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Committee: 4th committee (Special Political and Decolonization)

Issue: General issues relating to peacekeeping

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Position: Chair

INTRODUCTION

For centuries peacekeeping operations have been adopted with the aim of maintaining international peace, order and stability. Nonetheless, over the years, numerous investigations, audits and reports have brought to light the mismanagement, corruption and fraud often involved in UN peacekeeping. Previous Secretary General, Ban Ki Moon has stated that the UN “face[s] mounting difficulties in getting enough troops, the right equipment and adequate logistical support. Supply has not kept pace with demand. The global economic crisis could further limit our ability to respond effectively. And a number of missions struggle to operate amidst stalled peace processes and ongoing violence. These gaps and constraints should concern all of us”¹.



UN Peacekeeping Operations // www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/

One of the main issues is that despite all peacekeeping efforts and the billions of dollars invested, peacekeeping missions are often inefficient in maintaining peace. This often happens because missions lack the necessary personnel, equipment and leadership, or because the situation UN peacekeepers are called to resolve may not be ripe enough for a political

¹ Statement by Ban Ki Moon in July, 2009

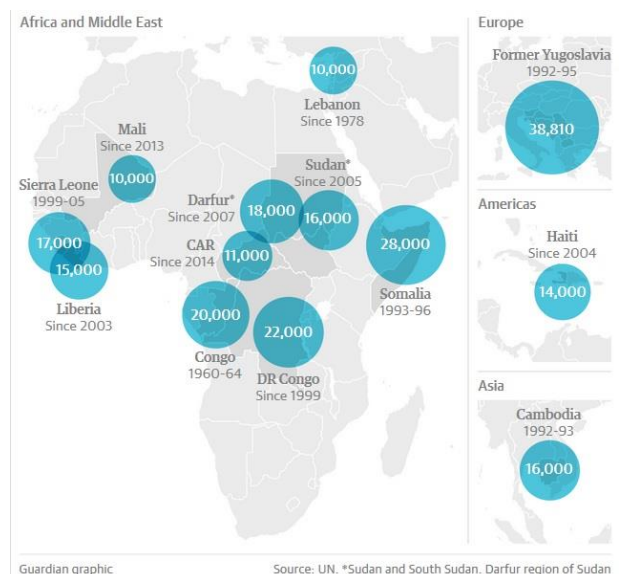
Aguirre, Mariano Aguirre, and Joana Abrisketa. “Pressing Issues for UN Peacekeeping Operations.” Transnational Institute, Europe’s World, 11 Apr. 2018, www.tni.org/en/article/pressing-issues-for-un-peacekeeping-operations.

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solution. Corruption among some UN personnel is also a major problem in peacekeeping operations. Sexual exploitation and abuse cases are common among troops, despite new discipline and conduct systems and a zero-tolerance policy. Such cases harm not only victims, but the entirety of the United Nations as well.

There have been previous efforts of reform by the UN, but none have proved to be sufficient in eliminating all issues related to peacekeeping missions. Cases of corruption are often overlooked and oversight by the UN is deficient. The U.N. Office of Internal Oversight Services is often disinterested in carrying out investigations or fails to publicly release reports of such investigations. This disengagement of the UN is partly responsible for the vast problems involved in peacekeeping missions.

Demand for peacekeeping operations is on a continual rise and all flaws and limitations need to be addressed. The need for such operations is not expected to decline in the foreseeable and future, making it crucial for all matters to be dealt with. The constantly reported cases of misconduct bring out the need for fundamental reform to improve the efficiency, accountability and transparency of peacekeeping missions.



DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Peacekeeping Operations

Operations that help restore long-lasting peace in countries torn by conflict. Peacekeeping Operations are “guided by three basic principles:

Major peacekeeping operations of 10,000 personnel or more, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/sep/17/un-united-nations-peacekeepers-rwanda-bosnia>

Consent of the parties, impartiality and Non-use of force except in self-defense and defense of the mandate”²

Peacekeepers

Soldiers responsible for restoring and maintaining peace within countries by providing security and political support.

Sexual Exploitation

Sexual exploitation is the act of taking advantage of a person’s vulnerability, trust or lack of power for sexual purposes. It is the abuse of a person’s sexuality for personal gain.

Mental Abuse

An act of violence that targets the mind. Following this act, the victim feels worthless and lacks empowerment.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is the intentional use of force to inflict pain, injury or impairment to another person.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Numerous issues can be found in UN peacekeeping missions. Security Council mandates are often too ambitious and contradictory, there are not enough resources and personnel, there is a lack of political will from both sides and not sufficient coordination by the UN. Missions are often problematic. Peacekeepers are sent to keep the peace but problems arise when there is no peace to keep. Below, the main issues relating to peacekeeping are explained.

Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

² “What Is Peacekeeping.” United Nations, United Nations, peacekeeping.un.org/en/what-is-peacekeeping.

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Over the past decades there have been thousands of reported cases of sexual exploitation and abuse by UN personnel in peacekeeping missions. Serious accusations of forced prostitution, sexual misconduct and rape of women and young boys and girls have been addressed to UN troops. Reports³ released in early 2017 revealed that over the past 12 years, nearly 2,000 allegations of sexual exploitation and assault by UN peacekeepers have been made, over 300 of which involved children. Bosnia, Cambodia, Burundi, Guinea, Congo, Haiti, Kosovo, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Sudan include some of the countries in which UN personnel in missions has been accused of such crimes.



The UN Appoints its First Rights Advocate for Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

In countries of extreme poverty, a promise of food, shelter or protection can be enough to entice a person into committing sexual acts. Such behavior, however, can have devastating consequences. Some decades ago, in the mission to Cambodia, UN forces had sexually abused young girls and women and spread diseases such as HIV/AIDS among the population. UN personnel have been accused of doing the same many times since, in missions such as the one in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti and Liberia. In 2014, peacekeeping forces from Georgia and France were involved in sexual misconduct against young children in the Central African Republic. In the mission to Somalia, UN forces were prostituting Somali women and young girls. Investigations conducted by the Human Rights Watch revealed multiple cases of exploitation, forced prostitution and rape, the victims of which were enticed

³ Information gathered by reports of the Associated Press

Anderlini, Sanam Naraghi. "UN Peacekeepers' Sexual Assault Problem." Foreign Affairs, Foreign Affairs, 25 July 2017, www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/world/2017-06-09/un-peacekeepers-sexual-assault-problem.

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by the promise of food and water. In 2016, there were 41 reported cases of abuse by peacekeepers, 8 of which were paternity cases and 6 of which involved minors.

There have been many such reports of sexual exploitation and abuse by UN staff and troops. Yet, these reports rarely make it to the Security Council. Allegations are often ignored and victims discredited. In Haiti, locals gave up on reporting incidents of sexual exploitations, realizing that their calls were disregarded. There is a general culture of silence around sexual exploitation and abuse by UN personnel and incidents remain unreported. This can be attributed to inefficient record-keeping, fear of consequences and a sense of pointlessness due to the rarity of positive outcomes and victim assistance. Victims are left powerless, trying to seek help in a culture which respects the rights of the accused and not those of the accusers. This impunity only reinforces the criminal behavior of troops.

There have been efforts towards the improvement of the situation. A zero tolerance policy towards sexual exploitation and abuse has been established and Secretaries General Kofi Annan, Ban Ki-Moon and Antonio Guterres have conducted various reports on the matter. Conduct Discipline Teams now accompany troops in nearly all UN peacekeeping missions. Such teams are responsible for increasing accountability and ensuring the highest standards of conduct in peacekeeping operations. Troops are also required to undergo extensive training and briefing on their conduct and behavior when on mission, and troop-contributing member states are urged to implement various measures such as more extensive investigations. These efforts have seemingly



United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres addresses the High-Level meeting on the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, at United Nations headquarters, Monday, Sept. 18, 2017. Photo: Richard Drew, AP

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resulted in a decline of cases of sexual exploitation and abuse on recent missions.

This decline, however, can be questioned. The under-reporting of cases of sexual misconduct and the covering up of such cases by the UN could be to blame. Various leaked reports have revealed that the problem remains the same, if not worse. Overall, the tendency of the UN to mask incidents and the reluctance of victims to pursue help must be dealt with.

Corruption, Fraud and Mismanagement

Over the years, reports, investigations and audits have brought to light numerous cases of corruption, fraud and mismanagement in many UN peacekeeping missions. For instance, a 2007 UN Office of International Oversight Services (OIOS) report revealed that over half a billion dollars (over 40% of the total funds) had been used for corruption schemes in peacekeeping operations. An audit of the mission in Sudan also revealed vast amounts of fraud and corruption and millions of dollars lost to mismanagement. Further, a leaked 2005 memorandum revealed substantial amounts of fraud in the form of meal and hotel invoices by peacekeepers in the mission to Western Sahara. A news report also indicated that peacekeepers in the mission to Lebanon illegally resold food. Other reports further accuse peacekeepers for supporting Russian contractors and selling peacekeeping jobs in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Haiti. The UN has generally been accused of failing to prevent corruption in peacekeeping missions.



corruption. It appears, however, that the OIOS is often disinterested in investigating cases of mismanagement, fraud and corruption, or that it fails to release such reports. The OIOS operates independently from the UN and, as a result, often functions based on self-interest. Often, to avoid investigating reports of misconduct, it filters these reports through the Conduct and Discipline Unit (CDU). This unit has no investigative authority and its function is limited to prevention of cases of corruption. Misconduct reports are therefore minimized.

In some cases, reports are seemingly investigated. Witnesses are identified and investigators are hired. Nonetheless, witnesses are frequently discredited, intimidated or bribed. In such cases, by the time investigators arrive, witnesses have retracted their allegations or disappeared. The failing of OIOS and the UN CDU are troubling and indicate that the issue of dealing with fraud, corruption and mismanagement in peacekeeping missions should remain a primary focus of reform for the UN.

Problematic Missions

The nature of some peacekeeping operations authorized by the UN seems to go against the strengths of UN peacekeeping. Some missions evidently lack the necessary personnel, equipment and leadership. Also, the principle that all missions must have the consent of the government of the host country to operate limits their ability to use force and, consequently, their effectiveness. Using force against the host country would mean the discontinuation of the mission. Peacekeepers are therefore unable to act in situations where the government of the host country is acting contrary to the interest of civilians. Regardless, missions continue to be authorized by the Security Council despite the apparent inability of the UN to help the situation and to restore/maintain peace.

In many cases, peacekeeping forces appear to simply be unable to improve the situation and to establish long-term peace. Missions often drag on for years without clear goals and exit plans. They crowd out governments and

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distract from deeper socioeconomic problems. It is clear that peacekeeping missions cannot end when civilians remain in danger, but there is a problem with operations that cost millions of dollars and are after all ineffective.

Haiti is a clear example of such a mission. For the past decade there has been no armed conflict in Haiti. Yet, more than 4,500 peacekeepers remain in the region. Meanwhile, forces have not managed to assist in the establishment of peace by creating a stable and democratic government in the country. Elections are constantly postponed and Haiti continues to face severe socioeconomic difficulties. In this case, the presence of the military certainly does not help the situation.



Four UN peacekeepers killed in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA)

A further example is that of the mission in Mali. After a terrorist takeover of some of the north parts of Mali, 10,000 soldiers and police were sent to the country by the UN with the aim of restoring peace. The peacekeepers were unprepared for counterterrorism and specifically instructed not to engage in it. Consequently, a large amount of the mission's resources were spent on self-protection and logistics. Many died and continue to, as the situation worsens.

It is clear that the UN should be more judicious when authorizing missions and that each mission should have the appropriate underpinning.

MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

The ongoing conflict and unstable political situation in the DRC called for the initiation of a peacekeeping mission in the country. The mission, known as MONUSCO, is the largest UN Peacekeeping mission and one of the most

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complex ones. Formed in 2010, its aim was to support a peace agreement and protect civilians from armed forces in the eastern part of the country. However, the conflict spread and peacekeepers were unable to restore peace in the country. The mission now covers the entire country and the situation is continually deteriorating. Dozens of Peacekeepers have been killed and some of the worst attacks against peacekeeping forces have taken place in the DRC.

In MONUSCO, peacekeeping forces appeared unable to resolve the situation in the DRC. This could be attributed to the problematic nature of the mission. Civilians were in danger and therefore a peacekeeping operation was in need, but the presence of UN Peacekeepers only further unstabilized the political situation in the DRC. Moreover, there have been countless reported cases of sexual exploitation and abuse in MONUSCO. Thousands of young girls and women have been sexually exploited by UN personnel. The DRC has even been described as the “rape capital of the world”. The corruption among peacekeeping forces and the continually deteriorating political situation in country make the DRC one of the countries most affected by problematic UN peacekeeping missions.



MONUSCO Peacekeepers on patrol

Central African Republic

MINUSCA, the Peacekeeping mission in the Central African Republic, was established in 2014 due to the increasing humanitarian, political and security crisis. Its main objective was protection of civilians. Nonetheless, MINUSCA has been heavily affected by corruption of UN personnel. There have been hundreds of cases of sexual exploitation and abuse and forced prostitution of women and young boys and girls by peacekeeping staff. Also, dozens of innocent civilians, including children, have been killed by peacekeepers. Corruption rates are high and peacekeeping forces have not yet been successful in resolving the situation. The Central African Republic continues to be affected by its

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multidimensional crisis and civilians are continually being exploited, violated and killed by peacekeeping personnel.

UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO)

The DPKO was officially founded in 1992 with the aim of operating peacekeeping missions. Such missions were previously handled by the UN Office of Special Political Affairs. Its main objective is to assist member states and the Secretary General in maintaining international peace and security. It offers executive and political direction to UN peacekeeping missions globally and helps in the implementation of SC mandates by keeping in contact with the Security Council, the parties of the conflict and troop and fund contributing member states. The DPKO also offers guidance and support to various other issues of UN political and peacebuilding missions. Such issues may include police, military and mine action issues.



UN Office of International Oversight Services (OIOS)

The OIOS was established by the GA in 1994 with the aim of assisting the Secretary General in his/her oversight duties over the Organization by providing “audit, investigation, inspection, and evaluation services”⁴. It assesses the efficiency of the Organization’s processes with the aim of improving its functions. It determines the factors affecting the Organization’s efficiency and effectiveness in relation to the agreed development goals and outcomes of the UN. Finally, the OIOS guides the SG on all disciplinary or jurisdictional action that needs to be taken.

Conduct and Discipline Unit (CDU)

⁴ “Inventory of United Nations Activities to End Violence against Women.” United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict, evaw-un-inventory.unwomen.org/fr/agencies/oios.

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The CDU is responsible for providing direction for all issues regarding conduct and discipline in UN peacekeeping missions. Its responsibilities include combating sexual exploitation and abuse. The CDU forms policies, trains UN personnel, raises awareness on said issues and oversees all allegations of misconduct on peacekeeping operations. Its functions also include communicating with member states about the troops they send on missions and their behavior and assisting all victims of the misconduct of UN personnel.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

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Date	Description of Event
1945	The UN Charter places the principal responsibility for maintaining international peace and security on the Security Council
1948	The first peacekeeping operations –UN Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO)- is established.
1945-1990	Only 18 peacekeeping operations established despite multiple conflicts that threatened international peace and security
1990	The first documented cases of sexual exploitation and sexual trafficking in Bosnia and Kosovo
1991	End of cold war makes the Security Council more active, establishing over 50 operations since 1990
1994	UN peacekeepers fail to prevent the genocide in Rwanda
1995	UN peacekeepers fail to stop the massacre in Srebrenica, Bosnia
2000	The Security Council urges all member states to “include a gender perspective in their peacekeeping and peacebuilding measures” in order to reduce cases of sexual exploitation
2000	The United Nations Panel on Peace Operations is appointed by the Secretary General in order to examine the existing system and propose solutions on how to enhance its implementation
2000	The Brahimi Report is published by the UN Panel on Peace Operations, which proposed political, financial, and institutional changes

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2003	Ban Ki Moon declares a 'zero tolerance 'policy against sexual misconduct acts, which defines and prohibits the sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers
2014	The UN investigated 150 allegations of sexual misconduct by peacekeeping troops in Burundi and the DRC, including allegations of “rape, paedophilia and prostitution” in the latter.
2005	The Zeid Report is published, providing methods to eliminate sexual exploitation and abuse in peacekeeping missions
2005	The Secretary General appoints a group of legal experts (GLE), concluded with members from different geographical regions and cultures to ensure the criminal accountability of peacekeeping personnel
2006	Second GLE is established, which argues the necessity and efficiency of standardizing norms of conduct for all kind of UN personnel
2006	The U.N. Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted a four-week investigation and received 217 allegations of sexual abuse and exploitation committed by 75 UN peacekeepers
2008	The United Nations Department for Peacekeeping Operations publishes the Capstone Doctrine which outlines the “principles and guidelines for UN peacekeepers in the field”
2013	The Secretary General releases the report “United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law” in an effort to ensure that UN personnel operates according to the International Law
2013	The Secretary General releases the report “Criminal accountability of United Nations Officials and experts on mission”
2017	The Secretary General releases the report “Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse: a new approach”

UN INVOLVEMENT: RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES AND EVENTS

- [United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 \(2000\) on Women, Peace and Security](#) - An effort to reduce sexual exploitation and abuse in peacekeeping missions
- ["Brahimi Report" Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations \(2000\)](#) - Proposes political, financial, and institutional changes for Peace Operations
- ["Zeid Report" Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects \(2005\)](#) - A comprehensive strategy to eliminate future sexual exploitation and abuse in United Nations peacekeeping operations
- [Capstone "United Nations Peacekeeping Operations Principles and Guidelines" \(2008\)](#) - Sets guidelines for the behavior of UN personnel on Peacekeeping Operations
- [Secretary General report "United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law" \(2013\)](#) - Ensures that UN personnel operates according to the International Law

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- [Secretary General report “Criminal accountability of United Nations Officials and experts on mission” \(2013\)](#) - Ensures that UN Officials be held accountable for their misconduct on peacekeeping missions
- [Security Council Resolution 2272 on measures to address sexual exploitation and abuse by U.N. peacekeeper \(2016\)](#) - Welcomes, urges and encourages member states to take steps proposed by the SG
- [Secretary General report “Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse: a new approach” \(2017\)](#) - Proposes measures to eliminate sexual exploitation and abuse incidents in peacekeeping operations

PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

As seen above, multiple efforts have been made to resolve the issues regarding peacekeeping missions. Resolutions have passed and reports have been formed, but the problem remains. It must be noted that in recent years reports reveal a reduced amount of reported incidents of sexual exploitation and abuse. This, however, is most likely due to the under-reporting of such incidents and of the reluctance of reports to include such allegations.

There has been progress, however, in the effort to resolve issues in UN peacekeeping missions. SC resolutions 1325 and 2272 have proposed meaningful measures that have helped ameliorate the situation. Nonetheless, often the measures proposed by such resolutions are not adequate to resolve the problem and their mandates are often not applied and followed. Also, reports have been released by many Secretaries General such as “United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law”, “Criminal accountability of United Nations Officials and experts on mission” and “Special measures for protection

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from sexual exploitation and abuse: a new approach”. Such reports are good efforts to tackle the problem and, in some respects, they have helped the situation. However, their propositions are often not followed through. Further reports have been released, such as the Zeid and Brahimi reports, but again the measures they propose to solve the issue are often not adequate and their propositions not followed through.

For decades, UN Secretary Generals have tried tackling the issues and demanded better behavior from personnel, but their requests have fallen short. This is, in part, because such requests fall under Chapter Six of the UN Charter: “member states are obligated to act, but they face no penalties for non-compliance”⁵. Also, many recommendations made are not robust enough, and even though they assist in improving the situation, they are not capable of resolving it. Future recommendations must be more applicable and thorough and the UN must employ a method to ensure that all mandates and propositions are followed through.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

One important step that needs to be taken is the re-evaluation of long-running UN peacekeeping missions. If a mission is not facilitating the resolution of the situation, the mission should be refocused and its goals altered. This would increase the efficiency of an otherwise unhelpful operation. If a country wishes that a UN peacekeeping mission continue, even though it has been in place for large periods of time and has not resolved the conflict, then some member states might propose that this country should assume all or a big part of the financial needs of that mission. This, to some extent, is already

⁵ Anderlini, Sanam Naraghi. “UN Peacekeepers' Sexual Assault Problem.” Foreign Affairs, Foreign Affairs, 25 July 2017, www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/world/2017-06-09/un-peacekeepers-sexual-assault-problem.

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the case in the mission to Cyprus, where the governments of Greece and Cyprus have volunteered to cover 45% of the mission's expenses.

Another measure that needs to be taken is for the UN to hold troop-contributing countries accountable. Troop-contributing countries have jurisdiction over all troops participating in UN peacekeeping missions. In the past, there were no consequences for countries that did not investigate reports of misconduct by the troops or did not punish them for their criminal acts. Since then, there have been requests by the SG that troop-contributing countries track their process of investigation and punishment of their personnel in cases of misconduct. However, many countries have not complied. Troop-contributing countries should be held accountable for the misconduct of their troops, in order to have an incentive to increase investigations and punishment.

Troops themselves should also be held accountable for their behavior. The impunity around criminal behavior of UN personnel on missions has contributed to the large amounts of corruption among peacekeepers. Investigations should be increased and perpetrators should be punished for their crimes.

Member states should also consider replacing troops in missions after misconduct. In some cases, however, this may be unrealistic. Another possible solution would therefore be replacing the chiefs of staff in such missions, if they prove to be unable to ensure the compliance of their troops.

It is also critical for supervision and investigation to be increased. This could happen in many ways. Member states could propose to the Security Council that a separate body be founded, which will be responsible for investigating allegations of misconduct.

Moreover, steps must be taken towards the prevention of misconduct on peacekeeping missions. The training of personnel before going on mission should undergo substantial improvement. Peacekeepers should be extensively briefed on the standards of conduct and behavior and informed of the

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consequences that would accompany their misconduct. This could prevent criminal behavior on the part of troops.

The UN should also be more judicious when authorizing UN peacekeeping operations. A peacekeeping operation might not always be the appropriate measure for addressing the situation, especially in cases where there is no peace to keep. The UN should thoroughly consider all possible options before authorizing a mission, and if they choose to do so, clear goals should be set out and adequate funds, personnel and leadership must be provided.

Finally, it is essential that appropriate support and assistance is provided to victims. This should include both humanitarian support and the opportunity to obtain justice. Victims should be provided with medical support –if needed- as well as with psychological help. They should also be recognized by judicial systems and provided with legal assistance if they desire so.

Generally, delegates should try to be realistic in the measures they propose, keeping in mind that in a peacekeeping mission, resolving conflicts and restoring peace is the primary concern for all peacekeepers.

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