**Forum:** General Assembly First Committee

**Issue:** Measures to Reconfigure the UN Peacekeeping System

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Introduction

With the aim of maintaining peace during the periods of continuous wars and conflicts, the UN Peacekeeping operations were established, assisting the development and the maintenance of peace with a global effort. In a total of 72 operations in 72 years, the UN Peacekeepers achieved such aim with significant success, ultimately receiving the Noble Peace Award.

Although the success and the benefits brought by the UN Peacekeeping forces are significant, it is undeniable that the current basis system in which the UN Peacekeeping system relies upon is significantly problematic, as there were countless of operations failed by the UN Peacekeepers, together with situations worsened furthermore ever since the deployment of UN Peacekeepers.

Previous Secretary General Ban Ki Moon has stated, “..[the presence of] clear and forthright terms about a cancer in our system [UN Peacekeeping] that is doing grave harm to the lives of the people we are meant to protect and serve.”

Delegates of the General Assembly First Committee should cooperate closely to further amend the current UN Peacekeeping system to ensure more efficient and successful peacekeeping operations in the future.

Definition of Key Terms

UN Peacekeepers

UN Peacekeepers are composed of military personnel provided by member nations of the UN to provide security and assist peacebuilding. Such responsibilities include protection of civilians, monitoring and observing peace in areas post-conflicts, and provide security over areas with on-going conflicts.

**Ceasefire**

Ceasefire agreement calls for the separation of forces of the two sides and the deployment of peacekeeping forces, where their responsibility includes the observation of the maintenance of peace between the two conflicting sides, ensuring the security of the people, and preserve the human rights of every individual.

**Veto Power**

The United Nations Security Council "veto power" refers to the power of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council (China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States) to veto, or to nullify, any substantive resolution.

History & Developments

Establishment of United Nations Peacekeeping

United Nations Peacekeeping began in 1948 when the Security Council authorized the deployment of UN military observers to the Middle East and were given the name of United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO). Since then, more than 70 peacekeeping operations have been deployed by the UN.  Over the years, thousands of military personnel, and other civilians from more than 120 countries have participated in UN peacekeeping operations, conducting a total of 72 missions.

Cold War

Throughout the Cold War, the tensions within the UN Security Council made it difficult to implement peacekeeping measures across different countries. The veto power of the Soviet Union and the United States of America made it almost impossible for the UN to intervene the spread or containment of leftist and revolutionary movements, and was limited to maintaining ceasefires and stabilizing situations on the ground, providing crucial support for political efforts to resolve conflict by peaceful means. These missions consisted of unarmed military observers and lightly armed troops with primarily monitoring, and reporting.

Post-Cold War

After the fall of the Soviet Union, the strategic context for UN Peacekeeping changed dramatically without the veto oppressions which limited the UN Peacekeeping Operations during the Cold War. The Security Council established larger and more complex UN peacekeeping missions, authorizing a total of 20 new operations between 1989 and 1994, raising the number of peacekeepers from 11,000 to 75,000.

Furthermore, peacekeeping came to involve more and more non-military elements that ensured the proper operation of civic functions, ensuring the implementation of comprehensive peace agreements and assist in laying the foundations for sustainable peace.

UN Peacekeeping Today

Loss of Incentives

The United States of America served as one of the main budget providers to the UN every year, making UN Peacekeeping Operations possible. The US Parliament stated that the US was to provide a budget of 28.5% of the total budget of the UN minimally to UN Peacekeeping Operations, ensuring the ‘global peace’. However, this was by President Donald Trump, who reduced 3% of the funding to the UN. In the 74th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, he stated “And if you want peace, love your nation. Wise leaders always put the good of their own people and their own country first.”

Furthermore, cases of nations losing incentives can be seen through the contribution of forces from countries. Russia has provided only a total of 98 military personnel to the UN Peacekeeper, while the UK provided only a total of 336 personnel.

Geopolitics

The United States of America (USA)

The United States of America holds one of the largest military units across the globe. Ever since 1948, the US has been one of the main sponsors of the UN Peacekeeping force, assisting the development of democracy in many nations, such as the United Nations Command in the Korean War (UNC), where the US provided more than 150,000 troops.

However, as time conceded and the Soviet Union fell apart, the US lost its incentive to further aid the cause of peacekeeping. In 2017, the US parliament, under President Donald Trump, declared that US will provide no more than 25% of UN Peacekeeping operation funds, which originally was 28.5% under the unamended parliament. Despite the fact that the United Nations has warned that President Donald Trump's plans to cut contributions to peacekeeping will make such work impossible, the US has lost its incentive to further provide aid to the UN Peacekeeping operations.

Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

Ethiopia is currently one of the main providers to UN Peacekeeping operations in terms of troop size. Ethiopia provided 8,326 peacekeepers, making up approximately 6% of the entire peacekeeping force. However, Ethiopia holds only the title as the 60th strongest military power compared to the globe, with a total financing of only $350,000,000 which is comparatively less to most military budgets. It is important to keep in mind that Ethiopia is a developing nation, and most military personnel are not professionally trained.

UN Security Council

According to the United Nations Charter, the United Nations Security Council holds the power and responsibility to take collective action to maintain international peace and security. According to Chapter VII, Article 42 of the United Nations Charter, it states “Should the Security Council consider that measures provided for in Article 41 would be inadequate or have proved to be inadequate, it may take such action by air, sea, or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security. Such action may include demonstrations, blockade, and other operations by air, sea, or land forces of Members of the United Nations.” Delegates should keep in mind that the final authorization of the mobilization of UN Peacekeeping forces can only be approved by the Security Council.

Department of Peace Operations (DPO)

The Department of Peace Operations provides political and executive direction to UN peacekeeping operations around the world and maintains contact with the Security Council, troop and financial contributors, and parties to the conflict in the implementation of Security Council mandates.

United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR)

Established by the Security Council Resolution October 1993, its original intention was to assist in the implementation of the Arusha Accords, which was meant to end the Rwandan Civil War. Yet UNAMIR was remembered for its failure on peacekeeping, due to the limitations of its rules of engagement, which failed to prevent the Rwandan genocide and outbreak of fighting leading to the death of 500,000 civilians. This ultimately resulted in the overthrow of the government by rebel forces, leaving this operation to be regarded as one of the worst failures in peacekeeping history caused by the system of the UN Peacekeeping operations.

Previous Attempts to Solve the Issue

The UN Peacekeeping Operations were first established in 1948 in S/RES/50 with its basic mandates and procedures strictly established while clarifying the deployment of Peacekeeping forces in Palestine. On March 11, 2016, amendment S/2016/235 addressed the sexual exploitation and abuse in peace operations, and resolution S/RES/2518 addressed to the issue of the safety of UN Peacekeeping forces deployed in regions of conflicts. Although these measures were capable of limiting major issues which were left unattended by the Security Council to a certain degree, in depth methods and solutions are still lacking generally even including the safety of Peacekeeping forces and the prevention of sexual exploitation.

Relevant UN Treaties and Events

* The Palestine QuestionS/RES/50
* Improvising the safety and security of peacekeepers S/RES/2518

Possible Solutions

Firstly, it is important to recognize that the UN Peacekeepers are mainly composed of armies provided by LEDCs, which means that these military personals lack professional experience and are under grave danger in certain situations. For the success and efficiency of Peacekeeping Operations, members should consider the implementation of training systems or the creation of a guideline to determine the exact perquisites of a Peacekeeping military personal.

Secondly, many operations resulted in failures due to the lack of communication between the national government and peacekeeping forces, so it is strongly recommended for member states to establish a system of communication between the government and the forces.

The increase of human rights crime ever since the deployment of UN Peacekeeping forces is also a factor that member nations should consider and should consider the establishment of a more thorough supervision system within the UN Peacekeeping taskforce.

Not only that, as mentioned above in the previous solutions, the methods to completely addressing the issue of the safety of the forces and sexual exploitation is not completely resolved as it still lacks in depth solution and methods to solve the issue. The rules of engagement are also problematic as well as they only allow the use of force under the circumstances of self-defense. It is highly recommended that delegates attempt to amend or add on to the current existing resolution of S/RES/50 to tackle these issues.

However, delegates should refer to the United Nations Charter constantly to prevent the violation of any bylaws of the United Nations, as Peacekeeping requires the mobilization of armed forces into nations, which might lead to violations of sovereignty rights or human rights, which are the most basic foundation in which the United Nations was established to protect.

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