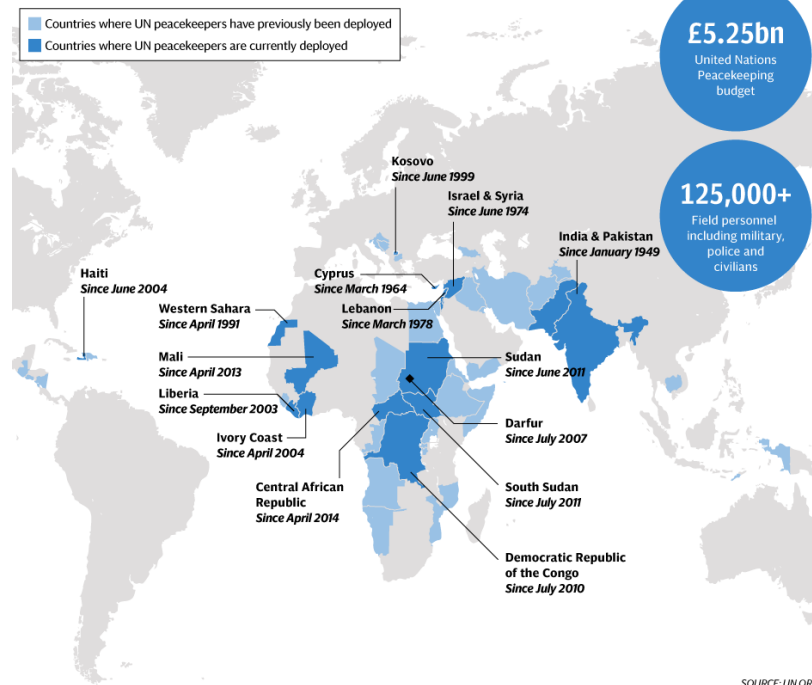


The Reformation of the Peacekeepers

History of the Peacekeepers

Where UN peacekeepers have been deployed



The United Nations Peacekeepers are, for much of the world, the quintessential image of the United Nations. In many ways, despite only representing a small portion of the United Nations' mission, they are synonymous with the organization itself. However, the organization and the existence of the peacekeepers are not explicitly laid out in the United Nations Charter. Instead, the modern day peacekeepers [were formed](#) in the wake of the Suez Crisis to monitor the ceasefire between Egypt, and

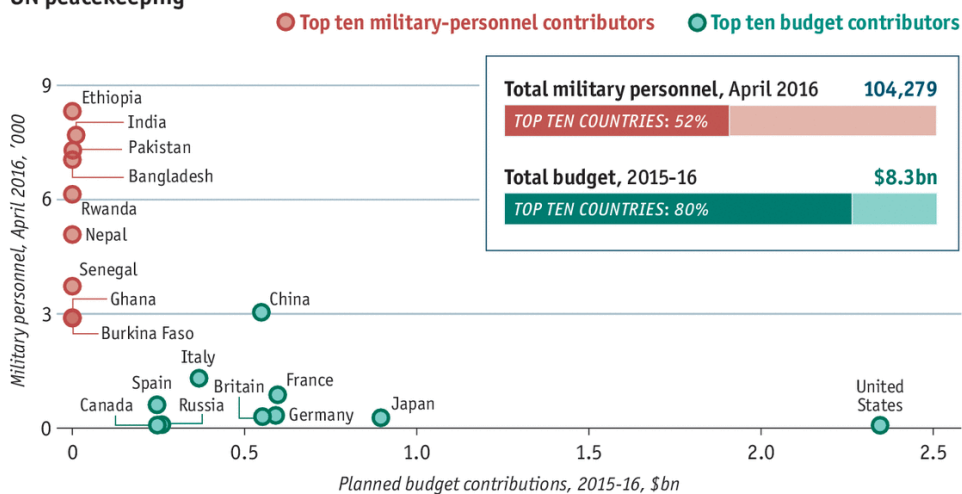
France, Israel, and the United Kingdom. This force, [proposed by](#) the Canadian Secretary of State of External Affairs, was met by skepticism by Egypt, but was eventually installed after assurances were made that the force would be multilateral, thus insuring the force would be neutral and unbiased. Peacekeeping missions are considered legal under international law because in [Chapter VII](#) of the United Nations Charter, the use of force is permitted against aggressive states or to reestablish order and security.

In total, the peacekeepers have been deployed and [completed nearly](#) 60 missions and are [currently deployed](#) on 16 missions. Of these [16 missions](#), nine are in Africa, one is in Asia, two are in Europe, one is in the Americas, and three are in the Middle East. Several of these missions, such as the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus ([UNFICYP](#)), United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan ([UNMOGIP](#)), and United Nations Truce Supervision Organization ([UNTSO](#)), have existed for several decades and show no signs of ending soon. While the peacekeepers have successfully transitioned many nations out of states of conflict and unrest, there are many areas where they are struggling to do so and it remains to be seen if the peacekeepers can continue to monitor these areas without the implementation of serious reforms. At the 2015 Leader's Summit of the United Nations, leaders from around the world [announced increased support](#) for peacekeeping operations with more troops and financial resources to be contributed from over 50 nations.

Key Statistics on Peacekeeping

United Nations peacekeepers, or peacekeeping forces authorized by the Security Council to operate on behalf of the United Nations, are [currently active](#) on peacekeeping missions in 16 countries. In

UN peacekeeping



Sources: United Nations; *The Economist*

total there [are over 100,000](#) uniformed peacekeepers, representing both troops, police and military observers. These peacekeepers are contributed [from 121 countries](#) across the world, but with most troops contributed by Ethiopia, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Rwanda and Nepal. According to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations' own statistics [only about 4%](#) of United Nations peacekeepers are women. In terms of its costs, [the budget](#) for United Nations peacekeeping is \$7.87 billion. A \$7.87 billion budget [represents](#) less than half of one percent of total global military expenditures. The [main financial contributors](#) to the peacekeeping budget are the United States of America (28.57% of the budget); China (10.29% of the budget); and Japan (9.68% of the budget).

Notable Peacekeeping Scandals

Past

Most allegations and scandals began to mount against the United Nations peacekeepers in the 1990s. The first source of many scandals was the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) [sent to the Former Yugoslavia](#) in 1992. This mission [worked in](#) Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. UNPROFOR [concluded in 1995](#) when it became the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH). UNMIBH [monitored the ceasefire](#) established in the Dayton Agreement. From the onset, UNPROFOR and UNMIBH were beset by scandals. For example, the Srebrenica Massacre was [a direct result](#) of failed United Nations peacekeeping tactics. While United Nations peacekeepers [did nothing](#), Bosnian Serbs executed 8,000 Muslim men and boys in the town of Srebrenica; despite the fact that Srebrenica [was declared a 'safe area'](#) by the United Nations and was under protection from United Nations peacekeepers, the massacre still occurred. This massacre was [a clear act of genocide](#), but constrained by United Nations procedures, the peacekeepers [had to stand by](#) and watch the massacre. While the United Nations

report on Srebrenica [declared that](#) any efforts to terrorize or expel entire people must be met with necessary means, no reforms have been made to allow the peacekeepers to take such means. Moreover, [UNMIBH allegedly engaged](#) in and abetted sex trafficking. When UNMIBH and its leaders [were confronted](#) with these allegations, they worked to fire the whistleblower and remove her from her post. Even today the United Nations works to minimize these allegations rather than implement serious reforms, [shutting down](#) an anti-trafficking initiative implemented by its gender affairs chief in Bosnia.

The Rwandan Genocide resulted in [the deaths of 800,000](#) people during 100 days in 1994. During the worst of the genocide, United Nations personnel were on the ground and in many instances, [watched as acts of genocide](#) were committed around them. The inability of the United Nations and international community, but in particular the United Nations peacekeepers to stop the Rwanda Genocide is the most important failure of all three institutions. The United Nations peacekeepers [were constrained](#) by a narrow mandate handed down by the Security Council that [failed to fundamentally understand](#) the nature of events on the ground. If the peacekeepers are unable to keep peace between two warring factions in an ethnic conflict, how can the peacekeepers be entrusted to succeed in any of their mandates? As many post-colonial states begin to fracture and ethnic violence increases in the 21st century, a more effective peacekeeping force must be developed. A strategy is necessary to prevent future Rwandas.

Recent

Since the inception of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) in 2004, the UN mission has been marred with controversy. MINUSTAH was [originally created](#) in 2004 to help stabilize the country after the ousting of President Jean-Bertrand Aristie in a coup. His ousting [prompted violence](#) and unrest. MINUSTAH [was mobilized](#) with the goal of promoting democracy and human rights while strengthening Haitian institutions. In reaching these goals, the mission proved incompetent. However, after the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, the mission [was given new life](#); it was now ordered to help reconstruction from the disaster. However, under this second mandate MINUSTAH troops from Nepal spread cholera to Haiti, [killing over 9,200 people](#). Due to unsanitary conditions that were [allowed to flourish](#) by the peacekeepers, the Haitian people must now contend with cholera as well as all the trauma still lingering from the 2010 earthquake. The United Nations [continued to deny](#) that the cholera originated from the peacekeepers and has still taken efforts to reduce their responsibility, despite there being no other culprits. Moreover, there have been allegations of sexual assault, with two United Nations peacekeepers [found guilty](#) of raping a young Haitian boy. In 2011, [MINUSTAH accounted for](#) 10% of global peacekeeping staff yet 20% of sexual assault allegations. Despite all of these controversies, MINUSTAH continues to have its [mandate extended](#).

Recent conversations on sexual assault in the peacekeeping forces were spurred by allegations against peacekeepers in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA). MINUSCA [was authorized](#) by the Security Council in 2014



with the goal to stabilize the Central African Republic in the wake of [their civil war](#) that split the country along religious lines. In 2016, the United Nations [announced 108 new](#) sexual abuse cases in MINUSCA, with the majority involving children. Allegedly, a French commander [forced girls](#) to engage in acts of bestiality for food. According to a [United Nations](#)

[report](#) on sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers, even after these allegations were internally raised, the United Nations did little about them. As a result of a separate allegation and investigation, 3 soldiers from the Democratic Republic of the Congo are [currently on trial](#) for their alleged participation in rapes. It remains to be seen if they will be found guilty as the Congolese soldiers [are being tried](#) in their native country, not in the country where the crimes were committed, and none of the alleged victims will be allowed to testify.

Core Issues

Funding of Peacekeeping Efforts

The only way in which the United Nations peacekeepers can continue to function is through continued funding. Without these funds, the peacekeepers would not be able to operate across the globe. During the global recession, the peacekeeping budget has fallen. From FY 2015 to FY 2016 the peacekeeping [budget decreased](#) by \$0.4 billion, despite an increase in troops and the same number of missions deployed during both years. Moreover, [many small or impoverished](#) countries such as Benin, Eritrea, Cambodia, and Myanmar, contribute few troops and very little to the budget. In 2014, nations [were \\$2.6 billion in debt](#) to the peacekeeping fund. In many cases, these nations have not paid for several years. It is important that all nations shoulder the burden of peacekeeping in some appreciable way. In reality, funding for the peacekeepers [relies heavily](#) on the United States of America. This results in a tenuous situation in which the United States could potentially cripple the peacekeepers if it ever wanted to; especially [given the reluctance](#) of many Americans to finance the United Nations when the United States [currently pays more](#) than 185 countries combined.

Sexual Violence and Human Rights Violations

As exemplified by MINUSTAH, MINUSCA, and UNMIBH, the United Nations peacekeepers [have a serious issue](#) with sexual assault. The number of sexual assault allegations made against peacekeepers are thought to [only represent a small portion](#) of actual incidences of sexual assault committed by peacekeepers. On a basic level, sexual assault committed by peacekeepers represents a gross abuse of power as peacekeepers are sent to protect at-risk populations. Moreover, the United Nations lacks an effective and unbiased process for investigating allegations and holding perpetrators accountable for their actions. In the case of MINUSTAH, [nobody](#) will be held accountable for the spread of cholera to

the Haitian people. Similarly, in the Central African Republic, French peacekeepers are being investigated by their own national military, and [if found guilty](#), “could face criminal punishment.” For these peacekeepers, who have committed a heinous crime against the people they were sent to protect, it is likely that their actions will only result in a slap on the wrist because under current agreements with the United Nations, national judicial systems [are responsible](#) for prosecuting those who have committed crimes on United Nations missions. The United Nations and their personnel who commit crimes must be held accountable. [Despite protests](#) from the United Nations that paying restitution to cholera victims in Haiti will result in further lawsuits against the United Nations, international law experts find [this outcome unlikely](#). The impunity of the United Nations must be seriously evaluated by the Security Council.

Lack of Female Peacekeepers

The United Nations peacekeepers are predominantly male. Only [4% of peacekeepers](#) are women. While this represents [an increase](#) from 1% of peacekeepers being women in 1993, there is a serious lack of women in the peacekeeping forces. It is important that the United Nations find innovative ways to increase the number of women in its peacekeeping forces. Unfortunately because the peacekeepers are contributed by nations, it is important that the United Nations work with national militaries to promote women into roles in which they can serve as peacekeepers. More female peacekeepers could change the dynamics of peacekeeping units and perhaps result in positive benefits for the women that are placed under their protection during peacekeeping missions.

Rules of Engagement

Perhaps the largest debate relating to the United Nations peacekeepers surrounds their rules of engagement. Among many nations, there [are serious qualms](#) over whether the United Nations peacekeepers are used to monitor peace, or enforce it. Many countries who contribute troops [are reluctant](#) to allow the peacekeepers to enforce peace as this could be quite dangerous and result in a loss of life. However, given the dangerous precedents set in Bosnia and Rwanda, of leaving populations to their deaths, the Security Council must carefully consider the appropriate use of peacekeeping forces to establish clearer rules of engagement that allow this goal to be accomplished.

Ineffectiveness

Many United Nations peacekeeping missions have failed to attain their goals. In South Sudan, peacekeepers have proven incapable in preventing [the rape and murder](#) of aid workers outside the doors of its military compounds. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the peacekeepers have completely [lost the faith](#) of the population it was sent to protect. In Rwanda and Bosnia, the peacekeepers had to watch as genocide was committed before their eyes. There is a serious lack of flexibility in the mandate for peacekeeping missions and this leaves the peacekeepers inept, unable to participate in the conflict and actually work to protect innocent lives. The peacekeepers seem to struggle particularly in ethnic conflicts and with these sort of conflicts on the rise, it is urgent that the United Nations engage in serious reforms of the peacekeeping forces.

The other issues, while important, contribute to the general ineffectiveness of many missions. However, even if those issues are resolved, it will not matter unless the Security Council can find ways to make its current missions effective and develop procedures to ensure the success of future missions.

Continued Importance of Peacekeeping Missions

While there are many systemic problems affecting the peacekeeping forces and it remains to be seen whether modern day missions are as effective as missions in the past, peacekeeping missions are still important to maintaining the global order and pursuing peace and security for as many people as possible. The United Nations must remain committed to its current missions, while continue to be vigilant and aware so as to pursue future missions when the need arises. However at the same time it is important to consider that peacekeeping missions, to monitor or enforce peace, cannot be the only tool used by the Security Council to protect people and establish more stable states. Peacekeeping missions must remain a tool of the United Nations, but they must also become more flexible.

Questions to Consider

To what extent should the rules of engagement be altered?

To what extent will developing mechanisms to hold peacekeepers accountable for criminal acts affect countries' decisions to contribute peacekeepers?

Can United Nations personnel be held accountable even when nations claim national sovereignty over their citizens?

How can United Nations peacekeeping missions become more effective?

Are United Nations peacekeeping missions still worthwhile?