

# Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding: Assessing the United Nations' Contribution to Global Stability

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## Abstract

The study aims at the role of the United Nations (UN) in promoting global stability through peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations. The establishment of the United Nations in 1945 marked a significant milestone in global efforts to maintain international peace and security following the Second World War. Over time, its role has expanded from traditional peacekeeping operations focused on monitoring ceasefires to more complex peacebuilding initiatives aimed at addressing the root causes of conflict. Peacekeeping involves the deployment of international military, police, and civilian personnel to conflict zones to maintain stability, while peacebuilding focuses on strengthening governance, rebuilding institutions, and promoting post-conflict reconciliation. In recent decades, the UN has increasingly engaged in multidimensional missions addressing civil wars, ethnic conflicts, terrorism, and humanitarian crises across various regions. This study examines the evolution of UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding and analyses their contribution to global stability through long-term conflict management and institutional reconstruction. The study findings indicate that UN operations have played a significant role in managing conflicts in regions affected by civil wars, ethnic violence, and humanitarian crises. Despite certain operational and political limitations, the UN remains a key institution in promoting international stability through coordinated global peace efforts.

**Keywords:** Evolution, Peacekeeping, Peacebuilding, Contribution, and Global Stability.

## Introduction

The aftermath of the Second World War highlighted the need for an international institution to prevent future global conflicts. This led to the establishment of the United Nations in 1945, with the primary objective of maintaining international peace and security. Since then, it has become a central institution for conflict prevention, peacekeeping, humanitarian intervention, and peacebuilding. Peacekeeping involves the deployment of international military, police, and civilian personnel to conflict zones to maintain ceasefires and prevent the resumption of violence. Peacebuilding focuses on long-term efforts to reconstruct political institutions, strengthen governance, promote reconciliation, and address the root causes of conflict. Over time, UN operations have expanded from traditional monitoring roles to multidimensional missions that include elections support, human rights monitoring, and post-conflict reconstruction. In recent decades, the UN has responded to conflicts involving civil wars, ethnic violence, terrorism, and humanitarian crises across regions such as Africa, the Middle East, and Eastern Europe. Despite criticism over operational limitations and political constraints, it remains one of the few global institutions capable of coordinating large-scale multinational peace efforts.

## Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the evolution of the United Nations peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations.
2. To analyse the role of UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding in promoting global stability.

## Methods and Material

The study adopts a qualitative and analytical research design, which helps in understanding the evolution, structure, and effectiveness of UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations. The research paper is primarily based on secondary sources of data. The data including books, peer-reviewed journals, research articles, UN reports, policy papers, and credible online databases. Historical and descriptive methods are used to trace the development of UN missions from traditional peacekeeping to multidimensional peacebuilding frameworks. Content analysis is employed to evaluate official UN documentation and scholarly interpretations of international peace operations.

## Evolution of United Nations Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding Operations

The evolution of United Nations (UN) peace operations reflects changing patterns of global conflict and international cooperation since 1945. From traditional inter-state ceasefire monitoring to complex multidimensional missions, UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding have expanded in scope, mandate, and operational complexity. These changes were driven by shifts in global politics, especially the end of the Cold War and the rise of intra-state conflicts.

### 1. Traditional Peacekeeping (1948–1988):

This era focused on monitoring ceasefires, stabilizing borders, and acting as a buffer between warring states. The principles of traditional peacekeeping were based on the so-called “holy trinity” of peacekeeping: consent of the parties, impartiality, and the non-use of force except in self-defense. For instance, early United Nations peacekeeping operations included the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) in the Middle East (1948) and the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) established in 1948 to supervise the ceasefire between India and Pakistan.

### 2. Post-Cold War Expansion (1989–1999):

The period from 1989 to 1999 marks a major

transformation in United Nations peace operations, often referred to as the Post-Cold War Expansion Phase. With the end of ideological rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union, the United Nations gained greater freedom to intervene in conflicts, leading to a rapid increase in the number, scope, and complexity of peacekeeping missions.

### 3. Comprehensive Peacebuilding (2000–2010)

This period focused on reforms introduced after the 2000 Brahimi Report, which significantly reshaped United Nations peace operations. The report emphasized the need for robust mandates, improved logistical and financial resources, and a more proactive approach to the Protection of Civilians (POC). It highlighted that short-term military deployments alone were insufficient to ensure lasting peace. In response, the United Nations strengthened its commitment to peacebuilding as a long-term structural process, involving disarmament, restoration of the rule of law, institutional rebuilding, and economic recovery. These measures were designed to prevent post-conflict societies from relapsing into violence. A key institutional development in this regard was the establishment of the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission (2005), created to coordinate international efforts in long-term post-conflict state-building and sustainable peace consolidation.

### 4. Modern Era (2011–Present)

This era primarily focused on adapting to asymmetric threats, including violent extremism, civil wars, and complex humanitarian crises, along with an increased emphasis on regional partnerships. Modern United Nations peace operations are integrated missions, combining military, police, and civilian components to address multidimensional challenges in conflict-affected regions. These reforms reflect a shift away from overly broad and unrealistic “Christmas tree mandates” toward more strategic and focused mandates with clearly defined objectives. Modern peacekeeping

increasingly emphasizes clear exit strategies, sustainability, and the prioritization of political solutions over military engagement. For instance, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) and the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) illustrate this contemporary approach to integrated and multidimensional peace operations.

### **Role of Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding: Contribution to Global Stability**

This section analyses the peacekeeping and peacebuilding are central instruments through which the United Nations contributes to maintaining international peace and security. While peacekeeping focuses on immediate conflict containment, peacebuilding addresses the structural causes of conflict. Together, they form a complementary framework that supports both short-term stabilization and long-term global stability.

#### **Role of Peacekeeping in Global Stability**

Peacekeeping plays an immediate and operational role in reducing violence and stabilizing conflict zones.

- **Conflict Containment:** Peacekeeping missions help prevent escalation of armed conflicts by monitoring ceasefires, separating hostile groups, and creating buffer zones.
- **Protection of Civilians:** UN peacekeepers are often deployed to protect civilians from violence, especially in fragile states experiencing civil war or ethnic conflict.
- **Support for Ceasefire Agreements:** Peacekeeping forces ensure compliance with peace agreements between conflicting parties, reducing the likelihood of renewed hostilities.
- **Security Environment Stabilization:** By maintaining order in post-conflict regions, peacekeepers create a secure environment for humanitarian assistance and political dialogue.
- **Confidence Building:** The presence of neutral international forces helps build trust among conflicting groups,

encouraging them to engage in negotiation processes.

### **Role of Peacebuilding in Global Stability**

- **Institutional Reconstruction:** Peace building supports rebuilding of governance systems, including police, judiciary, and public administration.
- **Strengthening Rule of Law:** It promotes legal reforms, justice systems, and accountability mechanisms to ensure fair governance.
- **Political Stabilization:** Peacebuilding assists in organizing elections, constitutional reforms, and democratic institution-building.
- **Economic Recovery:** It focuses on rebuilding infrastructure, creating employment opportunities, and reducing poverty, which are often root causes of conflict.
- **Social Reconciliation:** Peacebuilding encourages dialogue between communities, reconciliation processes, and healing of conflict-related grievances.

### **Conclusion**

The study shows that the peacekeeping and peace building efforts of the United Nations have evolved significantly since its establishment in 1945. Initially focused on traditional ceasefire monitoring, UN operations have expanded into multidimensional missions that integrate political, social, and institutional reconstruction in post-conflict societies. Peacekeeping has helped reduce immediate violence through the deployment of international personnel, while peace building has contributed to long-term stability by strengthening governance, supporting reconciliation, and rebuilding state institutions. These combined efforts have played an important role in managing conflicts arising from civil wars, ethnic tensions, and humanitarian crises across different regions. Despite challenges such as political constraints and operational limitations, the UN continues to remain a central institution in promoting global peace and stability. Its evolving

approach highlights the growing importance of addressing both the immediate and structural causes of conflict.

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