

Letter from the Chairs

Delegates,

It is thrilling to welcome you to the 42nd Mid-South Model United Nations Conference (MSMUNC)! My name is Mohammad Taysir, and I will be your United Nations Security Council (UNSC) chair. I am currently a junior majoring in International Studies on the Pre-Law track, with a minor in Jewish Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies. The co-chair, Stella, is a freshman majoring in History and minoring in International Studies.

The Security Council of the United Nations is a body dedicated to addressing global peace and security issues, and its main function is to manage and resolve international conflicts, crises, and threats that affect global stability. Resolutions often call upon strategies to maintain or restore peace in conflict-ridden regions, and measures like sanctions, peacekeeping operations, or other actions may be considered to reduce or prevent violence. Delegates are responsible for drafting, negotiating, and voting on resolutions to this effect.

At this conference, we will discuss the successes (and failures) of United Nations peacekeeping missions. The Security Council's relevance is that it is the body that authorizes such missions. We would encourage you to think about missions undertaken in the past few decades, considering the benefits and consequences of them. As a council, we will address not just the past of peacekeeping missions, but how in the future, the United Nations can utilize peacekeeping missions most productively and effectively. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the chair or co-chair. We look forward to meeting you all.

Mohammad Taysir: taymo-26@rhodes.edu

Stella Bentley: bensr-28@rhodes.edu

Topic: *Addressing the success of UN peacekeeping operations*

Chair: Mohammed

Co-chair: Stella

History of the topic

United Nations peacekeeping missions have played a pivotal role in maintaining international peace and security since 1948. These missions are authorized by the UN Security Council and are typically deployed to conflict zones to monitor ceasefires, protect civilians, and assist in the implementation of peace agreements.

United Nations Peacekeeping started in 1948 with the deployment of military observers to the Middle East to monitor the Armistice Agreement between Israel and its Arab neighbors. This mission, called the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), marked the beginning of over 70 peacekeeping operations worldwide. Since then, hundreds of thousands of military personnel, UN police, and civilians from more than 120 countries have contributed to these missions.¹

The beginning of UN peacekeeping missions

Initially, UN peacekeeping focused on maintaining ceasefires and stabilizing conflict zones, supporting political efforts for peaceful resolutions. Early missions involved unarmed

¹ <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/our-history>

military observers and lightly armed troops tasked with monitoring, reporting, and building trust. As such, the first two peacekeeping operations were the UN Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) and the UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP), both still active today; these early operations were small-scale, with unarmed observers.

The first armed peacekeeping mission, the First UN Emergency Force (UNEF I), was deployed in 1956 to address the Suez Crisis. The UN Operation in the Congo (ONUC) in 1960 was the first large-scale mission, peaking at nearly 20,000 troops.²

On July 12, 1960, the Congolese Government requested UN military assistance to defend the country against threats from Belgium; the UN Security Council called for Belgium to withdraw its troops and authorized the deployment of UN forces to support the Congolese government until its security forces were capable of maintaining order. Although originally, the mandate related to Belgium, resolution 161 (21 February 1961) requested the United Nations “take immediately all appropriate measures to prevent the occurrence of civil war in the Congo, including arrangements for a ceasefire, the halting of all military operations, the prevention of clashes, and the use of force, if necessary, in the last resort.”³



From the [United Nations Field Coverage](#): “Some 18,000 soldiers from twenty-two countries are on duty with the United Nations Force in the Congo, helping to restore order and calm in the country. A Congolese child is seen in the arms of an Ethiopian soldier, listening over a field telephone. March 1963.”

² <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/our-history>

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<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/military-history/history-heritage/past-operations/africa/operation-des-nations-unies-congo.html>

Evidently, the United Nations has had a strong, influential hand in transnational and nationally contained conflicts. As one example, ONUC is considered for, the most part, to have been very beneficial to the Congo. The UN peacekeeping force successfully aided Congo in reintegrating the territory of Katanga in 1963. Temporary leader Premier Adoula said in 1964 that it had been a “decisive factor” in the reunification of the country and that the “success” of the United Nations' mission should be “an encouraging precedent” to all young nations.⁴

The UN undertook a number of missions throughout the sixties and seventies before, in 1988, the “United Nations Peacekeeping Forces” were awarded the Nobel Prize of Peace.⁵ However, UN peacekeeping missions have never been without failures and criticisms. For instance, relating to the aforementioned ONUC mission, Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld tragically died in a plane crash while en route to Ndola (now in Zambia), where peace talks were scheduled.⁶ The overall success of UN peacekeeping missions has come most pointedly into question in the last few decades.

Post-Cold War peacekeeping missions

Following the end of the Cold War, the UN moved from traditional peacekeeping missions focused on observation by military personnel to operations aimed at implementing comprehensive peace agreements and fostering long-term stability. These new missions increasingly addressed intra-State conflicts and civil wars, rather than just inter-State

⁴ <https://www.nytimes.com/1964/07/01/archives/premier-adoula-resigns.html>

⁵ <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/nobel-peace-prize/un-peacekeeping-1988>

⁶ <https://peacekeeping.un.org/mission/past/onucB.htm>

disputes. Peacekeepers were tasked with a broader range of responsibilities, including building governance structures, monitoring human rights, overseeing security sector reforms, and managing the disarmament and reintegration of former combatants. The post-Cold War era was and is one of dramatically increased “peacekeeping.” Between 1989 and 1994, the Security Council authorized 20 operations and significantly increased the number of peacekeepers from 11,000 to 75,000.⁷

In this era, many peacekeeping missions were considered more ineffectual than valuable. For example, in Rwanda, Iraq, the former Yugoslavia, and the Congo, the methods and actions of the UN peacekeeping forces have been heavily criticized.

In Rwanda, the mission UNAMIR, United Nations Assistance Mission For Rwanda, began in 1993. The UN Secretariat and the Secretary-General faced significant criticism for failing to communicate critical information before and during the Rwandan genocide; UNAMIR Commander Dallaire recalled how his reports on the genocide seemed to disappear without action. In the Security Council, the word “genocide” was avoided in an effort to not invoke action under the Genocide Convention; this lack of communication led to non-permanent members of the Security Council, who relied on the Secretariat for information, failing to recognize the necessity of quick, decisive action by the United Nations. Additionally, after the failures in a peacekeeping mission to Somalia, particularly the deaths of US soldiers, there was considerable pressure on the UN to avoid another peacekeeping disaster.⁸

Out of the office and on the ground, UNAMIR was poorly equipped to prevent the killings due to constant pressure from the Security Council to reduce costs. Initially, UNAMIR’s

⁷ <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/our-history>

⁸ <https://www.e-ir.info/2012/04/07/rwandan-genocide-failure-of-the-international-community/>

mandate, authorized by UN Security Council Resolution 872 in October 1993, limited its role to "monitoring," "assisting," and "investigating." UNAMIR lacked necessary resources, such as heavy weapons, ammunition, and secure transport, and its troops were exhausted and ill due to inadequate food and medical supplies. Consequently, UNAMIR was powerless to stop the mass killings; had there been a force of even 5,000 troops, the worst of the violence could have been prevented.⁹

Several other missions have been critiqued. In general, peacekeeping missions of the post-Cold War era have been plagued by what some consider corruption in the Security Council, including inaction, and otherwise misused funds and unwise decisions. Trust in United Nations intervention has hence waned and waxed, though peacekeeping missions remain useful in many contexts.

Current Situation

As of February 2025, the United Nations has allocated a budget of approximately \$5.59 billion for peacekeeping operations for the fiscal year spanning July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025. This budget supports 14 active peacekeeping missions, two service centers, and associated support staff at UN Headquarters. The United States remains the largest contributor to UN peacekeeping, though its assessment rate has decreased from 27% to 26.15% for the 2024-2025 period. In contrast, China's contribution has increased to 23.78%, up from 18.68% in the previous assessment period. It's important to note that the UN's financial health is closely tied to the timely payment of assessed contributions by member states. Delays or shortfalls in these payments can impact the organization's ability to

⁹ <https://www.e-ir.info/2012/04/07/rwandan-genocide-failure-of-the-international-community/>

effectively carry out its peacekeeping responsibilities.

Current operations

1. United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO):

Established in 1991, MINURSO's primary goal is to monitor the ceasefire between Morocco and the Polisario Front and to organize a referendum allowing the people of Western Sahara to determine their own future.¹⁰

2. United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA):

Launched in 2014, MINUSCA aims to protect civilians, support the transition process, and facilitate humanitarian assistance in the Central African Republic amidst ongoing internal conflicts.¹⁰

3. United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO):

Since 2010, MONUSCO has worked to protect civilians and support stabilization efforts in the DRC, addressing challenges posed by various armed groups.¹⁰

4. United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF):

Established in 1974, UNDOF monitors the ceasefire between Israel and Syria in the Golan Heights, supervising the disengagement of their forces.¹⁰

¹⁰ <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/where-we-operate>

5. United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP):

Deployed in 1964, UNFICYP's mission is to prevent further fighting between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities and to maintain law and order.¹⁰

6. United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL):

Created in 1978, UNIFIL monitors the cessation of hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah, supports the Lebanese government in restoring its authority, and ensures humanitarian access.¹⁰

7. United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA):

Since 2011, UNISFA has monitored the flashpoint border region of Abyei, claimed by both Sudan and South Sudan, to oversee demilitarization and maintain security until a final status agreement is reached.¹⁰

8. United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK):

Established in 1999, UNMIK works to build a stable, democratic, and multi-ethnic Kosovo, facilitating political processes and supporting the rule of law.¹⁰

9. United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS):

Since 2011, UNMISS has been tasked with consolidating peace and security, facilitating the delivery of humanitarian assistance, and supporting the implementation of the revitalized peace agreement in South Sudan.¹⁰

10. United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP):

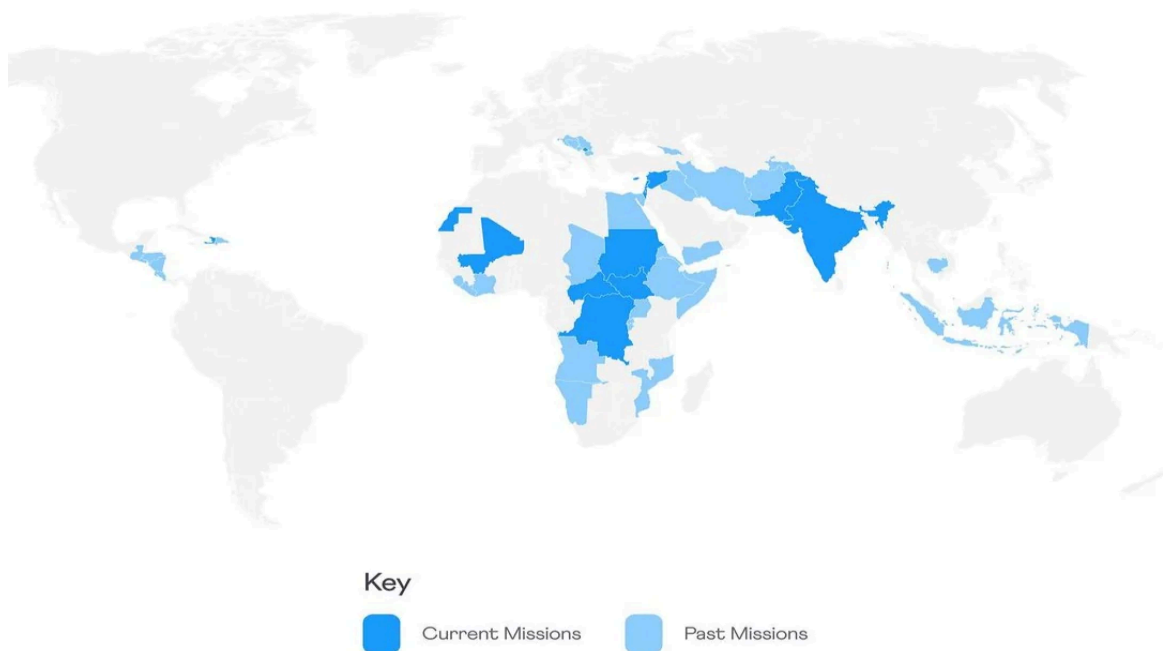
Established in 1949, UNMOGIP monitors the ceasefire in the disputed Jammu and Kashmir region between India and Pakistan, observing and reporting on ceasefire violations.¹⁰

11. United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO):

As the first-ever UN peacekeeping operation, established in 1948, UNTSO monitors ceasefires and supervises armistice agreements throughout the Middle East.¹⁰

UN peacekeeping missions

This map summarizes both current and past United Nations peacekeeping operations, offering a snapshot of the UN's efforts to maintain global peace.



Issues and possible considerations for the future; what a resolution should address

One of the most critical issues in global peacekeeping is the need for **rapid deployment and flexibility**, as slow responses can allow conflicts to escalate; improving logistics and pre-positioning equipment in key regions can enhance response times¹¹. Another major challenge is **ensuring robust mandates and rules of engagement** since unclear directives often limit peacekeepers' ability to act effectively; strengthening mandates and providing clearer operational guidelines can empower forces to protect civilians and maintain stability.

¹² Additionally, **combating disinformation** is crucial, as false narratives can undermine peacekeeping efforts and erode public trust; establishing dedicated fact-checking teams and community engagement programs can counter misinformation and build credibility.¹³

Finally, **securing sustainable funding** is essential, as inconsistent financial support leads to operational inefficiencies; encouraging more predictable, long-term financial commitments from member states and exploring alternative funding mechanisms, such as voluntary contributions, can help address this issue.¹⁴

Conclusion

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https://www.google.com/url?q=https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/unifil-has-vital-role-mission-must-be-strengthened-italy-says-2024-10-17&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1739074208672871&usg=AOvVaw0rm4V8mz4AxzM1FT_Ujgy3

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https://www.google.com/url?q=https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/unifil-has-vital-role-mission-must-be-strengthened-italy-says-2024-10-17&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1739074075787732&usg=AOvVaw2UZguhxxfh7t5R4zm_GzI1

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https://www.google.com/url?q=https://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/2212_Disinformation-against-UN-Peacekeeping-Ops.pdf&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1739074169573969&usg=AOvVaw3T_k6j6FH9oMXgWoKNEJhx

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<https://www.google.com/url?q=https://apnews.com/article/d9ebed4a6a809d080511009b39b1b1ac&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1739074122668557&usg=AOvVaw3IJukVezSWaGQUogRQEcm5>

The peacekeeping missions of the United Nations have, statistically and in the public perception, ranged from successful to even disastrous. For the Security Council, discovering how to most effectively mandate and follow through with peacekeeping operations is crucial. Efforts have been made to address issues with peacekeeping operations of the past, but issues with active operations indicate a need for further reform.

Members of the Security Council

Algeria

Country in Northern Africa and a non-permanent member of the Security Council. In the Security Council, Algeria asserts that “the Security Council” must work “with regional organizations based on the asset and experience of the latter in terms of [...] action on the ground.”¹⁵

China

A permanent member of the Security Council. China has placed a prominent and supportive role in UN peacekeeping; as of now, China has an 8,000-member standby peacekeeping force, has given over 50,000 personnel to missions, has aided in 29 former and ongoing peacekeeping operations, and is a top financial contributor.¹⁶

Denmark

A European country and non-permanent member of the Security Council. Denmark has

¹⁵ <https://pmnewyork.mfa.gov.dz/bilateral-relations/security-council/algeria-to-unsc>

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<https://rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/commentary/small-eagle-big-dragon-chinas-expanding-role-un-peacekeeping>; <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/how-we-are-funded>

participated in numerous peacekeeping operations, including those in the Balkans, Africa, and the Middle East.

France

A permanent member of the Security Council. France has played a prominent role in UN peacekeeping operations, particularly in Africa. France has led and contributed troops to missions in Mali, the Central African Republic, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Greece

Country in southeast Europe and non-permanent member of the Security Council. Greece has contributed to several UN peacekeeping missions, especially in the Balkans and the Middle East, including efforts in Cyprus, Kosovo, and the former Yugoslavia.

Guyana

A South American country and non-permanent member of the Security Council. Guyana has contributed personnel to missions in the Caribbean and Africa.

Pakistan

Country in South Asia and a non-permanent member of the Security Council. Pakistan has been one of the largest contributors of troops to UN peacekeeping missions, aiding efforts in conflict zones like Rwanda, Congo, and Kashmir.

Panama

Country in Central/South America and non-permanent member of the Security Council. Panama has contributed to some UN peacekeeping efforts in Central America.

Republic of Korea

Country in Asia and non-permanent member of the Security Council. South Korea has dedicated forces to peacekeeping efforts in countries like Lebanon, South Sudan, and Haiti, and is among the top financial contributors to missions.¹⁷

Russia

A permanent member of the Security Council. Russia has contributed to UN peacekeeping missions, though occasionally, what it considers “peacekeeping” has been controversial; “Russian politicians initially referred to [Russian troops in Ukraine] as ‘peacekeeping troops’.” This noted, Russia is also among the top financial contributors to official UN missions.¹⁸

Sierra Leone

Country in West Africa and a non-permanent member of the Security Council. Sierra Leone’s involvement in peacekeeping missions has been shaped by its own experience with civil war and the subsequent UN peacekeeping intervention in the late 1990s.¹⁹

Slovenia

A European country and non-permanent member of the Security Council. After gaining independence in the 1990s, Slovenia has actively supported UN peacekeeping operations in countries such as Lebanon, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

¹⁷ <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/how-we-are-funded>

¹⁸ <https://www.diis.dk/en/research/the-russian-approach-to-peacekeeping>;
<https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/how-we-are-funded>

¹⁹ <https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/past/unamsil/index.html>

Somalia

Country in East Africa and non-permanent member of the Security Council. Somalia's relationship with UN peacekeeping has been complicated by the failures of UNOSOM, the United Nations Operation in Somalia, in the early 1990s.²⁰

United Kingdom

A permanent member of the Security Council. The UK has been a consistent contributor to UN peacekeeping missions, both through considerable financial support, being a large contributor in this realm, and troop deployments.²¹

United States

A permanent member of the Security Council. The US has been a major supporter of UN peacekeeping, being the top financial contributor to missions, although its particular involvement in some missions has been subject to criticism.²²

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