

The Impact of the World Drug Problem

Regardless of international or developmental status, the issue of drug abuse and addiction can be recognized as one of utmost importance for the international community and its members. In 2016, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) started a new initiative to combat the world drug problem by putting people at the forefront of the issue. Action to do so requires looking at the issue from the perspective of human rights, health, security, and safety, rather than simply the criminal repercussions or consequences. Using tactics involving prevention, supply limitation, and treatment, some progress has been made in solving this issue, however, this progress is not effective enough and still leaves millions susceptible and vulnerable¹. Outside of drug addiction, the world drug problem consequently causes severe health issues such as the spread of the HIV/AIDS virus. UN Deputy Secretary-General, Jan Eliasson, recognized the controversy surrounding the world drug problem at the UN General Assembly Special Session on the world drug problem (UNGASS) and noted that “...some countries and regions have suffered more than others. It is therefore important that we listen to each other and learn from each other’s experiences, not least of how the well-being of people is affected”². In this way, the United Nations is now looking to attack the world drug problem for the wellbeing of the people, rather than the wellbeing of the state; moreover, trying to solve the world drug problem in a criminal and violent manner only perpetuates the problem, and can also

¹ “World drug problem: UN adopts new framework for policies to ‘put people first’.” UN News Centre. 19 Apr, 2016. Web. 14 July, 2017. <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=53723#.WXP16K2ZNsM>.

² *Ibid*.

cause internal turmoil. This, therefore leaves international cooperation and human rights as the only successful methods to address the world drug problem.

When reflecting on the idea of human rights as it pertains to the world drug problem, there are five key general areas that must be looked to:

1. The right to health
2. Rights relating to criminal justice
3. Rights relating to discrimination
4. The rights of the child
5. The rights of indigenous peoples

However, when looking to guarantee these rights to citizens, these rights must be protected from not only the world drug problem, but the solutions to the drug problem as well. Historically, one or more of these rights has been violated by policies meant to halt drug epidemics, and have not only failed in stopping the epidemic, but instead caused additional problems and consequences. Examples of such policies and their consequences are outlined below, as well as the goals for what a pro-human right, but anti-drug policy would look like.

Thailand's "War on Drugs"

Thailand's "War on Drugs" is one example of the turmoil that can be caused when a state's government seeks to handle drug problems criminally. In 2003, Thailand's Prime Minister, Thaksin Shinawatra, declared a "War on Drugs," and within three months, over 2,800 people were executed by the government³. In reflection of the ordeal, it was found that over half

³ "Thailand's 'War on Drugs'." Human Rights Watch. 12 Mar, 2008. Web. 14 July, 2017.
<https://www.hrw.org/news/2008/03/12/thailands-war-drugs>

of those killed by, or accused of, being involved in drug trafficking were innocent of all charges. The high tensions and stakes with the war on drugs caused a breakdown in the justice system within Thailand, leaving anyone accused of involvement at the mercy of tribunals to prove their innocence.

Additionally, the war on drugs in Thailand caused a rise in HIV/AIDS throughout the country. Since those who were addicted to drugs were forced even farther into hiding, needle sharing/reusing became more popular, which led to the rise in cases of HIV/AIDS within the country. Not only was the transmission of the disease on the rise, but the amount of people who went without treatment was also on the rise because seeking treatment caused suspicion⁴. The effects of the HIV/AIDS epidemic still haunts Thailand today, and the issue of needle sharing is still present as well. Thailand was, and remains an example of how the criminal treatment of drug addiction can have prolonged effects and consequences for a nation state. The policies enacted in this case not only violated the citizens of Thailand's right to health, but also their right to criminal justice.

The Philippines' Modern Struggle with the "War on Drugs"

In the case of the Philippines, their "War on Drugs" was aimed towards drug dealers and suppliers, rather than those found with or using drugs; regardless of this change in target, the impact and consequences remained the same. Within 2016 alone, over 7,000 people had been killed⁵. These deaths were caused not by government tribunal, but rather were by vigilante attacks after President Rodrigo Duterte encouraged citizens to take action themselves. This has

⁴ "Thailand's 'War on Drugs'." Human Rights Watch. 12 Mar, 2008. Web. 14 July, 2017.

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2008/03/12/thailands-war-drugs>

⁵ "Human Rights and Duterte's War on Drugs." Council on Foreign Relations. 16 Dec. 2016. Web. 14 July, 2017.

<https://www.cfr.org/interview/human-rights-and-dutertes-war-drugs>.

caused internal turmoil in an even greater form, as now citizens are not only fearful of the government, but of their fellow citizens as well. The internal violence still occurring in the Philippines has caused such great concern that the United States has now withdrawn its aid to the country⁶. Not only has the war on drugs caused an influx in violence and disease, but it has also resulted in a human rights crisis.

Outside of the 7,000 people who have died at the hands of vigilantes, an additional 2,100 people have been killed by the police during raids of poor neighborhoods which have gone without investigation; additionally, the President has also suspended the legislative branch's power to control the actions of vigilantes or the police, leaving the people without a voice within the government. Having a trial is also unlikely in the Philippines if someone is charged with a drug related crime due to the corrupt and slow judicial system, leaving those accused with no trial and no opportunity to prove themselves innocent⁷. Between the police brutality, the suspended legislative branch, and the lack of trials, the war on drugs in the Philippines has escalated to an issue of human rights as well. Thus, the Philippines remains an example of how individual states have been unable to enforce anti-drug policy and would see better results through collaboration with other nations in combating the war on drugs through non-criminal means. The policies in the Philippines violated its citizen's right to criminal justice, the right to health, and the rights of children, some of whom were subjected to police violence during raids.

Seeking Effective Treatment

According to the UNODC and World Health Organization (WHO), the most effective

⁶ "Human Rights and Duterte's War on Drugs." Council on Foreign Relations. 16 Dec. 2016. Web. 14 July, 2017.
<https://www.cfr.org/interview/human-rights-and-dutertes-war-drugs>.

⁷ *Ibid*.

way to address the world drug problem without violating human rights, is to offer those who are addicted proper treatment and rehabilitation without the fear of criminal repercussions⁸. Looking back to the war on drugs in Thailand, the criminalization of drug usage caused many to practice unsafe methods for using drugs for fear of legal repercussions. However, if treatment rather than incarceration or execution was available, then there would be a substantially lower risk to the citizen's health. This would also ensure that none of the five key human rights concerns would be violated, and would even be strengthened in some areas.

The UNODC and WHO are currently researching and seeking out ways to best treat those afflicted with an addiction. Once an effective method is found, it can be implemented in all treatment centers, which would make it easier for national governments to decriminalize drug abuse for those afflicted to receive treatment, not punishment⁹.

A Universal Control Policy via GLOK67

Initiating a universal policy for controlled substances, such as prescription drugs, would also help halt the world drug problem. In 2016, the UNODC, WHO, and the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC) met to create an agenda to seek out methods for ensuring that those who need treatment for an illness or disease receive that treatment without risk of becoming addicted to medication¹⁰. The "Access to Controlled Drugs for Medical Purposes While Preventing Diversion and Abuse" Initiative (GLOK67), seeks to diversify the

⁸ "Preventing Illicit Drug Use and Treating Drug Use Disorders for Children and Adolescents (GLOK42)." The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Aug. 2016. Web. 14 July, 2017. <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/drug-prevention-and-treatment/children/index.html>

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ "Access to Controlled Drugs for Medical Purposes, While Preventing Diversion and Abuse (GLOK67)." The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. 2017. Web. 14 July, 2017. <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/drug-prevention-and-treatment/access-to-controlled-medicines/accessibility-medicines-availability-glok67.html>

medications used to treat patients to decrease the chances of an addiction forming. The initiative does not seek to take away necessary medications that may relieve a patient's pain, it simply seeks to decrease the likelihood of a patient becoming addicted. There are three main goals that the initiative has to decrease addiction:

1. Work with legislative and policy-makers
2. Build capacity for healthcare professionals
3. Work with the community and caregivers

In meeting these goals, the initiative will successfully prevent addiction while not violating a patient's right to health, or any other rights¹¹.

Protecting the Next Generation via GLOK42

One of the crucial rights in need of protection are the rights of children, both in their direct protection, and the protection of their parents whose care they must rely on. The UNODC and United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) have partnered together since 2015 to start the GLOK42: "Preventing Illicit Drug Use and Treating Drug Use Disorders for Children and Adolescents" under the UNODC Children's Project¹². The project aims to reintegrate children and their parents who are recovering from drug abuse, as well as to support children who struggle with drug abuse issues themselves, or are trying to support themselves or

¹¹ "Access to Controlled Drugs for Medical Purposes, While Preventing Diversion and Abuse (GLOK67)." The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. 2017. Web. 14 July, 2017. <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/drug-prevention-and-treatment/access-to-controlled-medicines/accessibility-medicines-availability-glok67.html>

¹² "Preventing Illicit Drug Use and Treating Drug Use Disorders for Children and Adolescents (GLOK42)." The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Aug. 2016. Web. 14 July, 2017. <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/drug-prevention-and-treatment/children/index.html>

their siblings because their parents are struggling with an addiction; their goals include:

1. Addressing the health and social consequences for children
2. Preventing drug use
3. Treating drug dependence
4. Facilitating their re-integration and contribution to the larger community¹³

In addition to protecting the rights of children, and their parents, this project also supports the right to health and rights to discrimination.

Conclusion

As the world continues to become more connected, it becomes clear that the world drug problem is an issue that must be addressed as an international community. Previous attempts by individual nation states have tended to incite violence and cause several human rights violations. In Thailand, the war on drugs caused citizens to be convicted via tribunal and punished without a proper trial, which violated their right to criminal justice, and even their right to health. In the Philippines, similar rights were violated and neither state was able to cohesively solve their drug crisis. However, if member states work with the UN, specifically the UNODC, then a formidable solution can be made. Already, there are projects in progress to strengthen the right to health, criminal justice, and the rights of children, allowing the UN to not only protect these rights from being violated, but also advocating for them to be strengthened.

¹³ “Preventing Illicit Drug Use and Treating Drug Use Disorders for Children and Adolescents (GLOK42).” The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Aug. 2016. Web. 14 July, 2017. <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/drug-prevention-and-treatment/children/index.html>

Questions to Consider

1. Where have previous attempts gone wrong in trying to solve the World Drug Problem?
2. Do governments have the right to revoke the rights of citizens in order to remedy situations such as these?
3. How is the right to health interpreted in the eyes of different government entities, the individual, or the UN?
4. What solutions can be made to not only address the World Drug Problem for an individual nation but also address all nations?
5. How can government missteps be avoided in crises such as these (i.e. government tribunals, police brutality, among others)?
6. Outside of addressing current issues, what measures can be taken to prevent these crises in the future?

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Applying the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine

“If humanitarian intervention is, indeed, an unacceptable assault on sovereignty, how should we respond to a Rwanda, to a Srebrenica, to gross and systematic violation of human rights that offend every precept of our common humanity?”¹

This statement, made by Secretary-General Kofi Annan in the Millennium Report of 2000, was in response to the controversial intervention of human rights violations after seeing it occur in Somalia, Bosnia and Kosovo; moreover, when it failed to occur in the case of the Rwandan Genocide.² Genocide, mass killings, ethnic cleansing, crime against humanity all took place, and in the 1990s, it became apparent that the international community needed some sort of means to act effectively and lawfully to protect the human rights of all global citizens. The question stands today when, if ever, is it appropriate for states to take coercive, military action against another state to protecting people at risk? The risk is violating equal sovereignty, a cornerstone of the United Nations Charter (Article 2.1)³ that gives both states and citizens the fundamental principle for equality.

Failures have led to the necessity of guidelines or a definition of which situations supersede the sovereignty of a nation state. The UN was founded on the notion of protecting human rights, and its membership is committed to protecting the rights of the most vulnerable; moreover, as the primary authority on international human rights, it is the responsibility of the

¹ Department of Public Information. (2014). The Responsibility to Protect. www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/adviser/responsibility

² Ryan, D. (2002). Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty: the Responsibility to Protect. <http://responsibilitytoprotect.org/ICISS%20Report.pdf>

³ Finch, G. A. (1945). The United Nations Charter. *The American Journal of International Law*, 39(3), 541-546

UN to define when it is necessary for other states to step in and intervene. In response to the challenge of Secretary-General Kofi Anon, the Government of Canada promoted the establishment of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) in December 2001. It was at the ICISS that the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) would be coined with the overall premise that, "...sovereign states have a responsibility to protect their own citizens from avoidable catastrophe – from mass murder and rape, from starvation – but that when they are unwilling or unable to do so, that responsibility must be borne by the broader community of states."⁴

The ICISS was instrumental in outlining the global responsibilities of nation states in acting to protect people that were affected by violations of humanitarian law that sovereign governments were unwilling or powerless to prevent. In 2004, Secretary-General Kofi Annan set up the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges, and Change for legitimizing the authorization of use of force by the UN Security Council and the proportionality of the response. At the UN World Summit of 2005, all Member States formally accepted the responsibility of each State to protect its population from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity.⁵ Based on the outcome of this Summit, the current R2P consists of three mutually enforcing pillars:

- 1) The State carries the primary responsibility for protecting their own populations from the four crimes of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity, and their incitement;
- 2) The international community has a responsibility to encourage and assist the State in this responsibility;

⁴ Nau, Henry R., (1941). *Perspectives on International Relations: Power, Institutions, and Ideas*.

⁵ Bellamy, A.J., & Reike, R. (2010). The Responsibility to Protect & International Law. *Global Responsibility to Protect*, 267-286.

- 3) The international community has a responsibility to use appropriate diplomatic, humanitarian and other means to protect populations from these crimes. If a state is manifestly failing to protect its populations, the international community must be prepared to take collective action, in accordance with the UN Charter.⁶

Sudan

The first time R2P was utilized was in 2006 towards the city of Darfur in Sudan, and since its deployment in 2008, UNAMID, the UNSC, and the African Union have failed to ensure that the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and armed rebels of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N) honor past agreements on the cessation of hostilities and delivery of humanitarian assistance.⁷ The alleged use of chemical weapons and attacks on UN peacekeepers constitute war crimes, while restrictions on UNAMID's freedom of movement contravene the Status of Forces Agreement between the UN, AU and Sudan. After more than 57 resolutions, the General Assembly should review their approach to recurring conflict and atrocities in Sudan.

Libya

While R2P is noble in its goals to protect populations, it has proved to be little more than a principle when put into action. Even those countries that have been considered successes in practice disagree with being placed in the category of a "win;" Kyrgyzstan, for example took the General Assembly floor to unequivocally denounce the assertion that the UN-led response to regional ethnic conflict in their country in 2010 had been a successful example of R2P's implementation.⁸ Its usage in Libya in 2011 brought up the longstanding argument that Western

⁶ UNSC Resolution 1706

⁷ "Sudan: Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect." *Populations at Risk Serious Concern*.

<http://www.globalr2p.org/regions/sudan>

⁸ Halliwell, Shayna. "Failures of the Responsibility to Protect: Selectivity, Double Standards and an Assault on State Sovereignty." *RightsViews*, 1 May 2016, <http://blogs.cuit.columbia.edu/rightsviews/2016/05/01/failures-of-the-responsibility-to-protect-selectivity-double-standards-and-an-assault-on-state-sovereignty/>

states might be utilizing this approach to change regime within the country. Sanctions were imposed and travel bans were placed on members of the Gaddafi regime until Resolution 1973 authorized the use of force to “protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack.” China, Russia, Brazil and India each abstained on the vote; furthermore, when the Gaddafi regime was removed, non-Western perceptions that the third pillar could be manipulated to pursue ulterior motives (such as the replacement of unfriendly governments) was confirmed.⁹

Yemen

The United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 2014 (2011), condemning human rights violations by the government of former President Saleh and affirmed Yemen’s responsibility to protect their population. Sanctions were imposed on former President Saleh and Houthi leaders in November of 2014; furthermore, in April of 2015, Resolution 2216 was passed, establishing an arms embargo against Houthi leaders, and demanding they withdraw from all areas seized during the conflict. Despite the temporary ceasefire agreements and peace talks between the government and Houthi rebels, the conflict in Yemen continues to leave civilians facing mass atrocity crimes and is now the largest humanitarian crisis in the world.¹⁰ This is a direct result of the armed conflict and requires assistance from the international community.

Central African Republic

The current crisis in Central African Republic (CAR) originated from the overthrow of President Francois Bozize in March of 2013 by the Seleka rebels, and has led to over 600,000 internally displaced persons in CAR. The UNSC has passed nine resolutions since October 2013

⁹ Garwood-Gowers, Andrew. “China and the Responsibility to Protect.” *Sustainable Security*, 5 Sept. 2016. <https://sustainablesecurity.org/2016/05/31/china-and-the-responsibility-to-protect/>

¹⁰ “Yemen: Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect.” *Populations at Risk Serious Concern*. <http://www.globalr2p.org/regions/yemen>

which emphasize the R2P, including Resolution 2339 which renewed sanctions and an arms embargo until January 2018. The resurgence of violence in recent months is primarily driven by three armed groups: the predominantly Christian anti-balaka and two former members of the mostly Muslim Seleka rebel alliance, the Union pour la Paix en Centrafrique (UPC) and the Front Populaire pour la Renaissance de la Centrafrique (FPRC).¹¹ The FPRC, sometimes with anti-balaka, have systematically targeted ethnic Fulani for attack; in response, armed Fulani self-defense groups have allegedly committed violent reprisals, sometimes in collaboration with the UPC.

Anti-balaka militias continue to target Muslim communities; moreover, humanitarians and peacekeepers have also been targeted in recent attacks – nine from the UN Mission in CAR (MINUSCA) have been killed. MINUSCA must be able to deploy rapidly to all areas where civilians lack sufficient protection and improve its capacity to anticipate and respond to emergency threats; furthermore, they should undertake all necessary efforts to support government authorities to initiate investigations and ensure prosecution of mass atrocity crimes. The number of peacekeepers employed to this Mission is not nearly enough to uphold the R2P.¹²

Conclusion

The inherent weakness to R2P as whether the Security Council authorizes an intervention will always be a practical decision, made by the sovereign members of the UNSC and depending on circumstance.¹⁰ While the United States has repeatedly used R2P as a justification for airstrikes in Libya, R2P was not invoked in Syria due to a heavy opposition from Russia, proving

¹¹ “Central African Republic: Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect.” *Populations at Risk Serious Concern*. http://www.globalr2p.org/regions/central_african_republic

¹² “Central African Republic: Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect.” *Populations at Risk Serious Concern*. http://www.globalr2p.org/regions/central_african_republic

that even if Russia agrees with R2P as a principle, it will not adhere to it if it violates its national interests. Additionally, the doctrine itself calls into question previously existing concepts of national sovereignty and security. Member States may see the intervention under R2P as setting a precedent that may in turn affect their national sovereignty.

As the Responsibility to Protect continues to develop as a doctrine, it is important to navigate the balance of human rights and national sovereignty. The intent of the R2P is not meant to be an intervener's charter, but strives to codify a spectrum of activities to be taken by both international and regional organizations when a crisis that threatens a population threshold; however, it is necessary to ask, what is that threshold? If force should be used as a last resort, what is the tipping point of the scale? To enable governments, regional organizations and the UN to protect vulnerable populations, there is a need for the principles of R2P to outline a guide that will both safeguard against unilateral intervention by states seeking to advance their status as a global or regional power and continue to protect the rights of the most vulnerable populations. Edward Luck, special advisor to former Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, advised, "R2P is not specific. It is a principle that does not dictate any specific actions or tactics, and it should fit each individual case. Because R2P is about options, different alternatives to solutions, we have to be open to innovative ideas and take every case individually." In the changing global stage and nature of armed conflict, there is a need more than ever to establish a foundation for crisis prevention and response in cases of crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing and genocide.

Questions to Consider

- 1) How can concepts of human security be incorporated as to include a sovereignty definition?
- 2) How may the conflict over R2P affect future resolutions?
- 3) What does your country do to protect the human security of its citizens and can any of these policies be implemented on the international level?
- 4) What contribution has R2P made to the prevention of genocide and mass atrocities, and to the protection of vulnerable populations?
- 5) Can there be a criterion for the application of the R2P to guide the Security Council debates on any given case?

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The Question of Palestine

For most of the twentieth century, and extending into the twenty-first, one of the most intractable problems facing the international community has been the status and ownership of what was once the British Mandate of Palestine after the First World War. This small sliver of land has been variously promised as a homeland for two very distinct groups that, despite their differences in the modern era, were once one. Yet, for all the historical similarities and the popular desire for some sort of peace, the question of how – or if – the current State of Israel and the Palestinian Authority should be subdivided is a question that has transcended the international community's ability to resolve to date. Agreements such as the Camp David Accords and Oslo Accords have provided incomplete results, numerous resolutions have been forsworn, and even the elements of customary international law have been abrogated by both sides in a conflict that rarely sees any sign of ending. A laundry list of grievances on both sides, both significant and petty, further divides the belligerents. The historical inability to create a lasting peace is not, however, a reason to abandon efforts towards an equitable resolution to the crisis. Prior agreements and international action still provide a useful framework from which new opportunities can be built. It is the duty of the international community to continue bringing such tools to bear so as to ensure peace between Israel and the occupied territories that constitute Palestine. Untangling this dispute, however, requires delving deep into the history surrounding it, and the grievances collected over the years by both sides.

Mandates and Promises

Prior to the end of the First World War, as part of their war aims in breaking up the

Ottoman Empire, the United Kingdom – via their High Commissioner of the Sultanate of Egypt, Henry McMahon – issued promises to Arab leaders regarding the division and ownership of lands within the Ottoman Empire.¹ Subsequently, in a 1917 letter from the United Kingdom's Foreign Secretary, Arthur Balfour, the United Kingdom's policy regarding the future Mandate of Palestine was stated as: "...view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country."² This combination of promises led directly to a state of affairs in which both Palestinian Arab and Jewish populations saw the Mandate of Palestine as a land belonging specifically to them.

After this, Jewish emigration from Europe to Palestine intensified. While the concept of Zionism – the idea of an independent Jewish State in the Holy Land – had been encouraging waves of migration to the Levant beginning in approximately 1882, the increase in the number of Jews moving to the Mandate of Palestine was particularly sharp in the 1930s.³ These waves of migration, known as "Aliyahs," were intended to bring the Jewish people closer to their historic religious roots, and, later, to provide a safe place away from a rising wave of European anti-Semitism. There were five Aliyahs during this period, with the end of the last Aliyah roughly corresponding to the beginning of the Second World War. In addition, there was what was known as "Aliyah Bet" – Bet being the second letter of the Hebrew alphabet – referring to illegal

¹ "Husayn-McMahon Correspondence." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Accessed 20 July, 2017, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Husayn-McMahon-correspondence>.

² "Balfour Declaration 1917." *Yale Law School*, Accessed 20 July, 2017, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/balfour.asp.

³ "Primer on Palestine, Israel and the Arab-Israeli Conflict." *Middle East Research and Information Project*, Accessed 22 July 2017, <http://www.merip.org/primer-palestine-israel-arab-israeli-conflict-new>.

immigration.⁴ British authorities in the Mandate of Palestine attempted to limit Jewish immigration during this period, but clandestine organizations and paramilitaries facilitated additional migration as part of Aliyah Bet.

While the Aliyahs were taking place, particularly in the interbellum period, both sides in the dispute formed paramilitary organizations. These organizations opposed both each other and the British rule over the Mandate of Palestine, as both sides believed they had been promised an independent State. These included groups such as Haganah and Irgun on the side of Jewish nationalists, and Black Hand and other groups on the side of the Palestinian Arabs.⁵ This period was marked by low-level violence on both sides, such as in the case of the Hebron massacre in 1929, in which Arab nationalists rioted in response to tensions over access to such sites as the Western Wall and the Al-Aqsa Mosque.⁶

After the end of the Second World War, and the atrocities committed by Nazi Germany in the Holocaust (called the “Shoah” by the Jewish people), pressure increased for the establishment of both a Jewish and a Palestinian State. The General Assembly adopted Resolution 181 in 1947, endorsing the creation of a plan to partition the territory into a State for both peoples and a neutral Jerusalem.⁷ This led to a widespread outbreak of violence between Jewish and Palestinian Arab militias, which concluded in the establishment of the State of Israel, the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, and the annexation of the Gaza Strip by Egypt and the West Bank by

⁴ Lapidot, Yehuda. “Immigration to Israel: The Irgun’s Role in Illegal Immigration.” *Jewish Virtual Library*, Accessed 20 July 2017, <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/the-irgun-s-role-in-illegal-immigration>.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ “Timeline: Palestine since 1915.” *Al-Jazeera English*, 1 February 2009, Accessed 25 July 2017, <http://www.aljazeera.com/focus/arabunity/2008/02/20085251908164329.html>.

⁷ “A/RES/181.” *United Nations General Assembly*, 29 November 1947, Accessed 20 July 2017, <http://unispal.un.org/DPA/DPR/unispal.nsf/0/7F0AF2BD897689B785256C330061D253>.

the nascent state of Jordan.⁸ The conflict resulted in the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Arab residents living in the Mandate of Palestine, as well. These refugees, and families of refugees, are overseen to this day by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), which was created by the General Assembly when it adopted Resolution 302 in 1949.⁹

PLO, Seven Days and Yom Kippur

The Arab-Israeli War was far from the end of the violence, however. Many Palestinian Arabs refused to accept the creation of a Jewish State without a State of their own, and under the banner of various Feyadeen militant groups, conducted raids and attacks across the Jordanian and Egyptian borders. In 1964, after the creation of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) under Yasser Arafat, these groups were mostly folded into the new umbrella organization along with Palestinian political organizations, the most important of which being Arafat's Fatah party.¹⁰ The PLO, created by the Arab League at its first summit meeting, was initially conceived as a group to promote opposition to Israeli sovereignty in all forms. They demanded that Palestinians displaced by Israeli occupation be allowed to return to their homelands, and that they, and not Israel, had the right to develop a sovereign State in the region.

In 1967, tensions rapidly increased between Israel and its neighbors, due to border incidents, Egypt's removal of peacekeepers from the Sinai Peninsula, and mobilization of armed forces by both Israel and Arab League States. This led to Israel launching a series of pre-emptive

⁸ "Primer on Palestine, Israel and the Arab-Israeli Conflict." *Middle East Research and Information Project*, Accessed 22 July 2017, <http://www.merip.org/primer-palestine-israel-arab-israeli-conflict-new>.

⁹ "A/RES/302." *United Nations General Assembly*, 8 December 1949, Accessed 20 July 2017, <https://www.unrwa.org/content/general-assembly-resolution-302>.

¹⁰ "Primer on Palestine, Israel and the Arab-Israeli Conflict." *Middle East Research and Information Project*, Accessed 22 July 2017, <http://www.merip.org/primer-palestine-israel-arab-israeli-conflict-new>.

attacks against Egypt in June of 1967, beginning the Six-Day War.¹¹ This resulted in Israel seizing the Sinai Peninsula from Egypt, the West Bank from Jordan, and the Golan Heights from Syria. The Israeli government initially decided to return both the Sinai and the Golan Heights to their previous owners, but ultimately maintained occupation over all the captured territories. In response, the Security Council adopted Resolution 242, which called for Israel to withdraw from these territories, and requested that States in the region respect each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty.¹² This resolution endorsed what became known as the "land for peace" formula – the principle that peace in the Middle East was best achieved via Israel giving up its occupied territories in exchange for a permanent cessation of hostilities.

Subsequent to this, PLO activity increased, first from bases in Jordan, and then in Lebanon after conflict between the PLO and Jordanian forces.¹³ In 1973, Egypt and Syria attempted their own pre-emptive war by attacking Israel on Yom Kippur with the war aim of recovering the territories lost to Israel six years prior.¹⁴ At the same time, PLO militants launched rocket attacks from Lebanon and attempted to invade Israeli border towns. While initially these advances had some success, particularly the Egyptian front, Israeli forces eventually regrouped and pushed back. The threat of foreign intervention and a broader, global conflict brought on a cease-fire agreement on October 25, which ended the brief war *status quo ante*. Afterwards, the Security Council adopted Resolution 340, which endorsed the cease-fire agreement, and called for increased military observers and the creation of an emergency force to

¹¹ "Primer on Palestine, Israel and the Arab-Israeli Conflict." *Middle East Research and Information Project*, Accessed 22 July 2017, <http://www.merip.org/primer-palestine-israel-arab-israeli-conflict-new>.

¹² "SC/RES/242." *United Nations Security Council*, 22 November 1967, Accessed 20 July 2017, <http://unispal.un.org/DPA/DPR/unispal.nsf/0/7D35E1F729DF491C85256EE700686136>.

¹³ "Primer on Palestine, Israel and the Arab-Israeli Conflict." *Middle East Research and Information Project*, Accessed 22 July 2017, <http://www.merip.org/primer-palestine-israel-arab-israeli-conflict-new>.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

oversee the implementation of the agreement.¹⁵

Peace in Our Time?

While the PLO continued to perform attacks on Israel after the end of the Yom Kippur War, support for more diplomatic solutions was growing in the Palestinian community, the wider Arab League, and the international community as a whole. The General Assembly adopted Resolution 3210 in 1974, inviting the PLO as an observer entity to its proceedings, and subsequently also adopted Resolution 3236 that same year, affirming the right of return for the Palestinian people and recognizing them as a stakeholder in the broader peace process.^{16,17} In 1975, the General Assembly adopted Resolution 3376, establishing the Committee on Exercise of Inalienable Rights of Palestinian People, with the aim of establishing a successful blueprint leading to a lasting peace.¹⁸

A much greater diplomatic victory was scored in 1978 with the Camp David Accords.¹⁹ Brokered by the United States between Egypt and Israel, the Camp David Accords endorsed Security Council Resolution 242, and provided a basic framework for the broader peace process. This framework called for the establishment of transitional governing authorities in the West Bank and Gaza, with the aim of Israeli occupation ending after a transitional period. A separate agreement also established a timeline and procedure for Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai Peninsula, and the normalization of relations between Israel and Egypt.

¹⁵ "SC/RES/340." *United Nations Security Council*, 25 October 1973, Accessed 20 July 2017, <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/340>.

¹⁶ "A/RES/3210." *United Nations General Assembly*, 14 October 1974, Accessed 20 July 2017, <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/738/12/IMG/NR073812.pdf?OpenElement>.

¹⁷ "A/RES/3236." *United Nations General Assembly*, 22 November 1974, Accessed 20 July 2017, <http://unispal.un.org/DPA/DPR/unispal.nsf/0/025974039ACFB171852560DE00548BBE>.

¹⁸ "A/RES/3376." *United Nations General Assembly*, 10 November 1975, Accessed 24 July 2017, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/un-general-assembly-resolution-3376-november-1975>.

¹⁹ "Camp David Accords." *U.S. Department of State*. Accessed 23 July 2017, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1977-1980/camp-david>.

While the Camp David Accords were a landmark step towards the establishment of a peace process, it was not without flaws. The agreement did not recognize right of return, and did not resolve the status of Jerusalem. More importantly, from the international perspective, it did not include input from UN bodies or the PLO. The General Assembly adopted Resolution 34/70 in 1979, which condemned “partial agreements” that did not include the terms previously endorsed in resolutions such as Resolution 3236.²⁰ The Accords did succeed in leading to peace between Israel and Egypt, but this, paradoxically, made the PLO’s position more tenuous without the possibility of direct support from Egypt. It would soon become clear that the peace process was only at the end of the beginning, rather than at the beginning of the end.

Intifadas and Settlements

Despite the partial successes of the Camp David Accords, tensions continued to rise. Settlement activity in Gaza and the West Bank – the establishment of Jewish towns and settlements in occupied territories – increased after a ban on such settlements was lifted by Israel. Clashes between Palestinian militias and the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) continued during this time. Full-scale military operations took place once again in 1982 when Israel invaded Lebanon for the purpose of stopping PLO and affiliated Palestinian terror attacks.²¹ Israel was able to occupy Beirut and force a multinational peace agreement, but the war had significant consequences for Israel’s international image, in particular due to the massacres at Sabra and Shatila. Israeli-aligned militias killed nearly 3,000 unarmed Palestinians in refugee camps at Sabra and Shatila, and the IDF were found to have failed to stop the massacre.²² The General

²⁰ “A/RES/34/70.” *United Nations General Assembly*, 6 December 1979, Accessed 24 July 2017, <https://unispal.un.org/DPA/DPR/UNISPAL.NSF/5ba47a5c6cef541b802563e000493b8c/6118cf31ec9eb7fb852560da006e47f3>.

²¹ “Timeline: Palestine since 1915.” *Al-Jazeera English*, 1 February 2009, Accessed 25 July 2017, <http://www.aljazeera.com/focus/arabunity/2008/02/20085251908164329.html>.

²² *Ibid.*

Assembly adopted resolution 37/123 in 1982 and recognized the incident as an act of genocide.²³

In 1987, due to rising frustrations over the Israeli occupation and their conduct in imposing the occupation, Palestinians engaged in a massive series of uprisings that became known as the first Intifada; *intifada* being an Arabic term meaning “to shake off”.²⁴ The Intifada was composed of widespread boycotts, protests, and civil disobedience, along with firebombing and throwing stones at IDF checkpoints and installations. The ensuing IDF crackdowns only intensified the unrest, compounded by the initial use of live ammunition, and later use of extreme physical violence and tear gas against demonstrators. This violence also led to the formation of a new player in the struggle. The terrorist group Hamas was founded in 1987 shortly after the beginning of the First Intifada.²⁵

The United Nations Security Council attempted to pressure Israel to meet its obligations to civilians in the occupied territories by adopting Security Council Resolution 605 in 1987 for that purpose, in particular focusing on Israel’s obligations under the Fourth Geneva Convention.²⁶ This did not lead to a cessation in unrest, but diplomatic efforts did make some progress during the Intifada. The Palestine National Council (PNC) – and with it, the PLO – recognized the right of both Palestine and Israel to exist, a landmark step in what had often been a zero-sum game for both parties.²⁷ Furthermore, the General Assembly adopted Resolution 43/177 in 1988, which acknowledged the PNC’s declaration of a State of Palestine, and decided that the United Nations system would refer to Palestine as if it were a State, instead of simply

²³ "A/RES/37/123." *United Nations General Assembly*, 16 December 1982, Accessed 24 July 2017, <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/37/a37r123.htm>.

²⁴ "Primer on Palestine, Israel and the Arab-Israeli Conflict." *Middle East Research and Information Project*, Accessed 22 July 2017, <http://www.merip.org/primer-palestine-israel-arab-israeli-conflict-new>.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ "SC/RES/605." *United Nations Security Council*, 11 December 1987, Accessed 20 July 2017, <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/605>.

²⁷ "Timeline: Palestine since 1915." *Al-Jazeera English*, 1 February 2009, Accessed 25 July 2017, <http://www.aljazeera.com/focus/arabunity/2008/02/20085251908164329.html>.

referring to the PLO.²⁸ Several further agreements eventually led to the Oslo Accords in 1993.²⁹ The Accords led to Israeli recognition of the PLO, the creation of the Palestinian Authority (PA) as a limited provisional government of the occupied territories, and recognized Palestinian right of return where the previous Camp David Accords did not. By now, the First Intifada was over, and a sustainable road map towards peace seemed to be in reach.

Blockades and Rockets

Low-level violence by Hamas continued through the 1990s, though Israel was successful in targeting and assassinating top Hamas leaders at various points in order to limit the organization's ability to conduct attacks. However, internal political issues in Israel – including the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in 1995 – led to a more hardline stance against the Palestinian cause, and an attempt to salvage the peace process at the Camp David Summit in 2000 failed.³⁰ Shortly thereafter, Likud party leader Ariel Sharon visited the Temple Mount with a large delegation and a massive police escort, a message interpreted by Palestinians as saying that Israel would not relinquish East Jerusalem – and, with it, the Islamic holy site of the Al-Aqsa Mosque.³¹ This led to protests, riots and crackdowns of a similar kind to the First Intifada. Attempts to salvage the peace process yet again failed, and when Sharon was elected Prime Minister in 2001, he cut off talks with his PA counterpart Yasser Arafat; furthermore, this led to the intensification of what by then was known as the Second Intifada or Al-Aqsa Intifada.³² In response to increased attacks, including Hamas suicide bombings against civilian targets, in early

²⁸ "A/RES/43/177." *United Nations General Assembly*, 15 December 1988, Accessed 24 July 2017, <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/43/a43r177.htm>.

²⁹ "Oslo Accords." *U.S. Department of State*, Accessed 23 July 2017, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1993-2000/oslo>.

³⁰ "Primer on Palestine, Israel and the Arab-Israeli Conflict." *Middle East Research and Information Project*, Accessed 22 July 2017, <http://www.merip.org/primer-palestine-israel-arab-israeli-conflict-new>.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*

2002 the IDF launched Operation Defensive Shield, with the aim of rooting out terrorist cells and agitators. Some of the worst violence took place at a refugee camp at Jenin, which the IDF had targeted as a site for organizing Palestinian terror attacks; clashes between both sides quickly broke out, and hundreds of civilians in the camp were killed.³³

The Security Council adopted Resolution 1397 in 2002, calling for an end to the violence and a resumption of the peace process, but to no avail.³⁴ Hamas suicide and rocket attacks continued, as did IDF raids, even despite a temporary cease-fire agreement reached in 2003.³⁵ In 2004, Israel announced Operation Rainbow, similar to the previous Operation Defensive Shield, and with similar tragic results. By 2005, a series of steps taken by Sharon and new PA leader Mahmoud Abbas – himself the successor to Arafat as the head of Fatah – managed to reduce the violence to a much more sporadic level. However, Hamas's legislative victories in 2006 led to the imposition of harsh sanctions on the PA, as well as an Israeli blockade of Gaza.³⁶ This led not only to an increase in Hamas attacks against Israel, but also fighting between Hamas and loyalists of the Fatah party.

Not long after, Israel launched Operation Cast Lead in 2008.³⁷ Once again, the IDF's official purpose was to cripple Hamas's ability to fire rockets into Israel, and once again, Israel was accused of war crimes in the aftermath, this time by a Human Rights Council report

³³ "Primer on Palestine, Israel and the Arab-Israeli Conflict." *Middle East Research and Information Project*, Accessed 22 July 2017, <http://www.merip.org/primer-palestine-israel-arab-israeli-conflict-new>.

³⁴ "SC/RES/1397." *United Nations Security Council*, 12 March 2002, Accessed 24 July 2017, <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N02/283/59/PDF/N0228359.pdf?OpenElement>.

³⁵ "Primer on Palestine, Israel and the Arab-Israeli Conflict." *Middle East Research and Information Project*, Accessed 22 July 2017, <http://www.merip.org/primer-palestine-israel-arab-israeli-conflict-new>.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ Sourani, Raji. "Operation Cast Lead Five Years On." *Al-Jazeera English*, 19 January 2014, Accessed July 26 2017, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2014/01/operation-cast-lead-five-years-are-still-demanding-justice-2014188116566380.html>.

authored by Richard Goldstone.³⁸ Hamas rocket attacks from Gaza increased temporarily, and then decreased significantly near the end of the conflict, causing Israel to claim success, but the damage to Israel's image was high. Among targets accidentally hit by Israeli artillery were the al-Quds hospital, and the UNRWA headquarters in Gaza; Israeli authorities claimed that militants had taken refuge in the UNRWA compound. Whether this was in fact true or not, the Goldstone Report noted Hamas's tendency to build military installations in residential areas and near civilian buildings, though given the dense urbanization of most of Gaza, the report also concluded it was impossible to say whether this was a deliberate tactic or merely a consequence of the environment.³⁹ In early 2009, the Security Council adopted Resolution 1860, calling for an immediate end to hostilities; both parties flatly ignored this resolution, but fighting ceased several weeks later in any case.⁴⁰

Even after hostilities again died down, the blockade and its enforcement led to significant deterioration of humanitarian conditions in Gaza, with civilian consumer goods, livestock, industrial equipment and other basics being severely limited. Pressure quickly began to build from the international community and non-governmental organizations for Israel to end the blockade. In 2010, the UN Human Rights Council published report A/HRC/15/21, which concluded that the blockade, and in particular the practice of enforcing it by intercepting neutral ships, was illegal under international law.⁴¹ However, a separate 2011 report, known as the Palmer Report, indicated that the blockade was a valid self-defense measure, but cautioned that

³⁸ Goldstone, Richard. "A/HRC/12/48." *United Nations Human Rights Council*, 25 September 2009, Accessed 27 July 2017, <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/12session/A-HRC-12-48.pdf>.

³⁹ "UN condemns 'war crimes' in Gaza." *BBC News*, 16 September 2009, Accessed 23 July 2017, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/8257301.stm.

⁴⁰ "SC/RES/1860." *United Nations Security Council*, 8 January 2009, Accessed 24 July 2017, <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/1860>.

⁴¹ "A/HRC/15/21." *United Nations Human Rights Council*, 27 September 2010, Accessed July 24 2017, http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/15session/A.HRC.15.21_en.pdf.

restrictions should still be eased.⁴² In 2010 and 2013, Israel eased restrictions on some goods, but still presently continues to sharply limit certain items irrelevant to Israel's stated goal of preventing Hamas from acquiring dual-use equipment usable for manufacturing weapons.⁴³

As a consequence, the Palestinian Authority changed tactics, focusing on international recognition of Palestine as an independent State. This has had some partial success, including the General Assembly's adoption of A/RES/67/19 in 2012, granting Palestine non-member observer status within the General Assembly – a step seen as a precursor to formal recognition.⁴⁴ This step was roughly concurrent with the IDF's Operation Pillar of Defense, targeting numerous Hamas-controlled sites in Gaza, but also striking some civilian infrastructure as well and further increasing tensions.⁴⁵ Hamas, in turn, intensified its own rocket attacks against Israeli civilian sites. A ceasefire was brokered, but low-level violence continued. Intense fighting broke out again in July 2014 after the murder of several Israeli teenagers by members of Hamas, and the IDF launched Operation Protective Edge in response, leading to another ceasefire agreement in August, but no movement in terms of the broader peace process.⁴⁶

More recently, low-level violence has remained prevalent in response to increased settlement activity, though again the character of the conflict has shifted. Starting in 2015 and lasting into 2016, a wave of small-scale knife attacks and murders, known as the Wave of Terror, replaced the organized rocket and bomb attacks previously characteristic of Hamas and other

⁴² Palmer, Geoffrey. "Report of the Secretary-General's Panel of Inquiry on the 31 May 2010 Flotilla Incident." *UN News Centre*, September 2011, Accessed 27 July 2017, http://www.un.org/News/dh/infocus/middle_east/Gaza_Flotilla_Panel_Report.pdf.

⁴³ "Primer on Palestine, Israel and the Arab-Israeli Conflict." *Middle East Research and Information Project*, Accessed 22 July 2017, <http://www.merip.org/primer-palestine-israel-arab-israeli-conflict-new>.

⁴⁴ "A/RES/67/19." *United Nations General Assembly*, 4 December 2012, Accessed 25 July 2017, http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/67/19.

⁴⁵ Lappin, Yakkov. "IAF Strike Kills Hamas Military Chief Jabari." *Jerusalem Post*, 14 November 2012, Retrieved 25 July 2017, <http://www.jpost.com/Defense/IAF-strike-kills-Hamas-military-chief-Jabari>.

⁴⁶ Harel, Amos. "The last Gaza war – and the next." *Haaretz*, Accessed 25 July 2017, <http://www.haaretz.com/st/c/prod/eng/2015/year-to-gaza-war/israel-gaza-conflict/>.

groups.⁴⁷ What this portends for the future of the conflict remains unclear. In 2016, the Security Council adopted Resolution 2334, which indicated that ongoing settlement activity, including not just new construction but also transfer of settlers to existing settlements and land confiscation, were in violation of international law.⁴⁸ At the same time, Resolution 2334 also condemned violence targeting civilians, implicitly also condemning Hamas as well.

Current Disputes

While historical international action has provided several frameworks for an eventual peace process, most of the items in dispute between the State of Israel and the Palestinian Authority are as yet unresolved. The exact nature of the borders is one of the largest items in dispute, but there are many factors that go into any partition plan. Among these is the status of the city of Jerusalem and its numerous holy sites, in particular the Western Wall, the Temple Mount, and the Al-Aqsa Mosque.⁴⁹ Israel has historically been unwilling to accept any partition of the city; while the Palestinians insist on having access to what is generally considered the third-holiest site in Islam. Settlement activity is an additional strain on the ability to agree to a partition. Israel generally insists on retaining sovereignty over existing settlements, whether directly annexing them or using land swaps with a future Palestine to do so; the Palestinian Authority contends that ongoing settlement activity is a mere attempt at a land grab, reducing viable Palestinian territory.⁵⁰ Security issues are also a major factor; Israel contends that it requires a buffer zone against potential future aggression by its neighbors, and at some times has

⁴⁷ Lappin, Yakkov. "A Wave of Terror, Not an Intifada." *Jerusalem Post*, 10 October, 2015, Accessed 25 July, 2017, <http://www.jpost.com/Arab-Israeli-Conflict/A-wave-of-terror-not-an-intifada-421378>.

⁴⁸ "SC/RES/2334." *United Nations Security Council*, 23 December 2016, Accessed 25 July 2017, <http://www.un.org/webcast/pdfs/SRES2334-2016.pdf>.

⁴⁹ "Primer on Palestine, Israel and the Arab-Israeli Conflict." *Middle East Research and Information Project*, Accessed 22 July 2017, <http://www.merip.org/primer-palestine-israel-arab-israeli-conflict-new>.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

also insisted that a future independent Palestine must be demilitarized; Palestinian groups generally reject both of these conditions.

Resources and the economy constitute another major category of disputes. The blockade is chief among these in the present-day. Israel contends that the blockade is necessary to deprive Hamas of dual-use materials and that it undermines their legitimacy in the eyes of Gazans. However, the economic and humanitarian effects are dire, leaving the people in Gaza deprived of both imports and exports, without power generation, and, in many cases, without rebuilding materials for homes damaged in the conflict.⁵¹ The blockade has also had a chilling effect on the fishing industry in Gaza as well. As such, the Palestinian Authority believes the blockade should end independent of the peace process. Even without the blockade, though, the potential for Palestinian dependence is significant; Israeli territory controls close the vast majority of both major aquifers in the region, and the West Bank receives nearly 80% of its water from Israel.⁵² Both of these disputes also relate to agriculture, as well – traditionally a large segment of the regional economy.⁵³ Without solving export issues and water rights, an independent Palestine would be crippled.

The right of return for Palestinian refugees is also a core contention between both parties. Palestinians whose families were displaced in prior conflicts contend that they should be allowed to return to their ancestral homeland, and this right was recognized as early as 1948 when the General Assembly adopted A/RES/194.⁵⁴ The UNRWA estimates there are nearly five million

⁵¹ Goldstone, Richard. "A/HRC/12/48." *United Nations Human Rights Council*, 25 September 2009, Accessed 27 July 2017, <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/12session/A-HRC-12-48.pdf>.

⁵² Asser, Martin. "Obstacles to Arab-Israeli Peace: Water." *BBC News*, 2 September 2010, Accessed 26 July 2017, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-11101797>.

⁵³ Melhem, Ahmad. "Palestine's Lingering Water Crisis." *Al-Monitor*, 31 March 2015, Accessed 25 July 2015, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/03/palestine-water-resources-israel-agreement-resolution-291.html>.

⁵⁴ "A/RES/194." *United Nations General Assembly*, 11 December 1948, Accessed 25 July 2017, <http://web.archive.org/web/20150702150304/http://unispal.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/0/C758572B78D1CD0085256BCF0077E51A>

refugees and their descendants eligible to return.⁵⁵ Israel, meanwhile, contends that these people should be the responsibility of the States currently hosting them; that while a right of return may exist at such a time as when Palestine is an independent State, there is no way for Israel to accommodate this while the occupied territories are occupied by Israel.

Conclusion

As one of the longest-running territorial disputes of modern times, the conflict in Israel and Palestine is self-evidently a difficult one. Time and again, the international community has affirmed the need for an independent Palestinian State to live alongside the State of Israel, and time and again the process for achieving this goal has broken down into brutal violence. The goals of both sides remain partially in conflict, and each new outbreak of violence brings any hope of resolving the crisis further away. And yet, hope for some sort of negotiated peace still remains. The international community must build on its past action, while both listening fully to the concerns of both sides, and encouraging both sides to truly listen to each other. In this way, creative solutions to various disputes can perhaps be found, a conflict often derided as impossible can be made possible, and both peoples – Israeli and Palestinian – can live in peace in the lands they both call home.

⁵⁵ “Palestine Refugees.” *UNRWA*, Accessed 25 July 2017, <https://www.unrwa.org/palestine-refugees>.

Questions to Consider

1. Does your State support a two-State or one-State solution? What borders do they support?
2. What remedies are there for Israel not complying with Security Council Resolution 242 and other similar resolutions? What does your State support?
3. What were the successes of the Camp David Accords and Oslo Accords from your State's point of view? Where did they fall short?
4. What is your State's view regarding the commission of potential crimes against humanity in the various stages of the conflict? Who does your State hold responsible?
5. Does your State argue that Israel, the Palestinian Authority, or Hamas are most culpable for the lack of a sustainable peace? Why?
6. What is your State's view on the legality of settlements built by Israel in the occupied territories?
7. What obligations do your State feel that both sides of the conflict have, both in terms of bringing the conflict to a close, and in terms of limiting violations of international law?

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Decolonization in the Modern Era

The world as we know it today is comprised almost entirely of nation-states, as in they are subject to local self-rule organized in a self-determined structure. Though this is now the general conception of world order, it stands in stark contrast with the status quo just seventy-five years ago. In 1939, just fewer than 40% of the world population lived in some way subject to a foreign government, with the industrialized northern superpowers of the old world occupying and subjugating the Global South¹. The populations of these colonies often lived in a complete state of dependence on foreign authorities, intentionally limited in their ability to develop educational, economic, and military infrastructures necessary for self-governance. This global trend rapidly declined in the wake of the World Wars, as the colonies played a pivotal role in defending against the expansionist powers of Europe, and in many cases stood alone against the invading powers before receiving relief. This bolstered the political willpower of the colonies while colonial empires reeled during the reconstruction. By the late 1950's the total world population living under foreign subjugation in a colony had dropped to under 2%, and new nation-states across the Global South began their slow, determined construction of self-determined government.²

Legal Independence vs. Effective Decolonization

Immense challenges awaited these new states as they gained legal independence. Most

¹ Barber, Hollis W. "Decolonization: The Committee of Twenty-Four." *World Affairs*, vol. 138, no. 2, pp. 128–151.

² *Ibid.*

achieved their sovereignty through popular referendum, which often involved a hand off of the reins of leadership between the colonial powers and the local elite bourgeoisie, which only lent itself to maintaining the vested interests of the colonial states in their former colonies.³ This held especially true in those states gaining independence in the global south, as the South and Central American, and African colonies largely produced raw materials for manufacturing in the industrial north. Upon gaining independence these trends in international trade were untouched as cash crops continued to be exported along the same international trade routes, placing massive political capital over internal policies in the hands of their former oppressors.⁴

This economic continuation of colonialism affected every aspect of development thereafter. The woefully inadequate or agriculturally tailored education systems that were prevalent in the colonies continued due to a lack of diverse employment and foreign investments. In one staggering example, the Democratic Republic of the Congo had a mere 16 college graduates in their population of over 40 million at the time of their independence.⁵ Without a diverse economy and workforce, control of the production of raw resources became key to the stability of the state. State sponsored isolation and oppression of the economic centers became a key factor contributing to succession efforts across the developing world.

Concurrent to the struggle of state-building, nation-building posed an equally overwhelming obstacle to fledgling states. The internationally recognized borders based off the colonial divisions segregated historically tied populations and cultures between several states, or placed them in a severe ideological contrast to the ruling majority. New leaders had to create national narratives to bind the populations together, often by adopting secular, eastern bloc

³ Mittelman, James H. "Collective Decolonisation and the U.N. Committee of 24." Vol. 14, no. 1, 1976, pp. 41–64., www.jstor.org/stable/159647.

⁴ Hopkins, A. G. "Rethinking Decolonization." *JSTOR*, The Past and Present Society, www.jstor.org/stable/25096724.

⁵ Mittelman, James H. "Collective Decolonisation and the U.N. Committee of 24." Vol. 14, no. 1, 1976, pp. 41–64., www.jstor.org/stable/159647.

ideologies, or by imposing and mandating historical traditions and languages upon all citizens, regardless of their individual history. Additionally, when a former colony gains independence, there are inevitably generations of settled peoples from the administering power, intermingled and entrenched into the colonies political infrastructure and culture. In the endeavor of nation building, many new states took the course of action to forcibly uproot and expel these settled populations, often in a bloody fashion. This lost credibility for the new governments, and ostracized them farther from the international community.

These tactics proved unconvincing in many cases, and left the developing states ripe for foreign entanglement in their internal affairs. With few options, many leaders were forced to associate with major super powers for assistance, escalating regional power struggles in the Cold War. These associations held little long-term merit for the form colonies, as over 60 civil wars broke out since WWII.⁶

So as banners were stitched and raised in proud colors, and national anthems composed with zeal, major obstacles revealed themselves in the form of impractical and occasionally detrimental borders, populations comprised of a multitude of nationalities, generations of settlers of noncontiguous heritage, and a weak socio-economic base ripe for continued exploitation. Effective decolonization therefore, involves a completely independent development plan coupled with a cohesive national identity. Few emerging states achieved this benchmark, but it is a useful mechanism to judge authentic and complete independence.

The Committee of Twenty-Four

It was amidst these tumultuous growing pains that newly independent states began to

⁶ “The Troubles in Syria: Spawned by French Divide and Rule.” *Middle East Policy Council*, www.mepc.org/troubles-syria-spawned-french-divide-and-rule.

trickle into the halls of the UN General Assembly, applying greater pressure for formal recognition of former colonies and a call to action for the immediate independence of other non-self-governing territories. This resulted in the 1960 Decolonization Declaration, A/RES/1514 (XV), which was the first firm international stance against armed or economic repression of dependent peoples and recognition of the right of a nation to self-govern as a fundamental human right to be protected under the Charter of the United Nations.⁷

In 1961 A/RES/1654 (XVI) was adopted, constructing the Committee on Decolonization, (soon to become known as the Committee of Twenty-four after A/RES/1810 (XVII) expanded their mandate), which was largely assembled of former colonies and members of the P5 as a watchdog committee for the implementation of the Decolonization Declaration. Though the 4th (Special Political and Decolonization) Committee typically addresses the issues of Decolonization, it had absorbed many peacekeeping and humanitarian missions unrelated to the topic, overwhelming its capacity. The creation of the Committee of Twenty-Four absolved the 4th Committee of some of their responsibility, and acted as an advisory committee to the 4th Committee and the General Assembly, with many resolutions passed in the halls of the UN finding their roots in the Committee of Twenty-Four. The major efforts of the committee are dedicated towards the identification and evaluation of Trusteeship states and non-self-governing territories, providing visiting missions to verify self-reporting from administering states, and altering the world public opinion to support the financial and humanitarian needs of subjugated peoples seeking independence.

⁷ The United Nations Charter and the Decolonization Declaration

Criticisms of the Committee

The Committee of Twenty-Four quickly became a reflection of the growing pains its nation-states were undergoing. While the committee immediately began producing recommendations and status reports for the UN body, and its work culminated in several resolutions that were passed in the Assembly, non-compliance was the general response to all requests and demands. Text filled with aggressive, demanding verbiage condemned the actions of several colonial powers, but with little international legal precedence to back up their intent. This aggressive stance of the Committee was only exacerbated by its P5 members. The Western and Eastern blocs utilized their allies in the committee to publicly embarrass and chastise each other for their misconducts and demand international action be taken to mitigate each other's influence. Cold War politics eventually drove the United Kingdom, the United States, and Australia to rescind their membership in the committee out of protest.

Modern Efforts for Decolonization

Despite the struggles of the Committee, they have had substantial success in the past several decades. Since their creation, over 80 former non-self-governing territories have gained independence, with only 17 remaining, primarily under the administration of the United Kingdom and the United States. As its nation-states have matured politically, so has the Committee of Twenty-Four's tact and influence. Though still comprised of Afro-centric states along with Eastern bloc powers, the Committee has tempered its approach toward Western States, taking to coordinating discussions between administering powers and independence movements, rather than issuing condemnations. For several territories previously published on the as well as weighing options other than full independence as acceptable alternatives.

Additionally, more efforts are focused on the balanced investment in varied areas of development necessary to create viable economies.⁸

On the issue of Revanchism and Retention

As modern economic colonialism has been more widely recognized through world public opinion, and access to the global market has greatly expanded due to foreign aid and targeted development, former colonies are finally achieving full independence. This has in turn spurred a response from some ex colonial powers to disrupt or revert the process of decolonization through economic reprisal and military might. Taking the relationship between the Russian Federation and the ex-Soviet states as an example, when the Russian Federation agreed to dissolve the Soviet Union, it came along with the understanding that the ex-Soviet states would be exclusive trading partners with the Russians over NATO.⁹ Whenever this has been challenged, the Russian Federation has cracked down on the offending state through a variety of means, using control of natural resources and river flow to extort Kazakhstan into trade deals on Russian natural gas, or supporting dissident populations in Georgia as retribution for non-cooperation on Russian national security interests, and most recently, annexing the Crimean peninsula from Ukraine after closer alliances with NATO seemed inevitable.

Conclusion

While the Committee of Twenty-Four still exists today, the work of decolonization has been placed back with the 4th Committee. Considering the recent natural disasters, particularly

⁸ Hopkins, A G. "Rethinking Decolonization." *JSTOR*, The Past and Present Society, www.jstor.org/stable/25096724.

⁹ Von Eggert, Konstantin . "All Politics Are Local: Crimea Explained." *JSTOR*, Sage Publications, www.jstor.org/stable/43555255.

surrounding hurricanes, there has been concern that the Non-Self-Governing Territories in the Caribbean region are not receiving sufficient support. In the coming years many of the same challenges face the 4th Committee. Economic monopolies determining the options toward development of former colonies continues to be a major hindrance in the global south, as well as poorly prescribed borders inciting civil war and civil unrest. By examining the overall setbacks that faced the Committee of Twenty-Four, mainly due to lack of international legal enforcement, the international community should determine the most effective solution to decolonization.

Questions to Consider

- Was your State a former colony? If so, how independent is your state politically, economically, and militarily from the former administering power?
- What areas of development are holding your State back from full independence?
- Are portions of your population seeking independence? What factors do they contribute to your state, and is your government willing to respect a referendum for independence?
- Are any territories currently freely associated with your state? What benefit does retaining them have and what obligations does your state have toward the territory?

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Applying Food Security in Conflict Zones

Inherent rights of human beings, as stated in the Universal Declaration of Fundamental Human Rights (UDHR) of 1948, addresses the very essence of liberties that each human shall be entitled. That of dignity, education, due process, irrespective of race, religion and sex are all birthrights that have slowly evolved to a greater position of acceptance and codification within our United Nations over the last seventy years, yet still, inherently face volatility. Article 25 of the UDHR states that an elemental standard of living is Food Security and Nutrition. Without such vital elements, one does not even possess the physical energy needed to exercise any of the other fundamental rights such as freedom to worship, express or enjoy other human experiences. Basics of survival become basic to life, those factors, endurance and need of nutrition are exactly why this topic extends beyond the individual and is intrinsic to international security and why it is such an inherent and paramount issue for not just those affected by food security crises but by everyone in the globe. As the second goal of the Sustainable Development Committee and a primary issue directly correlated to international stabilization, this issue is paramount to the international community.

In the words of former Secretary General, Ban Ki Moon:

Saving our planet, lifting people out of poverty, advancing economic growth...these are one and the same fight. We must connect the dots between climate change, water scarcity, energy shortages, global health, food security and woman's empowerment. Solutions to one problem, must be solutions for all.

¹<https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/keywords/security.html>

History

With the dominance of information abundance and globalization, we are more and more intrinsically connected and interdependent. Some countries have recovered or even prospered through economic crises and turmoil. Over a half century ago, the General Assembly recognized the importance of this issue:

In 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights affirmed the right of everyone to adequate food. However, access to adequate food in the rural areas of many developing countries depends heavily on access to natural resources, including water, that are necessary to produce food. The UN General Assembly declared access to clean drinking water and sanitation as a human right on 28 July 2010. But the right to water in the context of the right to food is a complex question. While drinking and cooking water would be protected, water for food production would probably not be covered under the minimum needs in arid areas.²

Furthermore, The Five Rome Principles for Sustainable Global Food Security, adopted in November 2009 by the World Summit on Food Security in Rome, provide a strategic underpinning for coordinated action by all stakeholders at global, regional and country levels while embracing a twin-track approach to fighting hunger. They called on the international community to:

- (a) invest in country-owned plans, aimed at channeling resources to well-designed and results-based programmes and partnerships;
- (b) foster strategic coordination at national, regional and global levels to improve governance, promote better allocation of resources, avoid duplication of efforts and identify response gaps;

² http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/food_security.shtml

- (c) strive for a comprehensive twin-track approach to food security;
- (d) ensure a strong role for the multilateral system by sustained improvements in efficiency, responsiveness, coordination and effectiveness of multilateral institutions; and
- (e) ensure sustained and substantial commitment by all partners to investment in agriculture and food and nutrition security, with the provision of necessary resources in a timely and reliable fashion, aimed at multi-year plans and programmes.³

The problem is not a lack of awareness, but a lack of determination to fully commit to these needs on behalf of another nation, another community, another family. Food crises in particular draw global attention and can have a personal impact through social media. The United Nations has an opportunity to use that duty of aid and awareness, however, future resolutions will determine either triumphs or tribulations for the future successors of the global community.

Statistical and Scientific Consideration

The statistics of the current food crises are staggering. With a vast number of upheavals and civil wars throughout the global community, the actual and complete depths, aftermath and magnitude of these crises is left undetermined, and according to the World Food Program's (WFP) Global Report on the Food Crises of 2017:

*Currently, the world is faced with an unprecedented call for action at a moment in which four countries (South Sudan, Somalia, Yemen, and northeast Nigeria) have been identified at risk of famine. The demand for humanitarian and resilience assistance is escalating.*⁴

These statistics are staggering, particularly when consideration is taken on the impact of the

³ SG Report on Agriculture Development and Food Security.

⁴ http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/ena/wfp291270.pdf?_ga=2.111724551.2003555135.1502064472-1180631073.1501834254

situation, how gravely hunger and starvation may affect the development of children involved, and what is determining our future. The WFP Reports the amount of food-insecure people in the following countries:

Yemen: 14.1 Million people

Ethiopia: 9.7 Million people

Afghanistan: 8.5 Million people

Nigeria: 8.1 Million People

Syria: 7 Million people (not considering refugees in Egypt, Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan and Turkey).⁵

On a global scale, 108 million people in the year 2016 were “reported to be facing Crisis food insecurity or worse...this represents a drastic increase compared to 2015 when the figure was 80 million.”⁶ Member states struggle with the duty of providing the tools and support necessary to feed their fellow sovereign neighbors. If food security can be achieved, individuals may gain the capability to rise against and topple dictatorships, injustice, and human rights violations.

Triggers for Conflict, Destruction of Infrastructure and the Conflict Trap

There have been several analyses noting a grave correlation to food insecurity and conflict. Though food insecurity is not typically the sole factor to catalyze conflict or a repercussion alone, there is an intrinsic link altogether.

Food insecurity is both a cause and a consequence of violence, contributing to a vicious cycle or “conflict trap.” Food security is critical for political stability. Food insecurity is linked to increased risk of democratic failure, protests and rioting, communal violence

⁵ http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/ena/wfp291270.pdf?_ga=2.111724551.2003555135.1502064472-1180631073.1501834254

⁶ *Ibid.*

*and civil conflict. Violent conflicts, in turn, create food insecurity, malnutrition and – in some instances – famine.*⁷

As Brikman and Hendrix have noted, this correlation does not mean that it cannot be prevented or thwarted with long term efforts. Additionally, although conflict zones often dissuade tourists and investors from contributing to solving the crises, the lack of risk mitigation of involvement, in fact perpetuates the overall risk, making it certain that determined citizens can and will continue to migrate to search for the fundamentals, such as food and safety that they need and deserve. Based on their broad review of the research, in which more than 100 sources were referenced, “Food insecurity, especially when caused by higher food prices, heightens the risk of democratic breakdown, civil conflict, protest, rioting, and communal conflict.”⁸ This issue then becomes both a causal element of war, and an effect of conflict, causing a downward spiral of instability. That instability then further induces global crises, such as internally displaced persons, migration, refugees, strain on infrastructure, resources and regional instability. As is vastly evident in the conflict in Syria, since its onset in 2011, the World Food Program reports:

Within Syria, every month, WFP uses over 4,600 trucks to deliver emergency food assistance to 900 distribution points in all 14 governorates. In besieged and hard-to reach areas, where regular deliveries are not possible and humanitarian needs are extremely high, WFP employs creative solutions, including inter-agency cross-line convoys, as well as airlifts and high-altitude airdrops. WFP also conducts cross-border deliveries from Jordan and Turkey to bring food assistance to opposition-held areas in

⁷ Brikman, Hank J. and Hendrix, Cullen S. ‘Food Insecurity and Violent Conflict: Causes, Consequences, and Addressing the Challenges’ (July 2011).

⁸ Notaras, Mark: “Food Insecurity and The Conflict Trap”, August 31, 2011. <https://ourworld.unu.edu/en/food-insecurity-and-the-conflict-trap>

northern and southern Syria. Working with over 50 local and international partners, WFP distributes food to between 4 and 5 million people every month.⁹

This crisis exemplifies exactly why it is so imperative that member states address these issues with great resolve, to do their utmost to prevent the further spread instability. People in areas such as the Gaza Strip, Iraq, Yemen, Sudan and Syria experiencing these conflicts are gravely more at risk for larger magnitude of crises.

The proportion of undernourished people is almost three times as high in countries in conflict and protracted crisis than in other developing countries. Approximately 167 million undernourished people live in countries in protracted crisis today – roughly one-fifth of all people suffering from hunger. Malnutrition tends to affect children the most and, when it happens at a critical age may cause life-long mental and physical handicaps. Conflict has lasting, multi-generational impacts on human development.¹⁰

This demonstrates that food insecurity has both immediate and long-term impacts. Food insecurity has lasting effects on future generations and their development. Clearly, conflict zones are intrinsically correlated with famine and food instability currently and for future generations. Our primary duty should be that of providing for both the prevention and reversal of such crises.

International Organizations

The global community has worked diligently to address the issue of food security. Efforts include the Zero Hunger Challenge, the G8 Summit on Food Sustainability, and initiatives at the

⁹ <http://www1.wfp.org/syria-emergency>

¹⁰ Food and Agricultural Organization, Report “Peace and Food Security-Investing in Resilience to Sustain Rural Livelihoods Amid Conflict.”

International Fund for Agricultural Development.¹¹ The World Food Program provides food and nutrition to over 80 million people in 80 countries and supports almost 1.6 million of the most vulnerable Syrian refugees sheltering in Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, Egypt and Iraq. Through its voucher programme, the WFP is empowering families to purchase food of their choice from local shops, including fresh produce, dairy products, meat and chicken.¹² The World Bank's primary focus is on development and investment in infrastructure, rural development and agricultural practices. The Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations mission is:

*to make sure people have regular access to enough high-quality food to lead active, healthy lives. Its three main goals: the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition; the elimination of poverty and the driving forward of economic and social progress for all; and, the sustainable management and utilization of natural resources, including land, water, air, climate and genetic resources for the benefit of present and future generations. FAO also issues the food price index, which is a measure of the monthly change in international prices of a basket of food commodities.*¹³

Although the correlation of food insecurity and conflict is quite striking, it should be noted that this is not typically the only two common factors. Other socio-economic issues typically accompany the conflict and greatly contribute as well. While those factors may vary ever so slightly, in combination they create a catalyst to conflict. But one such factor Mark Notaras noted is that of economic inequality: high levels of income inequality (especially between different ethno-linguistic or religious groups, rather than between households) can complete a perfect storm of conflict triggers.¹⁴ Agriculture accounts for two-thirds of

¹¹ <http://www.un.org/en/sections/issues-depth/food/>

¹² <http://www1.wfp.org/syria-emergency>

¹³ <http://www.un.org/en/sections/issues-depth/food/>

¹⁴ Notaras, Mark: "Food Insecurity and The Conflict Trap", August 31, 2011. <https://ourworld.unu.edu/en/food-insecurity-and-the-conflict-trap>

employment and one-third of GDP in countries with protracted crises¹⁵, so any approach to battling this issue must consider the needs of this sector and its effect on income inequality.

The Challenges and Cure vs. Prevention

Despite the efforts that have been made by the international community, concrete solutions must be made as aid efforts are still not reaching all who need it and millions silently are suffering. Brinkman and Hendrix suggest a variety of steps that could be taken.

Food price stabilization measures are important tools to prevent food prices from rising and causing unrest. Safety nets are critical instruments that can mitigate the effect of short-term spikes in food prices on food insecurity, helping to prevent violent conflict and contribute to long-term development. Because young men as a group are most in need of livelihoods and most likely to participate in political violence, income instability among them must be addressed. Safety nets have the added advantage of mitigating horizontal inequalities, which are one cause of conflict, and food is often phased out too quickly, leaving populations at risk and potentially reversing earlier gains in building peace. Transition, peacebuilding, capacity building and the recovery of agriculture are long-term processes; progress is measured in decades, rather than in years¹⁶; moreover, food plays a critical – but often underemphasized – role in these processes. Recovery activities focusing on improving food access often come too late, last too short a time, are poorly funded and are too small in scale.¹⁷

¹⁵ Food and Agricultural Organization, Report “Peace and Food Security-Investing in Resilience to Sustain Rural Livelihoods Amid Conflict.”

¹⁶ Pritchett and Weijer, 2010.

¹⁷ Notaras, Mark: “Food Insecurity and The Conflict Trap”, August 31, 2011. <https://ourworld.unu.edu/en/food-insecurity-and-the-conflict-trap>

Conclusion

Despite the great passion and desire of the international community to implement food security in these effected areas, there is an immediate need to determine a viable solution. One possibility would be to involve more peacekeeping security to assist in food disbursement; furthermore, the very struggle that we face as an international community to provide this assistance to these communities is slight in comparison to those suffering in conflict zones. The sacrifice the organizations and individuals on the ground are making for those in food crises not only endangers them personally but also those suffering in the trenches.

There is a humanitarian and geopolitical concern when the needs of a food crisis are not met, but the international community must learn from successes and mistakes previous resolutions have made evident to determine the most effective way to enter a conflict zone without exacerbating or creating any new conflict.

Questions to Consider

1. What is the biological impact of food crises on adversely effected children, including insecurity and malformation as adults and for future generations?
2. What, if any, role does exploitation of the Global South by the Global North play in the existence or response to food crises?
3. Should concerns over Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs), economic dependency, or environmental considerations be suspended during the response to a food crisis?
4. How can the international community respond to the humanitarian needs of a food crisis without creating or exacerbating conflict within the target state?

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Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding Mandate

The mandates surrounding peacekeeping and peacebuilding are uniquely complex given that there are many concerns these measures aim to manage. For some nations, these measures create sustainable peace in regions where situations could otherwise escalate to violent conflict. As for other nations, these measures aim to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict. This is where the difference is most apparent between peacekeeping and peacebuilding mandates. Where a peacekeeping mandate is intended to use diplomatic action to bring hostile entities together by way of a negotiated agreement, a peacebuilding mandate aims to strengthen relations between two parties in a complex, often long-term process of creating negotiated long-term peace in a region. This brief will analyze the many roles that UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding mandates play in terms of their framework, the criteria for them, the modern mandate and misconduct.

Background

Peacekeeping and peacebuilding mandates were some of the first actions taken by the UN, beginning in 1948, when the UN Security Council sent military observers to the Middle East. This particular mission's role was to secure peace by fostering an armistice agreement between Israel and its Arab neighbors. The mission's goal in supervising truces between conflicting nations was the catalyst for the UN Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) in 1948.¹ It was common for missions during the mid-twentieth century to have very little

¹ "History of peacekeeping - the early years. United Nations Peacekeeping," United Nations, 1, accessed July 12, 2017, <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/operations/early.shtml>.

Multinational involvement, often consisting of unarmed military observers and lightly armed troops tasked primarily with monitoring, reporting, and confidence-building roles. It was not until 1956 that the UN had its first armed peacekeeping operation in response to the Suez Canal crisis, an escalation of force that was necessary in resolving a rapidly growing crisis.²

Then, in 1960, the UN Operation in the Congo (ONUC) was launched and quickly became the largest peacekeeping mission that the UN had ever undertaken, deploying nearly 20,000 troops at its peak. ONUC was established by Security Council Resolution 143 (1960), which states its goals as:

“To authorize the Secretary-General to take the necessary steps, in consultation with the Government of the Republic of the Congo, to provide the Government with such military assistance as might be necessary until, through that Government’s efforts with United Nations technical assistance, the national security forces might be able, in the opinion of the Government, to meet fully their tasks.”³

The initial mandate, which is not outlined here, was to ensure the withdrawal of Belgian forces from the Republic of the Congo. Shortly after the beginning of this mission, the use of force escalated to carry out the mandate. In the end, the UN learned of the dangers of interfering in war-torn regions due to the substantial loss of 250 UN personnel who were killed during ONUC.

Throughout the 1960s and 70s, there were several other peacekeeping missions in areas such as: the Dominican Republic, West New Guinea (West Irian), Yemen, Cyprus, and areas in the Middle East.⁴ Most of these missions were short-term, not lasting more than a year in most

² "FIRST UNITED NATIONS EMERGENCY FORCE (UNEF I) - Background (Full text)." United Nations. Accessed July 14, 2017. <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/past/unef1backgr2.html>.

³ "ONUC." United Nations. Accessed July 14, 2017. <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/past/onuc.htm>

⁴ "FIRST UNITED NATIONS EMERGENCY FORCE (UNEF I) - Background (Full text)." United Nations. Accessed July 14, 2017. <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/past/unef1backgr2.html>

cases. This is in sharp contrast with the sort of mandates and peacekeeping missions that are seen from the UN in more recent years. The approach at this time by the UN was somewhat subtle, excluding the operation in the Congo. Most peacekeeping missions did not require the use of force, instead opting for more oversight. It was the success of these peacekeeping missions that awarded UN Peacekeepers with the Nobel Peace Prize in 1988, describing these missions as a world organization coming to play a more central part in world affairs.⁵

The Modern UN Peacekeeping Mandate

A good working example of these peacekeeping and peacebuilding mandates is in South Sudan, where civil war has brought a great deal of violence and conflict. Through mandates passed by the United Nations Security Council, there have been efforts made dating back to 2011 to bring stabilization to the struggling nation and eventually maintain sustainable peace. However, mandates have not been the most effective in this region for a wide variety of reasons. The first being that the political and security crisis in South Sudan became far worse than the UN originally predicted and several other mandates were sought by the Security Council following a breakout of violence in the South Sudanese capital.⁶ The Security Council adopted Resolution 2155 (2014) which laid out several tasks for UN personnel in South Sudan: protection of citizens, monitoring and investigating human rights, creating the conditions for delivery of humanitarian assistance, and supporting the implementation of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement. This would be the height of UN involvement in South Sudan, even with these clear tasks outlined, the 7,500 UN personnel on the ground are still asking for reinforcements.⁷

⁵ "History of peacekeeping - the early years. United Nations Peacekeeping." United Nations. Accessed July 12, 2017. <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/operations/early.shtml>.

⁶ "South Sudan: What is the fighting about?" BBC News. May 10, 2014. Accessed July 12, 2017. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-25427965>.

⁷ *Ibid.*

Mandates in South Sudan have had little effect on building or keeping peace in the region, but the international humanitarian efforts have saved countless lives. South Sudan has a history of ethnic tensions and several decades of conflict, which is often used by politicians to incite violence and rebellion to gain or retain power.⁸ This is another example of why peace mandates in this region seem ineffective, because of the long history of tension and violence any efforts made by the UN to secure peace would require addressing these complex issues. In the end, it seems that peace mandates have not stopped conflict in the region and still, to this day, there are military clashes around the country and killings for ethnic reasons.

Modern peacekeeping mandates are represented by the South Sudanese mission, as this sector of UN global involvement has grown in size and complexity, since its inception in 1948. The range of tasks assigned to UN Peacekeeping operations has also grown. The tasks grew in response to rapidly shifting patterns of conflict and to be better prepared to address any global threats to peace and security. Mandate framework has remained standard throughout the years, and peacekeeping operations are normally reserved for supporting the implementation of a ceasefire or a comprehensive peace agreement.⁹ However, this is not always the case, as is represented in the operations in South Sudan. The Sudan operation represents the modern use of a peacekeeping mandate well because of the wide range of tasks that are being carried out by the UN to help bring peace to the war-torn region.

Criteria for UN Peace Mandate

When considering historical peacekeeping or peacebuilding mandated by the United

⁸ "History of peacekeeping - the early years. United Nations Peacekeeping." United Nations. Accessed July 12, 2017. <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/operations/early.shtml>.

⁹ "UNMISS Mandate - United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan." United Nations. Accessed July 12, 2017. <https://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unmiss/mandate.shtml>.

Nations, it is important to recognize that there are criteria for international intervention. Often this manifests itself in the way mandates are framed by the UN for global intervention – a framework that has remained the same since the inception of peace missions abroad. The charter of the UN states that its primary responsibility is the maintenance of international peace and security, and in order to fill this large role, the UN must issue peacekeeping or peacebuilding mandates.¹⁰ Often this role by the UN is invoked under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, which provides for the involvement of regional arrangements and agencies in the maintenance of international peace and security, provided such activities are consistent with the purposes and principles outlined in Chapter I of the Charter.¹¹

Chapter VII of the UN Charter is very important for understanding the role that mandates play in peacekeeping missions, and how they are invoked. Where this portion of the UN Charter is lacking is in describing the criteria or necessary elements for a peacekeeping mandate. The Security Council will not create a mandate for a peacekeeping mission unless it is justified, and that is where criteria for mandates needs further development. The official United Nations Peacekeeping Operations Principles and Guidelines document from 2008 outlines these criteria in terms of the evolving role of UN peacekeeping operations. The spectrum of criteria involves certain activities, such as: conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping, peace enforcement, and peacebuilding.¹² If the Security Council recognizes a global conflict as having one of these particular sets of criteria, then a peacekeeping operation may be issued in the form of UN mandate.

¹⁰ "United Nations Peacekeeping Operations Principles and Guidelines." January 18, 2008. Accessed July 14, 2017. http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/documents/capstone_eng.pdf.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*

Moving from Peacekeeping to Peacebuilding

It requires a good deal to move from peacekeeping to peacebuilding in post-conflict countries and in any situation it requires a clear set of goals from the beginning of an operation. In more recent years, there has been a significant number of expanding mandates internationally by the Security Council, taking original mandates and adding tasks to them. These tasks include items like support for political processes, security sector reform and early capacity building. This has been highly criticized because it does not follow the mandate framework originally set out for peacekeeping missions. Instead this modern use of mandates continually increases the amount of tasks to be completed in each conflict zone, expanding and growing UN peacekeeping personnel internationally.¹³ Just marking one of the many ways in which there is misconduct or misuse of UN peacekeeping or peacebuilding missions.

The only real solution to this form of misconduct is a clear mission in conflict areas, straying from frail institutions and providing consistent support.¹⁴ However, modern mandates rarely follow these guidelines because of the unpredictable nature of conflict as well as adapting to an evolving situation on the ground. The question then remains as to how peacekeeping operations transition into peacebuilding operations. Peacebuilding means that an operation no longer focuses on stopping conflict and instead would focus on forming resolution and sustainable peace. It is very complicated and often takes the course of several years to see a conflict zone make the transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding. Susanna Malcorra, Under-Secretary General for Field Support, said it best in 2012 when she said:

¹³ "Moving from Peacekeeping to Peacebuilding Depends on Clarifying Priorities, Not Expanding Mandates, Security Council Told in Briefing | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases." United Nations. Accessed July 19, 2017. <http://www.un.org/press/en/2012/sc10591.doc.htm>.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

“The fundamental importance of effective transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding, stressing the impact that field missions, particularly large missions, had on the social and economic life of host countries in addition to their mandated goals in support of the security and political sectors.”¹⁵

Malcorra does an excellent job of summing up one of the ‘big picture’ items to be considered by peacekeeping missions in order to secure sustainable peace in conflict regions, keeping social and economic affairs in mind throughout the course of a mission. This is just one of the many things that help to facilitate a smooth transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding operations, but there are many items to be further considered. Not only should UN operations be taking into consideration the after effects of conflict in terms of social and economic impact, but there should be more done to keep good and consistent communication as well. Clear communication helps to foster a positive image of the operation and ensure better cooperation afterwards. It’s very important for this transition to occur in the most direct way possible, staying away from adding too many tasks or goals and carry out operations in a timely and efficient manner.

Misconduct in UN Mandate

Peacekeeping operations have the potential to produce very positive impacts in areas of conflict but there are many downfalls that keep mandates from being effective, the largest of which is misconduct. Misconduct comes in many forms, from the addition of tasks by the Security Council to Peacekeeping personnel accountability. When peacekeepers in the field have poor performance and take part in blatant misconduct, the integrity and effectiveness of their

¹⁵ "Moving from Peacekeeping to Peacebuilding Depends on Clarifying Priorities, Not Expanding Mandates, Security Council Told in Briefing | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases." United Nations. Accessed July 19, 2017. <http://www.un.org/press/en/2012/sc10591.doc.htm>.

missions and of the organization are in question. This is a contemporary problem in UN peacekeeping mandates and it leads to weaknesses in international and regional agreements.

Much of this misconduct is repeated patterns of sexual abuse and rape perpetrated by soldiers supposed to be restoring the international rule of law.¹⁶ This has undermined the work done in these areas and has nearly destroyed the reputation of UN peacekeeping missions in several conflict areas. This sort of conduct has brought a very distasteful image of UN peacekeepers and possible solutions include banning any sort of sexual relations between local populations and members of resident UN military missions in high-risk areas. However, this is not the only form of misconduct that has been seen in recent years, which brings back the subject of South Sudan and the UN mission in this war-torn region.

South Sudan is a good example of another form of misconduct in UN peacekeeper personnel. As the situation worsens each day it is the peacekeeping mandate failures that have allowed much to go unchecked or unnoticed. When violence broke out in South Sudan's capital city of Juba in 2016, UN personnel were highly criticized for their lack of protection. As over 300 civilians died and 42,000 civilians were displaced, UN personnel offered very poor protection for those sheltered in their base and virtually no protection for those outside their gates.¹⁷ Poor performance and misconduct in these areas where conflict is taking place, going against the role of these peacekeeping missions of providing safety and fostering peace.

Conclusion

Looking forward from current UN peacekeeping missions such as South Sudan,

¹⁶ Bowcott, Owen. "Report reveals shame of UN peacekeepers." The Guardian. March 24, 2005. Accessed July 20, 2017. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/mar/25/unitednations>.

¹⁷ Bosco, Laura, Katharina P. Coleman, Megan M. Roberts, Charles T. Hunt, Arthur Boutellis, Paul D. Williams, and Namie Di Razza. "Prioritizing UN Peacekeeper Accountability." IPI Global Observatory. Accessed July 20, 2017. <https://theglobalobservatory.org/2017/01/united-nations-peacekeeping-sexual-abuse-guterres>.

Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has made it very clear that accountability is a top priority.¹⁸

Without proper accountability, the UN mandate will lose the ability to transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding. An important transition for a nation in conflict to make is for sustainable peace or peaceful agreement. The modern UN peace mandate should exhibit concern for modern problems, addressing misconduct and setting realistic goals for a sustainable society. With a good focus, mandates can be the most effective method of keeping international peace and security; moreover, this is why the UN must change and adapt to an always evolving world.

¹⁸ Bosco, Laura, Katharina P. Coleman, Megan M. Roberts, Charles T. Hunt, Arthur Boutellis, Paul D. Williams, and Namie Di Razza. "Prioritizing UN Peacekeeper Accountability." IPI Global Observatory. Accessed July 20, 2017. <https://theglobalobservatory.org/2017/01/united-nations-peacekeeping-sexual-abuse-guterres>.

Questions to Consider:

1. What sorts of conditions are necessary for sustainable peace in a conflict zone?
2. What strategy would you take as the Security Council to create a UN peacekeeping or peacebuilding mandate?
3. What criteria would your nation consider when creating a peacekeeping mission?
4. How does misconduct effect peacekeeping and peacebuilding mandate in conflict zones?
5. What mandate criteria or framework should be used multi-nationally to create sustainable peace?
6. How should the UN, or more specifically Committee 34, address concerns about misconduct in peacekeeping operations?
7. Using the South Sudan example, how do you create sustainable peace through mandate?

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Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding Strategies

At its core the United Nations (UN) was formed to keep peace after World War II, namely by avoiding or at least abating World War III. Since October 24th, 1945, the UN has promoted the cause and cases of peacekeeping throughout the world. It is arguably the United Nations' only real objective, and all the other facets of its mission are subsidiaries of that goal. Through the UN, States have a platform to engage in open dialogue and can resolve conflicts prior to escalation, humanitarian aid is disbursed to individuals around the world to prevent civilizations from descending into chaos, establishing universal rule of law and promoting collaboration so that humanity's collective challenges can be viewed as non-zero-sum games.

In its first active missions, United Nations Peacekeeping began in 1948 to monitor and observe a ceasefire between the newly formed state of Israel and its Arab neighbors, forming the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO).¹ In 1949, another group of unarmed UN observers were deployed to monitor a ceasefire between India and newly formed Pakistan, forming the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP).² Although both UNTSO and UNMOGIP exist as current missions today, the nature of the United Nations peacekeeping and peacemaking strategies have had to evolve to adapt to new and often shifting dynamics. Unlike the original missions, modern peacekeepers are armed and must do far more than monitor a truce between two state actors. Today's missions require that we not only aim to keep peace, but to build it between warring parties, and make it in hostile environments.

¹ "UNITED NATIONS TRUCE SUPERVISION ORGANIZATION." *UNTSO*, untso.unmissions.org/.

² "UNMOGIP Mandate - United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan." *United Nations*, United Nations, www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unmogip/mandate.shtml.

Introduction to the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, Committee 34

Much like the size and scope of global peace, the world of UN Peacekeeping is composed of a daunting network of diplomats, bureaucrats and members in the field. UN Committee 34 (C34) was formed in 1965 via General Assembly Resolution 2006 to create holistic annual reviews of the peacekeeping process. C34 provides recommendations based on their observations and qualitative and quantitative analysis which are global in scope. “It reports to the General Assembly on its work through the Fourth Committee (Special Political and Decolonization) and is comprised of 147 Member States, mostly past or current contributors to peacekeeping operations. 14 other Member States, intergovernmental organizations and entities, including the African Union, the European Community, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol), participate as observers.”³

As of August 31st, 2017, seventy-one peacekeeping operations have occurred since 1948, with fifteen missions that are currently engaged. Over 94,000 uniformed personnel collaborate with approximately 15,000 civilian personnel across the globe in pursuit of peacekeeping missions which take place primarily in underdeveloped and developing states. Although each mission may carry a different mandate or be authorized with different tools the goal is always the same, to promote, create or sustain peace until a positive peace may be formed between the affected parties.

Security Council mandates also reflect the broader normative debates shaping the international environment. In this regard, there are a number of cross-cutting, thematic tasks that are regularly assigned to United Nations peacekeeping operations on the basis

³ “General Assembly and Peacekeeping.” *United Nations*, United Nations, www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/ctte/CTTEE.htm.

of the following landmark Security Council resolutions: Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security; 2) Security Council resolution 1612 (2005) on children and armed conflict; 3) Security Council resolution 1674 (2006) on the protection of civilians in armed conflict.⁴

Studies by C34 are instrumental to the development of innovative approaches, occasionally prompting Security Council resolutions like the ones posted above. The systematic use of rape as a weapon of war and destabilizing impact on the stability of states must be taken seriously. The use of children as agents of war can create a generation worth of killers, poisoning a state's future. Studying the protection of civilians in armed conflict and reexamining its impact over time led to the creation of Responsibility to Protect (R2P).

Peacekeeping, Peacebuilding and Peace Enforcement

UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding operates under three interrelated and mutually reinforcing principles:

1). Consent of the parties involved: Since the UN operates as a third party it must strive to not become part of an active conflict, but instead seek to act as an intermediary element that brokers peace. The consent is of the governing bodies involved, as such cooperation and collaboration are not always guaranteed at the local level. The consenting parties must allow the UN to operate politically and physically for their mission to be successful.

2). Impartiality: The UN seeks to create peace and act against those who inhibit or prohibit its progress, however it must do so while attempting to have no other vested interest in

⁴ Langholtz, Ph.D., Harvey J. *Principles and Guidelines for UN Peacekeeping Operations*. Peace Operations Training Institute, defenseetsecuriteinternationale.files.wordpress.com/2013/10/pag_en-120130.pdf.

the situation. It is imperative that peacekeeping efforts maintain good relations with the involved parties so that they may broker a deal and promote peace. Playing favorites or picking sides jeopardizes the immediate mission and undercuts the credibility of UN peacekeeping overall.

3). Non-use of force except in self-defense and defense of the mandate: With authorization from the Security Council some missions may utilize “robust peacekeeping”, authorizing peacekeepers to “‘use all necessary means’ to deter forceful attempts to disrupt the political process, protect civilians under imminent threat of physical attack, and/or assist the national authorities in maintaining law and order.”⁵ Robust peacekeeping is the tactical use of force with both the consent of the host nation (or the parties to the conflict including non-state actors or factions) and authorization from the Security Council.

The underlying causes that lead to instability are addressed through the UN’s seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This set of interconnected and interdependent goals lays the groundwork for the long-term stability and success of Member States in a hope to prevent crisis from arising in the first place. Although it is not a wholly inclusive list, nearly every SDG, or more correctly the lack thereof, is in itself a source of conflict that has or has strong potential to lead to escalated conflict. Goal 6: “Clean Water and Sanitation” is directly tied to stability and peace in many of the fifteen active UN peacekeeping missions. By far the scarcest resource in densely populated desert environments is and will forever be water. The SDGs can act as a road map to pinpointing the most vital element of a region's inability to independently attain peace. Regardless if all other SDGs were met in sub-Saharan Africa but access to reliable clean water was not, the region could never foreseeably be secure and stable.

There are essentially two types of crisis, nonviolent and violent. Non-violent crisis is

⁵“Principles of UN Peacekeeping. United Nations Peacekeeping.” *United Nations*, United Nations, www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/operations/principles.shtml.

typically the consequence of a natural disaster, the collapse of institutional or political leadership, or the lack natural resources (often a combination of those factors). Of course, violent crisis may arise out of a non-violent crisis or be escalated by the events of a non-violent crisis. As the climate around the globe continues to change we are likely to see more stress placed on already distressed populations, and the incidents of conflict to secure resources increased.

Peacekeeping efforts are in place to help states implement and pursue the SDGs, which at their core address not only short and mid-term solutions (food, water, rule of law, stable institutions, gender equality), but also long-term solutions that slow or combat the growth of climate change (building sustainable cities and communities, responsible consumption and production). Peacekeeping, Peacebuilding and Peace Enforcement actions are only implemented to bring states to the point where they may actively and securely pursue SDGs.

Peacekeeping operations generally operate under the following mandates:

- Deploy to prevent the outbreak of conflict or the spillover of conflict across borders;
- Stabilize conflict situations after a ceasefire, to create an environment for the parties to reach a lasting peace agreement;
- Assist in implementing comprehensive peace agreements;
- Lead states or territories through a transition to stable government, based on democratic principles, good governance and economic development.⁶

Haiti is a prime example of how non-violent crisis has turned to violent crisis, and nearly full

⁶ “Mandates and the Legal Basis for Peacekeeping. United Nations Peacekeeping.” *United Nations*, United Nations, www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/operations/pkmandates.shtml.

circle back towards stability through the efforts of peacekeeping. Haiti has suffered repeated natural disasters (namely hurricanes) which have destroyed homes, disrupted lives and dissolved its institutions over time. The recent mission in Haiti (the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti - MINUJUSTH) was created by Security Council resolution 2350 in April of 2017 after the conclusion of its original mission (the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti - MINUSTAH) expired. Haiti's experience has been that of an unstable state being stretched to its limits through non-violent crisis (hurricanes), which have exacerbated the preexisting instability. With the collapse of institutional stability people have had to fend for themselves. Although the most obvious needs within the mission are tangible (food, water, shelter), the mission statement is centered around creating conditions that allow for those everyday necessities to be distributed and developed in the nation peacefully, rather than creating another source of conflict. The current mission has a just a six-month mandate to assist with security sector reform and other rule of law-related activities. "MINUJUSTH will assist the Government of Haiti to further develop the Haitian National Police (HNP); to strengthen Haiti's rule of law institutions, including the justice and prisons; and to promote and protect human rights - all with a view to improving the everyday lives of the Haitian people."⁷ MINUJUSTH is staffed with formed police units and individual police officers, not "blue helmets", which reflects its mission priorities.

Peacebuilding missions attempt to foster cooperation and reconciliation between sides via third party arbitration, using political tools such as dialogue, trade and enforcement on the ground. As expressed by Laurent Goetschel of Swisspeace in his perspective called *The Light*

⁷"UNITED NATIONS MISSION FOR JUSTICE SUPPORT IN HAITI." *MINUJUSTH*, minujusth.unmissions.org/en.

Footprint Approach to Peacekeeping, “Parties to a conflict should resolve the conflicts themselves, because they will also be the ones out there who must manage their relations once the violence will have stopped.”⁸

The mandates typically used within peacebuilding activities are:

- Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants;
- Mine action;
- Security sector reform and other rule of law-related activities;
- Protection and promotion of human rights;
- Electoral assistance;
- Support for the restoration and extension of State authority;
- Promotion of social and economic recovery and development.

Peace Enforcement operations may be implemented when there is no other alternative than the tactical and controlled use of force. These missions are implemented during instances of genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes and crimes against humanity. Responsibility to Protect (R2P) is at its core a question of how to protect non-combatants from mass atrocities, but carries with it questions about the nature of State sovereignty, human rights as well as local, regional and global security. As such no one committee is entirely able to address R2P concerns alone, but must work within the context of the Security Council, General Assembly, the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS), Human Rights Council and Secretary General to achieve the mission of saving human lives.

⁸ Goetschel, Laurent, director. *The Light Footprint Approach to Peacekeeping*. Youtube, www.youtube.com/watch?v=NRH1500lrQo.

Future Challenges

The pace of globalization has been exponentially expedited by modern transportation and the flow of information from platforms that allow access to the world wide web, namely communication technologies. Consider that the advent of the printing press in 1440 C.E by Johannes Gutenberg acted as a catalyst, or precursor, to the many reformations and revolutions that occurred between 1440 C.E and today. The logistical capacity to create and disperse ideas that underlay the foundations of ideologies around western Europe were disrupted and no longer solely in the hands of those who held power, but could be challenged daily by something far more powerful - paper and ink.

The revolutions of the mind through education were the microcosms of revolution which would topple the control of the Roman Catholic Church initiated by the protestant reformation and several hundred years of bloody conflict as it attempted to maintain control. Today we live just a few decades after the creation of a vastly more powerful medium which will undoubtedly continue to cause individuals to question their governments and ways of life. As older and more conservative view points are challenged it is not just predictable, but probable that those who exert power will attempt to maintain it by any means necessary. The internet is arguably the greatest creation within the last five hundred years; however, it is also a malleable tool that allows terrorist groups to recruit members, governments the capacity to spy on others (including their own citizens), and the circulation of propaganda and misinformation to be spread at the fastest pace in human history.

Global warming and climate change are already and will continue to disrupt the global balance of power. It is unlikely that an altered environment will topple existing powerful states, although we have already begun to witness the desperate conditions of the world's least fortunate

get worse due to climate change. Food, and namely water, security will be key issues over the next centuries as states must continue to find clean sources of potable water. Consider the circumstances if the Mekong River were to dry up or become non-potable due to pollution – this single river supplies Tibet, China, Burma, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand and Vietnam with drinkable water and its associated benefits and resources. Who controls, or owns a river? Is it the country of origin (China) or all their benefactors? If that source somehow became scarce, control of the resource would likely be determined by the most powerful state farthest upstream.

Conclusion

Conflict is no longer an interaction between two or more warring state actors. Non-state actors may be tribes, terrorist groups, religious or ethnic minorities or any other group of people which holds some form of political or physical influence but is not the dominant power. When engaging in a peace enforcement mission against ISIS, there is a clear target even though they are a non-state actor, but when intervening in most other scenarios it is incredibly difficult to differentiate between multiple tribes' languages and sub-cultures, let alone foster peaceful resolution to disputes which may reach back many centuries. Frustrated and vulnerable people may lash out even at those who are attempting to help them.

After the conclusion of World War II the balance of world power had shifted and the “winners of WWII” became the P5 (permanent members of the SC). Then, a great ideological divide called the Cold War split world order between two primary actors, the U.S and the U.S.S.R. In this bi-polar world, smaller or less powerful states could make clear cut decisions about whose side they were on or to “go it alone.” The U.S.S.R collapsed in the late 1980's and the world experienced a unipolar period of American dominance. Unable to fulfill such a role the

balance of world power is now apparently shifting back to its pre-World War I/II pattern of multipolar existence. If the United Nations' ultimate goal of preventing World War III becomes a failure, it is all but guaranteed that all other efforts towards peacekeeping will as well, so it is imperative that C34 closely examines past and current peacekeeping operations to identify mistakes and successes that can be utilized for future missions.

Questions to Consider

1. What do we do when states refuse UN peacekeeping teams/missions?
2. Can or should state sovereignty ever be challenged, called into question or delegitimize?
3. Is a peace that must be enforced through the use of external force really peace?
4. What factors, preconditions or actions must be present for states and people groups to form lasting positive peace?
5. Bench marks - how do we measure progress or success?

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Personnel, Conduct, Discipline, Cooperation and Mitigating the Negative Outcomes

The Committee 34, henceforth known as C34 in this writing, is a unique body within the United Nations system. Established in 1965, by General Assembly Resolution 2006, C34 was given the mandate of conducting an annual comprehensive review of all issues relating to peacekeeping. It is comprised of 147 vote-holding Member States, all past or current contributors to peacekeeping operations, and 17 other non-voting Member States or other international organizations such as, the European Union, the African Union, Interpol, and the ICRC.

C34 has been given the prerogative to conduct periodic reviews and evaluate the performance of UN peacekeeping operations throughout the globe. Based upon these reviews, C34 must then provide recommendations for their improvement. These recommendations play a pivotal role in strengthening the UN's overall mandate. The information therein is extremely important, not only to the General Assembly, but to the Security Council, the Departments of Peacekeeping and Field Support (DFS), and individual Member States as well. Moreover, C34 writes reports rather than drafts resolutions and operates under the *consensus model*, which seeks to achieve the best possible outcomes for the entirety of the United Nations and its Member States. It is highly encouraged that delegates at MUNFW operate in the same regard.

Background

The term 'peacekeeping' describes a specific type of military action used by Member States as a tool in the United Nations' collective security arrangement. However, an important

distinction between peacekeeping or peacebuilding and other forms of conflict management must be made. Peacekeeping is founded upon the idea of *consent of involved parties*. This means that the process itself relies heavily upon *all* involved parties, especially the host state, to maintain and preserve peace with very minimal use of military force.

Customarily, the Security Council (SC) authorizes peacekeeping operations through an adopted resolution. This is, very frequently, based upon the recommendations of C34. However, there has been precedent in the past wherein the General Assembly (GA) has mandated peacekeeping missions. Accordingly, where the SC authorizes and determines the mission's mandate, size, and the mission's tasks in the field, the GA approves the budget for the mission. Organizational aspects of the mission are handled through the Secretariat, via the Department for Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO).

Ultimately, peacekeeping/peacebuilding operations can be initiated throughout various phases of conflict. As such, each mission is invariably unique with an individualized set of goals. For example, a mission can be tailored to engage in conflict prevention for potential conflicts, conflict management during ongoing conflicts, or post-conflict peacebuilding. Thus, most modern peacekeeping missions are designed to serve a multitude of different functions. These functions include, but are not limited to, confidence and transparency building via conflict observer status, partitioning of involved parties as an interposition force, the maintaining of order in failed states or in post-conflict states, and to assist in the re-establishment of normal state functions (i.e. disarmament protocols, fighter reintegration, demining, reestablishment of rule of law, etc.) In this context, C34 is tasked with reviewing all aforementioned UN actions.

History

Since 1948, the UN has mandated 71 peacekeeping operations. As of today, there are 16 peacekeeping operations around the globe, consisting of 95,544 uniformed personnel contributed from 127 Member States, 15,153 civilian personnel, and 1,597 UN volunteers. This equates to 112,294 total personnel serving in peacekeeping/peacebuilding operations around the world. Mindful of these numbers, which have only increased since its inception, C34 emerged out of the need to review and formalize the concept of peacekeeping, as early missions lacked clearly defined goals or the much-needed institutional anchor to the United Nations itself.

After the end of the Second World War, States placed considerable focus upon maintaining international peace and security. Where the League of Nations had failed, the United Nations was designed to rectify. Although a UN force was enshrined in the Charter, designed as a system of collective security, it ultimately failed to prevent or mitigate the effects of the Cold War. Nevertheless, it can be argued that the UN was successful in mitigating the many crises that broke out after the war's end. It was in this post-war world that the term 'peacekeeping' began to become more defined.

Multiple examples of the UN attempts to deal with crises can be found throughout its history. For example, in 1946, the UN authorized the use military observers in the Balkans as a means to uphold and restore peace. Early missions, such as this, were ad-hoc and constituted of only a very small amount of personnel – not more than a dozen military observers. Building upon these actions, the SC then established the first UN-led peacekeeping operation in 1949: the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO).

It was at this point that the concept of peacekeeping transformed; where it was originally a marginal force with limited personnel, it then became something larger and more proactive. This led to the establishment of the UN Emergency Force (UNEF 1) in 1956, to settle the crisis

in the Sinai Peninsula. As per its design, the SC was looked to for direction during the onset of the conflict. However, the U.K. and France vetoed any resolutions drafted to mitigate the conflict, due to their immediate involvement in the situation. In a rare act of cooperation, even for today's standards, the U.S. and the then former Soviet Union called upon the GA's rarely used, "Uniting for Peace Resolution" as a means to overcome the stalemate and pacify the conflict. Consequently, the GA adopted resolution 998 on October 30, 1956, which established the UNEF 1. Its goal: to secure and supervise the cessation of hostilities, to ensure the withdrawal of all involved parties, and to serve as a buffer between the Egyptian and Israeli forces in the Sinai. In this rare act, the GA challenged the SC as the primary organ in the UN to mandate peacekeeping operations. Nevertheless, as we have seen, this proved to be an extremely rare act of cooperation and ultimately, did not affect the primary role the SC plays on matters pertaining to international peace and security. Today, the SC is still viewed as the principle UN organ to mandate peacekeeping operations. Important to note, with a mandate to "secure and supervise the cessation of hostilities along the Suez Canal" and a staff of 6,000 military personnel at its peak, the UNEF 1 marked an expansion of the concept and scale of peacekeeping operations.

This trend, of larger and more vigorous peacekeeping operations would continue under a 1961 SC mandate to establish the United Nations Operation in the Congo (ONOC), presently known as the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The mandate of the ONOC was robust and included goals such as the maintenance of rule of law and to facilitate the restoration and maintenance of the territorial integrity of the Congo. By all accounts, at its peak in 1961, the ONOC could be considered a legitimate fighting force with a military staff of over 19,000 soldiers.

Ultimately, history viewed both missions as mostly successful in pacifying their respective conflicts. However, early missions such as these lacked a clearly defined operational foundation, both within the UN Charter and in the working mechanisms of the UN itself. This is most evident in the question of the GA's role to mandate such missions. Both missions were very expensive and brought forth the question of how such operations should be budgeted. Within the GA itself, Member States argued whether peacekeeping expenses constituted "expenses of the organization" as related to Article 17 of the Charter. Ultimately, they could not come to consensus and asked the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to give an advisory opinion on the matter. The ICJ found, according to Article 65 of the *Statute of International Court of Justice*, that the aforementioned operations did in fact fall under Article 17. Furthermore, the ICJ found that the GA was authorized to mandate peacekeeping operations.

Although the question of whether or not peacekeeping missions should be budgeted through the regular budget approved by the GA was solved, the broader question of how the financing of peacekeeping should be organized and implemented in a more formalized manner in the UN System, remained unsolved. Consequently, the GA adopted resolution 2006 (XIX) on the "Comprehensive Review of the Whole Question of Peacekeeping Operations in all their Aspects" during the 19th session on February 18, 1965 – thereby creating the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C-34).

C34's inception marks the beginning of modern peacekeeping, as we know it today. It was the first instance wherein the UN took the necessary steps to ensure that peacekeeping was a acknowledged function of the UN and that its activities were funded by the UN's budget. In the early days of its existence, the committee was predominately focused on two topics: the development of basis tenants and guidelines for peacekeeping operations and, consequently, the

questions of how to define and fund said operations. As no consensus was met before the end of the Cold War, an interim funding formula was developed. It was then, in 1990, that C34 decided to implement the interim formula indefinitely. Moreover, it was in the same session that the committee decided that the budgeting and financing of the C34 should be transferred to the General Assembly Fourth Committee. C34 has since worked to strengthen and review its functioning and organizational goals in following sessions, but these attempts have not always been met with solidified changes. An example of which would be within C34's annual 1992 report, wherein the committee agreed on a set of principles of peacekeeping missions, but was ultimately never adopted.

In recent history, C34 has broadened the scope of its deliberations due to the increase in the number and depth of peacekeeping operations since the 1990s. Since then, C34 has given important recommendations in different fields, including: issues of the training of peacekeepers, the encouragement of regional organizations, NGOs, and other arrangements to support UN peacekeeping missions, and enhancing regional peacekeeping capacities (i.e. rapid deployment ability and the safety and security of peacekeeping personnel) in the area of operation.

Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding Mandate

Since its inception in 1965, the GA has requested a new report from C34 each year. Subsequent resolutions consistently outlined the mandate of C34 to “conduct a comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects,” review the “implementation of its previous proposals,” and to “consider any new proposals so as to enhance the capacity of the United Nations to fulfill its responsibilities on the field.” To put it plainly.

C34 is the only UN body that has a comprehensive review and guidance mandate for all UN peacekeeping operations.

As many would come to expect, the interpretation and application of this mandate has changed over time. As previously mentioned, for example, during the Cold War the review of peacekeeping was limited to financial issues and the development of basic peacekeeping guidelines. However, since the 1990s, C34 has broadened its topics of concern substantially to include a more accurate reflection of *all aspects* of peacekeeping, excluding budgetary concerns – of course. These aspects include: the safety and security of peacekeepers, conduct and discipline, strategies for complex peacekeeping operations, cooperation with regional arrangements, the enhancement of African peacekeeping capacities, and best practices and the development of stronger UN field support arrangements.

Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding Strategies

As a body of the General Assembly, any new ideas for potential action are initiated from individual Member States. Before these ideas or concepts are brought before C34, informal discussions between Member States and the UN Secretariat take place and concept papers are shared. If it can be seen that Member States are receptive to the idea, it is then brought before C34 in formal session. Concurrently, the Secretariat, at the behest of Member States, is requested to deliver a report on the possible impact of the respective idea - this includes its financial implications as well. Only after an idea gains approval by consensus, does C34 implement the idea in its annual report section on proposals, recommendations, and conclusions. This report is then presented before GA Fourth Committee and ultimately adopted by the GA itself. It then is immediately referred to the GA Fifth Committee for budgetary considerations.

A great example of this process was in C34's 1989 annual report. The report included a concept to compile a registry that contained information on the availability of troops for peacekeeping operations. Ultimately, this led to fruitful discussions between the Secretariat and Member States throughout the 1990s. In the end, it led to an agreement in 2002 which created the concept of "strategic deployment stocks" (SDS) of troops, which were designed to ease the rapid deployment of today's peacekeeping missions.

As both the primary initiator of new peacekeeping programs and the primary reviewing organ for existing programs, much of the work done by C34 is heavily relied upon by other UN peacekeeping organs, such as the DPKO and the Peacebuilding Commission. Often, DPKO and other peacekeeping organs will work directly with C34 to address best practices.

Currently, C34 is focused on strengthening regional peacekeeping capacities, further developing strategies for more complex operations to account for the protection of civilian populations, including gender specific protections, the continued strengthening of African regional arrangements, and the concurrent and ongoing efforts to improve the training of peacekeeping personnel. Moreover, all of these topics include elements to reinforce strategies to help maintain the rule of law, establish disarmament protocols, and assist with the demobilization and reintegration of former fighters.

Conclusion

In the end, the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations is the United Nation's primary organ for peacekeeping operations in all their aspects. Once endorsed by the GA, its annual report becomes a vital component of the peacekeeping/peacebuilding process. It provides legitimacy for the peacekeeping personnel and affirms the collective support of all Member

States. Importantly, C34 is a crucial body for Member States to initiate reforms aimed at the overall improvement of peacekeeping methods, the training of peacekeepers, the equipment they carry, and further cooperation with regional arrangements.

Questions to Consider

1. Has your State ever had a UN sanctioned peacekeeping operation within its borders? If so, how has that affected your Nation's outlook on peacekeeping as a whole?
2. What steps has your State taken to strengthen or mitigate peacekeeping operations around the globe?
3. In what ways can C34 address root issues of conflict as a means to mitigate any potential need for a peacekeeping operation?

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Preventing Domestic Violence against Women

In 1997, the World Health Organization reported that nearly 20% of women have been abused by a man in their lifetime. Since the organizations' existence, the United Nations Charter has promised to provide the right to life, liberty, and security of person. The United Nations Human Rights Council aims to provide protection for all persons in all nations. In 1993, the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women was adopted, ensuring the security of the integrity, dignity and equality of all women.¹ Since the 1990s, domestic violence has been recognized as a human rights issue and a health issue therefore research on the issue has expanded. Most recently, the issue has been delegated to not only the governments within Member States, but grassroots organizations and other international women's organizations. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly and aimed to prevent discrimination against women, in all its forms. Rashida Manjoo, the current UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women directed attention to the correlation between discrimination and domestic violence by saying, "States must acknowledge that violence against women is not the root problem, but that violence occurs because other forms of discrimination are allowed to flourish."² Violence against women, or gender based violence, is now widely recognized as a serious human rights abuse, and increasingly also as an important public health problem that concerns all sectors of society.³ The recommendations for ending domestic violence after the study was complete were as follows:

¹ General Assembly. A/RES/48/104. Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 20 December 1993.

² UN Treaties on Domestic Violence. www.stopvaw.org/un_treaties_and_conventions

³ L. Heise, Garcia-Moreno, *United Nations World Health Organization*.

strengthening national commitment and action, promoting primary prevention, involving the education sector, strengthening the health sector response, supporting women living with violence, sensitizing the criminal justice systems, and supporting further research and collaboration and increasing donor support.⁴ The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) currently invests in counselling and legal services, mediation and rehabilitation for those affected by domestic violence.⁵

The General Assembly adopted the Intensification of Efforts to Eliminate all Forms of Violence Against Women in 2006, which reaffirmed the commitments to social development and gender equality in all states, and reaffirmed the commitment to empowering women and ending domestic violence.⁶ In 2008, the United Nations Secretary-General announced the “Unite to End Violence against Women” campaign whose global mission was to end domestic violence against women. The campaign plans to do this through the adoption and enforcement of national laws, the implementation of multi-sectoral national action plans, the establishment of data collection systems and the establishment of local campaigns to engage civil society actors. Ban Ki-moon, former Secretary General of the United Nations, stated, “Break the silence. When you witness violence against women and girls, do not sit back. Act.”⁷

When figuring out how to best dissolve the problem of domestic violence, the UN first had to differentiate between types of violence. Intimate partner violence is defined by an intimate partner that intentionally causes physical, sexual or psychological harm, including physical aggression, sexual coercion, psychological abuse and controlling behaviors.⁸ The forms of

⁴ L. Heise, Garcia-Moreno, *United Nations World Health Organization*.

⁵ “United Nations Secretary-General’s Campaign to UNiTE to End Violence against Women.” United Nations, www.un.org/en/women/endviolence/who_undp.shtml

⁶ General Assembly. A/RES/61/143. Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 19 December 2006.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ “Violence against Women.” World Health Organization. www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs239/en/.

intimate partner violence include physical violence, sexual violence, emotional abuse such as humiliation or insults, and controlling behaviors such as isolating a person from family and friends or restricting access to healthcare, financial resources or education.⁹ A WHO multi-country study on women's health and domestic violence against women collected data on intimate partner violence from women in 10 countries. Among these women, 13-61% reported experiencing physical violence by a partner, 4-49% reported having experienced severe physical violence by a partner, 6-59% reported sexual violence by a partner at some point in their lives, and 20-75% reported experiencing emotional abuse acts from a partner in their lifetime.¹⁰ Sexual violence is defined by the UN as any sexual act or attempt at a sexual act by the use of coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim. The World Health Organization has also made it a point to study women's attitude towards violence, which directly correlates with a woman's self-worth or idea of equality with members of the opposite sex.

Factors associated with increased presence of violence

Women that were previously married were more likely to experience violence than those that are married. In certain countries, the presence of formerly married women is low for cultural reasons. The absence of formerly married women does not make them immune to violence, but those that are unwed may be more willing to speak out because of the lack of fear or stigma. Women with lower education levels are also at an increased risk for violence, according to the World Health's Organization's report. Multiple international studies have mentioned the protective effects of women's education past secondary school. Women are empowered through education, and the opportunities that follow education, such as financial independence and

⁹ WHO, and Pan American Health Organization. Understanding and Addressing Violence against Women. 2012.

¹⁰ "Violence against Women." World Health Organization. www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs239/en/.

information on legal literacies and the right to inheritance.¹¹ Additionally, large disparities in education is also a factor that increases a woman's chance to be exposed to violence. Around 65% of women with primary education or less are married younger, lack control of resources in their homes, and condone wife beating, as opposed to only around 5% of women that finish high school.¹²

Those who had experienced family violence before in their life are at higher risk to be the perpetrator for violence or to be a victim of violence. Marital discord and dissatisfaction are also associated with an increased risk for domestic violence.

Outcomes of Domestic Violence

Victims of domestic violence are at substantial risk for mental health and physical health injuries. Bruises, lacerations, fractures and broken bones are all common injuries from those suffering from domestic violence. In addition to injury, "functional disorders" can also arise from domestic violence, such as chronic pain, asthma, and fibromyalgia. 40-70% of female murder victims were killed by their spouses or husbands.¹³

Poor mental health is also an outcome of domestic violence. Those that experienced domestic violence are more likely to be diagnosed with depression, anxiety and phobias. Thoughts of suicide and attempted suicides are higher in women that were abused than women that were not. Other mental health diseases that are attributed to the presence of domestic violence are poor self-esteem, physical inactivity, eating disorders, sleeping disorders, alcohol abuse, drug addictions and post-traumatic stress disorder.

¹¹ Noughani, Fatemeh, and Jamileh Mohtashami. "Effect of Education on Prevention of Domestic Violence against Women." Iranian Journal of Psychiatry, Tehran University of Medical Sciences, 2011. www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3395941/.

¹² "Education Plays Key Role in Advancing Women, Girls, and Communities, Report Says." World Bank. www.worldbank.org/en/new/press-release/2014/05/14/education-key-role-women-girls-communities-report.

¹³ "Violence against Women." World Health Organization. www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs239/en/.

The sexual and reproductive health consequences of victims of sexual violence are ones that can be treated depending on their access to health care and financial resources of the victim. Victims of sexual violence are at an increased risk for sexually transmitted diseases, unwanted pregnancies and unsafe abortions. Difficulty seeking contraceptive use for the woman's partner or perpetrator of sexual violence is an indirect risk of the negative health outcomes of sexual violence.

Conclusion

Empowering women through education could result in equality in financial resources in the home through a career and prevent victims of domestic violence from leaving the perpetrator due to inequalities. Local governments and Non-governmental organizations empowering women through financial support and activists assisting to bring policy change for empowering women could also decrease cases of domestic violence.

Programs that assist women with options and potential outcomes when facing domestic violence and further research on factors contributing to violence from the UN are vital to diminishing the number of victims of crimes of intimate partner violence, sexual violence, emotional abuse and physical abuse.

Questions to Consider

1. What policies or committees does your country have in place to decrease domestic violence?
2. What research has your country published regarding domestic violence?
3. What programs does your country have in place for victims of domestic violence?
4. What is the awareness level of domestic violence or intimate partner violence in your country?
5. How much of your population is affected by domestic violence?
6. How does your country plan to contribute to the end of domestic violence?

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Closing the Gap in Providing Access to Women's Health Care

The United Nations is built around four purposes or goals that strive to ensure international security as well as protect individual human rights, all while using the great forum that is the UN. The third purpose according the UN Charter is “to achieve international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion.”¹ In regards to equitable access to health care for women, the international community is failing the third purpose of the United Nations as it continues to inadequately address the unique needs of physical and mental health of women. This deficit in access to care has led to 63.2 million unintended pregnancies in the developing world as women do not have access to effective contraception. Additionally, it is estimated that 100,000 maternal deaths could have been avoided if modern contraception methods were available in developing nations. This continued behavior of indifference violates the UN Charter as it does not respect the fundamental freedom of reproductive health of women. Several UN bodies have paid close attention to this issue over recent years including the Human Rights Council. The Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the General Assembly have highlighted the need to need for international reform of medical inequities. Goal three and five ensure good health and wellbeing and promoting gender equality. In addition to the United Nations, certain State actors have made improvements

¹ UN Charter

and to slowly closing this gap in Access to Women's Health Care. The natural and more encompassing step to achieve equitable access to health care would be to institute universal health care. According to the World Health Organization, "universal health coverage means that all people receive the health services they need without suffering financial hardship when paying for them. The full spectrum of essential, quality health services should be covered including health promotion, prevention and treatment, rehabilitation and palliative care."² The universal health care (UHC) debate has permeated throughout many international and multilateral forums and has many myths behind it. UHC does not mean government paid for insurance, that is simply not feasible, and no government could bare the load of nations medical costs. UHC deployed effectively would minimize government involvement yet keep out of pocket costs to a bare minimum. The international community does not need to solve the problem of resistance to UHC to provide equitable access to a marginalized groups, women and girls. A narrow focused can be placed on women and girls to specifically target unique health care needs and combat maternal mortality rate.

United Nations

In 2016, The Human Rights Council adopted A/HRC/RES/32/4 focusing on eliminating discrimination against women. The Council called up the international community to make high quality health care systems accessible, affordable, available, appropriate, and effective to women and girls.³ The Council implored Member States to eliminate legal, administrative, financial and social barriers that hinder women's right to the full enjoyment of the highest

² Universal Health Coverage Fact Sheet, The WHO

³ A/HRC/RES/32/4

attainable standard of physical and mental health. Although the Council was able to adopt the resolution without a vote, there is still significant disagreement on how to provide access to women's health care. Member States' governments stymie reform in the name of preserving culture and heritage. This problem permeates developed and developing states alike, but we do see greater maternal mortality rates in developing states due to the already high numbers of disadvantaged groups. Certain organizations are still able to make an impact in those regions, namely the World Health Organization, and the World Bank. The WHO can provide support through regional office that are uniquely situated to know not only know where health care needs to be, but where it is currently at in the region and what strategize will work best for that area. The World Bank can financially support government programs that plan to educate women on health care as well as subsidize health care services to lower financial and cultural barriers to entry.

Egypt

In 2005, Egypt's Project Population sought "to motivate families to utilize family planning, contraception, and other health measures by highlight the negative affect that a high fertility rate will have on the local community via overpopulation." This tactic encouraged smaller family size and therefore increased contraception usage. This program not only focused on maternal figures, but paternal and other units of the family to help overcome the cultural and social barrier to equal health care services.

The World Bank provides its take on how to close the gap in Egypt in the 2015 report, *A Roadmap to Achieve Social Justice in Egypt*. In the short term, a renewed focus is placed on disadvantaged groups in districts within the region that have high maternal mortality rates as well

as high fertility rates. Additionally, resources are sent to bad-outcome districts which include staff with specialized training in approaching the community with family planning options, maternal nutrition education, and high-risk pregnancy attendants. The staff training as shown success in discussing and encouraging family planning and contraception use, where otherwise there might be a negative reaction from the local community due to cultural or religious concerns. The report shows that emphasizing the need for family planning services as well as motivating those in the family unit whether paternal or grand-maternal figures to stay involved throughout and after the pregnancy will provide a significant positive change. These measures seek to help those disadvantaged overcome not a financial obstacle, but a cultural and social barrier to health care. As a result of these additions the contraceptive prevalence rate doubled as well as an average four-fold increase in the use of family planning clinics.⁴

Maldives

The Maldives have taken a different approach to lower maternal mortality rate and fertility rate. In the region, there is a significant increase in physical abuse for women, especially during pregnancy. Abuse during pregnancy by intimate partners are not uncommon and has led to increased maternal mortality rate. “Of all cases where severe abuse injuries were sustained and those injuries needed immediate medical attention, only 11% were reported.” Of that 11% that sought medical attention, only 1 in 3 told the medical professional the true nature of those injuries.⁵ Here the Ministry of Gender and Family saw a possible solution to the problem. Medical staff and professional were trained to look for indicators of abuse at places other than

⁴ *Project Population*. (2005). Retrieved from The World Bank: <http://projects.worldbank.org/P005163/egypt-population-project?lang=en>

⁵ The Government of Maldives Ministry of Gender and Family. (n.d.). *The Maldives Study on Women's Health and Life Experiences*.

trauma centers. antenatal and postnatal facilities were staffed with those trained to notice abuse. Additionally, Family Protection Units were established at major hospitals which aimed to strengthen the health sectors overall response to abuse. These units were allotted special examination space and privacy where cases of abuse were prevalent and encouraged victims to discuss cases of domestic violence to medical officials, where lack of privacy would have otherwise dissuaded them. These units are particularly important for equal access to health care because these abused women purposely avoid crucial health services because of the trauma visible to medical professionals. Without these units or some program similar, intimate partners are now a barrier to health care access. The Republic of Maldives admits that adding these units to all medical centers throughout the region would be a costly endeavor, but it has led to an increase in the overall percentage of reported maternal violence and is starting to decrease maternal mortality rate in the region.

African Region

Africa has been highlighted by the World Health Organization as a region requiring specialized focus for a variety of cultural and political reasons. The Regional Office for Africa published a report in 2012, Addressing the Challenge of Women's Health in Africa. The report identified major focus areas in health reform that have elicited positive results in certain States. For example, A study conducted in 1990 in Uganda showed a decrease in public health services at public hospitals as they instituted user fees. These fees were hypothesized to place an undue burden on the individual if they wanted to utilize these supposed public services. Women were especially affected by user fees as comparatively an income for a woman was significantly less than a man. Conversely in 2001, Uganda showed a 50% increase in the same services when they

eliminated user fees for these services in 2001. Focusing on financial accessibility continues to move Uganda in the right direction.

Ghana showed another approach which hoped to circumvent geographical barriers to health care. Ghana utilized community health workers that went from location to location, otherwise cut off from most health services, and “provided essential services such as health education, immunization, family planning, skilled birth attendance, antenatal and postnatal care, and the treatment of minor ailments.”⁶ Many Member States will find this approach inviting as it utilizes the local community and not out intervention to help fix the problem at home. Just this relatively simple change saw a 30% maternal mortality rate drop and a significant drop in over fertility rate in the region.

Conclusion

Providing equal access to health care for women is not a simple task. The international community has showed through United Nation resolutions that it is committed to human rights for all and is dedicated to its original pillars built in the UN Charter. Other NGOs have shown their commitment to equitable access to health care for years through financial and other resources sharing. An integrated approach between State actors, non-governmental organizations, and the UN system should be utilized. Examples in Africa emphasize the need to reduce financial obstacles to health services. Additionally, there is a trend in Egypt and Africa in using the local community to supplement health professionals. A remarkable success in Egypt and the Maldives revolves around education. Education is a theme in these regions as it helps to

⁶ The African Regional Office of the World Health Organization. (2012). *Report of the Commission on Women's Health in the African Region*.

circumvent cultural barriers that stymie health professionals from providing critical services. In both the Egypt and Africa, local government utilized local community leaders while also welcoming help from NGOs like WHO and accepted financial sponsorship from the World Bank. Universal Health Care is a standard worth pursuing, however the international community can no longer hide behind the nuance, complexity and controversy of UHC while women and young girls are being marginalized, maternal mortality rate is unnecessarily high and fertility rates peak in some of the most densely populated regions in the world. Member State must work together with each other and other non-governmental organizations within the United Nations framework to take simple yet proven effective steps to close the gap in providing access to women's health care.

Questions to Consider

1. What steps are your country taking to increase access to women's health care?
2. Has your country attempted to reduce financial obstacles with either Universal Health Care or some specific mechanism targeting women?
3. Does your country currently keep detailed records of maternal mortality rates?

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Empowering the Economic, Political, and Social Life of Women

It is increasingly clear that when women and girls are empowered, humanity is empowered – evidence shows that “economies grow faster and families are healthier and better educated.”¹ As of 2014, 143 countries have constitutionally guaranteed equality between the sexes; however, 52 countries have yet to do so.² Persistent gender inequalities exist in virtually every country at the economic, political and social level. Yet, gender disparities are being reduced in many countries with successful policies being implemented by the United Nations, governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) by targeting root causes of inequality.

Economic Empowerment

In order to empower women and girls, these gender imbalances need to be addressed. No country is immune from economic inequality, and while the economic gap has diminished significantly in developed countries, in many others “women have been forced to accept low pay and poor working conditions.”³ The responsibility for the majority of unremunerated domestic work such as child and elder care, food preparation, environmental protection and community service falls primarily on women. When these contributions are not quantitatively measured, they are not valued on a national level. “Women’s contribution to development is seriously underestimated and thus its social recognition is limited.”⁴ Other systematic obstacles to the

¹ *Beijing Declaration and Platform For Action*. UN Women. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/pdf/BDPfA%20E.pdf>

² *Gender Equality: Why it Matters*. Retrieved July 14, 2017, from UN Sustainable Development: http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/5_Why-it-Matters_GenderEquality_2p.pdf

³ *Beijing Declaration and Platform For Action*. UN Women. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/pdf/BDPfA%20E.pdf>

⁴ *Beijing Declaration and Platform For Action*. UN Women. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/pdf/BDPfA%20E.pdf>

economic empowerment of women are the lack of equal access to education, health care, vocational training, land ownership, bank credit and markets.

Elimination of gender disparity in primary and secondary education is an ambition of the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals. "Increasing women and girls' education contributes to higher economic growth."⁵ An example of the United Nations, governments and NGOs collaborating towards addressing equal access to education for girls is taking place in Nigeria, in the small, rural town of Toro. The UK Department for International Development (DFID) works to help the country achieve its part of the Millennium Development Goals by funneling money to the Girls Education Project. According to the DFID, more than 2000 Nigerian children under the age of 5 die every day from preventable diseases, and more than 100 women die every day from complications during pregnancy and childbirth.

The Girls Education Project is funded by the DFID with the goals of getting one million more girls into school by 2020, to improve the quality of education, and, importantly, to ensure the "deployment of more than 10,000 female teachers to rural areas where the predominance of male teachers deters many parents from sending their girls to school."⁶ Resistance also stems from the perception that there is little value to education, particularly for girls, and many parents simply cannot afford the costs associated with sending their children to school. With the help of the Girls Education Project, a group of women (under the auspices of the Mothers' Association at the Gyezmo primary school) discuss school attendance – if a student drops out, they visit that student's home. If the parents do not have the money to send their child to study, the association will use "the little money [they] do have to help those girls buy pencils and other materials they

⁵ *UN Women*. (2014). Retrieved June 30, 2017, from Facts and Figures: Economic Empowerment: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/economic-empowerment/facts-and-figures>

⁶ Unicef At a glance: Nigeria. (2014, June 16). Retrieved July 08, 2017, from UNICEF: <http://www.unicef.org/education/nigeria>

need,” says Hadiza Ahmadu, the chair of the association.

Adequate health care provisions and appropriate education on hygiene practices can aid in the economic welfare of girls and women. In many countries, lack of access to affordable sanitary products and local customs combine to keep girls from attending school for one week out of every month during their menses. This is a major contributor to girls falling behind in their studies and leads to high dropout rates. Low educational opportunities is a root cause of economic inequality, as it confines women to menial and low paying jobs.

Kenya Self-Help Project, an NGO dedicated to addressing this issue, distributes what it calls ‘Dignity Kits’ in 23 schools in Kendu Bay, Nigeria. “Over 2,050 adolescent girls in partner schools receive Dignity Kits containing underwear and locally-made reusable sanitary supplies.”⁷ The partner schools have also constructed gender-sensitive latrines to ensure girls have secure and private facilities. These measures have reduced absenteeism in schools by 70 percent, reduced the dropout rate by 98 percent, and have reduced pregnancy to zero percent.⁸

Political Empowerment

Despite representing half the global population, women are woefully underrepresented politically. They comprise less than 20 percent of the world’s legislators, and, as of July 2013, there are 37 states in which women account for less than 10 percent of parliamentarians in single or lower houses.⁹ Women face a myriad of obstacles to political participation in their countries. Structural barriers come in the form of discriminatory laws and institutions, including a lack of

⁷ Kenya Self-Help Project Girls Empowerment. (n.d.). Retrieved July 21, 2017, from Kenya Self Help: <http://www.kenyaselfhelp.org>

⁸ Kenya Self-Help Project Girls Empowerment. (n.d.). Retrieved July 21, 2017, from Kenya Self Help: <http://www.kenyaselfhelp.org>

⁹ *Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment*. (2016, February 18). Retrieved July 17, 2017, from USAID: <https://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/gender-equality-and-womens-empowerment>

education, financial resources and support.

The political empowerment of women is “fundamental to ending extreme poverty and promoting resilient democratic societies. According to USAID, when women play an active role in civil society and politics, governments tend to be more open, responsive and transparent. When women are at the negotiating table, peace agreements are more durable.”¹⁰ Still, women are largely absent from local and national decision-making structures. Without the active participation of women and their perspective at all levels of decision-making, equality, development and peace are elusive goals.

A change of attitude in regard to gender stereotypes is necessary to reverse the dearth of political engagement of women, and is needed at all levels. Women may be discouraged from participating in the political arena by a lack of family support which reinforces discriminatory attitudes and practices that place the burden of child care and other family responsibilities disproportionately on them. Equal access to education should be expected from local governments to ensure girls are participating to their best ability. Engaging more women in civil society through increased participation in the formal work force is a natural avenue towards political opportunity.

Governmental assistance was instrumental in Kabul, Afghanistan with the launch of the largest women’s empowerment program in USAID history – Promote. “Promote will serve as the stepping stone between education and careers for thousands of Afghan women driven to serve as political, civil society and private sector leaders.”¹¹ Progress is being made in several countries

¹⁰ *Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment*. (2016, February 18). Retrieved July 17, 2017, from USAID: <https://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/gender-equality-and-womens-empowerment>

¹¹ Lewa, J. (2015, March 6). *From Kenya to Kabul: Women as Decision Makers, Entrepreneurs, and Leaders*. Retrieved July 18, 2017, from USAID.gov: <https://blog.usaid.gov/2015/03/from-kenya-to-kabul-women-as-decision-makers-entrepreneurs-and-leaders/>

with assistance from the United Nations, specifically UN Women, by providing training for women candidates, voter and civic education and supporting “gender equality advocates in calling on political parties, governments and others to do their part in empowering women.”¹²

The following are a few recent results of UN Women’s success:

- The 2013 elections in Kenya saw a more than 20 percent rise in the number of women legislators. UN Women contributed to this by running Campaign for Women in Leadership which encourages voters to elect women, and provided training to almost 900 female candidates.
- In 2012, UN Women worked with The National Database and Registration Authority in Pakistan to register more than 40 million women to vote, which represents 86 percent of the female population – an increase from 44 percent just four years earlier. The collaboration also resulted in a system to collect voter data by sex and will aid in identifying obstacles to women’s civic rights.
- Women in Zimbabwe gained 35 percent of legislative seats in their July, 2013 elections, compared to only 17 percent in 2008; moreover, this contributed to a new constitution which is strong on women’s rights. Credit for this constitution and breakthrough goes to the *Group of 20*, a lobbying group for gender equality that is comprised of activists, politicians and scholars supported by UN Women.¹³

¹² *Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment*. (2016, February 18). Retrieved July 17, 2017, from USAID: <https://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/gender-equality-and-womens-empowerment>

¹³ *Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment*. (2016, February 18). Retrieved July 17, 2017, from USAID: <https://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/gender-equality-and-womens-empowerment>

Social Life

Many of the same impediments to the economic and political empowerment of women also inhibits their social standing, namely, conscious or unconscious biases and attitudes regarding girls' inherent worth that deprives them of equal opportunity and education. Changing the traditional roles for men and women in the family, as well as society is necessary to attain full equality between men and women. This is not new information, as the Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was adopted and ratified by the General Assembly in 1979. The document asserts:

“that discrimination against women violates the principles of equality of rights and respect for human dignity, is an obstacle to the participation of women, on equal terms with men, in the political, social, economic and cultural life of their countries, hampers the growth of the prosperity of society and the family and make more difficult the full development of the potentialities of women in the service of their countries and of humanity.”¹⁴

Women and girls' empowerment is imperative to the expansion of economic growth as well as promoting social development. Gender equality is essential to all aspects of creating and maintaining a healthy society, “from reducing poverty to promoting the health, education, protection and well-being of girls and boys.”¹⁵

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal number 5 for Gender Equality promotes investing in educational programs for girls, encourages girls to stay in school and for

¹⁴ *Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*. UN Women. Retrieved July 17, 2017, from UN Women: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm>

¹⁵ *Gender Equality: Why it Matters*. Retrieved July 14, 2017, from UN Sustainable Development: http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/5_Why-it-Matters_GenderEquality_2p.pdf

them to advocate for their right to “access sexual and reproductive health services.”¹⁶ Goal 5 also calls on boys to “work alongside women and girls to achieve gender equality and embrace healthy, respectful relationships.”¹⁷ This is exemplified through the United Nations HeForShe Initiative - a solidarity campaign for the advancement of women initiated by UN Women. “HeForShe invites people everywhere to come together as equal partners to craft a shared vision of a gender equal world and implement specific, locally relevant solutions for the good of all of humanity.”¹⁸ Its goal is to engage men and boys as agents of change by encouraging them to take action against negative inequalities faced by women and girls. Furthermore, they also advocate for public sector reforms to aid in the transformation of “norms, policies, and practices that shape government planning, budgeting and performance monitoring”¹⁹ by adopting gender equality as a key objective. Some examples of success are evidenced in Morocco and Rwanda.

In Morocco, UN Women began advocating that gender equality be addressed in the planning and budgeting in 2002. With significant investments in training and the publication of the *Handbook for Integrating Gender in Planning and Budgeting* in 2007, the budget now includes “a new family aid law that extends benefits to poor women undergoing divorce” and “an increase in resources for health care for women giving birth, maternal mortality declined.”²⁰

Similar activities are taking place in Rwanda where the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, in collaboration with the Ministry of Gender and Family and UN Women, now have a national program for “gender-responsive budgeting.” This program includes training,

¹⁶ *Gender Equality: Why it Matters*. Retrieved July 14, 2017, from UN Sustainable Development: http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/5_Why-it-Matters_GenderEquality_2p.pdf

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ HeForShe, from UN Women: <http://www.heforshe.org/en/our-mission>

¹⁹ *Engaging in Public Sector Reform*. Retrieved June 30, 2017, from UN Women: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/governance-and-national-planning/engaging-in-public-sector-reform>

²⁰ *Ibid.*

workshops and mentoring. Civil society groups and parliamentarians have attended conferences on holding the government accountable for the allocation of budgeting commitments.²¹ With gender-sensitive plans and the participation of women in the decision-making process, assisted by UN Women and UN Capital Development Fund, women in Tanzania have better access to clean water and are economically empowered by securing contacts for water service delivery. Also, Mozambique has a program that trains women in electrical and mechanical skills for the development of solar energy systems.²²

Conclusion

While there has been significant progress in the economic, political and social empowerment of women over the past several decades due to the creation and adoption of documents such as CEDAW, The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the establishment of UN Women, there is still much more to do. The policies and goals outlined in the above documents need to be better executed. Women and girls are still suffering from discrimination in every part of the world. Changing attitudes, without imposing foreign values, that girls and women are valuable assets to the family, community and economy is critical to overcoming the biases which still exist. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action calls on governments to:

“Commit themselves to establishing the goal of gender balance in governmental bodies and committees, as well as in public administrative entities, and in the judiciary... setting specific targets and implementing measures to substantially increase the number of

²¹ *Engaging in Public Sector Reform*. Retrieved June 30, 2017, from UN Women: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/governance-and-national-planning/engaging-in-public-sector-reform>

²² *Ibid.*

women with a view to achieving equal representation... in all governmental and public administration positions.”²³

It is imperative to provide women and girls with equal access to education, health care, justice, and the opportunity to participate in political and economic decision-making processes. The implementation of gender equality policies which promote economic, political and social empowerment of women and girls will provide a foundation for sustainable economies, promote peace, and benefit civil society as well as humanity at large.

²³ *Beijing Declaration and Platform For Action*. UN Women. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/pdf/BDPfA%20E.pdf>

Questions to Consider

- 1) Is your country one of the 143 that constitutionally guarantees gender equality? If so, what policies are being implemented to ensure equality?
- 2) Are cultural attitudes and religion in your country obstacles to achieving parity?
- 3) What are some of the systemic and endemic obstacles to achieving gender equality in your country? Is there a public policy solution to these challenges?
- 4) Are indigenous women recognized and afforded equal access to participation in policy making?
- 5) Is there consistent implementation of a comprehensive public policy to prevent violence against girls and women and punish perpetrators?

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