

# Lowering Expectations: The Evolution of UN Peacekeeping and Recommendations for the Future

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## Abstract

United Nations Peacekeeping Operations have been contested since the first blue helmets arrived in the Gaza Strip in 1956. Peacekeeping Operations can be divided into three temporal categories, each with their own challenges: Cold War, post-Cold War, and twenty-first century. This article analyzes these three periods of peacekeeping in order to proffer advice as to how UN Peacekeeping should be undertaken in the future. Considering that UN member states are shying away from the financial burdens of peacekeeping and that the twenty-first century has been marked by states' desire to engage only in conflicts directly in line with national interests, I suggest that the United Nations should return to limited-mandate peacekeeping missions. By combining limited-mandate missions with a greater focus on conflict prevention, the United Nations may continue to play an important role in global peacekeeping.

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## Introduction

The United Nations Charter claims as one of the organization's primary goals "to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security."<sup>1</sup> Such lofty intentions, however, are necessarily complex when implemented. The finer points of UN protocol and powers were and are highly contested as member states fail to agree on just what the UN can and should do to fulfill its humanitarian aims. Today, UN peace maintenance is perhaps most closely associated with the famous "Blue Helmets," yet United Nations peacekeeping operations (PKOs)<sup>2</sup> have evolved slowly, moving imperfectly towards an idyllic vision of global peace as enforced by well-trained, blue-helmeted troops. From the paralysis of peacekeeping missions in the Cold War to a veritable explosion of peacekeeping in the post-Cold War years to renewed recalcitrance in the twenty-first century, powerful nations today are moving away from PKOs more

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations Charter reproduced in Paul Kennedy, *The Parliament of Man: The Past, Present, and Future of the United Nations* (New York: Random House, Inc., 2006), 314.

<sup>2</sup> United Nations Peacekeeping Operations are generally associated with Chapter VI of the United Nations Charter, which provides for the peaceful settlement of disputes. However, the Security Council does not need to and has never before explicitly invoked this chapter in the passing of a peacekeeping resolution. Peacekeeping operations should not be confused with larger-scaled peace enforcement operations, which are provided for under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. This chapter is related to "Action with Respect to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression" and while the Security Council has, in recent years, invoked Chapter VII in the deployment of peacekeeping operations a Chapter VII operation generally involved an expanded mandate and the SC's implicit approval of a more forceful mission. "Mandates and the Legal Basis for Peacekeeping," United Nations Peacekeeping, accessed April 16, 2015. <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/operations/pkmandates.shtml>.

broadly and instead moving towards a more effective and less costly means of supporting international peace and security. The UN should remain conscious of the problems of peacekeeping and adjust expectations for the future accordingly rather than relying on idealistic expectations of what the future might hold for peacekeeping.

### Background

After the creation of the United Nations in 1945,<sup>3</sup> the Cold War complicated debates over the proper place of the UN and UN peacekeeping in international affairs. The long-lasting conflict between the United States and the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics (USSR) meant that two of the Permanent Five (P5) members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) were “centrally involved in ... struggle” and proved themselves “willing to use the veto whenever necessary,” effectively preventing the Security Council from important action.<sup>4</sup> It was in this atmosphere that the United Nations undertook its first peacekeeping operation. Peacekeeping Operations in the future, however, would be shaped by the Security Council’s early, imperfect attempts at keeping the peace.

Regardless of major global changes, the problems which initially plagued the UN would remain influential in future affairs. During the Cold War, faulty missions, hesitant member states and UN leadership, and vetoes by the P5 changed UN peacekeeping operations and their role in the world significantly. As the UN has never fully standardized its peacekeeping operations, each new global crises requires a new consensus on the part of member states; though many founders envisioned that the United Nations would have military capabilities, the UN Charter does not provide a standardized framework for peacekeeping. In fact, “the UN Charter contains absolutely no mention of the word *peacekeeping* and offers no guidelines as to this form of collective action.”<sup>5</sup> Lack of standardized *motus operandi*, therefore, has led to disorganized and often highly flawed attempts at peacekeeping.

In the decades following World War II, Middle Eastern, African, and Asian decolonization movements threatened to destabilize the already fragile world peace. The United Nations understood that in order to sustain global peace and security, the organization would have to enforce it. In some of the world’s most dangerous and tumultuous regions, the UNSC worked through the frost of the Cold War in order to launch ‘peace observation’ missions in the 1940s, which the UNSC later gave military powers in order to monitor and maintain peace agreements.<sup>6</sup> These observational missions would become the first of over 71 total peacekeeping missions launched by the United Nations between 1948 and 2014.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> “Overview,” United Nations, accessed April 17, 2015. <http://www.un.org/en/sections/about-un/overview/index.html>.

<sup>4</sup> Kennedy, *The Parliament of Man*, 81.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 77.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 80.

<sup>7</sup> Thompson cites 69 missions between 1948 and 2012, but two missions have been established since 2012. The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) which began in 2013 and the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), both of which were missions originally undertaken by African Union forces and then taken over by United Nations forces. Thomas W. Jacobson, “UN Peacekeeping Overview and U.S. Support,” *International Diplomacy and Public Policy Center* (January-February 2012), 1.

Traditional UN peacekeeping operations<sup>8</sup> began with General Assembly resolution number 998 of November 4, 1956, which sent a force of military observers under a neutral military officer to create a physical barrier between Egyptians and Israeli combatants on the Gaza Strip.<sup>9</sup> Peacekeeping missions have become central to the UN's efforts to maintain global security and to the public image of the UN, however imperfect. Since this first mission, UN PKOs have both altered and been altered by changing global circumstances.

United Nations peacekeeping operations can be divided into three distinct historical phases: those missions which occurred during the Cold War (thirteen missions between November 1956 and April 1989 upon the fall of the Berlin Wall), those which took place in the aftermath of the Cold War (thirty-six missions from April 1989 to 2000),<sup>10</sup> and those which took place in the twenty-first century (sixteen missions between May 2002 and April 2014—the beginning of the most recent PKO). While each of these periods necessarily presented unique challenges to UN peacekeeping, the problem of ad hoc operations, the issue of financing and reimbursement, and the challenge of the primacy of national interest have all shaped peacekeeping from 1948 to the present. The continuing influence of these particular challenges means that they should be considered in any proposition for the future of UN peacekeeping operations.

One can only understand the future of UN PKOs by analyzing the nature of and challenges to UN peacekeeping in each of these three phases. Early United Nations peacekeeping operations observed more than they enforced, as the Cold War prevented them from expanding. The politics of the UN Security Council stagnated peacekeeping efforts in almost all areas, except for cases of decolonization. Moreover, the hypocrisy of major powers during the Cold War delegitimized the UN's peacekeeping operations in the eyes of many non-aligned nations. When the Soviet Union fell in 1989, the number of operative PKOs grew exponentially as the United Nations became infatuated with the new possibilities for international intervention. UN peacekeeping quickly became overworked and overburdened and member states realized that the UN would have to limit these operations if they were to remain financially feasible. The United States, which had originally been a large supporter of PKOs,<sup>11</sup> began to push back against such large-scale peacekeeping operations in 1995. In the twenty-first century, peacekeeping has been marked by a reduction in financing of and contributions to operations on the part of major world powers, despite efforts on the part of the UN to make operations more realistic and limited. As international politics and global security remain dominated

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<sup>8</sup> Two UN operations established before 1956 are often considered in historical reviews of UN PKOs, but these are distinguished as “observational” missions rather than “peacekeeping” missions due to the fact that neither were undertaken by armed observers. These first two missions were: the UN Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) and the UN Military Observer Group in Indian and Pakistan (UNMOGIP). The UNTSO was created to maintain peace between Israel and several other Arab nations in 1948 and remains operative today. “The Early Years” United Nations Peacekeeping, accessed April 16, 2015. <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/operations/early.shtml>.

<sup>9</sup> Kennedy, *The Parliament of Man*, 83.

<sup>10</sup> “Especially as a consequence of the termination of the Cold War, the détente in the relations between East and West (Gorbachev’s ‘new thinking’ in foreign policy matters) and, finally, the disappearance of the Soviet Union the number of UN peace-keeping operations increased” beginning in 1989 and escalating significantly after 1991. Robert Siekman, “The Development of the United Nations Law Concerning Peace-keeping Operations,” *Leiden Journal of International Law* 5, no. 2 (October 1992), 273.

<sup>11</sup> “Before 1988, the United States was involved in about two thirds of the cases that provided personnel. That fell subsequently to about one third.” This statistic does not take into account the quantity of troops provided in each particular case, but rather only for number of cases in which the United States was involved. Davis B. Bobrow and Mark A. Boyer, “Maintaining System Stability: Contributions to Peacekeeping Operations,” *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 41, no. 6 (Dec. 1997), 743.

by the War on Terror, member states will become increasingly focused on conflicts which engage their own national interests. Considering current trends, I argue that the UN should move away from expanded peacekeeping operations for which the United States—its primary funder—and other major member states clearly have little patience. Instead, I suggest that in order to maintain the functionality of PKOs, the UN should return to traditional, limited peacekeeping operations for cases of extreme violence and human rights violations. In most other cases, rather than deploy new operations, the United Nations should rely on civil society and NGOs to promote peaceful state-building and the prevention of humanitarian crises.

### Peacekeeping in the Cold War

As global powers prepared for what would be a decades-long conflict, the United Nations faced a daunting task: maintaining peace between great powers in a world of emerging nations. Ironically for European nations attempting to create a stable world, ex-colonies proved to be the first significant source of conflict requiring European intervention. When the colonial system collapsed in the 1950s and 60s, “decolonization created demand for a type of peacekeeping that had not really been anticipated”<sup>12</sup> by the United Nations, at that point primarily composed of European nations. The UN was forced to react to these changing global circumstances while its efficacy remained marred by the stalemate between the United States and Russia. Amid these conflicts, the UN faced for the first time what would become long-term problems for peacekeeping operations: inefficiency due to ad hoc procedures, lack of financing and troop support, and less than enthusiastic participation on the part of member states focusing on their own national interests in mind.

The first major UN peacekeeping operation was uniquely of the Cold War. Known as the United Nations Enforcement Force (UNEF), the UN’s first mission was established by the Security Council in 1956.<sup>13</sup> After the US intervened on behalf of Israel and relations between Egypt and Israel steadily deteriorated after the signing of the 1949 General Armistice Agreement, the conflict became dangerous enough to necessitate intervention. United Nations member states, France, and the United Kingdom in particular,<sup>14</sup> quickly realized that the complex proxy-Cold War conflict between Israel and Egypt was unfortunately an ideal circumstance for the United Nations to fulfill its mission to “maintain international peace and security.”<sup>15</sup> As would become the norm for peacekeeping, the UNEF operation was somewhere between an observation mission and a Chapter VII enforcement mission: “It was armed, but the units were to use their weapons only in self-defense and even then with utmost restraint.”<sup>16</sup> UNEF was intended to “supervise the withdrawal of the three occupying forces...to act as a buffer between the Egyptian and Israeli forces and to provide impartial supervision of the ceasefire.”<sup>17</sup>

United Nations Enforcement Force clearly demonstrated the problems of UN’s attempt to maintain peace during the Cold War, though it certainly maintained some

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<sup>12</sup> Kennedy, *The Parliament of Man*, 79.

<sup>13</sup> The UNEF was renamed post-facto after United Nations Enforcement Force II (UNEF II) was created in 1973.

<sup>14</sup> “Middle East-UNEF I: Background,” United Nations, accessed April 4, 2015, <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/past/unefIbackgr2.html#one>.

<sup>15</sup> United Nations Charter reproduced in Kennedy, *The Parliament of Man*, 314.

<sup>16</sup> “First United Nations Emergency Force,” United Nations, 2003, accessed April 16, 2015, <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/past/unefi.htm>.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

measure of peace in the region. The Security Council first met on the issue of the Egyptian-Israeli conflict on September 26, 1956, yet it was not until November 5 of the same year, after Israeli forces had threatened to cross the Egyptian border, that the Security Council passed the peacekeeping resolution. While troops first landed on Egyptian soil on November 14, 1956, peacekeepers were not permitted to fulfill their mandate until agreements on the status of troop force and a wide range of other problems between the UN and the Egyptian government were finalized in February of 1957.<sup>18</sup> The amount of time it took for UNEF to become operative demonstrates the problems of ad hoc peacekeeping: it takes time, negotiation, and limited, unsteady agreements, all of which dilute the power of what would otherwise be a rapid response force to an international crisis.<sup>19</sup> Ad hoc peacekeeping continues to be the *de facto* standard with the UN; however, the problems of ad hoc missions could be avoided were the UN to have a standardized framework for PKOs or rapid response teams to deploy to crisis areas.

Further weakening UNEF was the primacy placed on state's interests over peacekeeping, an issue that would manifest itself differently, but never cease to plague UN PKOs. Due to the UN's strict acceptance of state sovereignty,<sup>20</sup> UNEF was severely limited by Israel's refusal to allow troops into its territory.<sup>21</sup> By 1967, the question of state sovereignty managed to force the conclusion of UNEF I. In May of that year, the Egyptian government retracted its consent to UN troops and, while Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld could have brought the issue before the Security Council, the United States and USSR's entrenchment on opposing sides of the conflict meant that any action on Hammarskjöld's part would be effectively useless. Moreover, the governments of both India and Yugoslavia declared their intent to withdraw their troops from Egypt due to pressure from the USSR. Regardless of any security considerations, the implicated parties ended UNEF.<sup>22</sup> The national interests of UN member states clearly took priority over the humanitarian mission of the United Nations. Indeed, the UN did nothing to curb Israel's and Egypt's influence, nor did the UN undertake anything which might go against the desires of the United States or the USSR. The fact that state interests are so highly respected by the UN, while practical, has remained problematic for PKOs.

The ad hoc nature of UNEF I meant that the operation was neither as fast-moving nor as effective as a rapid deployment force would have been. Perhaps more importantly, the interests of individual players—acting to protect their own sovereignty in the case of the Egyptian and Israeli governments or to maintain their spheres of influence in the case of the United States and the USSR—significantly depleted the power of the PKO. In this first peacekeeping mission, member states considered neither funding nor troop contribution problems, but these quickly became significant as the UN undertook peacekeeping efforts increasingly regularly. Although not a total failure, UNEF was highly problematic and, retrospectively, demonstrates many of the problems which would

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<sup>18</sup> "UNEF I: Background," United Nations, 2003, accessed April 16, 2015, <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/past/unef1backgr2.html>.

<sup>19</sup> The Brahimi Report notes that "The first 6 to 12 weeks following a ceasefire or peace accord are often the most critical ones for establishing a stable peace and the credibility of a new operation." UNEF did not fulfill this time scale requirement. "Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations" General Assembly Security Council, United Nations, August 2000, accessed April 20, 2015.

[http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/55/305](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/55/305), xi.

<sup>20</sup> With the advent of R2P and various precedents, the UN today is more willing to violate state sovereignty or to discount the interests of the state in which the intervention is taking place than it once was. However, the extent to which this is acceptable remains a debate in peacekeeping.

<sup>21</sup> In fact, while the Secretary-General repeatedly raised the question of stationing UNEF troops on the Israeli side of the buffer zone in order to maintain the peace "this was declared entirely unacceptable to Israel." Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> "UNEF I: Background," United Nations, 2003, accessed April 16, 2015.

plague UN PKOs. As the Cold War raged, however, it is hardly surprising that the UN struggled to achieve meaningful compromise between member states in favor of international intervention.

From this first mission in 1956 until the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, only thirteen UN peacekeeping operations were undertaken—even these were primarily for “conflicts that had arisen after European de-colonization.”<sup>23</sup> Missions in emerging nations were generally undertaken both to provide a stable transition out of colonialism and, more subtly, to prevent the expansion of the American or Soviet spheres of influence. However in order to maintain order, any case which directly concerned conflicts between the United States and the USSR was “dealt with outside the UN.”<sup>24</sup> Consequently, UN peacekeeping operations in the Cold War were few and far between. When the Security Council could garner enough support to undertake PKOs, missions in this period had little regulation, instead implementing peacekeeping on a case by case basis. Each mission was implemented only as crises arose and was necessarily shaped by the conditions of the Cold War. Peacekeeping at this time held an as yet undecided role:

Peacekeeping evolved in the grey zone between pacific settlement and military enforcement...the UN [aimed] at keeping new conflicts outside the sphere of bloc differences. The technique of preventative diplomacy was to be used to forestall the competitive intrusion of the rival power blocs into conflict situations that were either the result or potential cause of a power vacuum in the Cold War. Preventative diplomacy was a policy designed to contain a peripheral war, to achieve a kind of disengagement before the fact.<sup>25</sup>

Due both to the UN’s desire to limit the expansion of American and Soviet spheres of influence and to the fear that its actions would be perceived to be neo-imperialistic, UN peacekeeping operations in the Cold War utilized troops donated from non-P5 members which were at least perceived to be neutral.<sup>26</sup> In the case of UNEF I and II, almost all peacekeeping troops were donated by Canada and Poland.<sup>27</sup> At this time, PKOs were supported more or less willingly by major powers who encouraged their partners to donate troops. Once the Cold War ended, however, the same world powers became unwilling to fund troop contribution and the quality of peacekeeping contingents declined over the following decades.

Too many conflicts during the Cold War which could have benefitted from a UN peacekeeping force were given over to “‘good offices’ diplomacy by the Secretary General” due to their close association with the great power struggle; “because each side possessed the veto and capacity to begin another world war,”<sup>28</sup> the UN’s ability to establish peacekeeping operations was limited. Peacekeeping began to see the problems which would continue to mar it in the future: dangers due to the ad hoc establishment of

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<sup>23</sup> Muzaffer Ercan Yilmaz, “UN Peacekeeping in the Post-Cold War Era,” *International Journal on World Peace* 22, no. 2 (June 2002), 15.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 15-16.

<sup>25</sup> Ramesh Thakur, *The United Nations, Peace and Security* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 34.

<sup>26</sup> Kennedy, *The Parliament of Man*, 83.

<sup>27</sup> The forced balance of the Cold War. Canada served as a representative of NATO and Western interests in the UN and Poland stood as its counterpart, representing the Warsaw Pact nations and the Eastern or Soviet interests. Henry Wiseman, “United Nations UNEF II: A Basis for a New Approach to Future Operations,” *International Journal* 31, no. 1 (Winter 1975/1976), 124.

<sup>28</sup> Kennedy *The Parliament of Man*, 87.

operations and financial and personnel limitations due to the lack of support from those few countries in a position to do so. Perhaps unique to this period, UN PKOs also suffered from a lack of legitimacy in the view of many developing nations which believed that “UN operations led to diplomatic ennui and could not be freed of the Cold War rivalry.”<sup>29</sup>

### The Cold War is Over: A Time of Opportunities

The end of the Cold War significantly reduced tensions in the Security Council, leading to a massive increase in the “sheer number of crises occurring in so short a time”<sup>30</sup> as the former USSR, Yugoslavia, and other Communist nations dissolved and thus experienced conflict.<sup>31</sup> As rivalry between the two world powers diminished, P5 were more likely to be receptive to multilateral action and increasingly less likely to exercise their veto. In fact between 1945 and 1990 the United States vetoed sixty-nine resolutions proposed by the Security Council and the USSR vetoed 114; in contrast, between June 1990 and May 1993 there were no vetoes used at all in terms of peacekeeping.<sup>32</sup> As not all world affairs were now predicated on the US-USSR conflict, “the major powers were less likely than before to see an international conflict as part of a challenge from their major global adversary.”<sup>33</sup> The end of the Cold War gave the UN a *carte blanche* to expand global peacekeeping which, while beneficial for some individual nations, was disastrous for the international image of peacekeeping.

Only between 1988 and 1994, “25 new peacekeeping and peacemaking missions...sprung to life”<sup>34</sup> causing a massive increase in the demand for personnel, funding, and logistical support necessary to create and maintain these operations. In 1989 UN peacekeeping operations cost a total of \$635 million, to be divided among member states.<sup>35</sup> By 1994, the total cost of PKOs had risen to an incredible \$3 billion dollars, annually.<sup>36</sup> Moreover, the increased number and size of PKOs taken on by the UN after the end of the Cold War led to a corresponding increase in the number of personnel deployed around the world in missions. In 1978, there were approximately 17,000 military and civil personnel deployed in peacekeeping operations; this number rose to a record high in 1993, reaching almost 79,000 personnel deployed.<sup>37</sup> Both financial and personnel increases put an incredible strain on the UN as a whole, but particularly on those member states wealthy enough or generous enough to bear the brunt of these operations. The financing and staffing of peacekeeping operations become a problem in the post-Cold War period—perhaps even more so due to the increasing cost of peacekeeping.

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<sup>29</sup> Thakur, *The United Nations, Peace and Security*, 38.

<sup>30</sup> Kennedy, *The Parliament of Man*, 91.

<sup>31</sup> Previously the UN only deployed peacekeeping forces to enforce ceasefires after armed engagements, generally in cases of civil war or ethnic conflict. Yilmaz, “UN Peacekeeping in the Post-Cold War Era,” 17.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 17-18.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> Michael Renner, “A Difficult Assignment: UN Peacekeeping in the Post-Cold War Era,” *Ecumenical Review* 47, no. 3 (July 1995), 320.

<sup>35</sup> The formula used to divide this cost takes into account the economic capacity of each member state and establishes financial responsibility based on various economic qualifications. Accordingly, wealthier nations are responsible for a much larger share of UN costs than poorer nations.

<sup>36</sup> Marjorie A. Browne, “United Nations Peacekeeping: Issues for Congress,” *Library of Congress Washington D.C. Congressional Research Service*, January 30, 2008, 2.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

The UN Verification Mission in Guatemala<sup>38</sup> (MINUGUA) which lasted from 1994 to 1997 demonstrates a typical peacekeeping operation of the post-Cold War period reflecting the increased size of operation, complexity of mission, and expanding peacekeeping mandates. After the Government of Guatemala and the Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca (UNRG) signed the “Agreement for Firm and Lasting Peace” in 1994, the United Nations deployed a task force of approximately 250 personnel in order to establish and maintain the peace outlined in this treaty.<sup>39</sup> The personnel for this mission included “human rights monitors, legal experts, indigenous specialists and police” who were “posted throughout Guatemala, including in its remotest areas” in order to “focus public attention on human rights and the related problem of impunity.”<sup>40</sup> Historically used to enforce treaties, various non-military personnel were deployed as peacekeepers, demonstrating a significant departure from the traditional mandate of peacekeeping as established in the Cold War. In order to support such expanded missions, UN member states had to deploy more troops and provide more financing, discouraging continued contributions on the part of wealthier nations.

While peacekeepers initially deployed under MINUGUA provided some sense of stability for Guatemalans, it took more than two years after the initial envoy of troops for the peacekeepers to work on long-term peace through demobilization and disarmament of former UNRG combatants. In order to facilitate this effort, the UN expanded the mandate of MINUGUA in 1997 after the Guatemalan government and the UNRG signed a definitive ceasefire in Oslo. The second, expanded mandate of the MINUGUA mission is perhaps more representative of “traditional” peacekeeping missions, intended to facilitate the transition from a society at war to a society at peace. To this second task force were assigned some 150 additional personnel beyond the humanitarian individuals already on the ground in Guatemala. It took contributions from sixteen different nations in order to muster the 150 troops sent to Guatemala, adding to the complexity of ad hoc PKOs.<sup>41</sup> Having troops from so many different nations, each with different training and abilities leads to inefficient operations; four men died while on mission in Guatemala, all of whose deaths were listed as “accidents.”<sup>42</sup> Despite the relatively small size of MINUGUA, the mission cost UN member states approximately \$39 million dollars.<sup>43</sup>

MINUGUA provides a broad image of UN peacekeeping operations in the post-Cold War period. PKOs between 1989 and 2000 were based on a broader interpretation of the UN’s mandate to maintain international peace and security, thus raising both financial and personnel demands on member states. Beginning in this period, the UN also partnered more heavily with civil society organizations, as demonstrated by the multilateral involvement of non-UN organizations in Guatemala. In the post-mission

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<sup>38</sup> The acronym MINUGUA was created from the Spanish name for this UN PKO: Misión de Verificación de las Naciones Unidas de Guatemala, known in English as the United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala.

<sup>39</sup> “United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala,” United Nations, accessed April 15, 2015. <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/past/minugua.htm>.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> Troop contributions for MINUGUA were as follows: Spain, 42, Uruguay, 20, Brazil, 18, Canada 15, Ukraine, 8, Venezuela, 8, Argentina, 5, United States, 5, Russia, 3, Ecuador, 3, and Norway 2. Singapore, Germany, and Austria each provided 5 medical personnel to the mission. “Report of the Secretary-General on the Group of Military Observers Attached to MINUGUA” *United Nations Security Council*, June 4, 1997. Accessed April 15, 2015. <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N97/128/04/PDF/N9712804.pdf?OpenElement>, 8.

<sup>42</sup> “Fatalities,” United Nations, updated April 8, 2015, accessed April 19, 2015. <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/resources/statistics/fatalities.shtml>.

<sup>43</sup> “Guatemala-MINUGUA: Facts and Figures,” United Nations, accessed April 16, 2015. <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/past/minuguafacts.html>.



report to the Security Council, Secretary-General Hammerskjold acknowledged “the role of the European Union, USAID, OAS, and the United Nations programmes and agencies that took the lead in provided logistical and other support to the demobilization process...”<sup>44</sup> Partnering with civil society and other UN affiliated non-peacekeeping agencies began in earnest in this period and may serve as a significant aspect of the future of UN PKOs.

In the Guatemalan mission, smaller nations contributed a significant portion of the overall troops—a necessary, if problematic trend, since by the latter half of the 1990s, most major world powers were hesitant to contribute significant numbers of troops. Troop contributions are, of course, essential to UN PKOs as the organization lacks a standing military; however, contingencies from less stable countries often embark upon missions without the relevant training, education, or equipment necessary for effective peacekeeping, not only lessening the value of contributions, but also endangering missions and peacekeepers themselves.<sup>45</sup> While these small-state contributions combine to make reasonably sized operative units, they are nowhere near as effective as would be those “of the world’s most capable militaries, including the United States and British military.”<sup>46</sup> More powerful nations, however, after seeing the danger of post-Cold War peacekeeping in Somalia and Rwanda, edged away from active involvement in the operations.

Despite the relative success of MINUGUA, peacekeeping missions in the post-Cold War period were more violent and dangerous than any previous PKOs.’ In Rwanda, Somalia, and the former Yugoslavia, peacekeeping troops were killed by supposedly treaty-abiding combatants. The increasingly dangerous situations in which peacekeepers found themselves led to unprecedented casualties.<sup>47</sup> In this generation of peacekeeping, troops were increasingly involved “in a theatre where there was no peace to keep.”<sup>48</sup> Such failures stymied positive public opinion for peacekeeping, pushing nations whose interest in the financing of troops was already waning by the last few years of the 1990s further away from UN peacekeeping operations. Despite the positive humanitarian intentions behind the increase in UN peacekeeping operations of the post-Cold War period, “having evolved through improvisation”<sup>49</sup> and being so costly, such ad hoc operations were bound for failure. The financial and human costs of peacekeeping operations, tolerated in the immediate post-Cold War years, would serve to dissuade major nations from participation in the twenty-first century.

By 1995, major UN member nations were reconsidering their commitment to UN peacekeeping due to the seemingly ever-increasing costs of PKOs. Reflecting growing dissatisfaction on behalf of the United States for military action undertaken through the UN, the Clinton Administration issued the Presidential Decision Directive 25 (PDD 25) in 1994 in order to curb American involvement in what was seen nationally as an unnecessary international involvement.<sup>50</sup> PDD 25 directed the United States to participate in UN PKOs only when missions proposed by the Security Council clearly advance American interests, have exit strategies, permit American forces to remain under

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<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>45</sup> Renner, “A Difficult Assignment,” 321.

<sup>46</sup> Yilmaz, “UN Peacekeeping in the Post-Cold War Era,” 22.

<sup>47</sup> Between 1993 and 1995, 546 peacekeepers died in PKOs around the world, whereas no more than 40 peacekeepers were killed in any given year between 1962 and 1991. “Fatalities,” United Nations Peacekeeping.

<sup>48</sup> Thakur, *The United Nations, Peace and Security*, 40.

<sup>49</sup> Yilmaz, “UN Peacekeeping in the Post-Cold War Era,” 22

<sup>50</sup> Browne, “United Nations Peacekeeping: Issues for Congress,” *Library of Congress Washington D.C. Congressional Research Service*, 1-2.

American control, are reimbursable by the UN, and could not otherwise succeed without the participation of American forces.<sup>51</sup> In essence, the Clinton Administration's directive meant that the United States could limit itself to as few or as many peacekeeping operations as it desired, knowing full well that the United Nations could not guarantee most of the provisions stipulated in the PDD 25. In addition to the presidential directive, the United States pushed back against the post-Cold War explosion in peacekeeping by limiting financial contributions; the United States Congress mandated in 1995 that "U.S. peacekeeping payments had [to be] limited to 25 percent"<sup>52</sup> of the assessment total estimated by the UN.

**Table 1. U.N. Peacekeeping Assessment Levels for the United States, Calendar Years 1992-2007**

Year	U.N. Assessment	Recognized by U.S.	Year	U.N. Assessment	Recognized by U.S.
1992	30.387% (30.4%)	30.4%	2000	30.2816% (30.3%)	25%
1993	31.739% (31.7%)	30.4%	2001	28.134% (28.13%)	25% // 28.15% *
1994	31.735% (31.7%)	30.4%	2002	27.3477% (27.35%)	27.90%
1995	31.151% (31.2%)	30.4%; Oct. 1: 25%	2003	26.927% (26.93%)	27.40%
1996	30.965% (30.9%)	25%	2004	26.690% (26.69%)	27.40%
1997	30.862% (30.9%)	25%	2005	26.4987% (26.5%)	27.1%
1998	30.5324% (30.5%)	25%	2006	26.6901% (26.7%)	25%
1999	30.3648% (30.4%)	25%	2007	26.0864% (26.08%)	25%

Figure 1 Taken from Browne, "United Nations Peacekeeping: Issues for Congress," 7.

Peacekeeping in the post-Cold War period was plagued by many of the same problems which had previously marked UN PKOs. The end of the conflict between the US and the USSR permitted the Security Council to increase its global peacekeeping presence, expanding its understanding of threats to international peace and security to include humanitarian crises and economic problems and thus implementing peacekeeping operations in more than just truce-enforcement. This increase in operational complexity, size, and quantity led to massive increases in cost and troop demands. In the immediate post-Cold War years, major UN member nations were willing to bear these costs. Yet as they continued to expand, largely without improvement, member nations demonstrated their hesitancy to become involved in conflicts where they had little national interests and which would require consistently larger contributions to maintain.

<sup>51</sup> Under President Bill Clinton, *U.S. Policy on Reforming Multilateral Peace Operations*, Presidential Decision Directive/NSC-25, Washington, D.C., May 3, 1994.

<sup>52</sup> Browne, "United Nations Peacekeeping," 7.

## Peacekeeping and the War on Terror: PKOs in the Twenty-First Century

Due largely to the over-zealous increase in peacekeeping efforts of the post-Cold War period, in 1995 UN member states began to push back against an ad hoc system which had begun to outgrow the capabilities and wills of its funders. Problems with peacekeeping already evident in the Cold War were exacerbated by the post-Cold War expansion of operations and have served as reasonable excuses for major UN member nations in the twenty-first century to avoid extensive involvement. Due to skyrocketing costs and the increasing danger and complexity of missions, UN member states in the twenty-first century have worked strenuously to avoid involvement with UN peacekeeping operations unless doing so would directly contribute to their interests.

The UN itself acknowledged the problems of the post-Cold War period. At the behest of Secretary-General Kofi Annan the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations was created to address the problems PKOs as evidenced by the missions in Rwanda and Srebrenica. Known as the Brahimi Report, the UN's panel openly admitted many of the problems of peacekeeping in the past and optimistically provided suggestions for the future. These will be discussed in the final portion of this paper. Interestingly peacekeeping in the twenty-first century has meant both the continued implementation of operations on the part of the UN and the diminishing participation on the part of member states as many refocus their military and economic capabilities towards more specific security interests. As long as conflict exists, the UN will continue to intervene. However, due to the nature of world conflict in the twenty-first century, great powers such as the United States, Britain, Russia, and China are choosing to invest their economic and military strength in interventions which suit their needs rather than humanitarian interventions, regardless of idealistic desires of UN diplomats.

Following the trend of the previous two periods, UN PKO troop contributions in the twenty-first century have come primarily from smaller, non-P5 nations. The UN's insistence on expansive interventionism has continued to increase the demand on such nations for troop contributions; as of mid-2005, there were over 78,000 military and civilian UN operatives in missions around the world,<sup>53</sup> nearly matching the peak of post-Cold War troops. For admittedly different reasons in the 21<sup>st</sup> century,<sup>54</sup> P5 nations today contribute few troops: the United States and Russia contribute approximately 1 percent of troops, EU member states taken as a whole give only ten percent of PKO troops, China contributes six percent of peacekeepers, and Japan provides no troops.<sup>55</sup> Instead, troops for twenty-first century PKOs come by and large from poorer, less politically-dominant nations—often to the detriment of troop quality and capability. The four largest contributory nations as of 2015 were: Bangladesh with 9,446, Pakistan with 8480, India with 8116, and Ethiopia with 7858.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Yilmaz, "UN peacekeeping in the Post-Cold War Era," 21.

<sup>54</sup> Primarily in the Cold War period of peacekeeping, major UN member states declined to provide troop contributions to peacekeeping efforts due to a reasonable desire to prevent the image of neo-imperialism. By using troops primarily from less influential countries, the P5 could deny accusations of undue influence. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, P5 nations have declined to provide troops for more self-interested reasons—most are not willing to sacrifice the personnel or provide the material required to provide these and, especially in the case of the United States, states are unwilling to place their personnel under the command of non-national forces.

<sup>55</sup> Yilmaz, "UN peacekeeping in the Post-Cold War Era," 22.

<sup>56</sup> These figures are calculated based on donated troops, military experts, and police forces. United Nations Peacekeeping, "Troop and Police Contributions," accessed April 10, 2015. <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/resources/statistics/contributors.shtml>.

As of 2012, only 10 nations provide 59 percent of the UN peacekeeping personnel,<sup>57</sup> which suggests an overall reticence to provide personnel on the part of member states. Those nations still willing to contribute significant troops are, in large part, those with less powerful military capabilities and thus those more likely to be problematic. As the UN needs troops in order to staff its operations, it maintains financial incentives for minor states to contribute, despite the clear problems this has caused. The UN's reimbursement of personnel is fixed at approximately \$1,000 per soldier, per month meaning that, "UN peacekeeping is a source of revenue for governments that pay their personnel less than the flat rate,"<sup>58</sup> yet a source of loss for those nations which pay soldiers more. Not only does this limited reimbursement de-incentivize more capable nations from contributing troops, it encourages the contribution by poorer nations which are less likely to be capable of coping with the increasingly complex situations into which UN PKOs are being sent in the twenty-first century. Increased accidental deaths of UN peacekeepers further supports the idea that those troops donated by smaller states are less able; as of 2012, a full 39 percent of troop losses in UN peacekeeping operations were caused by accidents rather than combat deaths.<sup>59</sup> So long as troop contributions continue to come from primarily poorer nations, UN PKOs will be unable to operate as well as any unilateral operation might.

Major world powers have even shied away from financing UN peacekeeping operations in the twenty-first century. While "legally, all members states are obliged to pay their share of peacekeeping costs...member states have been reluctant to pay."<sup>60</sup> As peacekeeping operations became more expensive in the post-Cold War, member nations' contributions failed to match the trend. As discussed previously, the United States officially limited its financing of UN operations to 25 percent in 1995, causing significant arrears in the UN's peacekeeping budget. The United States is not alone in this: both the Russian Federation and the United States top this list, with debts of \$500 million and \$743 million, respectively.<sup>61</sup> The United States still shoulders the largest burden of peacekeeping financing, but the percentage of contributions given by the United States continues to lessen and generally remains unpredictable. Between 1995 and 1997, the United States undertook a 55 percent decrease in UN funding—from paying 22.5 percent of its calculated debt to owing 33.5 percent of it. France, Argentina, Belgium, Iran, and several other nations undertook similar trends in subsequent years.<sup>62</sup> "This fact suggests the possibility of emulation of, if not downright leadership by, the United States."<sup>63</sup> There can be little hope that larger member nations which can afford to pay off the costs of UN peacekeeping efforts will begin to do so in years to come. As the cost of peacekeeping continues to skyrocket after the liftoff in 1989, the UN will not be able to count on increasing contributions from member nations.

Following the example of the United States, other nations in the twenty-first century have been increasingly hesitant to both finance and staff peacekeeping operations. Describing the limits of UN peacekeeping operations in 2003, then Chef de Cabinet to the UN Secretary-General Iqbal Riza argued a two-fold system of limitation; "First, in terms of financing. Is the rest of the membership willing to pay the rather heavy bills that comes with peacekeeping?...Then the question becomes whether the other

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<sup>57</sup> Jacobson "UN Peacekeeping Overview and U.S. Support," 3.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>60</sup> Yilmaz, "UN peacekeeping in the Post-Cold War Era," 23.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>62</sup> Bobrow and Boyer, "Maintaining System Stability," 740.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*

resources are available.”<sup>64</sup> Even in 2003, Riza said that “more and more we have had difficulty in finding the human resources...Western countries, although supporting [PKOs] politically...are reluctant to contribute troops.”<sup>65</sup> UN diplomats have demonstrated continued interest in supporting expanded peacekeeping operations in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and Western politicians pay peacekeeping extensive lip service, yet trends in both financing and troop contributions indicate that such extensive interventionism will soon be unfeasible.

Though the post-Cold War period was devoid of large-scale international conflict, the twenty-first century War on Terror has forced major nations to focus on more vital national security interests. Certainly, major UN member states maintain interest in the benefits of multilateralism, as reflected by the PDD 25, these states are only willing to undertake such operations where they will clearly benefit the interest of the state. The 9/11 terrorist attacks, which in many ways began the modern War on Terror, “prompted governments worldwide...to re-examine their foreign policy and place a stronger emphasis on national security”<sup>66</sup>; often times, this has meant that both great power nations and middle powers have prioritized national security over humanitarian issues. This is especially true of the United States. As the United States has deployed its own military around the world, American policy makers have demonstrated their intent to preserve America’s “freedom to act unilaterally where ‘national interests’ are at stake, not to get drawn into what are seen as quagmires abroad, and thus [join] UN operations only in a commanding role....”<sup>67</sup>

United Nations peacekeeping today remains limited by the same general factors which have plagued such missions since 1948. Increased expectations by idealistic diplomats have continued to expand the use of PKOs in global conflict, both in size and complexity, yet the ad hoc nature of a peacekeeping system which still lacks a unified operational framework has prevented it from achieving exceptionalism. Moreover, the reluctance of wealthy nations to contribute significant troops or monetary provisions has led to more problematic PKOs—limited by the poor quality of peacekeeping troops. Finally, the War on Terror in which major UN member states have taken part has led to a refocusing of these states’ resources towards their own national interests over those activities pertinent more specifically to the interests of the UN. Without an independent military or steady revenue, the UN will continue to be limited by the desires of the wealthier nations which support its operations. More specifically, “because the USA will remain the main financial underwriter of the costs of UN peacekeeping, it will continue to exercise unmatched influence on the establishment, mandate, nature, size and termination of UN peace operation.”<sup>68</sup> For better or worse, if the United States and other major powers do not want the UN to undertake peacekeeping missions, they will not be executed well, if at all.

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<sup>64</sup> The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs, “Iraq, U.S., and the War on Terror: The UN and the Future of Multilateralism: An Interview with Chef de Cabinet to the UN Secretary-General S. Iqbal Riza,” *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs* 27, no. 39 (Spring 2003).

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> Noha Shawki, “Civil Society, Middle Powers, and R2P: An Analysis of Canada’s Response to the Crisis in Darfar,” *Peace Research* 40, no. 1 (2008), 27.

<sup>67</sup> Renner, “A Difficult Assignment,” 322.

<sup>68</sup> Thakur, *The United Nations, Peace and Security*, 65.

## Suggestions for Peacekeeping in the Future

Without renewed commitment on the part of Member States, significant institutional change and increased financial support, the United Nations will not be capable of executing the critical peacekeeping and peacebuilding tasks that the Member States assign to it in coming months and years. There are many tasks which United Nations peacekeeping forces should not be asked to undertake and many places they should not go. But when the United Nations does send its forces to uphold the peace, they must be prepared to confront the lingering forces of war and violence, with the ability and determination to defeat them.<sup>69</sup>

In 2000, the United Nations itself acknowledged the limitations of peacekeeping operations through the Brahimi Report, quoted above. Yet the Report remained optimistic for future PKOs, urging member states to contribute greater financial and operational support to missions in order to make them more effective. While many of the suggestions made in the Brahimi Report are quite reasonable—it suggests that nations train and maintain troops that can be deployed within thirty days of a crisis and that peacekeeping troops be permitted a much larger mandate, among other things—it does not take into account many of the political realities of the twenty-first century that might make the implementation of these recommendations unlikely or impossible.

Unlike at any other point in modern history, the greatest international conflict in the twenty-first century will not be played out between states or between vast, organized world powers. It is clear that the greatest threat to global peace and security, at least in terms of military conflict, is terrorism. In no way does the advent of the War on Terror mark a drastic change in *quantity* of conflicts, but rather a change in the *nature* of conflict. World powers have necessarily focused on terrorist threats which put them at particular risk and, due to the nature of the War on Terror, the national interests of states are less likely to coincide with the security threats targeted by UN peacekeeping. “The ‘War on Terrorism,’ the ultimate paradigm of the asymmetric conflict, will continually remove militaries from routine peacekeeping operations in favor of missions more in line with the budget and capacity of [states] as they operate as a tool for national defense.”<sup>70</sup>

These suggestions are perhaps not the most idealistic mindset nor one most in-line with non-partisan humanitarian intervention, but *realpolitik* demands that we reconsider our expectations of UN peacekeeping. The United Nations is in desperate need of “a reliable source of funding and resources for peacekeeping,”<sup>71</sup> but such a provision is unlikely to be achieved in the near future. Even the Brahimi report acknowledges the limitations of PKOs so long as they remain without funding: “the changes the Panel recommends will have no lasting impact unless Member States summon the political will to support the United Nations politically, financially, and operationally.”<sup>72</sup> So long as those nations which determine when and where the UN can intervene are not interested in intervention, should we continue to push limited, ad hoc, and highly flawed peacekeeping missions through the UN? In the post-Cold War explosion of peacekeeping operations,

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<sup>69</sup> “Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations” General Assembly Security Council, United Nations, August 2000, accessed April 20, 2015.

[http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/55/305](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/55/305), viii.

<sup>70</sup> Jean-Paul Hanon, “Militaires et lutte antiterroriste,” *Cultures et Conflits* 56 (Hiver 2006), 121: “La ‘guerre au terrorisme’, paradigme ultime du conflit asymétrique, serait venue tirer les militaires de la routine des opérations de maintien de la paix pour des missions plus en accord avec leurs capacités réelles et les budgets consentis par les États pour l’entretien d’un outil de défense.”

<sup>71</sup> Browne, “United Nations Peacekeeping,” 1.

<sup>72</sup> “Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations,” United Nations, x.

“UN peacekeeping efforts have expanded far...beyond the financial capacity of member nations”<sup>73</sup> and while the ability to intervene in every case of intra and international conflict would be ideal, this approach to peacekeeping is simply unrealistic.

Powerful nations have a moral responsibility to prevent, protect, and monitor international humanitarian crises. As the post-Cold War shift in peacekeeping has demonstrated, the UN has expanded its understanding of what constitutes a threat to international peace and security to include “non-military sources of instability in the economic, social, humanitarian, and ecological fields.”<sup>74</sup> Increasingly, the UN Security Council has cited internal humanitarian crises as appropriate motivation for intervention, as per Article 39.<sup>75</sup> Yet the limitations inherent to the way UN PKOs have been undertaken in the past do not remove all hope for international peace; perhaps there is a way to prevent human rights violations which falls short of the commitment required by traditional United Nations peacekeeping missions.

It is true that “peacekeeping... emerges as a necessary element of conflict management and has a role to play in the overall process of peacemaking.”<sup>76</sup> In cases wherein parties “are engaged in mutual violence or armed clashes, peacekeeping appears to be the most urgent strategy.”<sup>77</sup> Indeed, in any case of mass atrocity,<sup>78</sup> the post-Cold War global community is increasingly willing to see these “offences against the ethical norms of the society of states”<sup>79</sup> as necessitating intervention. Peacekeeping Operations aimed at rapid-deployment preventionism should not be curbed. A non-partisan, fast-action prevention force—United Nations peacekeeping fulfills this definition as much as can be hoped for in an international political context—in cases of mass atrocity such as genocide, crimes against humanity, or large-scale war crimes, is ideal. Yet in the more expanded cases where the UN has been increasingly willing to send troops in the post-Cold War boom, the international community should distance itself from over-hasty UN peacekeeping interventionism.

For the maintenance of ceasefire agreements and attempts to disarm and disengage conflicting parties, the UN should create a more unified standard for intervention to dispel the problems inherent in ad hoc interventionism. Much of the criticism leveled at the UN for its operations is directed at the vulnerability of ad hoc missions in places where even the best militaries are likely to suffer casualties. How, many argue, can poorly trained contingents of for-profit troops hope to maintain peace between armed camps? The ideal solution to this would be to establish a permanent UN-affiliated military group, but such a suggestion is naïve. Despite the inclusion of a relatively similar provision in the original UN Charter, member states, both large and small, have demonstrated an unwillingness to permit the creation of a standing UN military force. Operating realistically, a standardized policy and readily accessible multilateral military force deployed in cases where rapid-action peacekeeping forces would prevent large-scale death and destruction would be ideal. The Brahimi Report

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<sup>73</sup> Jacobson, “UN Peacekeeping Overview and U.S. Support,” 5.

<sup>74</sup> Emma McClean, “The Dilemma of Intervention: Human Rights and the UN Security Council” in eds. Marco Odello and Sofia Cavandoli, *Emerging Areas of Human Rights in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: The Role of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 29.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

<sup>76</sup> Yilmaz, “UN Peacekeeping in the Post-Cold War Era,” 18.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>78</sup> I appreciate the irony in my use of vague language here. While critics of the UN may be highly skeptical of its typical use of vague, “catch-all” language, one finds that this is occasionally necessary when attempting to make a sweeping generalization capable of holding its own weight.

<sup>79</sup> Jack Donnelly, “Genocide and humanitarian intervention,” *Journal of Human Rights* 1, no. 1 (March 2002), 96.

suggests the creation of such a system: “the panel recommends that the United Nations define ‘rapid and effective deployment capacity’ as the ability to fully deploy traditional peacekeeping operations within 30 days of the adoption of a Security Council resolution.”<sup>80</sup> How this would be established is beyond the scope of this paper, but doing so would respond to many of the problems which have historically plagued UN PKOs.

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) coupled with middle power member nations which are generally more willing to undertake humanitarian missions are more likely to be able to enact change and establish peace support operations than the UN alone.<sup>81</sup> Proactive, non-military interventionism such as economic support for developing nations, encouragement of education, and humanitarian aid is increasingly favored by those very same nations attempting to distance themselves from United Nations peacekeeping. The international community in the twenty-first century has turned increasingly towards peace support operations which aim to prevent conflict and the occurrence of atrocities before they break out by improving economic and social conditions of individuals so that they do not resort to violence in order to solve conflict. Peace support operations are generally undertaken outside of the UN and aim to create “political change...by reducing the level of violence and addressing the deep roots of structural violence to end the conflict.”<sup>82</sup> By providing aid both through national programs like USAID and the American Red Cross and through various, more specific NGOs, the international community and civil society can hope to create situations in which violence is less likely to erupt and therefore where military intervention is unnecessary. Certainly, this does not mean that we can hope to prevent all violent conflict in this century. Prevention before the fact is not only preferable from a humanitarian and moral point of view, but is in fact more feasible from an international perspective.

## Conclusion

The approach outlined here resolves the three primary problems of UN peacekeeping operations which have developed over the three previously discussed periods of peacekeeping. Firstly, the problem of ad hoc interventions, which take far too long to take effect as they must be re-considered and re-created every time a crisis arises, would be solved by creating a norm of intervention in the case of large-scale atrocity requiring intervention. If the UN were to create a framework delineating when and how it would intervene in crises, peacekeeping would be able to perform the rapid-deployment prevention for which it is most needed. Secondly, the problems posed by nations’ desires to avoid financing and staffing such expansive peacekeeping would be circumvented if the UN were to limit the cases in which it intervened. If peacekeeping operations were only established in traditional, more limited instances, then both great and middle powers would be significantly more likely to fund them. The problem of incapable troops and

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<sup>80</sup> “The Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations,” United Nations, *xi*.

<sup>81</sup> “Middle powers are defined as non-nuclear powers that are politically and economically significant actors and that enjoy respect in the international community. They are ‘good international citizens with the resources and motivation to focus on complex global issues such as persistent conflict and Third World poverty...Middle powers are often key allies for global civil society.’ There are not enough middle powers to underwrite UN peacekeeping at the rate at which diplomats might desire it, but middle powers in combination with civil society actors have the best chance to contribute to global peace and security within or without of the UN. There is no clear consensus as to what constitutes a middle power, but most often included on this list are nations such as Canada, Australia, Brazil, and some smaller European nations such as the Netherlands and Switzerland. Shawki, “Civil Society, Middle Powers, and R2P,” 24.

<sup>82</sup> Kobi Michael and Eyal Ben-Ari, “Contemporary Peace Support Organizations,” *Armed Forces & Society* 37, no. 4 (2011), 658.



unsupported missions would thus be eliminated. In order to make this limited mandate feasible, the UN would necessarily have to rely more heavily on civil society and NGOs to provide much of the relief which they have been undertaking in the last several decades. Such non-UN organizations have proved themselves capable. Finally, the problem of national interests would be resolved by the same solution as the previous problem. Were nations permitted to engage in only limited peacekeeping operations, they would be more likely to perceive these few missions as absolutely necessary and within their best interest to undertake. While nations necessarily follow the limits of their own interests, the UN could work to frame all the more limited PKOs it does undertake as absolutely necessary and thus encourage not only hesitant participation, but perhaps active involvement in such missions.

United Nations peacekeeping has evolved imperfectly since its advent in 1948. Throughout its three relatively distinct periods of peacekeeping—the Cold War, the post-Cold War, and the twenty-first century—however, UN PKOs have been plagued by reoccurring problems. PKOs have been troubled by ad hoc and thus heavily flawed operations, the refusal of major powers to fund and staff missions—leading to poorly equipped and less capable troops—and the primacy of state interest over humanitarianism which has prevented otherwise generous nations from contributing to peacekeeping and has limited the UN’s mandate. In order to address all of these issues, the UN should strive to return to a more limited framework for intervention—minimizing the number and mandate of peacekeeping missions. Instead, more of the burden for humanitarian intervention, excepting cases of mass atrocity and human rights violations which necessarily require military intervention, should be placed on civil society and non-governmental organizations which can strive to fulfill the modern notion of R2P with much more ease than a non-military organization can do.

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