not being able to pay the T/PCCs their reimbursements.¹⁵⁹ Financial contributors to UN peacekeeping missions will often emphasize the need for a better, more sustainable, and more standardized PDT to justify the immense spending.¹⁶⁰

152 *Security Council Report, Peacekeeping: Relationship with TCCs/PCCs*. (New York: United Nations Security Council, 2009), http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/Update%20Report%2025%20June%202009_Peacekeeping.pdf

153 *Security Council Report, Peacekeeping: Relationship with TCCs/PCCs*.

154 Katharina P. Coleman, *The Political Economy of UN Peacekeeping: Incentivizing Effective Participation*. (New York: International Peace Institute, 2014), www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/ipi_political_economy.pdf

155 “How We Are Funded,” United Nations Peacekeeping, accessed August 5, 2025, peacekeeping.un.org/en/how-we-are-funded.

156 United Nations Peacekeeping, “How We Are Funded.”

157 United Nations Peacekeeping, “How We Are Funded.”

158 Bwc Admin, “Lower U.S. Payments to the UN: 2025 Assessments Explained,” Better World Campaign, January 17, 2025, betterworldcampaign.org/funding/lower-u-s-payments-to-the-un-2025-assessments-explained.

159 “Discussing Organization's Financial Situation, Speakers in Fifth Committee Worry Restricted Spending Due to Liquidity Crisis Is Impacting Mandate Delivery | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases.”

160 Danish Institute for International Studies, “8 Old and New Challenges for UN Peacekeeping,” DIIS, January 10, 2025, www.diis.dk/en/research/8-old-and-new-challenges-un-peacekeeping.

COMMITTEE MISSION

The Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C-34) is a part of the United Nations General Assembly. The C-34 consists of 157 member states and holds the mandate to carry out extensive reviews on peacekeeping missions. They also create suggestions for the Security Council.¹⁶¹ In addition, the C-34 brings together several key stakeholders when it comes to peacekeeping. This includes financial contributors, T/PCCs, and permanent members of the security council.¹⁶²

The C-34 Committee focuses on improving the effectiveness of UN peacekeeping operations. As peacekeeping missions become more complex, PDT is very important to ensure peacekeepers are ready for the challenges they face. This committee's mission is to work for better, more standardized training that prepares Blue Helmets to handle difficult and high-risk situations. The training should also enable UN peacekeepers to foster trust among local communities. It should also focus on getting rid of the culture of sexual abuse that has been present throughout most if not all peacekeeping missions.

The C34 doesn't make binding decisions. Instead, it produces an annual consensus report that recommends how to improve UN peacekeeping. These recommendations are not

enforceable, but they often shape actual policy and influence how missions are planned, funded, and run. The committee is important because it brings together both major troop-contributing countries and financial donors to find agreements on how peacekeeping should work.¹⁶³ Delegates should evaluate the main drawbacks of current PDT and determine strong recommendations to fill in the holes.

The aim of the C-34 is to push for stronger training programs with clear guidelines and shared resources. However, there are many challenges. Budget cuts, political disagreements, and differing priorities among member states are among them. The C-34 must also navigate host country concerns about the role and presence of peacekeepers.

Despite these challenges, the C-34 Committee must urge member states to prioritize PDT. The C-34 has to ensure that peacekeepers are better prepared, more ethical, and more effective. Robust training can help reduce scandals, improve the success of missions, and restore confidence in UN peacekeeping.

¹⁶¹ "Recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations," United Nations Peacekeeping, accessed August 9, 2025, peacekeeping.un.org/en/recommendations-of-special-committee-peacekeeping-operations-c34.

¹⁶² United Nations Peacekeeping, "Recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations."

¹⁶³ United Nations Peacekeeping, "Recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations."



Protecting Cultural Heritage in Conflict Zones

Photo Credit: Myriam Asmani

Peacekeeping missions have long been an important tool of the United Nations, to maintain peace and security. These missions aim to protect innocent people during conflicts, prevent violence from spreading, and restore peace between violent groups. However, these missions can sometimes harm the environment in the areas where they operate. Large deployments of personnel, vehicles, and equipment left behind create a harmful environmental footprint. This can impact ecosystems which have already been suffering because of pressure from the conflict.¹ The urgency of violent conflict also limits how much attention these missions can give to protecting the environment.² Peacekeepers may be forced to leave quickly when conditions worsen, which makes it harder to manage waste and protect local ecosystems. Because of this, environment protection is often a secondary goal. For example, their missions produce over 40 percent of the UN's total reported greenhouse gas emissions.³

The UN has taken steps to address environmental impacts. Missions

are encouraged to follow the “four R's” of waste management: reduce, reuse, recover, and recycle to make missions more environmentally conscious.⁴ One such project is the “Greening the Blue Helmets” policy.⁵ This initiative aims to limit harmful greenhouse gases during peacekeeping missions, while promoting the use of cleaner technologies. The plan has earned both praise and criticism. On one hand, implementing resource-efficient practices was found to reduce the cost of peacekeeping while improving self-sufficiency and resilience. On the other hand, the policy was described as “ad-hoc and limited,” since it has not been integrated in every peacekeeping mission.⁶ Despite this early awareness, the military side of peacekeeping continues to pose environmental challenges. Militaries around the world release large amounts of carbon and UN peacekeeping missions are no exception.

In recent years, the United Nations has moved toward using renewable sources of energy, but environmental action has not

always been the UN's main priority. Secretary-General António Guterres says switching to renewables is both cheaper and inevitable.⁷ The UN's concern for the environment, including in peacekeeping, dates back to the 1972 Stockholm Conference. The conference was the first global meeting focused on environmental issues and laid the foundation for international environmental policies.⁸ This conference was held for the main purpose of coordinating global environmental action and did not have a strong focus on the environmental impact of conflicts. However, the conference helped form the idea of cutting emissions from peacekeeping missions. Cutting emissions means lowering or stopping carbon dioxide to fight climate change.⁹ Peacekeeping missions are working to help keep global warming under 1.5 °C, as per the Paris Agreement.

However, switching to renewable energy is especially hard in unstable countries. Many of these are in the Global South. They often struggle with colonial histories, poverty, and political instability.¹⁰

1 “The Environmental Impact of UN Peace Operations,” International Peace Institute, April 18, 2018, www.ipinst.org/2018/04/environmental-impact-un-peace-operations#8

2 “Democratic Republic of the Congo - Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect,” Populations at Risk: Democratic Republic of the Congo, accessed July 22, 2025, www.globalr2p.org/countries/democratic-republic-of-the-congo/

3 Republic of Slovenia Ministry of Defense, “Reducing the climate impacts of UN Peacekeeping: from ambition to action,” briefing note, May 2025, ceobs.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/CEOBS_Reducing-the-climate-impacts-of-UN-Peacekeeping-from-ambition-to-action.pdf

4 “Managing our environmental impact on the field: Gao | United Nations Peacekeeping,” Managing our environmental impact on the field : Gao, accessed July 22, 2025, peacekeeping.un.org/en/managing-our-environmental-impact-field-gao

5 United Nations News, “Greening the Blue Helmets,” new release, June 1, 2012, news.un.org/en/audio/2012/06/573652

6 Andrew Morton, “Greening the blue helmets,” United Nations Environment Programme, accessed August 28, 2025, www.unep.org/topics/disasters-and-conflicts/response-and-recovery/greening-blue-helmets

7 United Nations News, “UN's Guterres declares fossil fuel era fading; presses nations for new climate plans before COP30 summit,” new release, July 22, 2025, news.un.org/en/story/2025/07/1165460?_gl=1*19adfw*_ga*NDM1MzM5NzcxLjE3NDY3NTk1NTI.*_ga_TK9BQL5X7Z*czE3NTM3NTY2NDYkbzE5JGcxJHQxNzUzNzU3MzEzJGoxNiRsMCRoMA..

8 Andreas Grieger, “Only One Earth: Stockholm and the Beginning of Modern Environmental Diplomacy,” *Environment & Society Portal*, Arcadia (2012), no. 10, Rachel Carson Center for Environment and Society, www.environmentandsociety.org/arcadia/only-one-earth-stockholm-and-beginning-modern-environmental-diplomacy

9 “What is Decarbonization | IBM,” What is decarbonization?, accessed July 15, 2025, www.ibm.com/think/topics/decarbonization

10 “What is the Global South?,” What is the Global South?, accessed July 15, 2025, foreignanalysis.com/what-is-the-global-south/

In these contexts, peacekeeping forces prioritize safety and stability. This can slow down renewable energy projects and environmental action aimed at reducing the carbon emissions.¹¹ Yet, addressing climate change and building peace cannot be separated. Both

require cooperation. Protecting the environment can prevent future conflicts, since resource scarcity is a common cause of conflict.¹² As a result, the UN faces a dual responsibility. It must protect people and reduce the carbon footprint of its peacekeeping

missions. This task is not easy, but it is essential. If the UN succeeds, peacekeeping missions will not only help stop current and future conflicts but also help fight the global crisis of climate change.

TOPIC BACKGROUND

Origins of Peacekeeping and Mandates

Peacekeeping missions can be seen reaching back to even before the establishment of the United Nations. The League of Nations (LoN) is seen as the predecessor of the United Nations.¹³ The LoN used peacekeeping missions to help resolve international disputes. For example, the dispute over the ownership of the Åland Islands between Finland and Sweden led to the creation of an independent commission.¹⁴ Despite this success, the LoN also had various failures. The primary issue of the LoN was their inability to enforce laws and policies. They lacked a structure,

like that of the peacekeepers, to implement their policies. The LoN was disbanded and then replaced by the UN in 1945. The UN took on all of the League's assets and responsibilities.¹⁵

The earliest form of peacekeeping within the UN happened when the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) supported action for the partition of Palestine and the creation of an Arab and Jewish State.¹⁶ This led to subsequent conflict in the region with much disagreement over the resolution. This prompted the creation of Resolution 50 and the introduction of a peacekeeping force and operation in the Levant region of the Middle East. This was intended

to calm tensions between the Arab and Jewish parties in the area.¹⁷ This group of operations would become known as the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO).¹⁸ Throughout its existence, UNTSO has helped support various treaties. UNTSO remains active today, making it the UN's longest-running mission.

Firstly, the 1949 Armistice Agreements were a set of treaties that were signed between Israel and its neighbors, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria. This ended the 1948 Arab-Israeli War and established a de facto border between Israel and the West Bank.¹⁹ Secondly, the 1979 Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty ended hostilities

11 "Advancing Political Solutions to Conflict | United Nations Peacekeeping," Advancing Political Solutions to Conflict, accessed July 15, 2025, peacekeeping.un.org/en/advancing-political-solutions-to-conflict

12 Vanessa Bauza, "When protecting nature helps build peace," Conservation, May 25, 2023, www.conservation.org/blog/when-protecting-nature-helps-build-peace

13 "Milestones in the History of U.S. Foreign Relations - Office of the Historian," The League of Nations, 1920, accessed June 15, 2025, history.state.gov/milestones/1914-1920/league

14 Council of the League of Nations, Åland Islands Question, R545/11/5430/468, 32 1 (Jul. 12, 1920), archives.ungeneva.org/aaland-islands-question-council-of-the-league-of-nations-report-and-resolution-adopted-by-the-council-at-meeting-london-12-july-1920

15 "Predecessor: The League of Nations | United Nations," Predecessor: The League of Nations, accessed June 15, 2025, www.un.org/en/about-us/history-of-the-un/predecessor

16 "Background | UNTSO," Background, accessed June 15, 2025, untso.unmissions.org/background

17 United Nations Security Council, Resolution 50, Calling for a cessation of hostilities in Palestine, S/RES/50(1948), ¶ 7-8 (May 29, 1948), digitallibrary.un.org/record/111999?ln=en&v=pdf

18 "Our history | United Nations Peacekeeping," Our History, accessed June 15, 2025, peacekeeping.un.org/en/our-history

19 "UNTERM - General Armistice Agreement of 1949," General Armistice Agreements of 1949, accessed July 5, 2025, unterm.un.org/unterm2/en/view/51c4703d-727d-494c-9ab7-f98afd9d9f77

between Egypt and Israel.²⁰ This led to a mutual recognition between the two states. Lastly, the 1994 Treaty of Peace ended hostilities between Jordan and Israel.²¹ Throughout these conflicts, UNTSO remained a mediator acting as a relief and military observer force, promoting the welfare of civilians trapped in major conflict zones.

Peacekeeping missions change based on the situation in a region. UN peacekeeping follows three main rules: consent of the parties, impartiality, and no use of force except in self-defense or to protect the mission.²² UN peacekeepers attempt to give security and political support to the region they are in. This helps countries move from conflict to peace. Peacekeepers also work in fragile areas to help people in need. Increasingly, environmental concerns are becoming part of how missions plan operations. UN missions are sent based on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) mandates, which depend on the situation.²³ Conflicts change, so each mandate is made for a specific problem. Mandates can ask peacekeepers to do different tasks: they may prevent conflict from starting, stabilize areas after



Promotion for creating a League of Nations (Credit: The New York Times)

a ceasefire, or help countries move to stable governments.²⁴ The goals of mandates are similar, but the ways to reach them change. Every region has its own social, economic, political, and environmental challenges.

The first UNSC mandate for UNTSO had key tasks, including watching ceasefires, supervising armistice agreements, and stopping small incidents from spreading.²⁵ An armistice is an agreement to stop fighting for a set time. The next important mission was the

first United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF I). In 1956, Egypt took control of the Suez Canal Company. France and the United Kingdom protested, and Israel invaded the Sinai and Gaza Strip. France and the UK sent troops to the Suez Canal Zone.²⁶ UNEF I's mandate was to reduce tensions and make all armed forces leave. UNTSO was a peacekeeping mission, but UNEF I was the first large-scale armed peacekeeping operation. It lowered hostilities and helped troops withdraw. The Suez

20 "The Avalon Project: Israel-Egypt Treaty," Treaty Between Israel and Egypt: 1973, accessed July 5, 2025, avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/isregypt.asp

21 "Treaty of Peace Between the State of Israel and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan," signed October 26, 1994. UN Peacemaker, peacemaker.un.org/sites/default/files/document/files/2024/05/il20jo941026peacetretyisraeljordan.pdf.

22 "What is peacekeeping | United Nations Peacekeeping," What is Peacekeeping, accessed June 15, 2025, peacekeeping.un.org/en/what-is-peacekeeping

23 "Mandates and the legal basis for peacekeeping | United Nations Peacekeeping," Mandates and the Legal Basis for Peacekeeping, accessed June 15, peacekeeping.un.org/en/mandates-and-legal-basis-peacekeeping

24 Mandates and the Legal Basis for Peacekeeping, "Mandates and the legal basis for peacekeeping | United Nations Peacekeeping."

25 "Mandate | UNTSO," Mandate, accessed June 15, 2025, untso.unmissions.org/mandate

26 "FIRST UNITED NATIONS EMERGENCY FORCE (UNCIF I) - Background (Summary)," Summary, accessed June 15, 2025, peacekeeping.un.org/ar/mission/past/unef1backgr1.html

Canal reopened, and peace between Egypt and Israel was maintained.²⁷

However, in some cases, mandates do not go far enough. Sometimes mandates that are too weak or are constantly changing could lead to a mission not succeeding. One example is the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR), often cited as a failure by the UN. It was in effect from 1993 to 1996, and had its mandate changed multiple times.²⁸ The lack of clear priorities in the initial mandate led to the UNAMIR mandate undergoing various changes. Many of these mandate changes had the mission focus on areas where they were not needed. The mission ultimately ended up with one final mandate change in December of 1995, assisting in the safe return of refugees and serving as protection for the International Tribunal for Rwanda in the aftermath of the genocide.²⁹ The failure of UNAMIR prompted a relook at the peacekeeping missions.

Despite the initial success of peacekeeping initiatives, early UN and League of Nations efforts largely ignored the environment. However, in June 1972, the UN Conference on the Human Environment was the first UN meeting dedicated to environmental issues. This introduced

environmental protection as a major concern. One of the conference's most important results was the Stockholm Declaration.³⁰ The declaration made environmental issues a global priority. One principle stated that people have the right to a healthy environment. It also warned about pollution from industry in developing countries, including air, water, and ocean pollution, as well as harm to people's health resulting from pollution.³¹ Additionally, it

Peacekeepers also work in fragile areas to help people in need. Increasingly, environmental concerns are becoming part of how missions plan operations.

established a plan for keeping the environment safe, with three main parts.

First, the agreement created the Global Environmental Assessment Program. This program was made to create a standardized scientific way to analyze the environment and

monitor global pollution. Second, the agreement proposed new ways to manage the environment. This would involve more regulations and monitoring of different pollutants in the atmosphere. Third, the agreement outlined ways to provide support for countries to handle environmental problems.³² The Stockholm Conference laid the foundation for future environmental laws and helped countries make rules to protect nature.

Peacekeeping in an environmentally sustainable way is not an easy task. However, strides have been made in properly training peacekeepers in conflict zones. Sustainability in peacekeeping missions now extends beyond human security to include environmental protection. Fragile regions in need of peacekeeping missions often face not only political and social challenges, but also environmental ones. This can include water scarcity and pollution. Integrating environmental awareness into peacekeeping policies can help communities have a better recovery. For example, protecting natural resources and reducing pollution from the mission can prevent tensions over scarce resources. This also supports long-term stability.

²⁷ "United Nations Emergency Force I (UNEF I) - RAPID STEP - Canada.ca," United Nations Emergency Force I (UNEF I) - RAPID STEP, accessed June 15 2025, www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/military-history/history-heritage/past-operations/middle-east/rapid-step.html

²⁸ "UNSAOG," UNAMIR, accessed June 15 2025, peacekeeping.un.org/mission/past/unamirM.htm

²⁹ UNAMIR, "UNASOG."

³⁰ "United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, Stockholm 1972 | United Nations," United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, 5-16 June 1972, Stockholm, accessed June 15, 2025, www.un.org/en/conferences/environment/stockholm1972

³¹ The United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, Report of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, A/CONF.48/14/Rev.1, 4 6-9 (Jun. 5-16, 1972), docs.un.org/en/A/CONF.48/14/Rev.1

³² The United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, Report of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, A/CONF.48/14/Rev.1, 6 1 (Jun. 5-16, 1972), docs.un.org/en/A/CONF.48/14/Rev.1

Emergence of Environmentally Sustainable Policy within the United Nations

After the Stockholm Conference, the UN created the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The conference was the first major UN meeting on the environment. UNEP is the UN's main environmental authority, fighting climate change, tackling nature crises, protecting land and biodiversity, and managing pollution and waste emergencies.³³ UNEP has a council with 58 members, and the General Assembly elects them for three years. The council guides international cooperation. It collects and studies environmental data.³⁴ The Stockholm Conference led to UNEP, which grew quickly and helped countries see the value of sustainability.

In 1979, a report on carbon dioxide and climate was released showing rising CO₂ levels in the air.³⁵ The report said human activity caused much of the increase. This could raise global temperatures as oceans might absorb some heat, but



Second UN “Earth Summit” conference in session (Credit: Poli.mara)

not enough. The report warned of big effects on the world economy and society. Data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency of the US shows that global land and ocean temperatures have mostly gone up since 1980.³⁶ The ten warmest years since 1880 all came after 2013. The 2017 U.S. Climate Science Special Report said fast-rising emissions could raise global temperatures by at least 5°F above the 1901–1960 average.³⁷ It also warned of a possible 10.2°F rise. Ultimately, the recent evidence has

shown that the 1979 report was correct.

In June 1992, the UN held the Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). It was also called the Earth Summit and took place in Rio de Janeiro.³⁸ It came 20 years after the Stockholm Conference. The conference focused on social and economic aspects of environmental sustainability. Its agenda, called Agenda 21, included a plan for resource conservation and management. It aimed to strengthen the role of major groups,

33 United Nations General Assembly, 2997 (XXVII). Institutional and financial arrangements for international environmental cooperation, A/RES/27/2997, 13 (Dec. 15, 1972), <http://www.un-documents.net/a27r2997.htm>

34 United Nations General Assembly, 2997 (XXVII). Institutional and financial arrangements for international environmental cooperation, A/RES/27/2997, 19-22 (Dec. 15, 1972), <http://www.un-documents.net/a27r2997.htm>

35 Jule G. Charney, Akio Arakawa, D. James Baker, et al., Carbon Dioxide and Climate: A Scientific Assessment (Washington D.C.: National Academy of Sciences, 1979), geosci.uchicago.edu/~archer/warming_papers/charney.1979.report.pdf.

36 “Monthly Climate Reports | Global Climate Report | Annual 2021 | National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI),” Monthly Climate Reports, accessed July 5, 2025, www.ncei.noaa.gov/access/monitoring/monthly-report/global/202113

37 “Climate change: global temperature | NOAA Climate.gov,” Climate change: global temperature, accessed July 5, 2025, www.climate.gov/news-features/understanding-climate/climate-change-global-temperature

38 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 3-14 June 1992 | United Nations,” United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 3-14 June 1992, accessed June 15, www.un.org/en/conferences/environment/rio1992



Mogadishu official testing water from a donated well, part of the African Union Mission in Somalia (Credit: AMISOM Public Information)

such as scientists and technologists. It also outlined ways to implement these policies.³⁹ However, some criticized it as Agenda 21 and the Rio Declaration were non-binding and had no legal enforcement, they nonetheless spurred national action.

After the Earth Summit, India released the National Conservation Strategy and Policy Statement on Environment and Development.⁴⁰ This statement showed India's promise to fight climate change. In 1994, U.S. President Bill

Clinton issued Executive Order 12898. It told federal agencies to consider how the environment affects minority groups.⁴¹ In 2000, Germany passed the Renewable Energy Act (EEG). It became an important climate law. The law gave renewable power owners a fixed payment per kilowatt-hour. This encouraged renewable energy growth. One major result of the Earth Summit was the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). It was a treaty that created a base for global action

on climate change.⁴² On December 12, 2015, at COP21 in France, 195 parties adopted the Paris Agreement. This treaty is legally binding.⁴³ The Paris Agreement was built on decades of work, starting with the Stockholm Conference. It showed real progress on environmental sustainability. This focus also supports peacekeeping training that includes care for the environment.

The UN's focus on environmental sustainability has also influenced its peacekeeping missions. Over time, the UN has started including environmental policies in peacekeeping training and operations. This includes using renewable energy where possible, reducing waste, and following guidelines to minimize environmental damage.⁴⁴ The lessons from conferences like Stockholm and Rio, and agreements like the Paris one, guide how missions should operate.

Environmental Footprint of Peacekeepers

Peacekeepers are ideally seen as forces who bring stability. While this may be true, they also contribute to sustainability

39 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, United Nations Conference on Environment & Development/ Agenda 21, A/CONF.151/26, 77, 270, 300 (Jun. 3-14, 1992), sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/Agenda21.pdf?_gl=1*momwma*_ga*NDM1MzM5NzcxLjE3NDY3NTk1NTI.*_ga_TK9BQL5X7Z*czE3NTAzMDYzOTMkbzE1JGcxJHQxNzUwMzA2NTgyJGo2MCRsMCRoMA..

40 Kamal Nath, National Conservation Strategy and Policy Statement on Environment and Development (New Delhi: Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, 1992), <http://re.indiaenvironmentportal.org.in/files/introduction-csps.pdf>

41 Executive Order No. 12898: Federal Actions To Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, 59 Fed. Reg. 7629 (February 16, 1994), www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/Executive%20Order%2012898.pdf.

42 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE, No. 30822, 6-7 (May 9, 1992), treaties.un.org/doc/source/recenttexts/unfccc_eng.pdf

43 "The Paris Agreement | UNFCCC," The Paris Agreement, accessed June 15, 2025, unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement

44 Ellie Kinney, "The importance of tackling the climate impacts of UN Peacekeeping," Conflict and Environment Observatory, May 13, 2025, ceobs.org/the-importance-of-tackling-the-climate-impacts-of-un-peacekeeping/

problems in the regions where they serve. One of the first reports to link peacekeeping and the environment was “Greening the Blue Helmets,” published by the UNEP in May 2012. The report showed the struggles of peacekeeping and how the environment affects missions.⁴⁵ It explained how natural resources are often used to fund conflicts. Scarcity and environmental damage make violence worse. The report linked non-renewable resource use to instability in fragile states.⁴⁶ For example, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, MONUSCO troops often used wood or charcoal for fuel. This use of wood for fuel has led to small areas of deforestation near peacekeeper bases.

To address this issue, the report looks to improve environmental management in peacekeeping. Missions now establish environmental management systems with designated Environment Officers. The report also adds planning logistics, reviews, building design, and training before peacekeeping missions. Pre-deployment now includes environmental impact assessments, site-selection to avoid fragile habitats, and green building standards baked into camp designs.

It improves water use, energy use, and waste handling. It also includes provision for protecting local wildlife. This overall changed how missions were run, as more performance indicators were related to the environment. While peacekeepers may not be the root cause of environmental destruction in a region, their presence can certainly contribute. As such, finding ways to mitigate their footprint is the first step at increasing their sustainability.

The second part of the report looked at natural resources. It highlights how to reduce corruption in host governments. Corruption can hurt both a region and the environment. The plan helps new governments use resources properly. This can stop more conflict and builds trust between governments, the public, and peacekeepers.⁴⁷ The plan also allows for sanctions on governments that misuse resources. Sanctions push for fair use and proper management. Sanctions are a common tool for enforcement deployed by the Security Council.

Supporting UN missions and personnel can be a challenge. A lack of electricity is a big problem in fragile states. UN missions often compete for resources with local governments who do

not always share the same goals of sustainability. Missions use electricity for buildings, vehicles, and communication.⁴⁸ Local people also need electricity, and this creates a dilemma with competing needs. Today, the United Nations uses over 8,600 generators to power equipment in eleven missions.⁴⁹ This equipment includes medical camps, clean water systems, communication networks, and logistics hubs. These systems help make missions more effective. Generating this power costs a lot of money and uses most of the UN’s fossil fuel.

In 2023, the UN reduced fuel use by 20 million liters, down from 150 million liters in previous years.⁵⁰ One key reason for this was the Electronic Fuel Management System v2 (EFMS-2), started in 2013.⁵¹ EFMS-2 is a system the UN uses to track, monitor, and control fuel use in its operations.⁵² The implementation of EFMS-2 in 2013 significantly helped reduce fuel consumption, highlighting its importance in promoting sustainability. In the 2015-2016 fiscal year, the United Nations used about 340 million liters of fuel. By 2023, that number had dropped to just 130 million liters, showing major progress in reducing

45 “Greening the blue helmets | UNEP - UN Environment Programme,” Greening the blue helmets, accessed June 22, 2025, www.unep.org/topics/disasters-and-conflicts/response-and-recovery/greening-blue-helmets

46 United Nations Environment Programme, *Greening the Blue Helmets* (Nairobi: United Nations Environment Programme, May 2012), operationalsupport.un.org/sites/default/files/unep_greening_blue_helmets_0.pdf

47 United Nations Environment Programme, *Greening the Blue Helmets*.

48 Holt, Victoria K. “A Positive Legacy? UN Peace Operations and Renewable Energy.” *Ethics & International Affairs* 38, no. 4 (2024): 444–63. doi.org/10.1017/S089267942500005X.

49 “United National Global Service Centre | The Future of Fuel Management in UN Operations,” The Future of Fuel Management in UN Operations, accessed June 22, 2025, www.ungsc.org/news/future-fuel-management-un-operations

50 The Future of Fuel Management in UN Operations, “United National Global Service Centre.”

51 “Support to Peacekeeping Operations,” Overview, accessed June 22, 2025, lpl.ilearn.un.org/course/category/1

52 Office of Internal Oversight Services, *Report 2024/002 - Audit of Electronic Fuel management System* (New York: Office of Internal Oversight Services, January 2024), oios.un.org/file/10216/download?token=roWUYO5r

fuel consumption.⁵³ However, a 2024 audit by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) of the Environmental and Fuel Management System (EFMS-2) revealed several challenges. The audit found that data entry and quality controls needed improvement to make fuel tracking more reliable. It also noted that the program failed to hold the minimum number of required oversight meetings. Therefore, while EFMS-2 has clearly helped lower overall fuel use across the UN, internal management and data issues still prevent the system from operating at its full potential.

EFMS-2 is only one part of the UN's sustainability data system. Its partner is Field Remote Infrastructure Monitoring (FRIM). FRIM is a technology platform that watches mission infrastructure. It helps the UN use limited resources more effectively.⁵⁴ The main difference between EFMS-2 and FRIM is what they track. EFMS-2 tracks fuel use. It records who takes fuel, when it is taken, and how much is used. FRIM mainly checks how mission equipment works. This includes water tanks, generators, and solar panels.

Most UN peacekeeping missions face big sustainability problems. Many missions have lasted for decades. This means missions have become very fuel intensive and have required lots of diesel fuel to be burned and emitted into the atmosphere. At COP 28 in November and December 2023, governments made a plan. They agreed to triple the world's renewable energy capacity by 2030.⁵⁵ Over 85,000 people attended this event. There were 150 Heads of State and Government and all eleven countries with large UN peacekeeping missions were included.⁵⁶ COP 28 included South Sudan, the Central African Republic, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, all who host missions. This meeting helped countries work on sustainability.⁵⁷

The UN had done little planning for sustainability until 2019. Then, major natural disasters in 2018 caused USD 200 billion in losses worldwide.⁵⁸ In 2019, the UN Secretariat released a climate action plan for 2020–2030. The plan had a target to increase renewable energy use by 40 percent by 2025 and 80 percent by 2030.⁵⁹ Many carbon-heavy activities come

from UN operations, including transportation and electricity from diesel generators. The plan aims to improve transport logistics. It also moves power from on-site diesel generators to off-site renewable sources.⁶⁰ This is a major change for how missions run. If this plan is able to be achieved, there could be a massive positive impact on sustainability to help reach the Secretariat's goals.

Procedural & Economic Framework of Peacekeeping and Environmental Sustainability

As of 2025, the United Nations has authorized over 70 peacekeeping missions since its founding. Eleven missions remain active worldwide, with more than 68,000 personnel deployed as of February 2025.⁶¹ These include military troops, police units, staff officers, civilian experts, volunteers, and other support staff. Peacekeeping remains a dangerous job; 1,442 personnel have lost their lives in service. The largest current missions are the

53 Office of Internal Oversight Services, *Report 2024/002 - Audit of Electronic Fuel management System*

54 "Catalogues," Field Remote Infrastructure Monitoring (FRIM) Catalogue, accessed June 22, 2025, www.un.org/peacekeeping/frimcatalogueoverview.aspx

55 International Energy Agency, *Renewables 2024* (Paris: International Energy Agency, October 2024), [iea.blob.core.windows.net/assets/17033b62-07a5-4144-8dd0-651cddb6caa24/Renewables2024.pdf](https://www.iea.org/renewables/2024)

56 Robert McSweeney, "Analysis: Which countries have sent the most delegates to COP28?" Carbon Brief, December 1, 2023, www.carbonbrief.org/analysis-which-countries-have-sent-the-most-delegates-to-cop28/

57 Viktoria K. Holt, Anaise Boucher-Brown, *Peacekeeping and Clean Energy: Can Climate and Development Goals Align in Fragile States?* (New Hampshire: Stimson, September 2024), www.stimson.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Peacekeeping-and-Clean-Energy_Oct3.pdf

58 "Weather, Climate & Catastrophe Insight: 2018 Annual Report | Aon," How are we addressing weather and climate risk?, accessed July 5, 2025, www.aon.com/global-weather-catastrophe-natural-disasters-costs-climate-change-annual-report/index.html

59 The United Nations Secretariat, *UNITED NATIONS SECRETARIAT CLIMATE ACTION PLAN 2020-2030* (New York: The United Nations Secretariat, September 2019), www.un.org/management/sites/www.un.org.management/files/united-nations-secretariat-climate-action-plan.pdf

60 The United Nations Secretariat, *UNITED NATIONS SECRETARIAT CLIMATE ACTION PLAN 2020-2030*.

61 "DATA | United Nations Peacekeeping," DATA, accessed June 22, 2025, peacekeeping.un.org/en/data

UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), and the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO).⁶²

The main troop-contributing countries are Nepal, Rwanda, Bangladesh, and India, each providing more than 5,000 personnel.⁶³ The peacekeeping budget for 2024-2025 is USD 5.6 billion, representing an 8.2 percent decrease from the USD 6.1 billion allocated in 2023–2024.⁶⁴ This reduction reflects both political and economic pressures among member states. The United States remains the largest financial contributor, providing 26.95 percent of the total budget, followed by China with 18.69 percent.

The budget approval process begins with a proposal from the Secretary-General, which is reviewed by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ).⁶⁵ The ACABQ then forwards recommendations to the General Assembly for final approval. Secretary-General António Guterres has emphasized that peacekeeping is “only as strong as member states’ commitment to it,” noting the



UN water trucks collecting water from the Nile for UNMISS (United Nations Mission in South Sudan) (Credit: Besserwisser123)

implications of the recent budget cuts.⁶⁶ These reductions have led to job losses and funding decreases across several missions, largely due to lower U.S. contributions.

Some member states have called for reforms to improve efficiency and maintain support. German lawmaker Johann Wadephul stated that Germany could consider increasing its financial contributions if missions become more efficient, less bureaucratic, and guided by clearer mandates.⁶⁷ Meanwhile, domestic skepticism in the United States, where portions

of the electorate remain wary of international peacekeeping and sustainability initiatives, continues to influence the country’s level of support.

To help peacekeepers save costs, the Department of Operational Support (DOS) launched the Environment Strategy. This strategy sets the foundation for managing the environment in peace operations. The plan had four main parts. First, it introduced a new environmental management system. Second, it aimed to reduce energy, water, and wastewater use. Third, it

⁶² “Troop and police contributions | United Nations Peacekeeping,” Troop and Police Contributions, accessed June 22, 2025, peacekeeping.un.org/en/troop-and-police-contributors

⁶³ Troop and Police Contributions, “Troop and police contributions | United Nations Peacekeeping.”

⁶⁴ How we are funded, “How we are funded | United Nations Peacekeeping.”

⁶⁵ “About the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) | Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ),” About the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), accessed June 22, 2025, www.un.org/ga/acabq/en/about-advisory-committee-administrative-and-budgetary-questions-acabq

⁶⁶ Associated Press, “UN chief pleads with countries to pay their share for peacekeeping, points to financial problems,” The Associated Press, May 13, 2025, apnews.com/article/united-nations-peacekeeping-guterres-conference-berlin-692f09f2d6f3b8b88aec7951ff4ea530.

⁶⁷ Associated Press, “UN chief pleads with countries to pay their share for peacekeeping.”

focused on minimizing hazardous waste. Fourth, it promoted long-term sustainability.⁶⁸ This plan was the first phase of environmental work in peacekeeping. It ran from 2016 to 2023.

Many of its measures are similar to those in the UN Secretariat Climate Plan, which started in 2020 and will run until 2030. These plans build on each other. Goals not met in one plan are carried over to the next. Some goals have been reached in missions worldwide. In 2021, the MINUSCA mission in the Central African Republic reduced its carbon footprint by launching a large-scale solar project, cutting generator use and fuel consumption by 35–40 percent and saving roughly USD 168,000 per year in fuel costs. Other missions

have also expanded renewables and adopted waste-minimization practices that reduce landfill disposal and lower freshwater use by as much as 40 percent.⁶⁹ At some sites, solar and hybrid systems now meet a substantial share (up to 50 percent) of power demand. The Environmental Technical Support Unit (ETSU) has played a key enabling role, providing technical guidance on solar design, sustainable energy planning, and waste and water management, and aligning field operations with UN sustainability goals.

Some peacekeeping missions also partner with local organizations to support environmental sustainability and community well-being. The UN–African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID),

for example, collaborated with the Sudan office of the African Development Bank on the Darfur Water Project. UNAMID provided security, transport, and technical support, enabling the project to deliver clean water and sanitation facilities to 15–20 towns, reaching more than 750,000 people, including 250,000 directly assisted by UNAMID.⁷⁰ Through efficient logistics and resource planning, the mission also achieved significant cost savings. This partnership demonstrated how integrating environmental and humanitarian goals can make peacekeeping operations more sustainable and community driven. Such models could guide future missions and host countries in designing joint projects that protect both people and the environment.

CURRENT STATUS

Sustainability Implementation in Sub-Saharan Africa

Sub-Saharan Africa is one of the most dangerous regions in the world for armed conflicts. Five of

the ten least peaceful countries, according to the Global Peace Index by the Institute for Economics and Peace, are in this region.⁷¹ In 2022, political instability and authoritarianism were common. Today, the UN has more than 50,000 troops in Africa, mostly

in sub-Saharan countries.⁷² Most peacekeeping missions are also in this region. Due to these factors, it is harder for environmental projects and mandates to succeed here. The nature of the conflict diverts almost all peacekeeping attention to the situation itself, as opposed

68 Department of Operational Support, DOS ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY FOR PEACE OPERATIONS (New York: Department of Operational Support, February 2022), operationalsupport.un.org/sites/default/files/dos_environment_strategy_for_peace_operations_-_phase_2.pdf

69 “Trimming MINUSCA’s carbon footprint through solar energy | United Nations Peacekeeping,” [Trimming MINUSCA’s carbon footprint through solar energy](https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/trimming-minuscas-carbon-footprint-through-solar-energy), accessed June 22, 2025, peacekeeping.un.org/en/trimming-minuscas-carbon-footprint-through-solar-energy

70 “Sudan - Darfur Water Project for Conflict Resolution and Peace Building - MapAfrica - African Development Bank Group,” [Sudan - Darfur Water Project for Conflict Resolution and Peace Building](https://mapafrica.afdb.org/en/projects/46002-P-SD-EA0-002), accessed June 22, 2025, mapafrica.afdb.org/en/projects/46002-P-SD-EA0-002

71 “Sub-Saharan Africa | The Armed Conflict Survey 2022,” [The Armed Conflict Survey 2022: Sub-Saharan Africa Regional Analysis](https://www.iiss.org/online-analysis/online-analysis/2022/11/acs-2022-sub-saharan-africa), accessed July 15, 2025, www.iiss.org/online-analysis/online-analysis/2022/11/acs-2022-sub-saharan-africa

72 “The Role of Peacekeeping Missions in Africa,” [The Role of Peacekeeping in Africa](https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/role-peacekeeping-africa), accessed July 15, 2025, www.cfr.org/backgrounder/role-peacekeeping-africa

to tracking their environmental impact and damage. To address this, sustainability should be treated as a form of mission resilience. Energy self-sufficiency, water reuse, and waste reduction directly reduce supply convoys, which lowers overall costs and saves lives.

One of the most environmentally concerning UN missions is MONUSCO in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). About 80 percent of the Congolese population lives in extreme poverty and many communities have little or no access to electricity.⁷³ The Stimson Center notes that the DRC possesses enormous untapped hydroelectric, solar, and wind potential, yet both the government and MONUSCO have struggled to use these resources, because of the country's longstanding political instability and weak infrastructure.⁷⁴ Currently, most of MONUSCO's power comes from diesel generators, rather than renewable sources. Transitioning to sustainable energy systems could yield major benefits: lower fuel and maintenance costs, reduced carbon emissions, and alignment with the UN's Greening the Blue Helmets initiative and its 10-Year Climate Action Plan (2020–2030).⁷⁵ Such a shift would also create local economic benefits, helping expand the national energy supply. Regional cooperation could



The Tshopo dam supplies a hydroelectric power plant built in July 1954 and located in the Democratic Republic of Congo (Credit: Ewalojean)

accelerate this progress, as missions in Central and East Africa could share renewable infrastructure contracts, logistics hubs, and training partnerships, instead of working separately.

The DRC has vast hydroelectric potential, yet it currently uses only about three percent of it. Tapping into these resources could support the national goal of achieving full electricity access by 2045.⁷⁶ However, major challenges remain. MONUSCO's continued dependence on diesel reflects the fact that troops often lack training and technical experience

with renewable systems. Many mission sites also cannot connect to the limited national grid or rely on solar power because of poor road networks, insufficient storage capacity, and remoteness. In rural areas, local communities face even greater barriers.⁷⁷ With no access to reliable energy, many residents cut down trees for fuel, worsening deforestation and environmental degradation. Government development plans often overlook remote populations, meaning that without investment in infrastructure and training, genuine sustainability remains

⁷³ Gregory Mthembu-Salter, David Mozersky, and Sherwin Das, *Renewable Energy & UN Peacekeeping: Untapped Potential in the DRC* (Washington, DC: Energy Peace Partners and the Stimson Center, September 2019), www.stimson.org/wp-content/files/file-attachments/Renewable%20Energy%20and%20UN%20Peacekeeping%20DRC.pdf

⁷⁴ Mthembu-Salter, Mozersky, and Das, *Renewable Energy & UN Peacekeeping: Untapped Potential in the DRC*

⁷⁵ "Congo DR Energy Market Report | Energy Market Research in Congo DR," Congo DR energy report, accessed July 15, 2025, www.enerdata.net/estore/country-profiles/congo-dr.html

⁷⁶ Mthembu-Salter, Mozersky, and Das, *Renewable Energy & UN Peacekeeping: Untapped Potential in the DRC*

⁷⁷ Belinda Mongolare and Didier Makal, "Indigenous people cut down trees as solar energy remains inaccessible and costly in DRC" Mongabay, February 18, 2025, news.mongabay.com/2025/02/locals-in-drc-cut-down-trees-while-solar-energy-remains-inaccessible-and-costly/

out of reach. To overcome these barriers, peacekeeping missions could integrate sustainability into Pre-Deployment Training (PDT) modules, ensuring that personnel arrive already trained in solar, water recycling, and waste management systems. Partnering with local organizations could also create co-benefits, as missions would gain local expertise and communities could gain long-term technical capacity after the peacekeepers leave.

Some peacekeeping missions follow strong environmental practices well. UNMISS in South Sudan has done a lot for climate action. It is the first UN mission with a full climate security team, the team worked with UNMISS operations and gave advice on climate issues.⁷⁸ UNMISS also tested a new tool called the Environment Risk Assessment app, ERAw².⁷⁹ The app helps find wastewater risks on site by tracking leaks, overflows, and contamination. UNMISS has tried many environmental management projects in peacekeeping. In 2021, the United States also funded a solar hybrid power system for a Nepali peacekeeping battalion at UNMISS.⁸⁰ The system was to be installed in Rumbek, South Sudan,

at the battalion's training site to use less diesel. The project also aimed to train Nepali engineers to install and manage more of these power systems in the future. Although the installation was completed, it was very expensive. The United States and Nepal paid most of it without a guarantee of getting money back. The new technology was unfamiliar to workers, and the remote location made travel and logistics hard. The project aimed for long-term results but had short-term problems and costs. Troop rotations from the Birenda Peace Operations Training Centre to Rumbek caused additional issues. This shows how many sustainability plans face logistical problems with high costs, making implementation difficult. These lessons suggest that sustainability initiatives must be designed for continuity, with standardized equipment, maintenance manuals, and handover protocols that could survive troop rotations.

As a result, it might be wise to focus on environmental projects that may not need a lot of money and resources, like solar panel grids. Additionally, some simple steps can also help with environmental issues such as local clean ups. In February 2025, the UNMISS

Field Office in Malakal led cleanup efforts with 42,000 people.⁸¹ The campaign cleared blocked drains and improved water flow. It also built better relations between peacekeepers and the community. Community engagement could become a formal part of sustainability implementation. Projects like cleanups, tree planting, and shared infrastructure maintenance build trust and leave lasting environmental and social impact. Small-scale, high-visibility projects, like solar lighting in local schools or water pumps shared between bases and villages, can deliver quick results and strengthen local support for larger environmental goals.

Sustainability Implementation in the Middle East

Similar to the issues in Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East faces its own list of environmental problems. This includes access to clean energy and the carbon footprint of peacekeepers. During the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL 2018), the mission started to cut its carbon footprint. First, hundreds of solar panels were put on base in Naqoura.⁸² The mission

⁷⁸ "Operationalising climate security in UN peace operations: Experience sharing from the UN Mission in South Sudan," Operationalising climate security in UN peace operations: Experience sharing from the UN Mission in South Sudan, accessed July 15, 2025, berlin-climate-security-conference.de/en/operationalising-climate-security-un-peace-operations-experience-sharing-un-mission-south-sudan/

⁷⁹ "Environmental risk and performance management | United Nations Peacekeeping," Environmental risk and performance management, accessed July 15, 2025, peacekeeping.un.org/en/environmental-risk-and-performance-management

⁸⁰ Environmental risk and performance management, "Environmental risk and performance management | United Nations Peacekeeping."

⁸¹ "Clean-up campaign at UN Protection of Civilians site in Malakal promotes a healthier environment | UNMISS," Clean-up campaign at UN Protection of Civilians site in Malakal promotes a healthier environment, accessed July 15, 2025, unmiss.unmissions.org/clean-campaign-un-protection-civilians-site-malakal-promotes-healthier-environment

⁸² "UNIFIL strives to 'beat plastic pollution' | UNIFIL," UNIFIL strives to 'beat plastic pollution', accessed July 15, 2025, unmissions.org/unifil-strives-to-beat-plastic-pollution

also treated sewage from the base and wastewater from the whole town of Naqoura. This was coupled with smaller efforts as well, such as reducing plastic waste to build greenhouses and plant pots.

In 2021, one of UNIFIL's positions was the first to rely fully on solar power.⁸³ The solar panels are estimated to save nearly 36,000 liters of diesel fuel every year. This cuts another estimated 93 tons of CO₂ emissions. Moreover, solar panels are expected to have a 25-year lifespan. This success pushed three more positions in UNIFIL to move toward sustainable energy in solar panels. However, much of this success does not reach regular people in Lebanon. UN missions help the environment, but the local government still faces an energy crisis. Recently, UNIFIL introduced the Quick Impact Project to help people of the country. In the town of Chebba, many households were unable to get water because well pumps lack electricity.⁸⁴ The project then installed solar power grids to fix water shortages by providing enough energy to have pumps continuously run. The project also still gives maintenance and support to the water system to keep it operational.⁸⁵

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, Lebanon has struggled with severe economic and regional



Italian Blue Helmets of the UNIFIL (Credit: Italian Army)

instability. Prices for basic goods and services, including food and fuel, have surged, making electricity increasingly unaffordable for many households. In response, the government launched a 500-megawatt solar power project in spring 2025, aiming to reduce fuel costs and promote environmental sustainability.⁸⁶ The initiative is supported by a USD 200 million loan from the World Bank and a USD 50 million grant from the European Union. Despite this progress, Lebanon's solar expansion has faced criticism. Observers warn that the global off-grid solar industry, valued at over

USD 1.2 billion in Sub-Saharan Africa alone, has often led to debt and dispossession.⁸⁷

In some cases, companies repossess solar panels when customers default on payments, resulting in renewed energy poverty. Critics fear similar risks could emerge in Lebanon, where the political and regional landscape remains fragile and could easily disrupt new infrastructure. For the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), renewable energy is both a practical necessity and a peacebuilding tool. However, as UNIFIL acknowledges, the stability required for such projects

⁸³ "By increasingly turning to solar energy, UNIFIL accelerates efforts to go green | UNIFIL," By increasingly turning to solar energy, UNIFIL accelerates efforts to go green, accessed July 15, 2025, unifil.unmissions.org/increasingly-turning-solar-energy-unifil-accelerates-efforts-go-green

⁸⁴ "Going green to survive | UNIFIL," Going green to survive, accessed July 15, 2025, unifil.unmissions.org/going-green-survive

⁸⁵ "UNIFIL support gives lifeline to Tyre water network | United Nations Peacekeeping," UNIFIL support gives lifeline to Tyre water network, accessed August 1, 2025, peacekeeping.un.org/en/unifil-support-gives-lifeline-to-tyre-water-network

⁸⁶ "Lebanon solar energy Project: 500 Megawatts for Stunning Change," Lebanon solar energy Project: 500 Megawatts for Stunning Change, accessed July 15, 2025, www.pvknowhow.com/news/lebanon-solar-energy-expansion-1200-rise/

⁸⁷ United Nations, "Peacekeeping challenged by more complex situations on the field."



Close Reconnaissance Vehicles for the UNDOF mission (Credit: IDF)

depends on state actors rather than peacekeepers themselves.⁸⁸ Without sustained peace, energy systems remain vulnerable and environmental goals become difficult to achieve.

This challenge extends beyond Lebanon. In the Golan Heights region of southwestern Syria, the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) has monitored the disengagement line since 1974.⁸⁹ In January 2025, the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) reportedly moved troops into the area and set up roadblocks, restricting UN movement and

access to communities in need.⁹⁰ Israeli officials described the measures as temporary security actions, yet UNDOF reported damage to roads, water pumps, and solar panels, allegedly caused by IDF tanks.⁹¹ The incident occurred soon after the UN extended UNDOF's mandate in December 2024.⁹² As in Lebanon, the lesson is clear: without lasting peace and political stability, long-term economic recovery and environmental sustainability remain out of reach.

Before the increase in military presence, UNDOF and the local

community worked to fight climate change. UNDOF set up water filtration stations to provide safe drinking water.⁹³ This stopped the use of 7,000 plastic bottles each year. They also appointed Environmental Military Focal Points (EMFPs). These staff do inspections, training, and briefings on site like UNMISS's climate team. EMFPs help run the mission's Environmental Management System. Most of the mission still uses diesel power, but UNDOF plans to add more solar panels, which could cut greenhouse gas emissions by 21 percent. Sustainability in the Middle East will depend on linking environmental action to peacebuilding. Renewable energy, resource management, and community engagement can become part of stabilizing societies, not just supporting missions.

Sustainable Development Goals

Adopted in 2015, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides a shared blueprint for prosperity and peace among all United Nations member states.⁹⁴ Its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) build

⁸⁸ United Nations, "Peacekeeping challenged by more complex situations on the field | UNICEF."

⁸⁹ "UNDOF | United Nations Peacekeeping," UNDOF Fact Sheet, accessed July 15, 2025, peacekeeping.un.org/en/mission/undof

⁹⁰ United Nations, "Security Council Speakers Urge Israel to Withdraw from Lebanon, Golan Buffer Zone, Allow Peacekeepers to Operate without Obstruction," news release, January 17, 2025, press.un.org/en/2025/sc15969.doc.htm

⁹¹ A News, "Israeli army's activity in Golan Heights buffer zone in Syria breaches 1974 agreement: UN" A News, December 10, 2024, www.anews.com.tr/middle-east/2024/12/10/israeli-armys-activity-in-golan-heights-buffer-zone-in-syria-breaches-1974-agreement-un

⁹² Michelle Nicholas, "UN extends peacekeeping mission between Syria, Israeli-occupied Golan Heights" Reuters, December 20, 2024, www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/un-extends-peacekeeping-mission-between-syria-israeli-occupied-golan-heights-2024-12-20/

⁹³ UN Peacekeeping, "Fostering a healthy environment for peace to grow: UNDOF helps protect the environment in the Golan." Medium, August 2, 2023, unpeacekeeping.medium.com/on-world-environment-day-discover-how-the-united-nations-disengagement-observer-force-undof-185ac6750ec5

⁹⁴ "THE 17 GOALS | Sustainable Development," THE 17 GOALS, accessed July 15, 2025, sdgs.un.org/goals

upon decades of international collaboration, summits, and policy frameworks. Together, they set clear, measurable objectives for governments and organizations to pursue. These goals aim to promote global stability, social equity, and environmental resilience.

Goal 7, Affordable and Clean Energy, connects directly to both peacekeeping operations and environmental protection. Target 7.2 calls for a substantial increase in the share of renewable energy by 2030.⁹⁵ Currently, most UN missions rely heavily on diesel as their primary fuel source, meaning that a shift toward renewables could have a significant impact on both emissions and cost efficiency. According to a 2025 UN report, global electricity access reached 92 percent in 2023, up from 84 percent in 2010.⁹⁶ Renewable energy continues to expand rapidly and is projected to surpass coal as a global energy source by the end of 2025. However, sustained investment remains crucial. Without it, 1.8 billion people could still lack access to clean cooking, and 645 million may remain without electricity by 2030.

Goal 13, Climate Action, focuses on strengthening environmental sustainability and resilience.

It calls for the world to “take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.”⁹⁷ While the goal’s language is broad, its specific targets provide a framework for integration. Target 13.2, the inclusion of climate measures in national policies and planning, closely aligns with the environmental objectives of peacekeeping missions.⁹⁸ Yet weak management and inconsistent implementation continue to undermine these efforts. The urgency is growing; 2024 marked the first year that global temperatures exceeded the 1.5°C threshold. This is driven by rising greenhouse gas emissions, natural disasters, and other compounding factors. Carbon dioxide concentrations now stand 151 percent above pre-industrial levels, underscoring how far the world remains from achieving climate stability.⁹⁹

Goal 16, Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions, ties peacebuilding directly to environmental protection.¹⁰⁰ It emphasizes inclusive, transparent, and accountable governance, which in turn supports responsible resource management. Target 16.4 seeks to reduce illicit financial flows, arms trafficking, and organized crime, all activities that often

exploit or destroy natural resources in fragile states. Target 16.8 aims to amplify the voice of developing countries in global decision-making, allowing host states to play a greater role in shaping and managing peacekeeping and green development programs. However, both targets face obstacles. Many countries struggle with corruption, crime, and logistical barriers.¹⁰¹ Across 83 countries, only about 45 percent of citizens report feeling that their government listens to them.

The Sustainable Development Goals offer a framework for global environmental and institutional reform. Multiple goals, especially those concerning energy, climate, and governance, intersect with the priorities of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. Both aim to strengthen peacekeeping effectiveness, enhance accountability, and advance sustainable international order.

⁹⁵ “Goal 7 | Department of Economic and Social Affairs,” Goal 7: Targets and Indicators, accessed July 15, 2025, sdgs.un.org/goals/goal7#targets_and_indicators

⁹⁶ “Goal 7 | Department of Economic and Social Affairs,” Goal 7: Progress and Info, accessed July 15, 2025, sdgs.un.org/goals/goal7#progress_and_info

⁹⁷ “Goal 13 | Department of Economic and Social Affairs,” Goal 13: Overview, accessed July 15, 2025, sdgs.un.org/goals/goal13

⁹⁸ “Goal 13 | Department of Economic and Social Affairs,” Goal 13: Targets and Indicators, accessed July 15, 2025, sdgs.un.org/goals/goal13#targets_and_indicators

⁹⁹ “Goal 13 | Department of Economic and Social Affairs,” Goal 13: Progress and Info, accessed July 15, 2025, sdgs.un.org/goals/goal13#progress_and_info

¹⁰⁰ “Goal 16 | Department of Economic and Social Affairs,” Goal 16: Overview, accessed July 15, 2025, sdgs.un.org/goals/goal16

¹⁰¹ “Goal 16 | Department of Economic and Social Affairs,” Goal 16: Progress and Info, accessed July 15, 2025, sdgs.un.org/goals/goal16#progress_and_info

BLOC ANALYSIS

Points of Division

The first major dividing factor for country policy might be the political situation in a country. Some countries may not view sustainability in conflicts as a major focus, as war and conflict has been so destructive to their countries. However, countries that have placed a higher political priority on sustainability may be more in favor of investing in new initiatives in peacekeeping missions. This political divide often mirrors the tension between short-term survival and long-term planning. States under internal strain prioritize immediate security over environmental stewardship.

Another dividing factor could be the economics of a country. The level of development and how dependent on fossil fuels a country may be could also affect their view on this. Some countries have very diversified economies, which allows them to have more resources to be given to sustainability initiatives. Other countries may be more dependent on fossil fuels for development. As a result, they may want to reduce sustainability initiatives. Economic diversification therefore becomes a key predictor of environmental ambition. Wealthier or service-based economies can afford transition costs, while

resource-dependent states often resist reforms that threaten their revenue streams.

Additionally, the approach to military conflicts can influence a country's view on this topic. Countries that are more militarized and have contributed to peacekeeping operations in the past may be in favor of fewer sustainability initiatives, since these could make the jobs of peacekeepers more difficult or less efficient. They may argue that there should be no compromises when it comes to conflict mitigation and peacekeeping. Other countries may view peacekeeping as something that should be more passive in the future. These countries may see more benefit with decreasing peacekeeping missions' environmental footprint while at the same time potentially scaling them back into a monitoring role. This divide captures a deeper philosophical question of if peacekeeping should prioritize operational speed or ethical sustainability.

There are many other points of divisions but some of these are the core factors that can base a country's policy. The domestic situation within countries is important to consider and will guide the policies of individual countries within the committee.

Countries with High Environmental Proactiveness

These countries are taking big steps to protect the environment by cutting harmful activities at home, like greenhouse gas emissions. They pay for environmental projects around the world and follow global organizations, like UNEP, who aim to use renewable energy and limit fossil fuels.¹⁰² Their influence within the committee often pushes for binding sustainability standards and stronger environmental reporting mechanisms.

To track how proactive countries are in assessing environmental concerns, many use the Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI). This data-driven approach reinforces transparency. The CCPI is an annually published monitoring tool to track countries' climate mitigation performance and is distributed to the media worldwide to hold governments accountable for their environmental planning.¹⁰³ The CCPI draws data from 63 countries and the European Union, which collectively account for over 90 percent of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Countries like Denmark, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom rank highly on climate change performance in the

¹⁰² "Climate action | UNEP - UN Environmental Programme," The world is in a climate emergency. Unless greenhouse gas emissions fall dramatically, warming could pass 2.9°C this century, accessed July 15, 2025, www.unep.org/topics/climate-action

¹⁰³ "CCPI Philosophy & Team | Climate Change Performance Index," What is the CCPI?, accessed July 15, 2025, ccpi.org/ccpi-philosophy-team/

2025 report.¹⁰⁴ The reasons for these high rankings stem from various factors. These countries often pair domestic climate leadership with diplomatic advocacy, linking emissions targets to peacekeeping mandates and funding incentives.

The first reason is a link between greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and renewable energy. Many countries have increased renewable energy, but none use enough renewable energy to offset GHGs.¹⁰⁵ Luxembourg ranks high because it is small and has a lesser need for high-emission transport. Second, energy use affects the ranking. Lower energy use gives a country a higher score. Using less energy reduces GHG emissions. Finally, climate policy is important. Countries with plans to control temperature and protect the environment score higher. These policies let citizens hold governments accountable for real change. This bloc would likely advocate for strong, enforceable environmental standards within peacekeeping operations. They would push for green budgeting, mandatory sustainability reporting, and the inclusion of renewable energy targets in mission mandates. These states would also favor linking financial contributions to environmental performance, ensuring that missions align with

the SDGs and the UN's Climate Action Plan.

Countries with Moderate Environmental Proactiveness

Countries in this bloc take a moderate approach to the environment. They follow treaties like the Paris Climate Agreement and are part of the UNEP, but do not take any major actions at home. This may be due to money, public opinion, or how much they prioritize environmental issues. They favor sustainable development in principle but balance it against domestic economic growth and energy demands.

Countries such as Brazil are part of this bloc. It has a long history in environmental sustainability. Brazil hosted the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, also called the Earth Summit, in 1992. More recently, it passed laws to stop deforestation in the Amazon Rainforest.¹⁰⁶ Despite these successes, Brazil is still the largest producer of crude oil in Central and South America, making up 48 percent of the region's total.¹⁰⁷ It also produces 48.4 percent of the region's coal supply. Brazil focuses on protecting the

Amazon's habitat and ecosystem. Despite this, illegal deforestation is a rampant issue and hampers environmental goals. Additionally, the current government puts little focus on using renewable energy. Brazil's dual identity as both a biodiversity powerhouse and a fossil-fuel producer illustrates the internal contradictions common to this bloc.

Another country that can fall into this bloc is India. India's position reflects the broader dilemma of emerging economies: pursuing rapid industrialization while pledging gradual decarbonization. India is a rapidly growing state in terms of population, making access to electricity a daunting challenge to achieve. Further, the fastest way to obtain energy currently is through non-renewable sources such as fossil fuels. With such a large population, coal is set to remain the largest source of energy for the majority of India's population.¹⁰⁸ In the Asian Pacific region and globally, India ranks second in total coal supply and third in total coal production. India also ranked second in total oil supply and crude oil production, behind only China. On July 11, 2025, the government exempted most coal-fired power plants from adding technology to reduce sulfur dioxide emissions.¹⁰⁹ Experts warn that this policy change could delay

¹⁰⁴ "Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI)," CCPI 2025: Ranking and Results, accessed July 15, 2025, ccpi.org/

¹⁰⁵ Jan Burck et al., Climate Change Performance Index 2025 (Bonn, Germany: Climate Action Network International, November 20, 2024), ccpi.org/wp-content/uploads/CCPI-2025-Results-1.pdf

¹⁰⁶ Fernanda Wenzel, "Brazil plans new reserves to curb deforestation near contested Amazon roads" Mongabay, November 28, 2024, news.mongabay.com/2024/11/brazil-plans-new-reserves-to-curb-deforestation-near-contested-amazon-roads/

¹⁰⁷ "Central & South America - Countries & Regions - IEA," Central & South America Coal Supply, accessed July 15, 2025, www.iea.org/regions/central-south-america/coal

¹⁰⁸ "India - Countries & Regions - IEA," India, accessed July 15, 2025, www.iea.org/countries/india

¹⁰⁹ Chetan Bhattacharji, "India Reverses Key Policy, Exempting Most Coal-fired Power Plants from Emission Rules" Health Policy Watch, July 16, 2025, healthpolicy-watch.news/india-reverses-key-policy-exempting-most-coal-fired-power-plants-from-emission-rules/

pollution control and harm public health. However, India has also made major progress in climate action over the past decades. This includes the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC).¹¹⁰ This mixed record shows how political cycles and economic priorities can either accelerate or undermine climate commitments.

This bloc would likely advocate for balanced, pragmatic approaches that promote sustainability without compromising development goals. They would likely support voluntary sustainability frameworks, conditional funding for green projects, and technical assistance from wealthier states rather than binding emissions or renewable quotas. Their emphasis would be on gradual transitions and affordable implementation.

Countries with Low Environmental Proactiveness

Countries in this group often struggle to improve the environment. In these contexts, sustainability is often viewed as

secondary to regime survival, infrastructure rebuilding, or basic economic stability. They may have trouble making lasting changes at home and abroad. This bloc generally uses a lot of fossil fuels and produces high greenhouse gas emissions. Many face internal conflicts which stop them from protecting the environment. Political problems, weak governments, poverty, and reliance on oil, gas, and mining make progress very hard.¹¹¹

For example, Chad has many minerals which attracts foreign investment. Companies also invest in Chad because of its vast oil reserves.¹¹² Foreign extraction without robust governance deepens dependency and leaves little incentive for environmental oversight. Some big companies are China National Petroleum Company (CNPCIC) and ExxonMobil's Esso Exploration & Production Chad Inc. (EEPCI).¹¹³ However, Chad also has high corruption levels, with a score of 21/100 on the Corruption Perceptions Index and a ranking of 158 out of 180 countries.¹¹⁴

Thus, oil companies face little oversight. As a result, greenhouse gas emissions increase and the environment suffers.¹¹⁵

Another example is Saudi Arabia. While Saudi Arabia has announced large-scale “green” projects, these remain overshadowed by its structural reliance on oil exports. It is the world's largest exporter of crude oil.¹¹⁶ Oil makes up about 40 percent of the country's GDP.¹¹⁷ Because of this, Saudi Arabia ranks near the bottom on the CCPI. It performs poorly in all categories—climate policy, energy efficiency, renewable energy adoption, and greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction. The country depends heavily on oil and has limited climate action policies.¹¹⁸ That said, one upcoming project is the King Salman Energy Park, which aims to add renewable energy and green spaces.¹¹⁹

Overall, countries in this bloc often resist climate action, heavily rely on fossil fuels, and produce, export, and import oil and gas. In addition, they may also have high corruption levels or political instability which prevents rules from being followed, even if

110 Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, “National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) FAQs,” news release, December 1, 2021, static.pib.gov.in/WriteReadData/specificdocs/documents/2021/dec/doc202112101.pdf

111 “Context | African Development Bank Group,” Context, accessed July 15, 2025, www.afdb.org/en/about/mission-and-strategy/context

112 “Chad: Mining, Minerals and Fuel Resources,” Chad: Mining, Minerals and Fuel Resources, accessed July 15, 2025, www.azomining.com/Article.aspx?ArticleID=184

113 “Chad - Oil and Gas,” Chad Country Commercial Guide, accessed July 15, 2025, www.trade.gov/country-commercial-guides/chad-oil-and-gas

114 “2024 Corruption Perceptions Index - Explore Chad's... - Transparency.org,” Corruption Perceptions Index: Chad, accessed July 15, 2025, www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2024/index/tcd

115 Thierry Vircoulon, “Oil in Chad: The Fragile State's Easy Victory over International Institutions” Crisis Group, September 9, 2010, www.crisisgroup.org/africa/central-africa/chad/oil-chad-fragile-states-easy-victory-over-international-institutions

116 “Crude oil - exports - 2021 World Factbook Archive,” Crude oil – exports, accessed July 15, 2025, www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/about/archives/2021/field/crude-oil-exports/country-comparison

117 “Saudi Arabia Economy Overview: Forecast & Reports - FocusEconomics,” Saudi Arabia Economic Data & Projections, accessed July 15, 2025, www.focus-economics.com/countries/saudi-arabia/

118 “Saudi Arabia - Climate Performance Ranking 2025 | Climate Change Performance Index,” Saudi Arabia, accessed July 15, 2025, ccpi.org/country/sau/

119 “King Salman Energy Park,” Project: KING SALMAN ENERGY PARK, accessed July 15, 2025, www.vision2030.gov.sa/en/explore/projects/king-salman-energy-park

they exist. Their resistance complicates multilateral efforts, as climate policies tied to economic diversification are seen not as collective duties but as existential threats to one's national income.

This bloc would likely advocate for flexibility and non-binding commitments, emphasizing national sovereignty and economic realities. They would argue that sustainability efforts must not limit

peacekeeping capacity or impose financial burdens on developing states. Instead, they would call for external funding, technology transfers, and capacity-building programs led by developed states.

COMMITTEE MISSION

The Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, known as C34, is part of the UN General Assembly.¹²⁰ Its main job is to review the overall effectiveness and evolving challenges of UN peacekeeping operations. C34 writes an annual report with recommendations, which all member states receive. Members include Security Council permanent members, Troop- and Police-Contributing Countries (T/PCCs), major financial contributors, and host states. States can adopt the recommendations if they agree. C34 operates by consensus; its recommendations are not legally binding but often influence UN Secretariat policy, peacekeeping mandate design, and budget priorities. The Committee also serves as a forum to discuss the perspectives of T/PCCs, financial contributors, and host states on operational performance,

accountability, training, and the protection of civilians.

Peacekeeping missions reviewed by C34 help countries move from conflict to peace. They often work in dangerous conflict zones to stabilize regions.¹²¹ Missions cooperate with local leaders and civilians. This helps build trust and meet the mandates of the Security Council and General Assembly. Peacekeeping missions follow three main rules. First, they need the consent of the main parties to the conflict, which allows operations to proceed peacefully.¹²² Second, missions must stay impartial and fair. They consider the experiences of both leaders and civilians. Third, force may only be used in self-defense or in defense of the mandate, particularly to protect civilians. Missions mainly rely on diplomacy to build trust and achieve peace. C34 periodically reassesses how these principles apply in high-threat environments,

including robust peacekeeping, stabilization contexts, and protection mandates.

C34 studies the environmental dimension of peacekeeping. It gives recommendations on how to minimize ecological impact. Many match the UN's goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote sustainable operations.¹²³ When considering how to implement these goals, delegates should consider all peacekeeping rules and goals. Delegate recommendations should fit within an increasingly underfunded UN body. C34 can recommend mission-wide environmental management systems, green procurement policies, renewable energy pilots, and pre-deployment training (PDT) standards focused on energy, water, and waste management. It can also encourage data reporting on environmental performance to improve transparency and accountability across missions.

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RESEARCH AND PREPARATION QUESTIONS

The following research and preparation questions are meant to help you begin your research on your country's policy. These questions should be carefully considered, as they embody some of the main critical thought and learning objectives surrounding your topic.

Topic A

1. What are your country's views on the effects of the inconsistent international standards for UN peacekeeping missions?
2. How can your country contribute to a more effective and comprehensive screening of UN personnel before they are deployed in peacekeeping missions?
3. When faced with accounts of human rights violations in UN peacekeeping operations, how can your country best work together with other involved countries to bring accountability to the responsible parties?
4. In what ways could the IMIT be improved or adjusted, particularly considering its current format as an entirely online and self-paced program?
5. How does your country view the involvement of UN peacekeeping missions in regard to government sovereignty? How does PDT play a role in your country's view on this?
6. How is your country affected by the current budget cuts of the peacekeeping budget, and what will be the main priority of your country regarding PDT?

Topic B

1. What effects do former colonized countries face that lead to less environmental sustainability?
2. How can your country effectively mediate between different states where environmental degradation spans across borders?
3. Are there ways to focus on the environmental effects of peacekeeping missions during the training process and pre-deployment period?
4. Have any countries with active peacekeeping missions achieved success in attaining significant environmental sustainability? Why or why not have these countries been successful?
5. How have failed environmental mandates murdered and environmental degradation caused by peacekeeping missions reflect the United Nations' sustainability of resource management?
6. What regulations has your country implemented that ensure natural resources in a given country are used responsibly for their respective missions?
7. Are there any renewable energy resources that can replace the high dependency on fossil fuels in peacekeeping missions? Can this be implemented across all missions? Why or why not?

IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

Topic A

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Topic B

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Written by Solaia Lund and Jojo Paulino.

Edited by Devansh Bhartia, Joelle Boilard, Ana Margarita Gil, Sabeeh Mirza, Tyler Schmied, Althea Turley, Nastasja Vasquez, and Sofia Velasco.

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