

<b>Forum:</b>	Social Humanitarian and Cultural Committee (GA3)
<b>Issue:</b>	Addressing the Humanitarian Implications of Peacekeeping Missions
<b>Student Officer:</b>	Aloi Gkania
<b>Position:</b>	Co-Chair

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## PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

Dear delegates of the Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee,

My name is Aloi Gkania, I am 16 years old and a 10th grade student at Platon School. I will be serving as a Co-Chair of the Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee (GA3) in this year's PSMUN conference.

This will be my second time serving as a student officer. After participating in multiple conferences, I have realized how important Model United Nations is and the experiences and memories this growing academic stimulation provides you with. Not only are delegates allowed to acquire knowledge about controversial topics and current affairs, but they are also called to debate upon them and conduct resourceful and reasonable solutions to the issues through collaboration and teamwork with their fellow delegates as well.

The Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee (GA3) can be a great experience and an educational introduction to the world of MUN. As a delegate, you will have the opportunity to further develop your social and cooperation skills, critical thinking, and organization whilst participating in fruitful debates on global issues. Most importantly you will be given the chance to find your voice and confidence in expressing your beliefs by representing your country's core principles. As a Student Officer, I will guide you throughout this journey and help you with any obstacle that may come your way. In the context of PSMUN 2024's theme, "The Paradox of Progress", delegates in the social, humanitarian and cultural committee (GA3) are tasked with debating the humanitarian implications of peacekeeping missions, emphasizing the complex synergy between progress and challenges in addressing these issues. It will introduce to you the main aspect of the issue and provide you with useful information to grow familiar with the topic. However, this guide is for introductory purposes only, and further research is required for a better understanding of your position on this topic. If you have any questions concerning the topic or the conference in general, feel free to contact me through my email address at [aloigkania@gmail.com](mailto:aloigkania@gmail.com).

I am truly excited to meet you all this March!

Yours truly,  
Aloi Gkania

## INTRODUCTION

From “an innovation in human history”<sup>1</sup> peacekeeping missions turned to “A cancer in the system” as Ban Ki-Moon, a former Secretary General characterized the sexual assault by peacekeepers allegations in August 2015.<sup>2</sup>

The primary goal of Peacekeeping missions is to protect civilians, stabilize conflict zones and strengthen the rule of law, as well as social and civic conditions necessary for ensuring peace in those regions.<sup>3</sup> However, despite having a majority of successes, the nature of these missions presents complexities and challenges, making it imperative to address their humanitarian implications.

Peacekeeping missions are typically led by international organizations such as the UN, but peacekeepers are not trained and provided by the UN. The majority of the Member States that provide Peacekeepers are developing countries, as Bangladesh is the number one contributor and the United States of America (USA) is one of the lowest contributors.<sup>4</sup> One of the reasons behind this is that Member States benefit from the high contribution of Peacekeepers as troops are often better paid.

In various conflict zones, civilians fall victim to wars, unwillingly caught amid violence, displacement, and severe humanitarian crises. Although peacekeeping missions aim to protect civilians, in many cases, they have been reported for violating their power. Hence, it is significant to assess and evaluate the impacts these missions have on local populations, especially vulnerable groups such as women and children. Additionally, it is of paramount importance to ensure that peacekeepers abide by the international humanitarian law and the cultural, political and security regulations of each region they have been assigned to.

Peacekeeping missions include policies such as human rights, justice and the welfare of affected communities. It is worth noting that addressing this issue is a moral obligation and imperative in order to ensure the adequate execution of peacekeeping missions. Nevertheless, accountability for the actions and human rights abuses enhanced by the ones included in this war is a crucial step forward in resolving this issue and ensuring that all citizens can enjoy their fundamental rights to security and peace.

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<sup>1</sup> Does Un Peacekeeping Work? Here’s What the Data Says | UN News, [news.un.org/en/story/2022/12/1131552](https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/12/1131552).

<sup>2</sup> “Ban Ki-Moon Says Sexual Abuse in UN Peacekeeping Is ‘a Cancer in Our System.’” The Guardian, Guardian News and Media, 14 Aug. 2015, [www.theguardian.com/world/2015/aug/14/ban-ki-moon-says-sexual-abuse-in-un-peacekeeping-is-a-cancer-in-our-system#:~:text=Taking%20aim%20at%20%E2%80%9Ca%20cancer,of%20sexual%20abuse%20and%20exploitation](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/aug/14/ban-ki-moon-says-sexual-abuse-in-un-peacekeeping-is-a-cancer-in-our-system#:~:text=Taking%20aim%20at%20%E2%80%9Ca%20cancer,of%20sexual%20abuse%20and%20exploitation).

<sup>3</sup> “Preventing Conflicts.” *United Nations Peacekeeping*, [peacekeeping.un.org/en/preventing-conflicts](https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/preventing-conflicts).

<sup>4</sup> Dyvik, Einar H. “Largest Troop Contributor to UN Peacekeeping 2023.” *Statista*, 11 Sept. 2023, [www.statista.com/statistics/871432/largest-contributors-of-troops-to-united-nations-peacekeeping/#:~:text=Top%20contributors%20of%20troops%20to%20UN%20peacekeeping%20efforts%20globally%20in%202023&text=At%20April%202023%2C%20Bangladesh%20was,contributed%20just%20above%205%2C500%20troops](https://www.statista.com/statistics/871432/largest-contributors-of-troops-to-united-nations-peacekeeping/#:~:text=Top%20contributors%20of%20troops%20to%20UN%20peacekeeping%20efforts%20globally%20in%202023&text=At%20April%202023%2C%20Bangladesh%20was,contributed%20just%20above%205%2C500%20troops).

The Paradox of Progress, PSMUN 2024's theme, falls under the ideology that as society is developed, the more problems are created. Despite our best efforts to avoid consequences and move forward, we are unable to. This is clearly illustrated through peacekeeping missions since an attempt to bring peace to conflict zones, stability and improvements to communities resulted in unintended and severe consequences, the roots of which stem from the means of positive impact, namely, the peacekeeping missions themselves.

## DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

### Peacekeeping Missions

Peacekeeping missions frequently operate in highly volatile areas with conflict. They aim at protecting civilians, stabilizing conflict zones, and strengthening the rule of law as well as the social and civic conditions necessary for peace. Peacekeepers help strengthen national and sub-national institutions to address the root causes of conflict such as discrimination, inequalities, and marginalization.<sup>5</sup>

### Peacekeeping economy

The term peacekeeping economy refers to the economic activities associated with a peacekeeping mission's presence in a certain location.<sup>6</sup>

### Humanitarian Implications

The effect of armed conflicts and peacekeeping missions on civilians all the way to displacement, violence, food insecurity, and other humanitarian crises.

### Civilians in Armed Conflict

Non-combatant individuals who may become victims of violence during armed conflicts.<sup>7</sup>

### Displacement

The forced movement of individuals and communities as a result of or in order to avoid effects of armed conflicts or insecurity.<sup>8</sup>

### Conflict-Affected Areas

Conflict-Affected Areas are areas where conflict is prevalent. The area may be a region, a country, an area within a country, or an area that crosses one or more

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<sup>5</sup> "Preventing Conflicts." *United Nations Peacekeeping*, [peacekeeping.un.org/en/preventing-conflicts](https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/preventing-conflicts).

<sup>6</sup> *Academic.Oup.Com*, [academic.oup.com/isq/article/63/2/364/545975](https://academic.oup.com/isq/article/63/2/364/545975).

<sup>7</sup> "Civilians | How Does Law Protect in War? - Online Casebook." *Casebook.icrc.org*, [casebook.icrc.org/a\\_to\\_z/glossary/civilians#:~:text=Under%20IHL%2C%20the%20category%20of](https://casebook.icrc.org/a_to_z/glossary/civilians#:~:text=Under%20IHL%2C%20the%20category%20of).

<sup>8</sup> "Forced Migration or Displacement." *Migration Data Portal*, 28 June 2023, [www.migrationdataportal.org/themes/forced-migration-or-displacement#:~:text=Internally%20displaced%20persons%20\(IDPs\)%20are](https://www.migrationdataportal.org/themes/forced-migration-or-displacement#:~:text=Internally%20displaced%20persons%20(IDPs)%20are).

country boundaries. Operations are not necessarily complicit in Conflict if they are located in a Conflict-Affected Area.<sup>9</sup>

### Conflict Resolution

Conflict resolution can be defined as the informal or formal process that two or more parties use to find a peaceful solution to their dispute.<sup>10</sup>

### Robust Peacekeeping

Robust peacekeeping involves the use of force at the tactical level with the authorization of the Security Council and consent of the host nation and/or the main parties to the conflict.<sup>11</sup>

### Cold war

A cold war is a state of conflict between nations that does not involve direct military action but is pursued primarily through economic and political actions, propaganda, acts of espionage or proxy wars waged by surrogates.<sup>12</sup>

### Intra state conflict

When conflict breaks out inside a country.

### Inter-state conflict

When countries come into conflict with one another.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### Historical background of Peacekeeping Missions

Originally, UN Peacekeepers had the role of maintaining peace in international conflict after a ceasefire or resolution was established. In other words, lightly armed troops and unarmed military observers were trusted with overseeing, reporting and providing support in unstable areas without the authority to physically interfere. At the time, such measures were necessary due to the atrocities unfolding alongside the Cold War. It had paralyzed the UN and so, an impartial body was imperative in order to prevent the spark of a World War III.

On May 29, 1948, the Security Council authorized the first Peacekeeping Mission, namely, the deployment of UN military observers to the Middle East, following the

<sup>9</sup> STANDARD GUIDANCE (COP 6.2) Conflict-Affected Areas.

<sup>10</sup> Shonk, Katie. "What Is Conflict Resolution, and How Does It Work?" PON - Program on Negotiation at Harvard Law School, 20 Mar. 2023, [www.pon.harvard.edu/daily/conflict-resolution/what-is-conflict-resolution-and-how-does-it-work/](http://www.pon.harvard.edu/daily/conflict-resolution/what-is-conflict-resolution-and-how-does-it-work/).

<sup>11</sup> "Principles of Peacekeeping Peacekeeping." *United Nations*, United Nations, [peacekeeping.un.org/en/principles-of-peacekeeping#:~:text=Robust%20peacekeeping%20involves%20the%20use,main%20partition%20to%20the%20conflict](https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/principles-of-peacekeeping#:~:text=Robust%20peacekeeping%20involves%20the%20use,main%20partition%20to%20the%20conflict).

<sup>12</sup> Cold War (Term)." *Wikipedia*, Wikimedia Foundation, 16 Dec. 2023, [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cold\\_war\\_\(term\)#:~:text=A%20cold%20war%20is%20a,Cold%20War%20of%201947%E2%80%931991](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cold_war_(term)#:~:text=A%20cold%20war%20is%20a,Cold%20War%20of%201947%E2%80%931991).

Arab-Israeli War. Their mission was to monitor what is currently known as the UN Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), the Armistice Agreement between Israel and its neighboring countries with Arab roots, where the participation of armed troops was prohibited in order to prevent oppression.

During the Suez Crisis of 1956, when Peacekeepers took on the role of helping US and Soviet Union troops force invaders away from their borders, they used armed forces. It was not until 1960, however, that the UN decided to alter the role of unarmed peacekeepers to armed peacekeepers, following the assassination of the first democratic leader of Congo, where they had no choice but to physically intervene in order to keep mercenaries out of Congo.

During the aftermath of the Cold War, the demand for Peacekeepers and the range of complex missions that they were summoned for, dramatically increased from simple monitoring missions to complexities such as attaining sustainable peace and stability and ensuring the implementation of peace agreements. Additionally, although Peacekeepers were initially assigned to deal with interstate conflicts, the UN also began assigning them to intrastate conflicts. The UN remained the backbone of Peacekeeping missions, but other contributors such as legal experts, humanitarian experts, administrators, police officers, economists and electoral observers<sup>13</sup>, began sharing inclusion. In 1988, the UN Peacekeeping Forces were awarded a Nobel Prize for Peace.

Currently, Peacekeeping missions are challenging and complex missions that require determination and sacrifice. They are an efficient tool that has succeeded in bringing peace numerous times. However, they are also dangerous to both Peacekeepers and the inhabitants of the areas they visit since the circumstances and behaviors that revolve around a conflict zone tend to be inhumane. And so, as of recently, rather than neutralizing a territory, troops have been witnessed to inflict it, being the ones to cause harm to those they were assigned to protect. Therefore, in contrast to 1948, Peacekeeping missions have become difficult to regulate.

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<sup>13</sup> "Our History Peacekeeping." *United Nations*, [peacekeeping.un.org/en/our-history](https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/our-history).



Figure 1: Swedish peacekeepers from the UN Emergency Force in Egypt (file 1956)<sup>14</sup>

## Advantages of peacekeeping missions

### Conflict prevention and mitigation

Peacekeeping missions are strategically calculated by the UN to address and identify the roots of potential conflicts in their developing stages, in order to act as a proactive force to prevent them from escalating into extreme threats. The criteria for peacekeepers to be sent somewhere are three basic principles: ‘consent of the parties, impartiality and non-use of force except in self-defense and defense of the mandate.’<sup>15</sup> Through early intervention, peacekeeping missions have the ability to achieve a fundamental necessity, conflict prevention and mitigation. With the aim of avoiding international chaos and promoting a peaceful global landscape, it is imperative for peacekeeping missions to continue to act in favor of the Member States' security. Peacekeepers achieve this by means such as mediation efforts, diplomatic engagement, dialogue facilitation and agreements. It is significant to note that with conflict prevention and mitigation, peacekeepers also work towards minimizing the economic, human, and social consequences accompanied by uncontrolled hostilities. Simultaneously, by improving such conditions, peacekeeping missions work towards achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goal (UN SDG), highlighting justice and strong intuitions. The

<sup>14</sup> *Does Un Peacekeeping Work? Here's What the Data Says | UN News*, news.un.org/en/story/2022/12/1131552.

<sup>15</sup> “What Is Peacekeeping Peacekeeping?” *United Nations*, peacekeeping.un.org/en/what-is-peacekeeping#:~:text=UN%20Peacekeeping%20is%20guided%20by,and%20defence%20of%20the%20mandate.



success of peacekeeping missions can help prevent the emergence of new wounds from conflicts, thereby mitigating severe consequences and aftereffects. This in turn safeguards vulnerable societies, addresses sensitive issues, and reduces the potential for international threats to arise.

#### Preventing health crises

Health crises are usually overlooked consequences of conflict escalation. It is of great significance to take into consideration how inhumane conditions populations have to suffer during conflicts naturally lead to the outbreak and spread of diseases in conflict-affected areas. Numerous individuals, both young and of age, tend to fall victim to destructive health issues due to their lack of resources and medical facilities. However, peacekeeping missions contribute to the resolution of health crises by implementing measures to secure and stabilize a population's health such as the establishment of medical facilities, health education, and vaccination campaigns. Both immediate and ongoing health needs are met by the troops as they ensure access to healthcare services. Hence, provided that peacekeepers are present, the overall well-being of local populations is ensured. This showcases that peacekeepers are advantageous to much more than security in a conflict zone.

#### Protection of Civilians

Peacekeeping missions act as a neutral and impartial body between the parties to a conflict to decrease tensions, foster enhanced security, and protect human rights. The presence of peacekeepers is symbolic and fulfills the role of preventing intense hostilities by posing as a protective 'shield' to the civilians. Apart from this, they also create a peaceful and secure environment which promotes negotiation and dialogue which stems from their impartial role. As the buffer, they set grounds where the parties can build on trust and mutual agreements. Promoting a respectful and right-abiding environment, as well as the thorough monitoring and reports of the territories, actively protects human rights, whilst preventing abuses and assaults. The protection of civilians is a priority and, therefore, such an achievement in Peacekeeping missions is key to global sustainability.

#### Empowerment of National Authorities

Naturally, conflicts take a toll on all previously stable bodies such as national authorities and democratic fundamentals. Therefore, an experienced and strong neutral third party must be present to showcase the role that national authorities must fulfill by acting as a model and guidance. Peacekeepers act as an influence on the chaos that has paralyzed an area by demonstrating an optimum approach and controlling any objection or intervention, whilst protecting democratic fundamentals such as voting rights, citizenship and freedom of speech. However, peacekeepers do not have a guaranteed long

stay and, hence, cannot maintain political stability in a vulnerable area eternally. National authorities should be able to keep the peace in their territory without outside help by having been educated and empowered by the UN's troops during their accessibility.



Figure 2: Peacekeepers attempt to guide and protect civilians<sup>16</sup>

## Disadvantages of Peacekeeping Missions

### Eventual Departure

Peacekeeping missions possess a temporary nature, making their eventual departure inevitable. However, a parallel inevitability arises as the residents of conflict zones become dependent on the presence of peacekeepers. Upon their sudden exit, a void of catastrophic absence is left, the result of which is the threat of a rebirth of conflicts due to unwelcome elements taking advantage of the area's vulnerability. This vulnerability, coupled with the disparity in expertise and resources between local authorities and peacekeepers, may disrupt the established order, potentially leading to a renewal of hostilities.

The consequences of such a departure are profound. The sudden absence of peacekeepers results in a lack of security and stability that vulnerable populations have come to rely upon, intensifying the risk of conflict. The insufficiency of local authorities to fill this void intensifies the complications, increasing the likelihood of social and political disruption. To manage this issue of high importance and prevent the chances that such an issue is repeated, it

<sup>16</sup> "Protecting Civilians." *United Nations Peacekeeping*, [peacekeeping.un.org/en/protecting-civilians](https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/protecting-civilians).



is crucial to develop a sustainable plan for the well thought distribution of responsibilities and resources.

### Exploitation and Abuse

Exploitation and abuse are the key humanitarian implications to peacekeeping missions. Vulnerable groups are prone to be overpowered and taken advantage of by troops within a range of behaviors, such as prostitution, sexual assault and inclusion in criminal activities. There have been a number of cases where personnel entrusted with providing sanctuary, stability, freedom and peace to local populations have abused their power and, instead, resulted to violence and sexual exploitation. Such actions are catastrophic for the livelihood of the victims and their community as a whole, as it also destroys every ounce of trust between the peacekeepers and the population, resulting in the downfall of the mission. Additionally, it goes without saying that such practices go against the fundamental human rights of every human being and, therefore, against the core principles of the UN. Vulnerable societies stem from such activities whilst crime rates naturally increase on an international level.

### Rise in Crime

Peacekeeping operations may be associated with a rise in illegal activities, a phenomenon attributed to various factors. The unfamiliar environment faced by both peacekeepers and local populations can lead to insecurity, paving the way for vulnerable groups and situations. The presence of foreign troops aggravates this sense of unease, while the availability of weapons and funds adds to the complexity of the situation, fostering an environment prone to criminal activities.

To salvage these challenges, it is imperative for peacekeeping missions to navigate these dynamics and minimize unfavorable impacts. Collaborating with local authorities becomes paramount in addressing security difficulties and establishing a safer atmosphere. Additionally, it is crucial to investigate whether an escalation in crime rates occurs post the departure of peacekeeping missions. By searching into the complexities of these factors, peacekeeping operations can effectively contribute to the reduction of illegal activities and the promotion of stability in the regions they serve.

## Case Studies

### United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO)

As it has already been mentioned, the majority of UN peacekeeping missions are a success, but the remaining percentage that is not, falls victim to great failure and insecurity. A recent and complex example is the peacekeeping

mission in the DRC (MONUSCO). Initially, MONUSCO was a renewed and advanced plan established through resolution 1925 on May 28 2010, and started on 1 July 2010. Its aim was to supplant the faltering operation in DRC, the UN Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), and to achieve success in contrast to its predecessor.

Decades of armed conflicts between local populations, violations of human rights and intense gender-based violence among other destructive hostilities and atrocities, have triggered the UN's necessary interference. This resulted in extreme insecurity, vulnerability and threats, displacing 6.1 million people within the country and forcing 1 million to seek asylum across Africa, usually neighboring countries.<sup>17</sup> The largest and longest peacekeeping mission, MONUSCO, brought hope to the civilizations inhabiting DRC. However, such positive perspectives gradually decreased with the passing of time and with the realization that not much has changed. The UN itself admitted to facing a major challenge with this mission and not having enough support and means to bring peace to the clashing groups. Instead, in recent years, the local population turned against peacekeepers and urged them to end their operation through attacks on the individuals and their bases. In response, rather than following protocol as an impartial third party, a number of peacekeepers have used armed forces to attack the citizens as well, resulting in all parties involved contributing to the destruction of the mission and the loss of lives. Thus, instead of protecting local populations, troops endangered them.

The president of DRC took it upon himself to request MONUSCO's departure to the Security Council. After dialogue between the participants, on 19 December 2023, resolution 2717 was unanimously adopted outlining peacekeepers' gradual, responsible, sustainable withdrawal from DRC and the handover of responsibilities to the Government. The mandate's expiration date is 20 December 2024.

#### United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

Statistics exemplify how after the Cold War, two-thirds of peacekeeping missions have been successful, as the peacekeepers involved had fulfilled their mandate and achieved the prevention of hostilities.<sup>18</sup> Therefore, despite several peacekeeping missions dramatically failing, it is significant to also focus

<sup>17</sup> "Democratic Republic of the Congo Situation." *Global Focus*, reporting.unhcr.org/operational/situations/democratic-republic-congo-situation#:~:text=in%20the%20world.-

,Decades%20of%20clashes%20between%20armed%20groups%2C%20widespread%20violations%20of%20human,to%20seek%20asylum%20across%20Africa.

<sup>18</sup> DR Congo: UN Mission Still Disinformation Target, as ... - UN News, news.un.org/en/story/2023/09/1141647.

on the majority of the missions that have succeeded. A prominent example is the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMLI), 2003-2018.

Liberia is a country located along the Atlantic coasts of West Africa, with Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire, and Guinea at its borders. It is known for being the first African country to gain independence and the luxury of stability for approximately a century and a half. However, starting in 1989, Liberia experienced a major outbreak of civil wars, usually characterized as the bloodiest and most vile in Africa. The Center of Justice and Accountability (CJA) reported that ‘they resulted in the deaths of 150,000 to 250,000 men, women and children, and the displacement of over half the population.’<sup>19</sup>The stability that the nation of Liberia had fought for, had suddenly collapsed, and with it, so did its law and order. For fourteen years, all parties to the conflict played a significant role in the downfall of their nation whilst committing indescribable crimes, atrocities and human rights violations such as rape, abuse, slavery, enforcement of underaged soldiers, exploitation of vulnerable groups and executions.

On 11 September 2003, the Secretary General of the UN, Kofi A. Annan was requested by the Security Council to submit a report addressing the conflict in Liberia, following the Second Liberian Civil War, 1999-2003, when President Charles Taylor resigned and Liberia was in a desperate need of a ceasefire agreement in which the UN eventually monitored. This report was necessary in order to raise awareness in the Security Council on the overwhelming issue the peacekeepers were facing at the time, and how the Secretary General advised to proceed. Kofi A. Annan suggested the Council act under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, ‘and authorize the deployment of a UN peacekeeping operation with a troop strength of up to 15,000, including 250 military observers, 160 staff officers, up to 875 UN police officers and an additional five armed formed units each comprising of 120 officers, and a significant civilian component and necessary support.’<sup>20</sup> This multidimensional operation (the UNMIL) with targets varying from providing humanitarian, political, ethical, health and legal aid, cooperated with neighboring missions such as the United Mission In Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), the United Nations Mission in Cote d'Ivoire (MINUCI) and the United Nations Office for West Africa. By 19 September 2003, the UNMIL was established by Security Council Resolution 1509.

During the fifteen years this Peacekeeping operation lasted, the peacekeepers involved contributed on an immense level by assuming roles in the inhabitants’ everyday lives, providing psychological, health and physical support and protecting and mitigating attacks. The Deputy Chief of the Women and

<sup>19</sup> “Liberia.” *CJA*, [cja.org/where-we-work/liberia/](http://cja.org/where-we-work/liberia/).

<sup>20</sup> “Background.” *UNMIL*, 24 May 2017, [unmil.unmissions.org/background](http://unmil.unmissions.org/background).

Children Protection Section Responsible for investigating sex crimes, claimed that the UN officers supported and helped her team whilst educating them through their expertise. In January 2018, George Weah was elected as president of Liberia through peaceful, impartial, and free means, giving credit to the UNMIL in his speech.<sup>21</sup> The UNMIL was also the first mission with an all-female formed police unit, which was a key component to the execution of multiple tasks such as coordinating and regulating medical facilities for health support. Overall, the key achievements of this mission are how peacekeepers succeeded in restoring long-lasting democracy, political stability and rule of law, advocating for freedom of speech and ensuring impartiality.

Due to the dedication and hard work of the peacekeepers to achieve peace in Liberia, the nation decided to contribute personnel among the other Member States, making it to the top 60th largest contributors. Additionally, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, the 24th Liberian president from 2006 to 2018, expressed her gratitude in her speech by stating that ‘We are no longer the country our citizens want to run away from.’<sup>22</sup>

## MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED

### United States of America (USA)

In accordance with Chapter 17 of the UN Charter, it is mandatory for every Member State to share a portion of the fund towards peacekeeping<sup>23</sup> and the USA is the UN’s largest donor and, therefore, plays a significant role in peacekeeping operations, providing approximately a quarter of the total cost used to operate them.<sup>24</sup> The USA’s commitment is illustrated through the work it has achieved through its primal peacekeeping organizations, the U.S Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI) and the International Police Peacekeeping Operations Support Program (IPPOS). For instance, in 2023, the USA committed more than 74 million dollars to UN peacekeeping.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>21</sup> “Liberia: Un Welcomes New President’s Inauguration as Key Milestone on Country’s Road to Success.” *UNMIL*, 23 Jan. 2018, [unmil.unmissions.org/liberia-un-welcomes-new-president%E2%80%99s-inauguration-key-milestone-country%E2%80%99s-road-success](https://unmil.unmissions.org/liberia-un-welcomes-new-president%E2%80%99s-inauguration-key-milestone-country%E2%80%99s-road-success).

<sup>22</sup> “Liberia: Legacy of Peace.” *YouTube*, 29 Mar. 2018, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=FdesF5HKJig](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FdesF5HKJig).

<sup>23</sup> “How We Are Funded Peacekeeping.” *United Nations*, [peacekeeping.un.org/en/how-we-are-funded](https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/how-we-are-funded).

<sup>24</sup> U.S. Department of State, 2001-2009. [state.gov/p/io/pkpg/#:~:text=The%20United%20States%20plays%20a,logistical%20support%20for%20peacekeeping%20operations](https://www.state.gov/p/io/pkpg/#:~:text=The%20United%20States%20plays%20a,logistical%20support%20for%20peacekeeping%20operations).

<sup>25</sup> “U.S. Commitments at the 2023 Accra Peacekeeping Ministerial - United States Department of State.” *U.S. Department of State*, 7 Dec. 2023, [www.state.gov/u-s-commitments-at-the-2023-accra-peacekeeping-ministerial/#:~:text=In%20fiscal%20year%202023%20alone,Operations%20Support%20Program%20\(IPPOS\)](https://www.state.gov/u-s-commitments-at-the-2023-accra-peacekeeping-ministerial/#:~:text=In%20fiscal%20year%202023%20alone,Operations%20Support%20Program%20(IPPOS)).

The USA has also provided personnel for a number of operations such as: in Liberia (UNMIL), in the DRC (MONUC), in Sudan (UNMIS) and in Ethiopia/Eritrea (UNMEE).<sup>26</sup> However, it is worth noting that amongst the rest of the More Economically Developed Countries (MEDCs) and in contrast with the Less Economically Developed Countries (LEDCs), the USA's absence of sending its own personnel in danger is apparent.

### Bangladesh

Bangladesh initially started contributing troops in 1988 during two simultaneous peacekeeping missions, namely, in Iraq (UNIMOG) and in Namibia (UNTAG). Since then, Bangladesh has grown to join the efforts to restore global peace as a fundamental target. Currently, Bangladesh is titled as the largest contributor in peacekeeping operations. More specifically, in April 2023, Bangladesh broke the record for contributing the highest number of troops in UN peacekeeping missions, namely, 6,500 soldiers.<sup>27</sup>

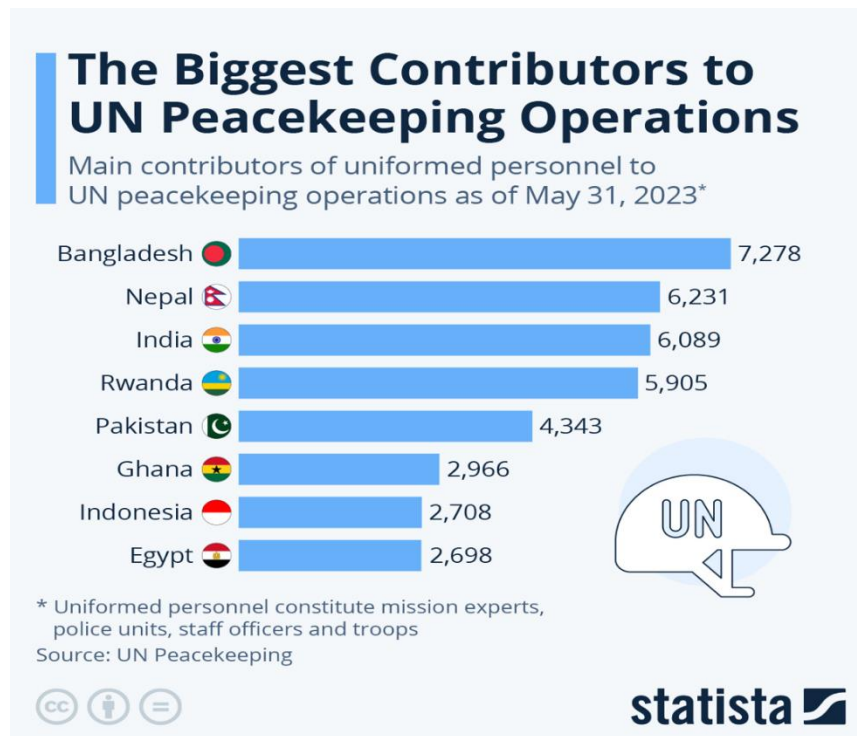


Figure 3: The Biggest Contributors to UN Peacekeeping Operations as of May 31, 2023<sup>28</sup>

<sup>26</sup> U.S. Department of State, 2001-

2009.state.gov/p/io/pkpg/#:~:text=Currently%2C%20the%20United%20States%20provides,%2C%20a nd%20Kosovo%20(UNMIK).

<sup>27</sup> Dyvik, Einar H. "Largest Troop Contributor to UN Peacekeeping 2023." *Statista*, 11 Sept. 2023, [www.statista.com/statistics/871432/largest-contributors-of-troops-to-united-nations-peacekeeping/#:~:text=Top%20contributors%20of%20troops%20to%20UN%20peacekeeping%20effo rts%20globally%20in%202023&text=At%20April%202023%2C%20Bangladesh%20was,contributed%20 just%20above%205%2C500%20troops.](https://www.statista.com/statistics/871432/largest-contributors-of-troops-to-united-nations-peacekeeping/#:~:text=Top%20contributors%20of%20troops%20to%20UN%20peacekeeping%20effo rts%20globally%20in%202023&text=At%20April%202023%2C%20Bangladesh%20was,contributed%20 just%20above%205%2C500%20troops.)

<sup>28</sup> Fleck, Anna, and Felix Richter. "Infographic: The Biggest Contributors to UN Peacekeeping Operations." *Statista Daily Data*, 29 Aug. 2023, [www.statista.com/chart/14007/top-contributors-to-un-peacekeeping-operations-by-](https://www.statista.com/chart/14007/top-contributors-to-un-peacekeeping-operations-by-)



## Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

The DRC has been undergoing persistent hostilities for a long period of time. This is the reason why on 12 July 1960, the UN received a request for protection measures through military assistance by the Congolese government.<sup>29</sup> The operation was named the UN Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic (MONUC). Conflict consumed the DRC as fights for territories and resources between armed groups became a daily occurrence. On 1 July 2010, the Security Council, in accordance with the resolution 1925, renewed the operation authorizing the UN Organization Mission in Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) aimed for more success.<sup>30</sup>

The prevention and mitigation of conflict, the establishment of peace and the protection of civilians were the key targets of this mission, alongside the fulfillment of the mandate, since the conditions there had been very insecure for a long period of time. However, decades later, it seems that the UN is facing extreme challenges with the operations they have in the Central African Republic (CAR) and the complications come from both the citizens and the peacekeepers. For instance, the DRC requested that the MONUSCO end and peacekeepers leave after their failure in protecting and supporting them, and, then, proceeded by storming a number of MONUSCO bases on 25-26 July 2022. In response, peacekeepers went against their protocol and opened fire on civilians on 31 July 2022.

## South Sudan

South Sudan is the newest Member State to join the UN and also extremely involved in peacekeeping missions. It has faced a variety of accusations of human rights abuses and atrocities, particularly in the Darfur region. The Security Council recognized the fragile conditions that the inhabitants had to face, and so, adopted the resolution 1996 on the 8th of July 2011. One day later, South Sudan officially joined the UN, and the operation of the UN Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS) began. Not only was South Sudan's insecurity a national threat, but it was also an international one, whose population were in desperate need of aid, protection, advocacy and support since their democracy was sabotaged and crimes were committed in an overwhelming frequency. As of currently, the UNMISS mission is still operating and due to the catastrophic consequences that would arise if the peacekeepers were to abandon the area, the UN decided to renew its mandate for the next year.

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[country/#:~:text=While%20richer%20nations%20such%20as,on%20these%20sometimes%20deadly%20missions.](#)

<sup>29</sup> "ONUC." *United Nations*,

peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/past/onucB.htm#:~:text=Establishment%20of%20ONUC,-The%20Republic%20of&text=On%2012%20July%201960%2C%20the,the%20Congo%20against%20external%20aggression.

<sup>30</sup> "UNSCR Search Engine for the United Nations Security Council Resolutions." *UNSCR*, unscr.com/en/resolutions/1925.

### International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

At the 74th session of the General Assembly, 2019, the ICRC made a statement to the United Nations (UN) in order to ensure the implementation of humanitarian measures that abide by the International Humanitarian Law (IHL) in peacekeeping operations. Namely, its Humanitarian Affairs Advisor explained how the ICRC has entrusted the UN with the power to use any kind of force to achieve the mandate of each peacekeeping mission for 20 years. Due to the unfolding of unfortunate events against citizens, the ICRC found it essential to act in favor of Protection of Civilians (PoC) through highlighting four messages. ‘First, respect and ensuring respect for the applicable legal framework is critical. By advocating for compliance with international laws, particularly the Geneva Conventions, the ICRC aimed to establish a robust foundation for the protection of civilians during peacekeeping missions. Second, engaging communities for protection purposes must be done in a safe and respectful way. Through meaningful community participation, peacekeepers can gain valuable lessons, match interventions to specific needs, and create trust within the communities they serve. Third, physical protection should remain a fundamental part of the PoC toolbox available to peacekeepers. This involves employing measures to shield civilians from harm, such as establishing secure zones and ensuring safe passage. Recognizing the essential role of physical protection contributes to creating a safer environment for vulnerable populations in conflict zones. Four, protection of healthcare by peacekeepers should be considered as an essential part of their PoC mandate.’ By incorporating these messages into their operations, the ICRC aims to enhance the effectiveness of peacekeeping missions and contribute to the overall well-being and safety of affected communities.<sup>31</sup>

### TIMELINE OF EVENTS

DATE	DESCRIPTION OF EVENT
29 May 1948	The Security Council authorizes the first Peacekeeping Mission, in the form of deploying UN military observers to the Middle East, following the Arab-Israeli War.
12 February 1961	The UN decides to alter the role of unarmed peacekeepers to armed peacekeepers.
12 July 1960	The UN receives a request for protection measures through military assistance by the Congolese government.

<sup>31</sup> International Committee of the Red Cross. “Peacekeeping Operations: ICRC Statement to the United Nations, 2019.” *International Committee of the Red Cross*, 30 Dec. 2021, [www.icrc.org/en/document/peacekeeping-operations-icrc-statement-united-nations-2019#:~:text=The%20International%20Committee%20of%20the,the%20protection%20of%20humanitarian%20space.](http://www.icrc.org/en/document/peacekeeping-operations-icrc-statement-united-nations-2019#:~:text=The%20International%20Committee%20of%20the,the%20protection%20of%20humanitarian%20space.)

17 September 1999	The Security Council unanimously adopts Resolution 1265, addressing the issue of humanitarian implications of peacekeeping missions.
19 September 2003	The UNMIL is established by Security Council resolution 1509.
14 September 2005	The Responsibility to Protect (R2P) international center is established.
12 July 2010	The Security Council in accordance with Resolution 1925, renews the operation (MONUC).
8 July 2011	The Security Council adopts Resolution 1966.
24 May 2018	Security Council Resolution 2417 is adopted, addressing the issue of conflict-related hunger.
31 July 2022	Peacekeepers go against their protocol and open fire on civilians during the (MONUC) operation.
19 December 2023	Resolution 2717 is unanimously adopted outlining peacekeepers' gradual, responsible, sustainable withdrawal from DRC and the handover of responsibilities to the Government.

## PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

### The Responsibility to Protect (R2P)

The Responsibility to Protect (R2P) is an international center established in 2005. It seeks to ensure that the international community never again fails to halt the mass atrocity crimes of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity whilst its mission is to make R2P a reality.<sup>32</sup>

The responsibility of states to protect their populations, international assistance, and timely and decisive collective action when a state fails in its responsibility are R2Ps pillars of responsibility. It represents a vital step in addressing the humanitarian implications of peacekeeping missions by recognizing that the international community has a shared obligation to protect civilians from such crimes.

<sup>32</sup> "What Is R2P?" *Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect*, 24 June 2023, [www.globalr2p.org/what-is-r2p/](http://www.globalr2p.org/what-is-r2p/).

R2P emphasizes proactive measures, cooperation, and diplomacy to prevent conflicts and protect vulnerable populations. It provides a suitable framework guiding peacekeeping missions prior to or during ethical considerations and decision-making processes. The effects R2P has brought are evident in its influence on international discourse, fostering a commitment to human rights and prompting a shift towards preventative strategies. R2P has facilitated increased awareness, cooperation, and accountability, offering a shared vision for a world where the protection of individuals from mass atrocities is a global responsibility.

### United Nations Security Council Resolution 1265 (1999)<sup>33</sup>

On September 17, 1999, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1265, addressing the issue of humanitarian implications of peacekeeping missions.

This Resolution emphasized the need to incorporate humanitarian concerns before the planning and implementation of peacekeeping missions whilst also acknowledging the fact that conflict and peacekeeping activities could lead to significant humanitarian consequences. Additionally, it aimed to ensure the protection of civilians in conflict zones. Some key factors that were addressed in this resolution were the protection of civilians, humanitarian access both in terms of peacekeepers being able to reach populations affected by the conflict and said populations having access to aid and healthcare, coordination with the military and actors to enhance the effectiveness of humanitarian assistance, Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law and the training and awareness that had to be increased in order to improve the peacekeepers abilities.

Although this resolution played a vital role in recognizing and addressing the humanitarian aspects of peacekeeping, resolutions such as the Resolution 1674 (2006) further contributed and built on those principles. More specifically, it certified the responsibility of the international community to protect civilians and prevent genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity.<sup>34</sup>

### United Nations Security Council Resolution 2417 (2018)

The United Nations Security Council Resolution 2417 which was adopted on May 24 2018 addressed the issue of conflict-related hunger and emphasized the need for international assistance to prevent and respond to situations where conflict intensifies food insecurity.

The adoption of this resolution brought various changes and has had a significant impact on addressing conflict-related hunger and promoting humanitarian efforts and its influence is evident in multiple developments over the years. In response to the

<sup>33</sup> "Resolution 1265(1999) /." *United Nations*, [digitallibrary.un.org/record/285718?ln=en](https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/285718?ln=en).

<sup>34</sup> "Resolution 1674 (2006) /." *United Nations*, [digitallibrary.un.org/record/573969](https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/573969).

rising food insecurity crisis in Ethiopia's Tigray region, OCHA called on UNSC 2417, encouraging an open debate and condemnation by the UNSC, leading to sanctions. The resolution has been referenced in addressing conflicts in Yemen and Ukraine, emphasizing the protection of civilian infrastructure. The resolution's principles have created discussions at both the African Union and UNSC levels, fostering a heightened awareness of the humanitarian impact of conflicts worldwide. Overall, UNSC Resolution 2417 has spurred concrete actions, policy adjustments, and international collaboration in addressing the critical nexus between conflict and food insecurity.

As the UN Special Rapporteur on Food Michael Fakhri noted, this resolution is a very powerful tool. It is powerful because it recognizes that hunger is a cause and effect of armed conflict. It is influential due to the fact that it warns against using food as a weapon. It is dynamic as it acknowledges the unique relationship between hunger and armed conflict, while also recognizing the complexity of hunger holistically and systemically.<sup>35</sup>

### Center for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC)

The Center for Civilians in conflict (CIVIC) has worked since 2003 to ensure the protection and well-being of civilians affected by armed conflicts, including those in areas with peacekeeping missions. They advocate and fight for policies and practices that minimize harm to civilians during military operations.

CIVIC's mission is to work with armed actors and civilians in conflict to develop and implement solutions to prevent, mitigate and respond to civilian harm. They call on and advise international organizations, governments, militaries, and armed non-state actors to adopt and implement policies to prevent civilian harm. When civilians are harmed, they advocate for the provision of amends and post-harm assistance. Their ultimate vision is a future where parties involved in conflict go above and beyond their legal obligations to minimize harm to civilians.<sup>36</sup> Their efforts and achievements to reach their goal have been recognized worldwide.

In particular, their research and advocacy in Afghanistan led to NATO approving its first amended policy for Afghan war victims, leading to a substantial reduction in civilian casualties caused by pro-government elements. In 2008-2009, CIVIC's efforts prompted the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to emphasize civilian harm mitigation, leading to a memorable decline in the percentage of civilian deaths attributed to pro-government elements. Additionally, CIVIC's collaboration with the United States Congress secured over \$200 million for assistance programs for civilians harmed in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan.<sup>37</sup> Their work extends to various conflict

<sup>35</sup> "Protection of Civilians: Four Years on from the Adoption of UNSC Resolution 2417." *Starvation Accountability*, 25 July 2022, [starvationaccountability.org/news-and-events/protection-of-civilians-four-years-on-from-the-adoption-of-uns-c-resolution-2417/](http://starvationaccountability.org/news-and-events/protection-of-civilians-four-years-on-from-the-adoption-of-uns-c-resolution-2417/).

<sup>36</sup> *Civilians In Conflict.Org*, [civiliansinconflict.org/our-work/](http://civiliansinconflict.org/our-work/).

<sup>37</sup> *Civilians In Conflict.Org*, [civiliansinconflict.org/our-work/](http://civiliansinconflict.org/our-work/).



zones, including Somalia, Libya, Syria, and Pakistan, where they played a crucial role in developing laws, advising on civilian harm mitigation, and documenting civilian losses.

## 15 YEARS OF CIVIC



Figure 4: Civics attempts and past work and achievements for civilians in conflict as of 2018<sup>38</sup>

## POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

### UN Supervisory body

Due to current events, peacekeepers have been doubted by a number of populations and deemed untrustworthy due to their lack of executing their mandate adequately and their violation of human rights. Therefore, it is necessary for a supervisory body, preferably one from the UN, to have the role of overseeing peacekeeping operations and ensuring that the personnel are abiding by UN protocol.

The said UN supervisory body will be assigned to conduct tests and trials before the operation, to ensure the reliability of the peacekeeping troops and their capability of fulfilling the mandate. The evaluations will be based on both technical and ethical skills, testing the individual's response under pressure, rapid decision-making, and character. This could be achieved through situational and psychological stimulations of possible scenarios.

<sup>38</sup>*Civilians In Conflict.Org*, [civiliansinconflict.org/our-work/](http://civiliansinconflict.org/our-work/).

Possible collaborations between the UN supervisory body and relevant International Organizations ranging from the International Criminal Police Organization (INCPOL) to Human Rights Watch could be beneficial depending on their expertise and experience. Additionally, the UN will have the ability to enhance global security and confidence with the effective execution of their missions and the monitoring of peacekeepers from the UN Supervisory body.

If any violations have been conducted by the peacekeepers, the UN Supervisory Body will have to take them to trial through ICC and ICJ whilst ensuring they are fired from their positions and given fair and appropriate punishments.

### Training and Capacity Building

Peacekeepers come from different Member States and are summoned to perform in UN peacekeeping missions without specialized training. Therefore, strengthening their physical and mental capabilities is a key priority for them to be able to face challenges carefully and successfully whilst adhering to the humanitarian principles of their mandate. Training programs should be mandatory for every peacekeeping troop and focus on every individual's approach to humanitarian policies and crises. Additionally, peacekeepers should be trained on how to engage with local populations and build secure relationships with them. Ultimately, peacekeepers must be aware of the consequences of their actions and the punishments they are bound to endure if they go against the mandate and harm citizens. Such consequences range from the risk of position removal to severe results like imprisonment for serious crimes.

A necessary organization to be involved in this training and capacity-building of troops is the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), alongside cooperation with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) such as the International Peace Institute (IPI) which specializes in peacebuilding. Through a calculated and positive approach, the entities involved will be able to help work towards the success of more peacekeeping missions and the fulfillment of global resolution.

### Accountability Measures

Accountability measures are key to the mitigation of humanitarian implications in peacekeeping missions. Peacekeepers must be aware of the consequences of their harmful actions and due to that, perhaps they will rethink destructive decisions before acting upon them. It is also imperative for the victims of such crimes to be brought to justice and so, be given back a sense of security. Therefore, the UN should collaborate with local authorities and ensure justice for the harmed individuals from peacekeepers, by enabling examinations of alleged misconduct, developing effective investigation processes, and implementing a legal system that holds appropriate punishments for the offenders whilst promoting justice.

An International Organization that should be included in the accountability framework is the International Criminal Court (ICC) or its sister organization, the International Court of Justice (ICJ), which could apply their expertise to ensure fair trials and equitable distribution of consequences by actively collaborating with local authorities. This will exemplify a commitment to eliminating humanitarian implications whilst continuing to fight for freedom and security, whilst also bringing justice and strengthening the credibility of peacekeepers.

### Long-Term Capacity Building and Development

An appropriate solution to the humanitarian challenges of peacekeeping lies in long-term capacity building and development initiatives. Rather than focusing solely on short-term crisis response, peacekeeping missions can invest in the socio-economic development of conflict-affected regions. This approach involves supporting education, healthcare, and infrastructure projects to build resilient communities. By addressing the root causes of conflict and promoting stability through sustainable development, peacekeeping organizations can lay the foundation for lasting peace and alleviate the humanitarian consequences of protracted conflicts.

Organizations that can help achieve this include renowned development entities such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank, and international non-governmental organizations like CARE and Oxfam. Collaborating with the UNDP allows peacekeeping missions to showcase its expertise in strengthening governance and improving access to basic services. The World Bank, focusing on poverty reduction and sustainable development, can provide financial support and technical expertise for infrastructure projects, contributing to the rebuilding and stability of affected communities. Additionally, collaborations with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) like CARE and Oxfam can ensure development programs, aligning efforts with local needs and empowering every resident to participate in the rebuilding process of their community. Through collaborations such as the ones noted above, peacekeeping missions can address the root causes of the conflict and create a sustainable framework for long-term peace and improvement.

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