

# AFTrain'25

Yusuf Ziya Öner Science High School Model United Nations Conference

# SPECPOL

## Agenda Item:

Reviewing the role of UN  
peacekeeping operations in  
conflict zones

CO-Under Secretary General:

Ali Emre Üzülmmez

CO-Under Secretary General:

Hasan Arif Ege Başkurt

Academic Assistant:

Efe Koçoğlu



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## **1. Letter from Secretary-General**

Distinguished delegates,

It is with profound honor and an enduring sense of purpose that we extend our warmest welcome to you all for AFTRAIN'25. As the Secretaries General, we are genuinely honored to see this conference once again gather bright young minds who share a belief in dialogue, diplomacy, and cooperation.

First and foremost, gratitude must be extended to our dedicated academic and organization teams. Without their unwavering efforts, the vision we aim to share with our generation would have never come to life.

We live in a time when global knots grow more complex every day, yet it is also a time filled with opportunities. The work you will do here represents what diplomacy truly means, the ability to seek solutions, wind up those complications and connect them across tough conditions.

On behalf of the Secretariat, we wish you an inspiring and memorable experience. Let us bow our heads, the king is back!

Kind regards,

Kaan Muştu & Ömer T. Demirel

Co-Secretaries-General

## 2. Letter from Co-Under-Secretary General

Dear Delegates,

My name is Hasan Arif Ege Başkurt. I am a student at Fethiye Tahir Çelebi Maritime Vocational and Technical High School, as a Senior year student. I have had the honour of participating in numerous Model United Nations conferences. Through these experiences, I have gained not only a profound appreciation for global diplomacy and international cooperation, but also a series of valuable friendships and insights that help aid in shaping my perspective on the world.

I would like to extend my warmest welcome to all of you joining the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (SPECPOL) . This committee has been carefully organized by our Co-Under Secretary-general Ali Emre Üzülmüş and by me. In this study guide you will learn all the important subjects about our topic and it is really important to read the study guide carefully. To offer an intellectually fulfilling and rewarding experience. SPECPOL stands apart from other committees due to its academic depth, procedural detail, and the complexity of its subject matter.

With respect and anticipation,

*Hasan Arif Ege Başkurt*

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Co-under Secretaries-General of Special Political and Decolonization Committee  
(SPECPOL)

### 3. Letter from Co-Under Secretary-General

Dear Delegates,

I esteemed to welcome you all to Aftrain'25 and I would like to introduce myself, My name is as you all know Ali Emre Üzülmöz and I am Co-Under Secretary-General of Special Political and Decolonization Committee (SPECPOL). For the beginning I want you all to read this guide properly and get prepared before the beginning of the committee.

I assume you will consider possible solutions to reduce this menace. After careful review of this guide, you will observe that we have tried to give complete details so that you have all the necessary information to participate in the committee. I foresee that this gathering will provide a new angle on the Model United Nations. In a similar vein to this committee, the topics have been carefully considered to maximize participation and enjoyment.

I am really excited for these 3 days with you Ege and Efe Koçoğlu. This committee has been carefully crafted in consultation with my dear Under-Secretary General Hasan Arif Ege Başkurt and dear Academic Assistant Efe Koçoğlu together we will make this committee for the best and most enjoyable 3 days. I extend my sincere gratitude to the Executive team of Aftrain'25 for putting me in front of this opportunity.

Best regards,

*Ali Emre ÜZÜLMEZ*

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Co-under Secretaries-General of Special Political and Decolonization Committee (SPECPOL)

#### 4. Letter from Academic Assistant

Dear delegates

I am Efe Koçoğlu. I am a student in Muhittin Mustafa Böcek Anatolian high school, as a senior student. I had the delight of participating in Model United Nations conferences. These conferences taught me how to see from different perspectives, how to debate and how to make instant decisions. I also gained valuable friendships in my mun career.

I am welcoming you all to the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (SPECPOL), as the Academic Assistant of this committee I wish you all a great conference. Work hard, love like you never loved. We expect you to love this committee and debate like your life depends on it. Read the study guide carefully and do your research because you will need it. This committee was my dream and thanks to our brilliant secretary General and our Under Secretaries-General my dream has come true. Again I am welcoming you all to this prestigious conference and this beloved committee

With my best regards;

*Efe Koçoğlu*

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Academic Assistant of Special Political and Decolonization Committee (SPECPOL)

## 5. Introduction of the Committee

Established in 1945 under the Charter of the United Nations, the General Assembly occupies a central position as the chief deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations. Composed of all 193 Members of the United Nations, it provides a unique forum for multilateral discussion of the full spectrum of international issues covered by the Charter. It also plays a central role in the process of standard-setting and the codification of international law.

The Assembly meets from September to December each year, and thereafter, from January to September, as required, including to take up outstanding reports from the Fourth and Fifth Committees. Also during the resumed part of the session, the Assembly considers current issues during high-level thematic debates organized by the President of the General Assembly. During that period, the Assembly traditionally also conducts informal consultations on a wide range of substantive topics towards the adoption of new resolutions.

The Assembly makes recommendations to States on international issues within its competence. It has also taken actions across all pillars of the United Nations, including with regard to political, economic, humanitarian, social and legal matters. In September 2015, the Assembly agreed on a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals, contained in the outcome document of the United Nations Summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda. In 2022, the Assembly held a series of meetings to discuss the recommendations put forward by the Secretary-General in his report entitled “Our Common Agenda”, an agenda of action, designed to strengthen and accelerate multilateral agreements – particularly the 2030 Agenda – and make a tangible difference in people’s lives.

## 6. Introduction of the Agenda Item

Peacekeeping, as defined by the United Nations, is a way to help countries torn by conflict create conditions for sustainable peace. UN peacekeepers—soldiers and military officers, police officers and civilian personnel from many countries—monitor and observe peace processes that emerge in post-conflict situations and assist ex-combatants in implementing the peace agreements they have signed. Such assistance comes in many forms, including confidence-building measures, power-sharing arrangements, electoral support, strengthening the rule of law, and economic and social development.

The Charter of the United Nations gives the Security Council the power and responsibility to take collective action to maintain international peace and security. For this reason, the international community usually looks to the Security Council to authorize peacekeeping operations. Most of these operations are established and implemented by the United Nations itself with troops serving under UN operational command. In other cases, where direct UN involvement is not considered appropriate or feasible, the Council authorises regional organisations such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, the Economic Community of West African States or coalitions of willing countries to implement certain peacekeeping or peace enforcement functions. In modern times, peacekeeping operations have evolved into many different functions, including diplomatic relations with other countries, international bodies of justice (such as the International Criminal Court), and eliminating problems such as landmines that can lead to new incidents of fighting. SPECPOL covers a diverse set of issues that includes responding to the effects of decolonization, ensuring the peaceful use of space, and reviewing all UN-run peacekeeping missions.



## **7. History of United Nations actions in conflict areas**

UN Peacekeeping was born at a time when Cold War rivalries frequently paralyzed the Security Council. Peacekeeping was primarily limited to maintaining ceasefires and stabilizing situations on the ground, providing crucial support for political efforts to resolve conflict by peaceful means. Peacekeepers walking in single file down a sand dune Those missions consisted of unarmed military observers and lightly armed troops with primarily monitoring, reporting and confidence-building roles.

As World War II was about to end in 1945, nations were in ruins, and the world wanted peace. Representatives of 50 countries gathered at the United Nations Conference on International Organization in San Francisco, California from 25 April to 26 June 1945. For the next two months, they proceeded to draft and then sign the UN Charter, which created a new international organization, the United Nations, which, it was hoped, would prevent another world war like the one they had just lived through.

Four months after the San Francisco Conference ended, the United Nations officially began, on 24 October 1945, when it came into existence after its Charter had been ratified by China, France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, the United States and by a majority of other signatories.

### **Actions made by after United nations has been released;**

United Nations peacekeeping operations are a vital instrument employed by the international community to advance peace and security.

The first UN peacekeeping mission was established in 1948 when the Security Council authorized the deployment of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) to the Middle East to monitor the Armistice Agreement between Israel and its Arab neighbours. Since then, there have been more than 70 UN peacekeeping operations around the world.

Over 72 years, UN peacekeeping has evolved to meet the demands of different conflicts and a changing political landscape. Born at the time when Cold War rivalries frequently paralyzed the Security Council, UN peacekeeping goals were primarily limited to maintaining ceasefires and stabilizing situations on the ground, so that efforts could be made at the political level to resolve the conflict by peaceful means.

UN peacekeeping expanded in the 1990s, as the end of the Cold War created new opportunities to end civil wars through negotiated peace settlements. Many conflicts ended, either through direct UN mediation, or through the efforts of others acting with UN support. Countries assisted included El Salvador, Guatemala, Namibia, Cambodia, Mozambique, Tajikistan, and Burundi. In the late nineties, continuing crises led to new operations in the

Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic, Timor Leste, Sierra Leone and Kosovo.

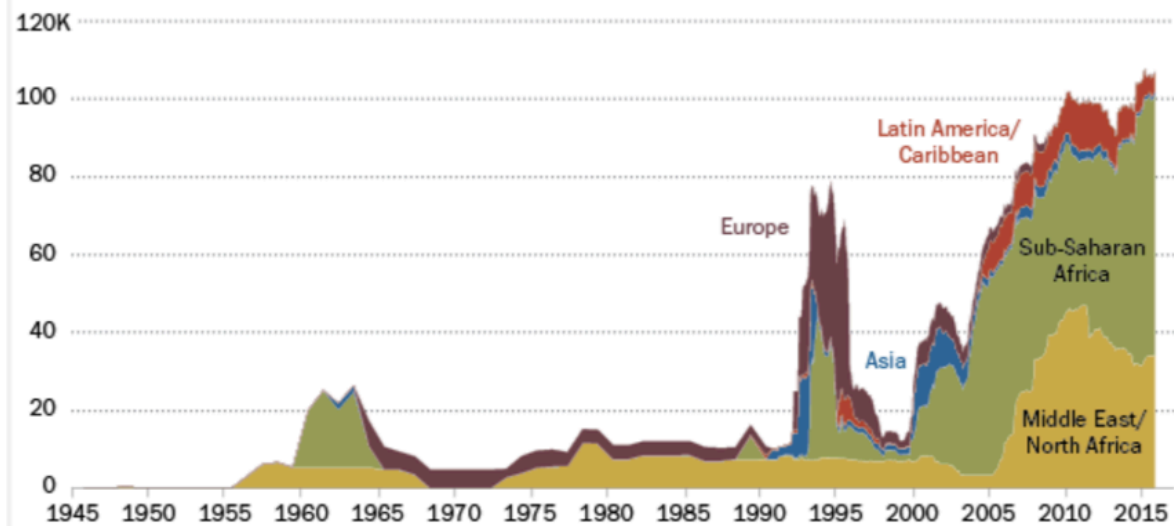
In the new millennium, peacekeepers have been deployed to Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Sudan, South Sudan, Haiti, and Mali.

Today's conflicts are less numerous but deeply rooted. For example, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Darfur, and South Sudan today, are in a second or third wave of conflict. And many are complicated by regional dimensions that are key to their solution. In fact, some two-thirds of peacekeeping personnel today are deployed amid ongoing conflict, where peace agreements are shaky or absent. Conflicts today are also increasingly intensive, involving determined armed groups with access to sophisticated armaments and techniques.

The nature of conflict has also changed over the years. UN peacekeeping, originally developed as a means of resolving inter-State conflict, has been increasingly applied over time to intra-State conflicts and civil wars. Although the military remains the backbone of most peacekeeping operations, today's peacekeepers perform a variety of complex tasks, from helping to build sustainable institutions of governance, through human rights monitoring and security sector reform, to the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, and demining.

### The rise of UN peacekeeping forces

*Total number of UN peacekeeping troops, military experts and police deployed to ...*



Actions of UN for Peacekeeping operations

## 7.1. Russian-Ukrainian war

The Russo-Ukrainian war began in February 2014 and is ongoing. Following Ukraine's Revolution of Dignity, Russia occupied and annexed Crimea from Ukraine. It then supported Russian paramilitaries who began a war in the eastern Donbas region against Ukraine's military. In 2018, Ukraine declared the region to be occupied by Russia. The first eight years of conflict also included naval incidents and cyberwarfare. In February 2022, Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine and began occupying more of the country, starting the current phase of the war, the biggest conflict in Europe since World War II. The war has resulted in a refugee crisis and hundreds of thousands of deaths.

In early 2014, the Euromaidan protests led to the Revolution of Dignity and the ousting of Ukraine's pro-Russian president Viktor Yanukovich. Shortly after, pro-Russian protests began in parts of southeastern Ukraine, while unmarked Russian troops occupied Crimea. Russia soon annexed Crimea after a highly disputed referendum. In April 2014, Russian-backed militants seized towns and cities in Ukraine's eastern Donbas region and proclaimed the Donetsk People's Republic (DPR) and the Luhansk People's Republic (LPR) as independent states, starting the Donbas war. Russia covertly supported the separatists with its own troops, tanks and artillery, preventing Ukraine from fully retaking the territory. The International Criminal Court (ICC) judged that the war was both a national and international armed conflict involving Russia, and the European Court of Human Rights judged that Russia controlled the DPR and LPR from 2014 onward. In February 2015, Russia and Ukraine signed the Minsk II agreements, but they were never fully implemented in the following years. The Donbas war became a static conflict likened to trench warfare; ceasefires were repeatedly broken but the frontlines did not move.

Beginning in 2021, there was a massive Russian military buildup near Ukraine's borders, including within neighbouring Belarus. Russian officials repeatedly denied plans to attack Ukraine. Russia's president Vladimir Putin voiced expansionist views and challenged Ukraine's right to exist. He demanded that Ukraine be barred from ever joining the NATO military alliance. In early 2022, Russia recognised the DPR and LPR as independent states. While Russian troops surrounded Ukraine, its proxies stepped up attacks on Ukrainian forces in the Donbas.

Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine has passed the one-year mark, and the crisis shows no signs of letting up. The war in Ukraine has forced millions of people to flee their homes — sometimes with little more than the clothes on their backs. Others remain trapped in besieged areas without access to food, water, or essential services. This page will continue to share updates on how the United Nations is helping in Ukraine.

The UN has been stepping up to deliver lifesaving aid to those in need by providing emergency food, water, shelter, and medical care to the most vulnerable, including women, children, and the elderly. One year in, amid the ongoing destruction, humanitarian needs continue to rise but resources are falling short.

Even as fighting raged, especially in the east and south of Ukraine, the UN and its Ukrainian government and international donors and partners started drawing up plans for the eventual reconstruction of Ukraine. Fast, brutal and deadly as the war has been, it has also seen a remarkable courage and resilience of the Ukrainian people in the face of adversity as well as an unprecedented generosity of Ukraine's neighbors who have opened their doors to those fleeing the country.

Despite the ongoing war, the will to recover, return to one's home, reconstruct and maintain hope for the future remains strong among the people of Ukraine. UNHCR's latest intentions survey revealed that 57% of refugees and 69% of internally displaced people (IDPs) are interested in returning home one day, with access to safety, housing, social services, and jobs being critical conditions for sustainable return.

UNHCR continues to implement a solutions-oriented approach, leveraging its leadership of the Protection, Shelter and NFI, and CCCM Clusters to promote localized, sustainable humanitarian responses. UNHCR is also actively engaged in the 2025-2029 UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), which will support the Government of Ukraine in its reform, recovery and development priorities, and co-leads, with UNDP, Results Group 4 on Governance. UNHCR will continue to leverage its technical expertise, extensive operational footprint and trusted relationships with national and local authorities, IDP Councils, and a network of over 550 community-based organizations in Ukraine to deliver humanitarian assistance and protection services to IDPs, returnees, other war-affected people, refugees, asylum-seekers and stateless people.

A quarter of a century has passed since the disintegration of the Soviet Union, yet the fundamental character of relations between the former Soviet states remains contested. There is no agreement on what is legitimate in relations between these states, and the limits and constraints on the exercise of sovereignty by the former Soviet republics. The post-Soviet 'space' remains precisely a politically undetermined area, with questions raised over whether it represents a coherent region at all. It is not even clear what to call this part of the world, since the use of the prefix 'post' by definition accentuates what came before, rather than focusing on what the region now is or what these countries could become.

The question of what is legitimate in post-Soviet Eurasia is fundamentally contested, and reflects broader divisions about the end of the Cold War, the security promises made at that time and, ultimately, conceptualization of the imperial character of the Soviet Union and its continuer state, Russia. The concept of legitimacy is always relational, dependent on understanding the broader political context, the character of historical time and a country's relative position in a power system. Equally, sovereignty is rarely absolute but part of a broader dynamic of international relations

## 8. Effects On League of Nations Caused on World War I

It was founded on January 10th 1920 by the Paris Peace Conference that ended the First World War. The main organisation ceased operations on 18th of April 1946 when many of its components were relocated into the new United Nations (UN) which was created in the aftermath of the Second World War. The League's primary goals were stated in its eponymous Covenant. They included preventing wars through collective security and disarmament and settling international disputes through negotiation and arbitration. Its other concerns included labour conditions, just treatment of native inhabitants, human and drug trafficking, the arms trade, global health, prisoners of war, and protection of minorities in Europe. The Covenant of the League of Nations was signed on 28 June 1919 as Part I of the Treaty of Versailles, and it became effective with the rest of the Treaty on 10 January 1920. Australia was granted the right to participate as an autonomous member nation, marking the start of Australian independence on the global stage. The first meeting of the Council of the League took place on 16 January 1920, and the first meeting of the Assembly of the League took place on 15 November 1920. In 1919, U.S. president Woodrow Wilson won the Nobel Peace Prize for his role as the leading architect of the League. Despite this, he was ultimately unsuccessful in getting his country to join it.

As the League developed, its role expanded, and by the middle of the 1920s it had become the center of international activity. This change can be seen in the relationship between the League and non-members. The United States and Russia, for example, increasingly worked with the League. During the second half of the 1920s, France, Britain, and Germany were all using the League of Nations as the focus of their diplomatic activity, and each of their foreign secretaries attended League meetings at Geneva during this period. They also used the League's machinery to improve relations and settle their differences.

In addition to territorial disputes, the League also tried to intervene in other conflicts between and within nations. Among its successes were its fight against the international trade in opium and sexual slavery and its work to alleviate the plight of refugees, particularly in Turkey in the period up to 1926. One of its innovations in this latter area was the 1922 introduction of the Nansen passport, the first internationally recognized identity card for stateless refugees.

The League failed to intervene in many conflicts leading up to World War II, including the Italian invasion of Abyssinia, the Spanish Civil War, and the Second Sino-Japanese War.

The onset of the Second World War demonstrated that the League had failed in its primary purpose, the prevention of another world war. There were a variety of reasons for this failure, many connected to general weaknesses within the organization, such as voting structure that made ratifying resolutions difficult and incomplete representation among world nations. Additionally, the power of the League was limited by the United States' refusal to join.

## 9. United Nations Impact on Conflict Zones

The United Nations Charter notes that the United Nations was founded to “save succeeding generations from the scourge of war.” Tragically, there have been over 250 armed conflicts since the Charter was signed in 1945. Sustainable Development Goal 16: Promote Just, Peaceful, and Inclusive Societies, calls for all Member States to promote peaceful co-existence among people. Some of its primary targets include reducing arms flows and combatting organized crime, as well as significantly reducing all forms of violence worldwide.

Today more than 600 million young people live in volatile and conflict-prone areas. Young people are disproportionately affected by the multiple and often interlinked forms of violence such as political violence, organized crime and terrorist attacks which exact human, social and economic costs. In the past decade, the recruitment of young people into violent and extremist groups has led some to view youth as a threat to global security and stability. However, research shows that the number of young people who actively participate in violence is a small minority, while the vast majority of youth are not prone to violence, despite the injustices, deprivations and abuse they can confront daily, particularly in conflict zones. Moreover, a growing body of evidence suggests that they can and do play active roles as agents of positive and constructive change, and the recently adopted Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security highlights this fact. It is a formal recognition of the positive role youth can play in the maintenance of international peace and security.

The maintenance of global peace and security is a cross cutting issue that is critical to achieving all the Sustainable Development Goals. Several UN offices are involved in the promotion and maintenance of international peace and security including: the Security Council, General Assembly, Secretary-General, Departments of Peacekeeping Operations, Field Support and Political Affairs and the Peacebuilding Support Office. Universities and institutions of higher learning are also important actors because they educate future leaders and peacemakers, who will shape the course of peace building in the world.

Present international relations even after the formal end of an epoch of alliance oppositions are still characterized by a high level of instability. The globalization process has led to expansion of a circle of participants of regional and international disputes: nowadays not only neighboring states are involved, but also global powers and international and regional organizations. In present conditions globalization process has visually shown the deficiencies which have generated serious problems of disproportion and inequality. It is possible to support globalization, asserting that it is capable of leading to an increased level of prosperity, reduction of poverty and strengthening of freedoms. However, fears of a huge number of people cannot be disseminated completely if more responsible administration of this process is not exercised. Conflicts, poverty, terrorism, climate change, environmental degradation, underdevelopment, pandemic diseases, discrimination and injustice still sadden life of millions of people worldwide.



During the Cold War period the United Nations were de-facto a meeting place and a point of discussion in search of balance between the opposing Powers. The Korean War, Suez Canal Crisis and the UN operation in Congo were the most important examples, which showed that the UN became an arena of ideological struggle between the two blocs.

In other words, most international conflicts between 1945 and 1989 were of the traditional interstate kind resulting from incompatible interests over economic, military or territorial issues. For example, The UN played a significant role in mediating an end to the Iran-Iraq war and assisting with the implementation of Resolution 598 in 1987, which provided for a cease-fire and the deployment of an unarmed UN military observer force.

Also, the overwhelming majority of conflict in the period of the Cold War took place between Third World countries where the great powers had been involved on opposite sides and often encouraged to continue the conflict. These conflicts were exacerbated by the ideological divide, that for decades gave rise to so much distrust and hostility and prevented any effective international steps from being taken

After the end of the Cold War the conditions under which UN peacekeeping operations were deployed qualitatively changed. Firstly, the number of conflicts increased significantly. Civil wars took place not only in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, but also in the Central Asian states, the Middle East, Africa and Southeast Asia. Secondly, these bear a significant amount of cruelty against the civilian population. New historical circumstances have put the UN up against new challenges, requiring constant readiness to settle ethnic and religious conflicts in multi-ethnic and multi-confessional states.

The Organization managed to support decolonization leading to the independence of a large number of new States and to mitigate, and even at times resolve, regional, bilateral and civil conflicts in a context that was nonetheless marked by severe ideological confrontation. At the same time, United Nations agencies made an important intellectual, political and judicial contribution to the universal recognition of human rights and strengthening cooperation for development and regional economic integration. Those advances constituted fundamental progress towards empowering the rule of law, which itself provides a favorable framework and is the best guarantor of human rights and peaceful international cooperation. It is therefore imperative that the United Nations of the twenty-first century respond effectively to present realities and effectively handle future challenges.

## **10. The engagements of United Nations peace operations in the MENA region**

The United Nations was established in 1945 to maintain and sustain world peace by working to avert wars and ensure security of the sovereignties of the independent member-states. Following the collapse of the seemingly challenged organisation before it, the League of Nations, the United Nations has worked since establishment to settle international conflicts and foster collaboration, especially through its peacekeeping and conflict resolution initiatives. Due to this function, the organisation has been at the epicentre of several conflicts, including some of the most complicated and enduring ones in the Middle East.

Since its establishment, the United Nations has sought to maintain World peace, avert wars, and provide security. The United Nations has worked to settle international conflicts and foster collaboration, especially through its peacekeeping and conflict resolution initiatives (UN Charter, 1945). Due to this function, the organisation has been at the epicentre of several conflicts, including some of the most complicated and enduring ones in the Middle East. Connecting Asia, Africa, and Europe, the Middle East has long been a region of geopolitical and cultural importance. But it is also characterised by long-standing disputes and power struggles, such as the Syrian civil war, the Israeli Palestinian conflict, and the Yemeni crisis. These conflicts are not isolated incidents, they affect international relations, involving both regional and global forces, and frequently have profound humanitarian repercussions. Due to their complexity, wide range of players, and frequent fuelling by ingrained political, religious and historical grievances, the Middle East crises provided a challenge to the United Nations' peacekeeping efforts.

Through its peacekeeping deployments, diplomacy and conflict resolution initiatives, the United Nations has worked to avert war and uphold World peace. Its peacekeeping missions are well known for their role in providing humanitarian assistance, promoting communication, and stabilising post-conflict regions. Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter gives the organisation the power to send troops to restore peace when global security is under severe threat (United Nations, 2024). UN peacekeeping forces work throughout the World, frequently in unstable areas, and are essential in reducing bloodshed, facilitating political transitions, and acting as a buffer between opposing factions.

The difficulties in maintaining international peace are best shown by several significant Middle East crises. With origins dating back to the early 20th century, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is among the longest-running conflicts in the World. Sovereignty, territory, and the right to self-determination are at the heart of this conflict. Hostilities persisted despite multiple UN resolutions advocating for peaceful resolutions, affecting not only the two major parties but also the stability of the region at large. A major obstacle to the UN's peace efforts is the conflict's intractable nature since continuous violence exacerbates animosity and scuttles diplomatic moves.

Since its started in 2011, the Syrian civil war has grown into a humanitarian catastrophe that has left millions of people displaced and hundreds of thousands of deaths. The Syrian government, opposition organisations, ISIS terrorist group, and international power blocs like the United States and Russia are just a few of the many parties involved in the war. The United Nations has had difficulty mediating.

between competing interests and meeting the enormous humanitarian needs as a result of this complex conflict. In situations where external actors are well-established and when conditions on the ground make peacekeeping operations extremely risky, the Syrian crisis serves as a typical illustration of the seeming limitations of the UN interventions in the Middle East's multiple conflicts. Yemen is similarly complicated as Syria. In addition to the problem with Houthi rebels and the Yemeni government, regional powers like Saudi Arabia and Iran are also involved in the Yemeni conflict, which started in 2014. With the attendant starvation, disease and loss of lives, this conflict has resulted in one of the worst humanitarian catastrophes in the World. The geographical nature of the conflict makes United Nations' efforts to promote peace through negotiations and provide relief materials for the suffering populace extremely difficult. The UN's challenges in maintaining peace in areas where regional conflicts are entangled with larger geopolitical rivalry manifested in the Yemen crisis.

The Middle East conflicts highlighted the significant obstacles the United Nations faces in upholding international peace. In addition to causing great pain to people, these conflicts have destabilised the region with adverse effects on socio-economic stability and international security. The UN's legitimacy and efficacy have been weakened in certain cases as a result of the frequent impasse in the Security Council, which is frequently caused by competing interests among the permanent members. Furthermore, conventional peacekeeping techniques are becoming less successful due to the growing number of nonstate actors and the power of extremist organisations across the regions of the World. Addressing these issues requires a dynamic strategy that incorporates political or diplomatic moves, aid, and efficient governments towards maintaining World peace. Even if the United Nations has made progress in fostering peace, the conflicts in the Middle East highlighted the need for more robust systems to handle intricate, multi-actor conflicts. The enduring nature of these crises emphasises how crucial it is to review and possibly modify the United Nation's peacekeeping tactics to successfully handle contemporary crises.

The centre of UN activity in the Middle East is Beirut, Lebanon, home to the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia. In addition to ESCWA, there are also UN political offices in the Middle East, and many regional and country offices of UN system entities in the Middle East and North Africa region.

#### Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

The purpose of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia is to raise the level of economic activity in member countries, strengthen cooperation among them, and promote economic and social development in the region. ESCWA activities are coordinated with the

divisions and main offices of the Headquarters of the UN, specialized agencies, and international and regional organizations, including the League of Arab States and its subsidiary bodies, and the Gulf Cooperation Council. ESCWA comprises 18 Arab countries in Western Asia: Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

#### United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA)

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees is unique in terms of its long-standing commitment to one group of refugees. It has contributed to the welfare and human development of four generations of Palestine refugees. The Agency's services encompass education, health care, relief and social services, camp infrastructure and improvement, microfinance and emergency assistance, including in times of armed conflict. UNRWA is committed to fostering the human development of Palestine refugees by helping them to acquire knowledge and skills, lead long and healthy lives, achieve decent standards of living, and enjoy human rights to the fullest possible extent. UNRWA Headquarters and the Jordan Field Office are located in Amman, Jordan. UNRWA also works in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, Lebanon, and Syria.

United Nations peacekeeping operations in middle east:

#### UNDOF;

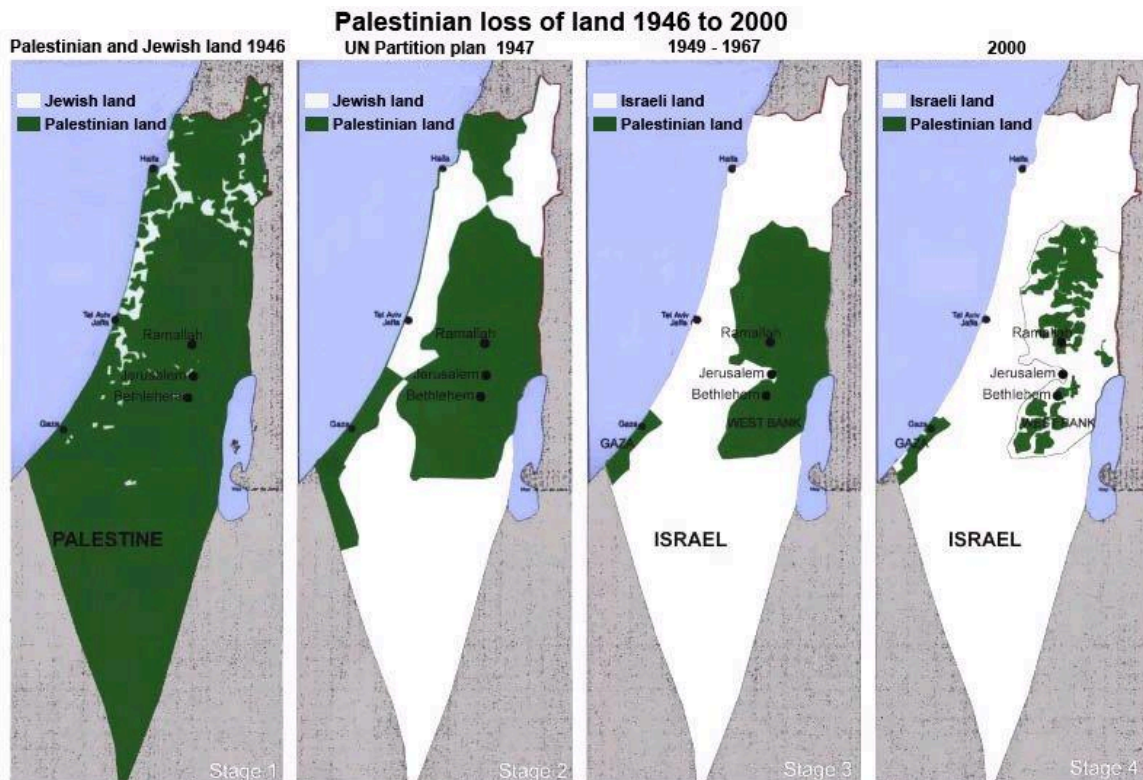
From early March 1974, the situation in the Israel-Syria sector became increasingly unstable, and firing intensified. The United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) was established on 31 May 1974 by Security Council resolution 350 (1974), following the agreed disengagement of the Israeli and Syrian forces in the Golan.

Since then, UNDOF has remained in the area to maintain the ceasefire between the Israeli and Syrian forces and to supervise the implementation of the disengagement agreement.

During the Syrian conflict, however, there were violations of the ceasefire with the escalation of military activity in the area of separation patrolled by UNDOF peacekeepers. On 18 December 2020, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2555 (2020), extending until 30 June 2021 UNDOF's mandate of maintaining the ceasefire between Israeli and Syrian troops and supervising the areas of separation and limitation — while requesting the Secretary-General to ensure that the Force has the required capacity and resources to fulfil its mandate in a safe and secure way.

UNIFIL;Originally, UNIFIL was created by the Security Council in March 1978 to confirm Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon, restore international peace and security and assist the Lebanese Government in restoring its effective authority in the area. The mandate had to be adjusted twice, due to the developments in 1982 and 2000.

Following the July/August 2006 crisis, the Council enhanced the Force and decided that in addition to the original mandate, it would, among other things, monitor the cessation of hostilities; accompany and support the Lebanese armed forces as they deploy throughout the south of Lebanon; and extend its assistance to help ensure humanitarian access to civilian populations and the voluntary and safe return of displaced persons.



The role and difficulties of the United Nations in maintaining peace in the Middle East using realism as the theoretical framework. A prevalent theory in international affairs, realism places a strong emphasis on national interest, state power, and the certainty of state-to-state conflict in international relations. Prominent Realists like Hans Morgenthau and Kenneth Waltz contended that states put their security and survival ahead of group objectives in a society without a central authority (Morgenthau, 1948 ; Waltz, 1979). This emphasis on self-interest frequently reduces the efficacy of global institutions like the United Nations, particularly in regions like the Middle East where power relations are complex and complicated. According to realism, states behave largely to safeguard their interests and increase their power. Strong nations outside the region frequently have national interest to pursue in the Middle East such that clashes with the United Nations' neutralist stance on peacekeeping. For example, nations such as Russia, Iran and the United States have economic and strategic interests in the Middle East and often back opposing sides in wars and

insurrections. This conduct is consistent with the Realist theory that nationstates acting in self-interest, frequently undermine peace efforts (Walt, 1985). As a result, these power-driven incentives place limitations on the ability of the United Nations to successfully mediate or settle disputes

Realist doctrine holds that national interests take precedence over pledges to maintain World peace. Realists contended that governments only fund the United Nations or back peacekeeping when it serves their national interests. Whether a peacekeeping mission serves the interests of powerful member states is a common factor in the Security Council, as they can veto decisions of the United Nations. Realism holds that national interests drive state activities, even at the price of international peace (Sutterlin, 1995). For instance, Russia has vetoed every Security Council resolution on Syria that has frequently hampered United Nations' intervention efforts in the protracted civil war. This is a serious problem for the United Nations because the power dynamics among its major members sometimes influence or block its activities. The constraint of collective security in a World with competitive states is another point of realism. According to Gilpin (1981), because member nations act freely to safeguard their interests, international organisations like the UN have little power to manage or stop disputes.

The United Nations finds it difficult to bring about enduring peace in the Middle East because of the long-standing hostilities between governments, despite the region's strong regional alliances and natural line of geopolitical solidarity. Realist theory therefore contended that maintaining peace in such an area is difficult since states tend to put security above cooperation, which frequently results in protracted conflicts and undermines United Nations peace initiatives. Lastly, realism sheds light on how challenging it is to strike a balance between efforts at peace and power. Realists contended that a key aspect of international politics is the conflicting interests of powerful governments, which complicate the United Nations' position in the Middle East. This theoretical framework highlights the difficulties the United Nations encounters since it has to balance opposing countries whose actions often cause regional instability and limit the organization's ability to influence events. Therefore, realism offers a useful perspective for comprehending the ongoing challenges facing the United Nations in maintaining peace in the Middle East.



### **10.1. The United Nations' approach regarding local governments in the MENA region**

The United Nations peacekeeping mission in the Middle East operates in a complex of challenging realities. There are powerful nations with their own interests involved in this conflict, as well as a range of different players, both regional and global, that stir this already politically charged pot. The conflicts in this part of the world are no easy firefights that can be monitored; rather, other factions, including ideological opponents, as well as shifting alliances, are all part of this equation. This, for example, can be seen in how permanent members of the UN Security Council, which are closely aligned with fighting nations, among other reasons, have been known to veto UN resolutions to bring peace to this area (UN Security Council, 2020).

The UN has in the past intervened in order to bring peace to this conflict-ridden area. These interventions cover major crises, including the Yemen crisis, Syrian Civil War, and the Israeli-Palestinian stalemate, which reflect a wide mandate but also with impediments. These impediments include lack of funds, lack of agreement among members, as well as the complexity of issues. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict fits this category. Since the 1947 Partition Plan, many resolutions, including 242 and 338, that advocated for Israeli disengagement from the occupied lands as well as a return to negotiations, yet a lasting peace has never been seen owing to differences among major powers. The support of a superpower, namely U.S., for Israel, in relation to the support of other members for the goals of Palestinians, has led to a political standstill.

The challenge of making great powers with divergent interests cooperate with each other remains a constant challenge for the UN. The Syrian Civil War further complicates this challenge. There are various approaches being taken by the UN. These approaches, including Security Council Resolution 2254, attempt to make a ceasefire and a political transition take place in Syria (UN Security Council, 2015). However, due to the conflict of interest between Russia and America, the role of this UN in this matter, in many ways, remains limited. This is especially true since these nations use their veto powers in resolutions that are not in their favor, thus having a chilling effect on peace-building actions being taken in this conflict. Also, due to certain laws, it remains impossible for the UN to make direct interventions in Syria without cooperation from their government.

Likewise, the Yemeni civil war offers a set of challenges. While Resolution 2216, which insisted upon a ceasefire and return to negotiations, has received scant compliance, foreign interference in these conflicts has further escalated the hostilities, with Saudi Arabian and Iranian support for their respective side. Budget constraints among member nations make it difficult for the UN to enact peace agreements and provide for humanitarian aid, despite a lack of conflict resolution options available to many of these nations. The domestic schisms in these nations, including those in Yemen, make it difficult for a longer-term resolution, with foreign pressures meeting internal divisions. Although a set of challenges, it remains vital

that the UN play a role in this portion of the world as a mediator and organizer. The Twenty-First Century has brought various challenges, as well as successes, for the UN peacekeeping organizations since 1948. These case studies point to a set of common issues for UN missions in the Middle East, such as lack of cooperation, interference, and complexities of conflict. Regional blocs and foreign country influences with stake in that area are known to cause issues in mandate fulfillment. A major challenge for these peacekeeping forces has been political tensions in those areas. These cover cases like UNTSO and UNDOF, where these peacekeeping missions are found to exist in a neighborhood where relations between Israel and other nations are known to continue being tense. There may also be a lack of cooperation due to issues with being labeled as biased, which, in turn, affects development of cooperation with governments in those nations, as seen in a study in 2021. There are also political issues that affect their performance since cooperation in various projects would not always be guaranteed. Based on these experiences, it has been learned that a robust and trustworthy regional partnership mechanism plays a fundamental role in successful peacekeeping. The UN would benefit from some form of partnership between itself and a regional group of nations where knowledge of the political and cultural setting of that region would make a bigger role in peacekeeping possible.

This would also help in situations where any foreign involvement has been screened with suspicion. Organisations may improve the acceptability and efficacy of peace missions. These collaborations can increase the likelihood of lasting peace by assisting the United Nations in implementing more politically and culturally appropriate solutions. Also, many United Nations missions in the Middle East have faced budgetary constraints that limit their capacity to maintain peace. For example, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) operates in an area prone to violent flare-ups between Hezbollah and Israeli forces. While its mandate requires monitoring and peace enforcement, limited resources hindered its operational capabilities, often leaving it unable to address the rapid escalation of violence effectively. Budget limitations also affected troop deployment, logistics, and the technology necessary for surveillance and reporting.

The Middle East serves as a focal point for World powers, which makes United Nations peacekeeping missions more complicated. For example, the United States and Russia's engagement in the Syrian crisis affected continuing diplomatic negotiations as well as the United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria (UNSMIS). The UN finds it challenging to mediate objectively since these outsider-actors frequently have conflicting interests. Additionally, when different factions receive assistance from influential allies, foreign influence frequently exacerbates local disputes, making it more difficult for the United Nations to carry out peacekeeping operations. When the situation became out of hand, the United Nations suspended such missions, such as UNSMIS, due to the geopolitical complexity.

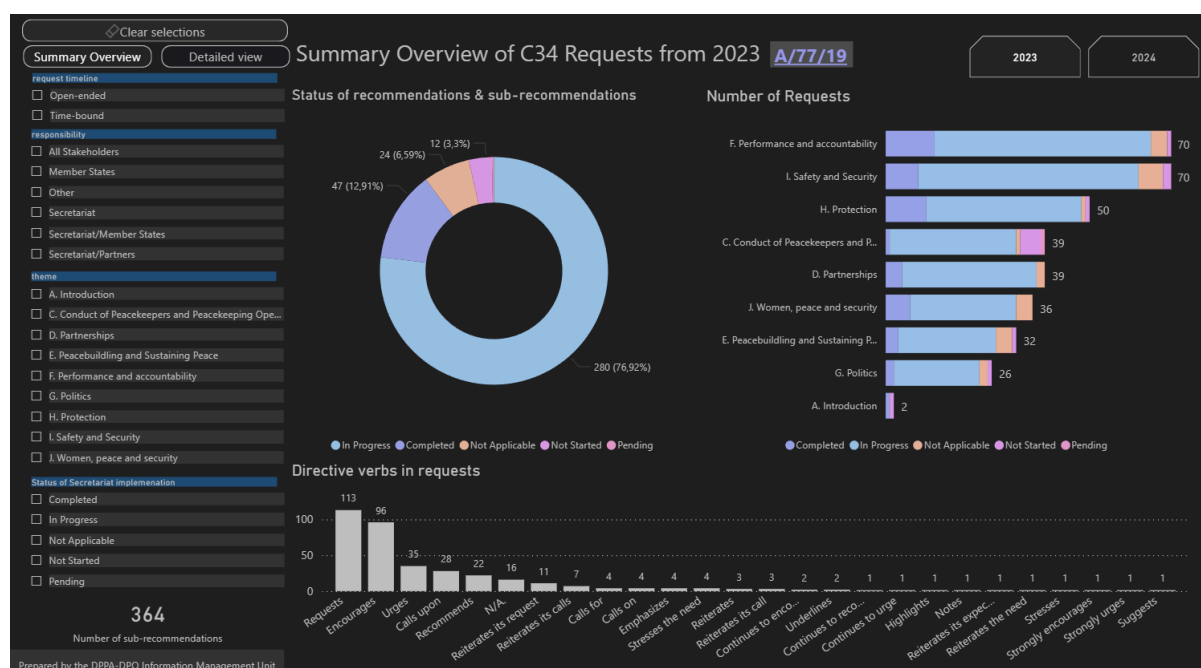
The United Nations has to take a more direct approach to addressing the influence of outside forces in conflict areas in the future. Creating plans to interact with strong nations to lessen their meddling in peacekeeping operations may increase the effectiveness of United Nations initiatives. Furthermore, encouraging global accords on the exclusion of outside powers from UN-led peace initiatives would improve the conditions for real peace-building. Furthermore, peacekeeper security becomes a major concern in areas where hostilities are ongoing. Particularly in states with severe violence like Syria and Iraq, United Nations personnel have been the targets of attacks, kidnappings, and harassment. For example, because of the continuous bloodshed by terrorist organisations, staff workers at the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) were in constant danger of security breaches. The security threats compel missions to take a defensive stance, which limits the breadth of their activity and hinders their capacity to actively interact with local populations. In severe situations, like UNSMIS, the United Nations had to terminate the operation early because of escalating violence.

Additionally, the United Nations peacekeeping efforts in the Middle East frequently lack the power to impose peace, thus they must rely more on diplomatic pressure than on military might. Although they are required to observe and report, missions such as UNIFIL are not empowered to take forceful action. For example, missions like those in Syria and Lebanon have shown that peacekeepers cannot often disarm fighters or impose peace when conflicts increase. Their inability to personally enforce ceasefire or stop violation diminishes their efficacy. Instead, they have to rely on member states to uphold agreements, which is difficult given how divisive politics are in the Middle East. The success of peacekeeping operations has been hampered by the inability to successfully de-escalate crises due to this lack of enforcement authority. The United Nations needs to think about more flexible methods for future peacekeeping plans that provide peacekeepers more power to take decisive action in areas of violence. Flexible mandates could lessen the deadlock that arises when the United Nations' activities are constrained by weak enforcement capabilities, particularly in areas where conflicts are still raging. The United Nations may create more feasible, realistic missions that support long-term stability by recognising these constraints. The lessons learnt in the Middle East have wider ramifications for how the UN handles peacekeeping around the globe. The difficulties in attaining durable results in the area point to the necessity for the UN to update its post-war recovery, peace enforcement, and conflict resolution policies.

First, a review of the United Nations' post-conflict reconstruction strategy would be beneficial. The lack of extensive reconstruction initiatives has occasionally permitted instability to reemerge in the Middle East. Preventing future conflicts may be possible if peacekeeping operations involve strong support for social and economic reconstruction. These examples also highlighted how the United Nations' peacekeeping system must address the root causes of violence, including resource competitiveness, political grievances and ideological differences. The United Nations can move closer to more lasting peace outcomes and lessen the chance of conflict reoccurring by addressing these problems.

## 11. Recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C34)

The Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, also known as the C34, is a subsidiary body of the Fourth Committee of the United Nations General Assembly. A unique, multilateral body consisting of 157 Member States, the C34 brings together a wide range of peacekeeping stakeholders, including the Permanent Members of the Security Council, troop- and police-contributing countries, leading financial contributors to the Peacekeeping Budget, several host states and others. The C34 is mandated to carry out a comprehensive review of all issues relating to peacekeeping operations. In this role, it makes recommendations, by way of annual reports that are adopted by consensus, to peacekeeping stakeholders. In response, the Secretary-General publishes an annual report on the implementation of these recommendations, outlining the measures taken by the Secretariat.



UN Peacekeeping is the largest and most visible representation of the United Nations. It is a collective investment in global peace, security, and stability. This investment has a proven track record. Over 70 years, our peacekeepers have made a tangible difference in the lives of hundreds of millions of the world's most vulnerable people, creating conditions for lasting peace, but a viable political process is central to the work of our operations, as peacekeeping is meant to support and not substitute national efforts.

Peacekeeping, however, is political and its success depends on active and sustainable political processes or the real prospect of a peace process. Peacekeeping cannot substitute for the political will and determination of the parties to end the conflict and protect their people, nor the host state's sovereign responsibilities.

The Security Council has a vital role in securing this commitment and cooperation, while providing missions with realistic and clear mandates. Peacekeepers protect civilians, actively prevent conflict, reduce violence, strengthen security and empower national authorities to assume these responsibilities. This requires a coherent security and peacebuilding strategy that supports the political strategy. UN peacekeeping helps host countries to become more resilient to conflict, laying the groundwork to sustain long-term peace, including by addressing root causes of conflict.

A strong and effective partnership between the UN Secretariat, the Security Council and the countries that contribute uniformed personnel, has made possible for 55 peacekeeping operations around the world to have, through the years, successfully completed their mandate. This partnership is essential as we continue to evolve, striving every day to become more agile and adapt to the volatile environments we operate in. UN peacekeeping is also committed to working smarter and using modern technology as well as other innovations.

## **12. Questions to be addressed**

- 1) Where might it be helpful to cooperate with local governments or other actors to attain enduring peace?
- 2) How can the UN strengthen its peacekeeping operations to remain effective in the conflict zones
- 3) Should the nature of UN peacekeeping missions be adapted to meet the specific characteristics of conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa(MENA)?
- 4) What can be done for the issues on ongoing wars and the diplomatic crisis in the Russian-Ukrainian conflict zone?
- 5) What is the appropriate way to adapt UN peacekeeping operations, in order to prevent conflicts and also how might the Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C-34) be involved in financing, and accountability in a peacekeeping mission concerning this type of conflict.



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