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Background Guide

United Nations
Security Council

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UNSC: Peacekeeping

Introduction of the Committee

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) was initially created following WWII to safeguard international peace and security. Specifically, the committee's four mandates are maintaining international peace and security, developing friendly relations among nations, cooperating in solving international problems, and promoting respect for human rights.

As the UNSC is the only organ which can create legally binding decisions that all UN members must abide by, as per Article 7 of the UN Charter, the UNSC is arguably one of the most vital organs of the UN. The committee held its first session in 1946 in London, after which all sessions were held in New York. Originally, the UNSC comprised five permanent members and six rotating members. Still, as UN membership increased, the number of non-permanent members increased to 10 in 1965, which remains today. The five permanent members, United States of America, the Russian Federation, The United Kingdom, the French Republic, and the People's Republic of China, enjoy a permanent seat on the council and veto powers over the council's decisions.

However, despite its centrality in the international order, the UNSC suffers from constant deadlocks due to the veto powers held by the five permanent member states. In the decades following its creation, the UNSC was unable to perform its task particularly with the Communist bloc and Western bloc using their veto powers to stop peacekeeping missions that went against their agendas. The UNSC was only able to act

on rare occasions, such as the Korean War and the Congo Crisis. Only after the collapse of the USSR did the UNSC begin to fulfil its mission. Since then, UN peacekeeping missions have increased dramatically in scale, and peacekeeping missions have been sent to Kuwait, Namibia, Cambodia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

History of the Topic

Cold War Peacekeeping

The first peacekeeping mission clearly under the control of the Secretary General was the 1948 United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO). The Blue Helmets were sent to Israel to supervise the ceasefire between Israelis and Arabs following the conflict that emerged due to the State of Israel's creation.

Shortly thereafter, a peacekeeping mission was sent to India and Pakistan to monitor relations between the two nations in the postcolonial era. Peacekeepers were also deployed after the Korean war ended in 1953, and after the 1956 Suez Crisis. In both cases, peacekeepers served to uphold the ceasefire that had been negotiated. The latter was particularly noteworthy because due to Egyptian fears of having only pro-UK peacekeepers, a wide variety of nationals served as peacekeepers in the country. This made the peacekeeping troops in Egypt the first diverse cooperation of nationals under the UN's flag, a trend that would continue to the modern day. It was also during this operation that the 'blue helmet' was invented: with foreign troops on the ground in Egypt, the foreign UN peacekeeper troops needed to set themselves apart, and the US spray-painted thousands of army helmets in a move that would earn the peacekeeping operations their nickname.

Of course, during Cold War peacekeeping operations, the global political situation imposed significant limits on the UN's ability to deploy, fund and manage peacekeeping operations. In particular, the rivalry between the permanent five members of the Security Council meant that they utilized their veto power frequently, sometimes even in the case of peacekeeping operatives.

Still, as the 1950s and 1960s progressed, peacekeepers gradually and slowly moved from being small, unarmed forces overseeing a ceasefire to being a part of a complex organization that would sometimes deploy troops to serve as buffers between rival forces, thereby 'making' peace rather than simply 'monitoring' it.

Of course, such an upscale of operations became necessary, especially during and after the crisis in the Congo. Days after the country received its independence in 1960, the province of Katanga seceded, and although President Kasavubu and Prime Minister Lumumba jointly appealed to the UN for help, they too would soon become rivals: Kasavubu was backed by the West while Lumumba was instead supported by Moscow. A full-scale civil war broke out in the country, and peacekeeping operations in the country became precarious. The situation was not helped by the Soviet Union's and France's refusal to pay their share of the costs of the operation; the problem of financial difficulties in the 1960s foreshadowed an issue that plagues the UN peacekeepers to this day. The crisis in the Congo is just one example of the complex environments in which peacekeepers were deployed in during the Cold War.

Following a period of seven years in which no new peacekeepers were deployed, in 1973 the Blue Helmets played a crucial role in averting confrontation between the US and the Soviet Union during the Yom Kippur War in the Middle East. Other traditional peacekeeper operations were deployed in the second half of the Cold War as well. It was, however, with

the rise to power of Mikhail Gorbachev and the subsequent thaw in international relations that UN peacekeepers began experiencing a newer style of operations. For example, in 1989, peacekeepers were sent to Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua to monitor their agreement to end guerrilla movements. The Blue Helmets' tasks, therefore, expanded to activities like disarming guerrillas, jointly monitoring elections and contributing to preserving law and order. It was amidst this shift, which had begun in 1956 but became increasingly prominent in the final years of the Cold War, that the peacekeepers received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1988.

Peacekeeping in the 1990s

The end of the Cold War brought about a period of hopefulness and optimism that affected the peacekeepers as well. The stalemate that had plagued the Security Council between Washington and Moscow was over, and the world could finally begin cooperating meaningfully to bringing about peace. Of course, it wasn't only the supply of peacekeepers, but the demand for them that changed too. The 1990s saw an increase in civil wars and state violence in general, which necessitated international intervention. Considering these circumstances, it seemed that a new type of peacekeeping was being born as the Iron Curtain fell.

Continuing with the trends that began in the late 1980s, the scope of peacekeeping operations began to expand. No longer did the Security Council necessarily wait for a ceasefire to be reached; they sometimes sent Blue Helmets to protect civilians before that. Peacekeepers were no longer simply monitoring peace independently created; instead, they took part in creating that very same peace to prevent civilian casualties and to restore order.

This approach was formally outlined in the 1992 Agenda for Peace written by Secretary General Boutros-Ghali himself. The document described 'peacebuilding' as necessary for sustainable peace, which was to take the form of strengthening institutions, among other things. This "New Peacekeeping" also saw Chapter VI ½ renamed Chapter VI ¾, to signify a move towards the more robust Chapter VII.

Peacekeepers were now involved in monitoring the transition away from instability or authoritarianism via elections in Cambodia and Angola. In the former, for example, the UN deployed a 20,000-strong force to disarm belligerent forces after a 22-year civil war, to assist the country's operations, and to organize free elections. Meanwhile, in Western Sahara, the UN organised a referendum to decide the country's future. It was not just the way these peacekeeping operations functioned, but their numbers, that changed as well. To date, of the 72 official UN peacekeeping missions, 59 were deployed after 1990.

While the UNSC has historically had limited success in preventing or rolling back military coups, there are a handful of examples where the UNSC successfully took action. One such situation was when the UNSC reacted to the Haitian Military Coup that removed Jean-Bertrand Aristide in 1991. The UNSC conducted these actions through resolutions 841, 861, 862, 867, 873, 875, 905, 917, 933, and 940.

The Haitian coup d'etat in question took place on the 29th of September, 1991, when then-President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who had been elected eight months earlier as Haiti's first democratically elected president, was ousted from office. His opponents were members of Haiti's military, who were discontent at his attempt to strip the military of its power. Haitian military officer Army General Raoul Cedras, Army Chief of Staff Philippe Biamby, and Chief of National Policy Michel Francois led the coup, and together they installed Superior Court Justice Joseph Nerette as the new president of a provisional government.

The military junta returned Haiti to the chaos that the country had only just begun to dig itself out of. Mass protests broke out as civil stability crumbled. The army added to the chaos with repressive tactics and brutal violations of human rights, plunging Haiti back into a humanitarian crisis.

The UNSC responded to this crisis in multiple steps. They began by expressing their regrets for the overthrow of the legitimate government before expressing their concerns about several consequences that have arisen from the coup and finally condemning the situation.

Next, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali issued a list of demands to the new Haitian government that had just been established via coup d'etat and promised a list of trade embargos if the Haitian government did not comply. The trade embargo included a ban on the sale of petroleum, petroleum products, and all types of weapons, as well as a ban on all traffic from entering Haitian territory and freezing all Haitian foreign funds.

When the demands were unmet and the embargo proved ineffective, the UNSC further escalated the situation by widening the embargo and imposing a naval blockade on the island nation. When this proved ineffective, and the Haitian military junta demonstrated their uncooperativeness, the UNSC authorised an international military force to intervene in Haiti to restore democracy. The UNSC mandated that the US send forces and lead the international coalition, and the US was more than willing to do so. Two countries, including China, abstained from the vote. Still, the resolution passed nonetheless, and the international forces successfully overthrew the Haitian military junta and restored the previously democratically elected president Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

These new missions attained great successes at times, but two tragedies put a halt to "New Peacekeeping". Firstly, during the Rwandan Civil War, peacekeepers were ineffectively and

belatedly deployed, and even while on the ground, the troops did little to prevent the 1994 Rwandan Genocide. Similarly, peacekeepers already present in the region could not stop the Srebenica Massacre of 1995, during which hundreds of Muslim Bosnians were killed by Serbs. The shocking nature of both genocides was made all the worse by the peacekeepers' (and the international community's) inability to prevent them. Even peacekeeping operations not surrounded by genocide had limited successes: UNOSOM II in Somalia, for example, did prevent some civilian casualties, but it failed in disarming belligerent forces. All this led to the fall of "New Peacekeeping".

The second half of the 1990s saw a fall in peacekeeping operations, although a policy of "peacekeeping through subcontracting" was also implemented. Through this, the UN endorsed, but did not directly lead, interventions in Haiti and East Timor in 1994 and 1999 respectively. Still, as this diminished the role of the UN, Secretary General Kofi Annan largely abandoned the 'policy'.

Peacekeeping post-2000

After a tumultuous and varied track record in the 1990s, reform was needed for peacekeepers. In 2000, Annan commissioned the Report of the Panel on United Nations Peacekeeping, or as it became commonly known, the Brahimi Report, which proposed several improvements to UN peacekeeping. It highlighted the need for further resources, clearer mandates, and more international coordination for the success of peacekeeping operations. Many of the recommendations of the report were implemented in UNSC Resolution 1327. Further efforts to improve the peacekeeping process include the 2008 Capstone Doctrine, which focused on the lessons of previous decades of peacekeeping with an eye to the coordination of operations, while the 2009 New Horizon report outlined

training methods and called for increased cooperation between troop-contributing countries as well as with local organizations. These improvements led to several successes in the 21st century, from the United Nations Operation in Burundi following the Burundi Civil War (2004-2007) to the United Nations Operation in Cote d'Ivoire after their civil war (2004-2017).

The 21st century has also seen issues emerge concerning peacekeepers. Echoing decades of debates, the question of whether the Blue Helmets monitor or create peace remains as pertinent as ever, and the UN has yet to find a definitive answer to the question.

Secondly, the way in which peacekeeping operations are funded and staffed has always been tumultuous, with some countries contributing a significant percentage of troops and/or finances at one point in time, only to downscale their support shortly thereafter, or vice versa. This makes planning and overseeing operations challenging.

Finally, the question of who 'guards the guardians' has emerged in the wake of troop coordination problems. This poses a problem for the success of operations, as recently, widespread sexual violence on the part of peacekeepers has come to light. Moreover, the prosecution of perpetrators among peacekeepers remains legally complex and therefore infrequent. These issues will need to be grappled with by the international community and the UN to ensure the peacekeepers can successfully contribute to attaining and maintaining peace.

Discussion of the Topic

Aims of Peacekeepers

A key area in which peacekeepers are at a crossroads is the question of what their principal aim or objective is. Of course, the answer to this question is, seemingly, 'peace', but as alluded to previously, there has been much debate as to whether peacekeepers ought to monitor the peace that was attained independently of UN efforts, or whether the Blue Helmets should themselves take an active part in bringing that peace about.

On the one hand, many would argue that peacekeepers should only supervise previously agreed-upon ceasefires and protect civilians while doing so. Perhaps the most fundamental component of 'peace' is a permanent reduction of violence and armed conflict, and peacekeepers certainly work to bring that end about. Given the failures of "New Peacekeeping" in the 1990s, as has been discussed before, some Security Council members have been keen to see an increased shift towards traditional peacekeeping once more.

Some criticize the peace monitoring approach on the grounds that it does not truly solve the root of the problem of violence. Hostilities, it is argued, emerge due to divisions among communities, economic problems, socioeconomic inequalities and more; while violence might be temporarily reduced if Blue Helmets appear, this will not permanently solve the issue. On the other hand, some argue that traditional peacekeeping operations have nonetheless proven to be successful, such as the 1965-1966 mission to the Dominican Republic.

While some argue that peacekeepers should only monitor peace, others claim the UN peacekeepers should also undertake tasks like demilitarization, overseeing elections,

contributing to administrative tasks, and negotiating peace settlements. Peacekeepers, it is argued, should also contribute to building bridges between local communities and divided, belligerent groups. Again, the UN has a track record for performing peacekeeping in a 'peacemaking' style: for example, in the Darfur mission (UNAMID), around 9000 young people are employed in labour-intensive work such as building roads. Not only does this repair infrastructure, help the local economy and provide jobs, but it can also help mend rifts between communities.

As previously discussed, the incidence of violent conflict continuously fell during the 20th century, and in recent decades, most conflicts and peacekeeping interventions have not been due to all-consuming civil wars, but instead to state weakness and regional instability and conflict (such as the situation in the Central African Republic). Given that there is usually no longer a simple, binary dichotomy in terms of belligerent forces, many call for UN peacekeepers to contribute to making peace in this increasingly complex socio-political environment.

Still, this kind of more 'active' peacekeeping faces challenges as well. For one, it is harder for missions to be 'successful': given the variety of work a peacekeeper can carry out, from monitoring polling booths to demilitarizing child soldiers, it is challenging to determine when a mission is over, and whether it has achieved its plethora of sub-aims.

A related difficulty reflects the challenging relationship between peace building and state building. If peacekeepers are to bring about economic development, social stability and some form of democracy, then that almost always relates to the government and its strength in some way. Moreover, the history of countries like Nigeria and Afghanistan show that state building is a complex process that has more to do with negotiations among local stakeholders than with externally imposed policies or practices.

Success of Peacekeepers

Peacekeepers also need to grapple with questions relating to the success of their operation. Firstly, there are issues in terms of the command chain and the organization of troops, especially if those troops come from different countries. For example, tensions can arise from varying visions of what peacekeepers ought to do in a way that can affect the success of operations. In 2000 in Sierra Leone, for instance, two army officials, the British David Richards and the Indian Vijay Jetley, had what the former called a "real argument" as the UK wanted to support the elected government in putting down rebels who broke a peace agreement, while India felt their task was to only monitor peace deals already attained. Such divisions hinder the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations, and the UN is still working on finding a way to clarify its objectives and internal conflict resolution procedures.

Secondly, peacekeepers face challenges in terms of how troops are funded and staffed. As of 30 June 2018, troops mostly come from countries like Ethiopia, Bangladesh, Rwanda, India and Pakistan. At the same time, funds primarily come from the five permanent Security Council members, as well as Japan. Recently, countries like the United States have been decreasing the amount they spend on peacekeeping operations. While Secretary General Guterres promises to make peacekeeping troops more efficient, he also notes that currently, peacekeepers only operate with less than one percent of global military spending. Tensions have arisen as there are calls for developed countries to contribute more troops, but the situation is complicated by a rising death rate for peacekeepers; the 61 deaths in 2017 are the highest rate since 1994. There is also concern that the troops the peacekeepers already have are ineffectively trained, as the July 2016 crisis of the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) showed. There, a lack of preparedness, an ineffective command chain and poor leadership led to a high rate of civilian casualties, and such issues remain to be resolved.

Finally, there have been calls for a more comprehensive approach to the 'success' of peacekeeping operations. Countries from Thailand to the Maldives have recently called for peacekeeping operations and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to be coordinated, for instance in the case of environmental matters. The question of how this will be feasible, given the challenges in funding and supplying troops, remain to be seen.

Supervision of Peacekeepers

Content warning for sexual violence.

The question of who 'guards the guardians' is of special importance to peacekeeping operations. In the past decade, an increasing number of cases of sexual assault committed by peacekeepers has come to light. Since 2013 in the Central African Republic alone, there have been hundreds of child sexual abuse cases reported, yet only a couple dozen of these peacekeepers have been named by the UN, and even fewer have been convicted. Part of the issue is that each country is in charge of trying implicated troop members, but many member states have proven to be reluctant to do so. For example, in January 2017, French prosecutors claimed that no charges will be raised against peacekeepers implicated in sexual violence crimes in the CAR. This track record is not only vile and disgusting, but it also hinders peacekeepers' ability to cooperate meaningfully with citizens of the countries they operate in.

Another related issue concerns prostitution, which is most commonly practiced as a form of transactional sex. In Monrovia, the capital of Liberia, 50% of women surveyed had engaged in transactional sex, and an overwhelming majority of them (75%) had done so with UN peacekeepers. In some countries, prostitution as such might not be illegal, but due to the inherent unequal power dynamics between the comparatively rich and well-funded Blue

Helmets who arrive as 'saviors' and the local community usually facing some kind of civil war or other forms of armed belligerence, it is doubtful whether consensual sex can take place in such scenarios. Gill Mathurin of Aids Free World has argued that "prostitution (…) is rarely, if ever, the first choice of those who are hungry and/or have families to support. It is almost always a last resort and peacekeepers must reflect on their positions of power and privilege".

Proposed solutions to the peacekeepers' sexual crimes are varied but rarely successful. In 2003, Secretary-General Kofi Annan discouraged peacekeepers from engaging in sexual relations with the local population in the wake of allegations of wrongdoing, but academics remain doubtful about the effectiveness of asking peacekeepers to remain celibate for long missions. Keeping this kind of distance from the local population, it is argued, prevents peacekeepers from engaging with the local population in creating peace. It can also fuel a superiority complex that is, at times, compounded by racial differences. The question of how sexual violence crimes can be terminated, and the way in which one should think about 'consent' in the context of peacekeepers' activities, is yet to be resolved.

Questions of accountability and supervision also arise for commanders of peacekeeping forces. For example, following Major General Jetley's shortcomings in Sierra Leone, Kofi Annan tried to remove him from his position, only to be faced with opposition from India. The country threatened to pull out all its forces if Jetley were removed, and such problems remain.

Case Study: War in Sudan

Background Outline

In April 2023, conflict erupted in Khartoum between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), followed by a civil war which has extended to over one year. In the struggle for power between SAF leader General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and RSF leader Mohamed Hamdan "Hemedti" Dagalo, the promise of a long-awaited democratic transition diminishes.

Sudan's modern history began as an Anglo-Egyptian Condominium until its independence in 1956. The newly independent republic faced significant challenges, including vast geographic size and internal divisions between the wealthier Arab-Muslim north and the comparatively poorer, predominantly Christian or Animist south. These divisions led to two civil wars, culminating in the 2011 secession of South Sudan. The second civil war (1983-2005) was particularly brutal, resulting in approximately two million deaths due to famine and atrocities.

In addition to these internal conflicts, post-colonial Sudan was also marked by the dictatorship of Omar al-Bashir, who seized power in a 1989 coup. Bashir's regime lasted through most of the second civil war, the secession of South Sudan, and the Darfur conflict, which was condemned as genocide by international bodies. His oppressive rule included a strict interpretation of sharia, the use of private militias and 'morality police', as well as religious persecution. Bashir's regime persisted until 2019, when widespread protests led to his ouster in a coup led by the SAF as well as the RSF.

The RSF, emerging from the Janjaweed militia responsible for atrocities in Darfur, became a powerful paramilitary group under Bashir's rule. The RSF, led by Hemedti, carried out brutal campaigns and amassed significant wealth by controlling gold mines. Despite initially protecting Bashir, the RSF participated in his 2019 ouster and helped establish a transitional government, with Burhan leading the Transitional Sovereignty Council and Hemedti as his deputy.

The transitional government appointed Abdalla Hamdok, an economist and development expert with experience at various multilateral organisations, as prime minister and tasked him with addressing Sudan's economic crisis. However, Hamdok was ousted in a 2021 coup orchestrated by the SAF and RSF, which also suspended the constitution, leading to international condemnation and suspension of aid. Briefly reinstated, Hamdok resigned in January 2022 due to ongoing protests and violence by security forces. Since then, Sudan has lacked effective civilian leadership, with Burhan acting as the de facto head of state.

Negotiations in 2022 aimed at transitioning to civilian rule culminated in a December deal outlining a two-year transition. The agreement, however, faced significant opposition and did not specify a timeline for integrating the RSF into the SAF. By April 2023, the power struggle between Burhan's SAF and Hemedti's RSF escalated, with both forces deploying troops in Khartoum and across Sudan. The conflict intensified on April 15 with explosions and gunfire in Khartoum. The involvement of external actors like the Wagner Group and the UAE further complicates Sudan's crisis.

In early May 2023, peace negotiations in Sudan collapsed after the SAF abandoned talks brokered by the United States and Saudi Arabia. This followed Burhan's expulsion of UN envoy Volker Perthes, highlighting a refusal to cooperate with

international peace efforts. In response, the Biden administration imposed visa restrictions on SAF and RSF leaders, sanctioned affiliated companies, and updated business advisories for Sudan.

Under international pressure, the SAF and RSF resumed negotiations in late October 2023, but fighting continued. December talks in Jeddah failed as neither side upheld commitments, including maintaining civility and facilitating humanitarian aid. In January 2024, the SAF suspended contact with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, another mediation effort.

Violence persisted in Khartoum and across Sudan, including in Darfur, where the assassination of West Darfur Governor Khamis Abakar marked an escalation. Abakar had accused the RSF of genocidal attacks and called for international intervention. Since April 2023, over sixty-eight villages in Darfur have been burned by militias.

Humanitarian access is critical, with the U.S. urging the UN Security Council to authorise aid deliveries through Chad. The conflict has worsened already dire conditions, with over 600 deaths in the first month and the destruction of vital infrastructure. In August 2023, the UN warned that the conflict was "spiralling out of control," causing massive displacement and health system collapse. The UN's humanitarian chief called Sudan "one of the worst humanitarian nightmares in recent history." Over 14,000 people have been killed and tens of thousands wounded, half the country's population – 25 million people – need life-saving assistance. More than 8.6 million people have been forced to flee their homes, including 1.8 million refugees. Food insecurity has reached record levels, with 18 million people facing acute hunger. UN OCHA launched a famine prevention plan in early April 2024, as reported in UN News.

On March 8, 2024, the UN Security Council called for an immediate cessation of violence (see more under 'Relevant UN Actions'). Indirect negotiations mediated by Libya and Turkey broke down on March 11, as the SAF rejected a ceasefire proposal without RSF withdrawal from civilian sites. The SAF's recent advances, aided by Iranian-supplied drones, complicated the situation. In general, external actors have continued to provide outside military support illegally, defying the Council's sanctions – according to Mohamed Ibn Chambas, High Representative for the "Silencing the Guns" Initiative of the African Union Commission ", external inference has been a major factor' stymying efforts to negotiate a ceasefire and to stop the war."

Amnesty International noted that especially given the scale of the problem: "the international community has not exerted sufficient pressure on the warring parties to stop violating the human rights of people caught up in this war. The African Union, in particular, has not displayed the required leadership level nor taken concrete actions that match the scale and gravity of the conflict."

The Fact-Finding mission, established by the Human Rights Council through resolution A/HRC/RES/54/2 in October 2023, is currently unable to fulfil its mandate as it is yet to be fully staffed or adequately funded due to a UN hiring freeze. By the end of February 2024, the UN's appeal was only 5% funded. "The pervasive impunity in Sudan has emboldened the warring parties and militias allied to them to continue targeting civilians in violation of international law. These perpetrators believe they are immune from consequences, and the international community's failure to act has only emboldened them further," said Tigere Chagutah, Amnesty International's Regional Director for East and Southern Africa.

Relevant UN Actions in Sudan

Resolutions and meetings

Since the eruption of this war in April 2023, the UNSC has published five resolutions on Sudan. Initially, resolutions revolved around continuing efforts in the form of the UN Integrated Transition Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS), established in June 2020. However, this mission was officially suspended in December 2023.

The first official resolution by the UNSC regarding the war at hand was published on 8 March 2024 (S/RES/2724). This resolution called for an immediate cessation of hostilities in Sudan during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. It urged all warring parties to pursue a sustainable resolution through dialogue. It was adopted with 14 votes in favour and one abstention (Russia).

In the UN Security Council's meeting in March 2024, it was further noted that there has been no major progress since the Council adopted a resolution calling for full, unhindered access to aid. Prices of basic food commodities have been driven up by 83%, which means that "what is already the world's largest international displacement crisis is also on course to become the world's worst hunger crisis[1]." It is important to note that this is not due to unfavourable agricultural conditions – the representative of Algeria, also speaking for Guyana, Mozambique and Sierra Leone, observed that "if we had the ability to reverse the hand of time", it would have been "unimaginable" for a

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[1] https://www.wfp.org/videos/sudan-new-data-shows-worlds-largest-displacement-crisis-has-also-become-worlds-largest#:~:text=Sudan's%20war%20has%20set%20off,to%20devastate%20lives%20and%20livelihoods

country like Sudan — a breadbasket known for its abundant resources and agricultural traditions — to face the acute risk of food insecurity.

The latest resolution, published on June 13th, 2024, demanded that the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) end the siege of El Fasher, the capital of North Darfur state, and called for an immediate cessation of fighting and de-escalation in and around El Fasher.

Apart from requesting ceasefires and de-escalation, immediate solutions include proposals to mitigate ongoing humanitarian crises. UN OCHA coordinated the humanitarian response and called for $2.7 billion of Sudan's internal aid to reach 14.7 million displaced and hungry people. UNHCR calls for an additional $1.4 billion to target the nearly 2.7 million people who have fled Sudan into five neighbouring countries. Until now, this appeal has only been funded by around 5-6% as per UN OCHA.

Proposed Solutions

Ceasefire & Peace Talks: Ideally, an immediate ceasefire could be called, and an inclusive peace talk mediated by international actors would be held. This would be the best solution for preventing a humanitarian crisis and the best outcome of a peacekeeping mission. However, this would also be the most difficult to achieve. Opposing sides rarely voluntarily sit down for ceasefires and peace talks, and many of the problems which led to the crisis must be addressed before a ceasefire is achievable.

Sanctions and International Pressure: Sanctions and other forms of international pressure, including condemnations and threats, may pressure the various forces into ceasefires and peace talks.

Peacekeeping and Intervention: The UN has a track record of sending out peacekeeping task forces to intervene in potential humanitarian crises to minimise the harm inflicted on civilians. This would, however, require a detailed list of instructions for what policies the peacekeeping force should follow, as a lack of clear instructions may result in either the peacekeeping force being seen by local forces as a rival, as had happened in the Somali crisis, or the peacekeeping force being entirely ineffective, as it had been in the Rwanda Genocide. This would also require a majority vote from UNSC members and no vetoes to pass, as well as follow-up resolutions to be effective.

The benefits of a peacekeeping mission would be that in the case of an uncooperative local government, the peacekeepers can enforce peace and stability on the region, and effectively put the region under international control to rebuild and stabilize. The downsides to a peacekeeping mission, however, is that it will force the UN to intervene with military forces, risking further bloodshed, and severely infringes on both the Central African Republic's sovereignty, and the African Union's policy of "African solutions to African problems."

African Union: Many voices have called for leaving African problems to the African Union. These voices condemn non-African intervention as the root cause of many of these problems and believe that Africa should be given the sovereignty to address its problems within the continent. It would be worth discussing how much the UNSC should intervene in the first place, as opposed to leaving some responsibilities to the AU, as UNSC intervention would inevitably undermine the AU's legitimacy.

Humanitarian Assistance: Before solving the humanitarian problem, even after a ceasefire is signed, humanitarian assistance could be crucial to minimising humanitarian disasters and human suffering. Countries may want to discuss

responsibilities and sources of funding for this aid, as well as how this aid can be best provided, funded, and used.

Demobilisation and Disarmament: Should a ceasefire be achieved, it would be wise to discuss and arrange for demobilisation and disarmament to prevent future conflicts from arising again.

Monitoring a Political Transition: Similar to the demobilisation of the military providing stability in the military, political transitions may also be necessary to achieve a stable future in the political scene.

Bloc Positions

As of 30 June 2018, Ethiopia contributed the most troops to the UN peacekeeping forces with 8508 people deployed. Of the other current Security Council members, China is second with 2519 troops, France is third with 744, the UK is fourth with 699, Sweden is fifth at 305, and the other ten Security Council members contribute less than 300 troops to the Blue Helmets' ranks. In terms of funding, in 2016-2017, the US provided a leading 28.6%, China provided 10.3%, France 6.3%, the UK 5.8%, Russia 4.0%, and the other current Security Council members provided less of the overall peacekeepers budget. Recent changes to these figures and trends show a fall in US funding alongside a rise in Chinese funding and troops.

Amidst cutbacks in US funding, the mission to Haiti was terminated in 2018. Several countries, such as Bolivia, have highlighted that long-term support in the form of "material compensation" is nonetheless necessary for the country.

Past UN peacekeeping missions have taken place in Cote d'Ivoire and Kuwait. The former is widely regarded as an example of a successful UN peacekeeping mission that contributed to bringing about permanent improvements in the country, and the latter contributed to monitoring a demilitarized zone.

Members of the African Union have called for increased cooperation between the peacekeepers and the members of the AU.

This could entail training and working together towards joint aims. Still, individual members of the AU are doubtful of some of the peacekeepers' operations. Equatorial Guinea, for example, has stated that external military intervention in a conflict can encourage violence.

While some countries have contributed to UN peacekeeping forces since the 1940s, other have only recently begun sending troops to the organization. Kazakhstan, for example, sent 20 peacekeepers in 2013 for the first time since the country's independence. Like China, it sees the move as one that will increase the country's prestige worldwide, yet despite that, there have been calls for it to contribute more to peacekeeping operations as one of the largest countries in the world.

Several countries have been at the forefront of calling for more effective UN peacekeeping operations, and the Netherlands in particular has spearheaded initiatives to improve the way Blue Helmets are organized. Other countries instead have a historic reputation for supporting the peacekeepers: despite the country's size and population, Peru has supported the UN's operations for decades, and it was under the leadership of the former Peruvian Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar that the UN Peacekeeping forces received the Nobel Peace Prize.

Finally, some current Security Council members would support increased peacekeeping operations. In particular, Poland has asked the UN to deploy peacekeepers to Eastern Ukraine, while Sweden has said it would be open to contributing to peacekeeping efforts in Ukraine.

All countries should research the topic in greater depth to get a comprehensive understanding of their nation's approach to UN peacekeeping. They should also be mindful that their approach to peacekeepers will be influenced by their allies.

UNSC meeting, March 2024:

Several Council members, including those from Switzerland, Slovenia, Malta, the United Kingdom, the Republic of Korea, and Japan, reiterated the briefer's warnings about the famine currently unfolding in Sudan. They called on the warring parties to immediately cease hostilities and engage in dialogue to find a political solution. Facilitating on-the-ground access is a primary objective of the international humanitarian conference for Sudan and neighbouring countries, organised by France, Germany, and the European Union, scheduled to take place in Paris on 15 April 2024.

However, other Council members condemned the politicisation of humanitarian issues. The Russian Federation's delegate cautioned that economic and other restrictive measures imposed by the West have destabilised Sudanese society. China's delegate emphasised that some countries have recently used humanitarian aid as a political tool to exert pressure, impose sanctions, and even directly interfere in Sudan's internal affairs. They argue that this interference has significantly contributed to the prolonged turmoil.

Questions a Resolution Must Answer

- Which of the problems brought about by the situation are the most urgent?

- What are the pros and cons of a peacekeeping mission? Would you like to see such a mission take place?

- To what degree should the international community interfere in this problem?

- Should African nations solve African problems? Or should major powers get involved in this problem?

- How forceful should the intervention, if at all, be? Should it be economical or militaristic?

Suggestions for Further Research

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UNSC Resolutions on Sudan:

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