

30th Annual

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY MODEL UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE

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SECRETARIAT

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Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 30th annual Brigham Young University Model United Nations Conference (BYUMUN). I commend your decision to participate in the Model United Nations program, and am eager to see what ideas you will add to the global debate.

My name is Cristiana Farnsworth, and I will be your director for the General Assembly Fourth Committee (GA4). I am currently a Junior at BYU with a double major in European Studies and Russian. Last year, I competed at the National Model United Nations Conference in New York City, representing Italy on the General Assembly Second Committee. This experience was truly the highlight of my semester; the degree of hands-on learning, diplomatic practice, and personal development proved invaluable. I am certain that with sincere effort and a desire to learn, you will find similar value and enjoyment in your MUN experience.

The topics before this year's General Assembly Fourth Committee are as follows:

- I. Strengthening International Cooperation in Outer Space to Ensure Peace and Security
- II. Advancing Equality and Accountability in UN Peacekeeping Operations and Special Political Missions

The General Assembly Fourth Committee, also known as the Special Political and Decolonization Committee, discusses a relatively broad and fluid range of topics, including: the Palestinian refugee crisis, atomic radiation, decolonization, peacekeeping operations, and outer space. The latter two issues will be the focus of our debate.

This Background Guide is meant as a springboard to further research, rather than a mere replacement. I hope that the knowledge you will gain in this process will aid you not only as a delegate at BYUMUN, but as a citizen of the world. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at the email below.

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Committee History

“We must use the 75th anniversary of the UN to galvanize commitment to multilateralism, and to change the way we do business. It is a chance to make the UN more effective, more transparent, more accountable and more relevant to ‘we the peoples.’”

— *María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, President of the UN General Assembly*

Introduction

The United Nations (UN) is one of the largest and most comprehensive organizations in the world, with 193 Member States equally represented. The General Assembly is the principal organ of the UN, consisting of six main subsidiary organs that cover a wide array of social, cultural, political, and economic concerns.¹

The General Assembly Fourth Committee, also known as the Special Political and Decolonization Committee, is one of these six main organs. It was created in 1945, with the sole focus on decolonization. However, after the independence of most colonies, the Fourth Committee merged with the Special Political Committee (SPC) upon the adoption of resolution 47/233 (1993).² Now, the Fourth Committee deliberates upon a wide and versatile set of issues alongside decolonization. Currently, these issues are as follows: a review of peacekeeping operations and special political missions, international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space, the effects of atomic radiation, mine action, public information, the University for Peace, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), and the report of the Special Committee on Israeli Practices.³

Mandate and Functions

According to Chapter IV of the *Charter of the United Nations*, the General Assembly may discuss any issues “relating to the maintenance of international peace and security” and may initiate studies or make recommendations to Member States and other UN committees.⁴ Such studies and recommendations ought to promote “international cooperation in the political field, [encourage] progressive development of international law,” and promote “cooperation in the economic, social, cultural, educational, and health fields . . . assisting in the realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms. . . without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion.”⁵

For the Fourth Committee, this mandate applies to the aforementioned list of current topics. The Fourth Committee also hears and considers reports from several subsidiary committees, including the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), the Committee on Information (COI), the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C-34), Special Committee on Decolonization (C-24), and the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices

¹ Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the UN. *The GA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*. 2017.

² United Nations General Assembly, *Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly (A/RES/47/233)*, 1993.

³ United Nations. *Special Political and Decolonization (Fourth Committee)*.

⁴ *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Ch. IV.

⁵ *Ibid.*

Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and other Arabs of the Occupied Territories (Special Committee on Israeli Practices), among others.⁶

After it convenes, the Fourth Committee submits a report to the General Assembly Plenary on each agenda item discussed. The Plenary considers the report and votes on all draft resolutions contained therein. All 193 Member States are represented in the Fourth Committee, and each Member State is allowed one vote regardless of geographical size or population.⁷ All draft proposals, other than ones pertaining to Palestinian refugees and Israeli practices, are generally adopted by consensus within the Fourth Committee, showing a willingness to find truly cooperative solutions to complex issues.⁸

True to its array of specific issues, the Fourth Committee often implements its proposals through its specific subcommittees. For example, the Committee recently requested in resolution 73/96 (2018) that the Special Committee on Israeli Practices investigate the treatment and status of thousands of prisoners and detainees in detention centers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.⁹ Similarly, the Fourth Committee often hears and responds to petitions of the remaining Non-Self-Governing-Territories (NSGTs) through the Special Committee on Decolonization (C24). Thus, many of the resolutions of the Fourth Committee are based on reports of its subcommittees and then implemented through these committees.

Historical Landmarks and Recent Discussion

Perhaps the most important landmark document for the Fourth Committee is the *Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and People* (1960).¹⁰ This document affirmed that all people have a right to self-determination and urged the elimination of colonialism. While the Fourth Committee's scope has moved beyond mere decolonization, this document still stands as a pillar to the Fourth Committee's mission and influences a range of the committee's other decolonization-related topics.

When the UN was founded in 1945, over 750 million lived in territories that were still dependent on colonial powers. Since then, more than 80 former colonies have regained their independence, leaving 17 remaining NSGTs. The remaining NSGTs are: American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Falkland Islands, French Polynesia, Gibraltar, Guam, Montserrat, New Caledonia, Pitcairn, Saint Helena, Tokelau, Turks and Caicos Islands, United States Virgin Islands, and Western Sahara. True to its original purpose, one of the most significant recent acts of the General Assembly Fourth Committee was naming the period between 2011 and 2020 as the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism in

⁶ Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the UN. *The GA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*. 2017.

⁷ *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Ch. IV.

⁸ Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the UN. *The GA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*. 2017.

⁹ United Nations General Assembly. *Work of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories (A/RES/73/96)*, 2018.

¹⁰ United Nations. *Global Issues: Decolonization*.

resolution 65/119, which was adopted in 2010.¹¹ This resolution called upon Member States to work on a case-by-case basis with the 17 remaining NSGTs to eliminate the effects of colonialism and bring these territories to a state of self-determination. Even in regions that have already been decolonized, inhabitants still face negative economic and political repercussions of former colonial rule. The involvement of Western states in peacekeeping operations has even been categorized as neocolonialism, as former colonizers attempt to maintain the monetary benefits of their former territories. Thus, the original work of the Fourth Committee has faced some backlash from the international community for aiding transitions in favor of wealthy, Western states.¹²

The struggle of former colonies continues today with the clear example of the Mauna Kea protests. Mauna Kea is a dormant volcano located on the island of Hawaii; it is the tallest island mountain in the world and its summit air is extremely dry, making it a perfect location for space observation. Because of these ideal conditions, the TMT International Observatory (TIO), an organization of global research institutions, has decided to build a Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) on the highest summit of Mauna Kea.¹³ However, this summit is the most sacred location in native Hawaiian religion and culture. It represents the piko (umbilical cord), or the birthplace, of the Hawaiian islands and people; it is also considered the home of ancient Hawaiian gods and goddesses. When the TIO first attempted construction of the Mauna Kea TMT project in 2015, the Hawaiian Supreme Court halted the project amidst protests from native Hawaiians. However, the TMT project was recently reissued the building permit and construction began on Mauna Kea in July 2019. Now, over 2000 protesters have assembled on Mauna Kea in hopes of blocking the construction. Mauna Kea is actually one of the “ceded lands,” which is territory that is meant to be held in trust by the state government to be used only for the benefit of the Hawaiian people. The protesters argue that the TMT project is a blatant violation of this trust.¹⁴ The current tension on Mauna Kea is not isolated; it is a culmination of cultural power struggles between indigenous people and former colonizers.

The modern-day effects of colonization are also embodied in the current Hong Kong protests. These protests are in response to the proposed Fugitive Offenders and Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Legislation Bill. If passed, this bill would allow government authorities to detain and extradite people to territories with whom Hong Kong does not have an extradition agreement, including China and Taiwan.¹⁵ Hong Kong is considered a special administrative region of China with its own economic and political system. This status is a result of Hong Kong’s history as a British colony between 1842 and 1997, after which it was transferred to China, but maintained its own governing system. Due to its history and political status, Hong Kong has a different political and economic culture than China—one that is considered

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Autesserre, Severine. “The Crisis of Peacekeeping: Why the UN can’t end wars.” *Foreign Affairs*. February 2019.

¹³ Andone, Dakin, and Sarah Jorgensen, and Polo Sandoval. “This is Our Last Stand: Protestors on Mauna Kea dig in heels.” *CNN*. 23 July 2019.

¹⁴ Siegal, Ethan. “Astronomy Faces a Field-Defining Choice in Choosing the Next Steps for the TMT.” *Forbes*. August 2019.

¹⁵ Lyons, John. “Hong Kong Police Draw Protestor Rage, but Beijing Doesn’t Think They’re Tough Enough.” *The Wall Street Journal*. 8 August 2019.

decidedly more free.¹⁶ So, despite its status as “decolonized,” Hong Kong still faces tension with its current possessor, China, showing that decolonization failed to anticipate or prevent future political upheaval.

In its most recent work, the Fourth Committee submitted a report to the 73rd Session of the General Assembly, with draft resolutions pertaining to the work of the UNRWA, Israeli practices, public information, peacekeeping operations, and outer space.¹⁷ Specifically, the Fourth Committee called for a closer partnership with the African Union in peacekeeping operations, as well as more transparency, gender parity, and youth participation in peacekeeping missions. The Committee also stressed the need for sharing data on outer space, particularly data pertaining to climate change that could help developing countries.¹⁸

Conclusion

President of the 73rd Session of the UN General Assembly, Maria Fernanda Espinosa Garces, succinctly stated, “From decolonization to outer space, peacekeeping to Palestinian refugees, from public information to mine action, the work of [the Fourth] Committee reflects issues that have been central for the work of the United Nations since our foundation.”¹⁹ The General Assembly Fourth Committee stands as one of the most versatile committees, tackling an array of issues that are extremely pertinent and urgent for building world peace. As an organ of the General Assembly, the Fourth Committee is able to receive the input of every country in the world, allowing it to tackle a vast assortment of issues with a broad range of perspectives and resources. Furthermore, the Fourth Committee is posed to influence other subsidiary committees in the UN, allowing for more strength and flexibility in solution-making.

¹⁶ Cheung, Helier, and Roland Hughes. “Why are there protests in Hong Kong? All the context you need.” *BBC*. 25 July 2019.

¹⁷ UN General Assembly, *Reports of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/73/PV.48)*, 2018.

¹⁸ United Nations. *Meetings Coverage and Press Releases, Fourth Committee*.

¹⁹ *Ibid*.

Annotated Bibliography

Andone, Dakin, and Sarah Jorgensen, and Polo Sandoval. “This is Our Last Stand: Protestors on Mauna Kea dig in heels.” *CNN*. 23 July 2019. Accessed 8 August 2019 from: <https://edition.cnn.com/2019/07/21/us/hawaii-mauna-kea-protests/index.html>

This article describes the protests on Mauna Kea, why there are protestors, and what the government is doing. As this is a current event, delegates are encouraged to look further into new developments of the issue.

Autesserre, Severine. “The Crisis of Peacekeeping: Why the UN can’t end wars.” *Foreign Affairs*. February 2019. Accessed 8 August 2019 from: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2018-12-11/crisis-peacekeeping>

This article looks into the criticism that UN peacekeeping has failed to ensure lasting peace and accusations that peacekeeping has at times been in favor of wealthy, Western countries. Delegates can use this to understand some of the criticisms of UN peacekeeping and the Fourth Committee.

***Charter of the United Nations*. 1945. Accessed 12 June 2019 from: <https://www.un.org/en/sections/un-charter/chapter-iv/index.html>**

The Charter established the basic organizational structure and purpose of the UN. Use this document to clarify your committee’s mandate and rules of procedure.

Cheung, Helier, and Roland Hughes. “Why are there protests in Hong Kong? All the context you need.” *BBC*. 25 July 2019. Accessed 8 August 2019 from: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-48607723>

This article details the colonial history and special status of Hong Kong and how these have led to protests today.

Lyons, John. “Hong Kong Police Draw Protestor Rage, but Beijing Doesn’t Think They’re Tough Enough.” *The Wall Street Journal*. 8 August 2019. Accessed 8 August from: <https://www.wsj.com/articles/hong-kong-police-draw-protester-rage-but-beijing-doesnt-think-theyre-tough-enough-11565256603>

This article discusses some of the most recent developments in the standoff between protestors in Hong Kong and government authorities.

Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the UN. *The GA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*. 2017. Accessed 12 June 2019 from: https://www.eda.admin.ch/dam/mission-new-york/en/documents/UN_GA_Final.pdf

This is not a legal document to replace the GA Rules of Procedure, but it is a clear addition explaining the structure, rules, and mandate of the General Assembly and its

committees. Use this document to better understand how the bodies of the UN relate to one another, i.e. what specialized committees can you work with.

Siegal, Ethan. “Astronomy Faces a Field-Defining Choice in Choosing the Next Steps for the TMT.” *Forbes*. August 2019. Accessed 8 August 2019 from:
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/startswithabang/2019/08/09/astronomy-faces-a-field-defining-choice-in-the-next-steps-for-the-tmt/#5448d92b44ff>

This article outlines both the reasons why scientists want to build the TMT on top of Mauna Kea, as well as the reasons why people are protesting the project. It also offers a brief history of imperialism in Hawaii and its repercussions.

United Nations. *Special Political and Decolonization (Fourth Committee)*. Accessed 13 June 2019 from:
www.un.org/en/ga/fourth/

This is the homepage of the GA4. It lists the current special political issues before the committee and provides a link to PaperSmart where all the GA4 documents are kept.

United Nations General Assembly, *Reports of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)(A/73/PV.48)*, 2018. Accessed 12 June 2019 from:
https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3793681/files/A_73_PV-48-EN.pdf

This report details the discussion of GA4 in its most recent sessions. It was accessed from the UN Digital Library which holds all UN documents, speeches, and reports.

United Nations General Assembly, *Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly (A/RES/47/233)*, 1993. Accessed 12 June 2019 from:
https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/47/233

This resolution reorganizes the Fourth Committee into the Special Political and Decolonization Committee, and it lists the order and names of the other main committees.

United Nations. *Global Issues: Decolonization*. Accessed 12 June 2019 from:
<https://www.un.org/en/sections/issues-depth/decolonization/index.html>

This website describes the matter of decolonization in detail and contains links to important resolutions on that topic. Most importantly, this website contains pages on each global issue before the UN.

United Nations. *Meetings Coverage and Press Releases, Fourth Committee*. Accessed 13 June 2019 from: www.un.org/press/en/content/fourth-committee

This website contains a synopsis of all the meetings of each UN committee, thus it can be used to explore the current debates on the issues at hand.

I. Strengthening International Cooperation in Outer Space to Ensure Peace and Security

“When policy makers need to see the big picture to make well-informed policy decisions, they are turning to space.”

— *Simonetta Di Pippo, UNOOSA Director*

Introduction

On 4 October 1957, the international community took on a whole new realm as Sputnik-1, the first artificial satellite, was launched into orbit. Just one year later, the United Nations passed its first resolution solely concerning outer space entitled “Question of the Peaceful Use of Outer Space.” Resolution 1348 (1958) established the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) as a permanent subsidiary body to the Fourth Committee.²⁰ It is important to note that the Fourth Committee and its subsidiary bodies deal with advancing international cooperation in outer space and the peaceful applications of space technology, while the General Assembly First Committee handles the militarization and disarmament aspects of outer space. In the 72nd Session of the General Assembly in 2017, however, the First and Fourth Committees met in a joint panel to discuss “Possible Challenges to Space Security and Sustainability.”²¹

Space technology plays an integral role in sustainable development and bridging the gap between developed and developing countries. For example, remotely sensed data assists in observational studies of the earth that are helpful for inventory and surveys of agriculture, land use, hydrology, and geology. Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS) are used in designing and maintaining all forms of transportation and are integral to advanced emergency response systems, telecommunications, precision agriculture, and mining.²² The benefits of space technologies can be invaluable for economic and social development; thus it is essential that Member States intensify efforts to share information and resources that can aid the global community.

Existing Framework

While resolution 1148 (1957) was primarily concerned with arms reduction, it requested that all objects sent “through outer space shall be exclusively for peaceful and scientific purposes.”²³ Since this resolution, five international treaties and five sets of principles have been established, creating the backbone of international space law. The first of these is the *Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies*, and is succinctly known as the Outer Space Treaty (OST). It was signed in 1967 and serves as the basic foundation of international space law. It stipulates that the exploration and use of outer space should be focused on the benefit of all countries,

²⁰ United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs. *A Timeline of the Exploration and Peaceful Use of Outer Space*.

²¹ United Nations General Assembly, *Programme for the joint panel discussion of the First and Fourth Committees on possible challenges to space security and sustainability (A/C.1/72/CRP.5)*, 2017.

²² United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs. *United Nations Program on Space Applications*.

²³ United Nations General Assembly, *Regulation, limitation and balanced reduction of all armed forces and all armaments; conclusion on an international convention on the reduction of armaments and the prohibition of atomic hydrogen and other weapons of mass destruction (1148 (XII))*, 1957.

space is free for exploration and use by all states, states should not place weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) in outer space, and states should avoid the harmful contamination of space. The remaining four treaties are: the *Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts and the Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space* (Rescue Agreement) (1968), which focuses on the safe return of astronauts and objects launched into outer space; the *Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects* (Liability Convention) (1972) on international liability for damage caused by space objects; the *Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space* (Registration Convention) (1976) on identifying and registering space objects; and the *Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies* (Moon Agreement) (1979), which reaffirms that the moon and other celestial bodies should be used only for peaceful purposes, and that the UN must be informed of the location and purpose of any object stationed on these bodies.²⁴

As for the five sets of principles, one of the most significant is *The Declaration of Legal Principles*, adopted in GA resolution 1962 in December of 1963. This Declaration is the predecessor of the OST and maintains that activities in outer space should be for the “benefit and in the interest of all mankind” and establishes cooperation as a guiding principle in space exploration. Another significant set of principles, the *Benefits Declaration*, adopted in resolution 51/122 in 1996, focused international cooperation in outer space on the needs of developing countries, particularly those that can’t afford a space program. The other three sets of legal principles are: the “Broadcasting Principles” from GA resolution 37/92 in 1982; the “Remote Sensing Principles” adopted in GA resolution 41/65 in 1986; and the “Nuclear Power Sources Principles” from GA resolution 47/68 in 1992.²⁵ Other than the Outer Space Treaty, the rest of these agreements have been ratified by a rather limited number of Member States. Thus, international cooperation is still limited even in the implementation of these basic space laws.

These treaties and principles were spearheaded by the aforementioned COPUOS, whose mandate is to review “international cooperation in peaceful uses of outer space, study space-related activities that could be undertaken by the United Nations, encourage space research programs, and study legal problems arising from the exploration of outer space.”²⁶ COPUOS is the primary committee on outer space matters and, with 92 members, is one of the largest UN committees. Aside from Member States, a number of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations have observer status in COPUOS. The Committee is assisted by two subsidiary committees: the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, and the Legal Subcommittee, which were established in 1961 and meet annually. The most recent topics under discussion for COPUOS include safe operations in orbit, the safe use of nuclear power in outer space, space debris, the threat from asteroids, climate change, and water management.²⁷

The United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA) serves as the secretariat for COPUOS. This means that it is in charge of preparing and distributing reports and studies on space technology and international space law. It also implements the Secretary-General’s responsibilities related to international space laws and manages the United Nations Register of

²⁴ United Nations. *International Space Law: United Nations Instruments*. 2017.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs. *Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space*.

²⁷ Ibid.

Objects Launched into Outer Space.²⁸ There are several programs and bodies within UNOOSA. For example, the United Nations Programme on Space Applications (PSA) was created in 1971 to assist in space research and capacity-building particularly in developing countries. In 1999, the UN General Assembly clarified the mandate of the PSA in resolution 54/68, following the Third UN Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III), to focus on the following responsibilities: facilitating the development of space projects according to the needs of individual Member States, supporting the UN regional centers for space science and technology education, organizing workshops and conferences on space applications, providing technical advisory services, and promoting the use of Earth data observation for disaster management, among a few other responsibilities.²⁹ The PSA manages the Basic Space Technology Initiative (BSTI), which uses space technology for sustainable development, particularly in the areas of disaster management, climate change, natural resource management, and global health. Another program within the UNOOSA is the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER), established in 2006. UN-SPIDER aims to reduce disaster risk and improve disaster response mechanisms through remote sensing technology, satellite-based telecommunication, and navigation systems.³⁰

Another important body in the framework of UN outer space management is the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). Originally founded in 1865 to manage telegraph networks, the ITU has now become a specialized agency to the UN with 193 Member States and over 800 private-sector entities. The ITU Space Services Department (SSD) manages data capture and coordinates frequency assignments through its Master International Frequency Register (MIFR). This niche agency is significant in that it oversees the technical process of assigning radio frequencies for every object sent into orbit and coordinates small satellite orbital slots. Such technical coordination is necessary to prevent the interference or collision of frequencies or satellites.³¹

Aside from these main components of the UN outer space framework, there are a host of other bodies dedicated to carrying out the dissemination and coordination of outer space data and technology. Delegates should be aware that a highly detailed framework already exists, yet there are still measures that need to be taken within this framework to epitomize international cooperation in outer space.

Current Problems and Areas of Action

Inequality in Space Capabilities and Potential for Development

Perhaps the foremost problem in the international outer space regime is the perpetual lack of access to the benefits of space technology for developing countries. In the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly in 2018, the Fourth Committee addressed the need for more dialogue and partnerships between spacefaring and non-spacefaring nations. The Chair of COPUOS, Rosa

²⁸ United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs. *Roles and Responsibilities*.

²⁹ United Nations General Assembly, *Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (A/RES/54/68)*, 2000.

³⁰ United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs. *United Nations Program on Space Applications*.

³¹ International Telecommunication Union. *Space Services Department*.

Maria Ramirez de Arellano y Haro, noted that the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* is heavily reliant on space technology as modern communication systems, data collection, and infrastructure rely on information gathered from space. Speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Ina Hagniningtyas Krisnamurthi of Indonesia, pointed out that Southeast Asian countries are especially vulnerable to natural disasters, and thus space-based technologies for disaster prevention and management are a priority for ASEAN. She reiterated that space technology can play a vital role in closing the economic and capacity gap between developed and developing countries.³² Space technology can also boost the industrial competitiveness of a country as space-based capabilities contribute to job creation, education, and socioeconomic development. Thus, international partnerships between spacefaring and non-spacefaring countries could significantly speed-up the process of achieving the 2030 Agenda.³³ These international partnerships are even further benefitted when paired with private sector organizations. For example, the European Space Association (ESA) is partnering with industry facilities, such as Airbus Defense, to fund and develop future missions. Public-private space partnerships can expedite funding for existing projects and spur innovation for potential ones.³⁴ One issue with such partnerships, however, are that the diversity of new actors in space require a new set of rules for space management. Furthermore, the privatization of space can hinder transparency and information-sharing, as there are more entities with their own data on space.³⁵ While space exploration and capacity building often seems secondary to more pressing issues of world hunger, security, and health, space-based technology can actually play a crucial role in the advancement of nearly every sector of society.

The UNOOSA currently heads a project called Space4SDGs, which addresses how space can assist the realization of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. This project essentially details what space-based services and technology can offer to each of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For example, space technologies can assist in achieving SDG 2 to have “Zero Hunger.” Remote sensing tools can monitor crops and livestock and increase efficiency in the use of existing food and water resources. This project works in tandem with the European GNSS Agency’s (GSA) study: “European Global Navigation Satellite System and Copernicus: Supporting the Sustainable Development Goals,” which investigates how European space technologies can help fulfill the SDGs³⁶

Additionally, Member States in the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) adopted a ministerial decree in 2018 that called for more partnerships between states that have a space program and those that do not, providing the example of Mongolia’s partnership with China, India, and Thailand to create a space-based drought monitoring mechanism. The decree also requests that governments promote the participation of women in space-based science and technology education. ESCAP countries also endorsed the *Asia-Pacific Plan of Action on Space Applications for Sustainable Development (2018-2030)*, which is the

³² United Nations. Meetings Coverage and Press Releases, “Delegates Call for More Dialogue, Partnerships among Established States, Newcomers, as Fourth Committee Takes Up Peaceful Uses of Outer Space”. 23 October 2018.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ European Space Agency. *Partners for Space Exploration*.

³⁵ Wharton University of Pennsylvania. “The Implications of the Privatization of Space Exploration.” 12 December 2016.

³⁶ United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs. *Space Supporting the Sustainable Development Goals*.

first coordinated regional approach for using space technology based on a comprehensive assessment of the needs specific to that region. The plan focuses on six key sectors: disaster risk management, natural resource management, connectivity, social development, energy, and climate change.³⁷ To mitigate the impacts of climate change, for example, the plan aims to use data from the Space Climate Observatory for climate modelling and vulnerability mapping. Such technology and data could assist societies vulnerable to climate-related disasters prepare for potential crises.

Problems of Space Debris and Mitigation Measures

According to the *Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space*, space debris is any non-functional, man-made object or fragment that is still in orbit.³⁸ This debris ends up traveling at speeds up to 18,000 miles an hour, making even flecks of paint from old spacecrafts a hazard to current and future space exploration missions and space-based services. In low earth orbit (LEO) alone, there are over 6,000 tons of non-functional material. This number increases every year as low-grade satellites that lose their functionality remain in orbit and at times collide with existing satellites, multiplying the amount of debris. Some countries purposefully destroy their outdated space objects, such as in 2007, when China destroyed its Fengyun-1c spacecraft. However, such actions only increase the amount of non-functional and dangerous fragments in orbit. This destruction, along with the accidental collision of an American and a Russian spacecraft in 2009, has increased the “large orbital debris population in LEO by approximately 70 percent,” thus exacerbating the risk of collision for future space missions.³⁹

In response to the growing problem of space debris, the UN General Assembly adopted the *Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space* in 2007. This document requests that Member States avoid intentional destruction of space objects, limit the possibility of accidental collisions and breakups, and limit the release of debris during normal space operations.⁴⁰ While these guidelines are a step in the right direction, they still lack effective implementation mechanisms. For example, the guidelines are vague on “what operational changes are reasonable to limit debris production, minimize breakup potential, and reduce the probability of accidental collisions.”⁴¹ Thus, these guidelines could use some clarification while balancing sovereignty with collective action against space debris.

Conclusion

The UN has established a highly detailed and competent legal regime for managing cooperation in space under the direction of COPUOS and the UNOOSA. However, the expansion of actual space capabilities to non-spacefaring and developing countries is still in the beginning stages, requiring a more efficient and transparent approach to sharing space information and technology. Additionally, space debris mitigation measures are still minimal in their effectivity. Thus, any

³⁷ “Backed by UN, Asia-Pacific countries to advance space technology for ‘development transformation’.” *UN News*. 18 October 2018.

³⁸ United Nations. *Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space*. 2010.

³⁹ National Aeronautics and Space Administration. *Space Debris*. 2019.

⁴⁰ United Nations. *Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space*. 2010.

⁴¹ Rao, R. Venkata. *Recent Developments in Space Law: Opportunities and Challenges*. 2017.

upcoming space legislation will need to focus on implementation and accountability. Space exploration and space technology stand as a gateway to both economic and societal development; thus, it is crucial that the international community intensify efforts to work closer with one another and with the private sector to spread the benefits of space.

Questions to Consider

1. How can the international community respect sovereignty while also increasing accountability?
2. How can efforts to use space technology for development be intensified and streamlined?
3. How can space contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030?
4. What are some ways to expand on the measures already attempted to control and reduce space debris?

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This is an article about a regional action plan laid by ASEAN to epitomize the use of space technology. This website is also helpful in that it provides the latest news on UN work on any global topic.

International Telecommunication Union. Space Services Department. Accessed 2 July 2019 from: <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-R/space/Pages/default.aspx>

This website for the ITU can be used by delegates to better understand the role this organization plays in coordinating the orbit and frequencies of objects launched into space.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration. Space Debris. 2019. Accessed 3 July 2019 from: <https://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/hqlibrary/pathfinders/debris.htm>

From the NASA website, this source contains a general summary of the issue of space debris, as well as NASA’s policies and standards concerning space debris and links to other reports and articles on the topic.

Rao, R. Venkata. *Recent Developments in Space Law: Opportunities and Challenges*. 2017.

This book discusses how legislation on space can aid advancements in security policies for space and cooperation for solutions to problems like space debris and antiquated satellites.

United Nations. *International Space Law: United Nations Instruments*. 2017. Accessed 2 July 2019 from:

http://www.unoosa.org/res/oosadoc/data/documents/2017/stspace/stspace61rev_2_0_html/V1605998-ENGLISH.pdf

This booklet is a compilation of the most significant components of international space law, including the five treaties and five resolutions that make up the bulk of space law. Delegates should sue this source to become familiar with what’s already been done to improve cooperation in space.

United Nations. *Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space*. 2010. Accessed 3 July 2019 from:

http://www.unoosa.org/pdf/publications/st_space_49E.pdf

This is the official publication of the space debris mitigation guidelines. It can be useful for delegates to review what has already been done in handling space debris and for

delegates to determine what is still lacking in this current schema (considering that this is the only UN agreement on space debris).

United Nations General Assembly, Programme for the joint panel discussion of the First and Fourth Committees on possible challenges to space security and sustainability (A/C.1/72/CRP.5), 2017. Accessed 1 July 2019 from:
[http://www.unoosa.org/documents/pdf/gajointpanel/A-C1-72-CRP5 Programme for the Joint Panel Discussion of the First and Fourth Committees.pdf](http://www.unoosa.org/documents/pdf/gajointpanel/A-C1-72-CRP5_Programme_for_the_Joint_Panel_Discussion_of_the_First_and_Fourth_Committees.pdf)

This resolution outlines the discussion held at the joint panel of the First and Fourth Committees, detailing what each committee hopes to contribute to advancing peace and security in space.

United Nations General Assembly, Regulation, limitation and balanced reduction of all armed forces and all armaments; conclusion on an international convention on the reduction of armaments and the prohibition of atomic hydrogen and other weapons of mass destruction (1148 (XII)), 1957.

This resolution was the first time space was discussed in international legislation; the document however is mainly about disarmament.

United Nations General Assembly, Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (A/RES/54/68), 2000. Accessed 2 July 2019 from:
http://www.unoosa.org/pdf/gares/ARES_54_68E.pdf

This document contains a review of the items discussed and the decisions reached at the UNISPACE III conference. Most importantly for delegates, it provides an example of some relatively recent efforts to enhance cooperation in outer space.

United Nations. Meetings Coverage and Press Releases, “Delegates Call for More Dialogue, Partnerships among Established States, Newcomers, as Fourth Committee Takes Up Peaceful Uses of Outer Space”. 23 October 2018. Accessed 2 July 2019 from:
<https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/gaspd673.doc.htm>

This is a press summary from the UN newsfeed that covers one of the meetings of the Fourth Committee in the 73rd Session of the UN; it summarizes what was said by each speaker and what decisions were made. Overall, this website of the UN Press is useful for finding summaries of recent UN committee sessions.

United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs. Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. Accessed 1 July 2019 from:
<http://www.unoosa.org/oosa/en/ourwork/copuos/index.html>

This website introduces COPUOS and provides the history of its creation and a description of its subsidiary bodies. Most important for delegates, it provides a list of the

Member States of COPUOS and a link to all the documents made by COPUOS.

United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs. *Roles and Responsibilities*. Accessed 2 July 2019 from: <http://www.unoosa.org/oosa/en/aboutus/roles-responsibilities.html>

While this specific webpage outlines the role of UNOOSA, delegates will find the use in the entire UNOOSA website/database, as it provides an index of the space object register, all the documents produced by UNOOSA, a review of recent COPUOS sessions and the Unispace+50 Conference, and a description of all the current projects and areas of work for UNOOSA.

United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs. *Space Supporting the Sustainable Development Goals*. Accessed 2 July 2019 from: <http://www.unoosa.org/oosa/en/ourwork/space4sdgs/index.html>

This website describes the UNOOSA program to apply space technology to all the SDGs. It details how each SDG can be and is assisted by existing space technology.

United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs. *A Timeline of the Exploration and Peaceful Use of Outer Space*. Accessed 1 July 2019 from: <http://www.unoosa.org/oosa/en/timeline/index.html>

Along with an array of other useful information on space law and space technology, this webpage from the UNOOSA shows a timeline of the relationship between the UN and outer space, including significant space events and important agreements and resolutions formed.

United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs. *United Nations Program on Space Applications*. Accessed 2 July 2019 from: <http://www.unoosa.org/oosa/en/ourwork/psa/index.html>

This website provides a history and description of what the UNOOSA has done to use space technology for non-space purpose, such as disaster management, global health, and climate change. This website provides a good basis for understanding the types of space technology available for treating humanitarian and social issues.

Wharton University of Pennsylvania. “The Implications of the Privatization of Space Exploration.” 12 December 2016. Accessed 7 August 2019 from: <https://publicpolicy.wharton.upenn.edu/live/news/1619-the-implications-of-the-privatization-of-space>

This study discusses the pros and cons of private sector involvement in space exploration. It provides some examples of both successes and failures of private-public space partnerships.

II. Advancing Equality and Accountability in UN Peacekeeping Operations and Special Political Missions

“UN peacekeeping is a remarkable enterprise of multilateralism and international solidarity. Action by the Secretariat alone is not enough to meet the challenges we face.”

— Antonio Guterres, *United Nations Secretary-General*

Introduction

Peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions are crucial to fulfilling the primary purposes of the United Nations as outlined in the UN Charter, namely to “maintain international peace and security and...to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to peace.”⁴² The UN defines peacebuilding as efforts to assist transitions from war to peace and strengthen national capacities to manage conflict in order to prevent lapsing or relapsing into conflict. Most prominent among UN peacebuilding efforts are the official UN peacekeeping operations (PKOs). The first of these, known as the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), began in May 1948, and was tasked with monitoring the Armistice Agreement between Israel and its Arab neighbors. To this day, UNTSO military personnel have remained in the Middle East to monitor armistice agreements, control isolated incidents of conflict, and assist with other UN PKOs in the region.⁴³ This mission, along with others of its time, originally consisted only of unarmed military observers, purposed towards monitoring, reporting, and confidence-building roles. The earliest armed operation was the First UN Emergency Force (UNEF I), deployed to handle the Suez crisis in 1956.⁴⁴

Since these early operations, the UN has established over 70 PKOs around the world, with 14 of these operations currently active.⁴⁵ During the Cold War era, PKOs generally consisted of observational missions run by military personnel; however, in the 1990s, these operations took on a more multidimensional mandate, meant to lay the foundations of sustainable peace. Thus, the responsibilities of UN Peacekeepers now extend to monitoring human rights, helping form and support sustainable government institutions, restoring rule of law, demining, and disarming and reintegrating former combatants. Furthermore, as the nature of conflict has changed over the years, UN PKOs now deal more with intra-state conflicts and civil wars, rather than only inter-state conflicts.⁴⁶

In addition to PKOs, the UN also organizes Special Political Missions (SPMs), which are broadly defined as “civilian missions that are deployed for a limited duration to support Member States in good offices, conflict prevention, peacemaking, and peacebuilding.”⁴⁷ These missions focus on preventative diplomacy and supporting complex political transitions, working with national actors and humanitarian entities. SPMs include UN-directed special envoys, sanctions

⁴² *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Ch. IV.

⁴³ United Nations Peacekeeping. *UNTSO Fact Sheet*.

⁴⁴ United Nations Peacekeeping. *Our History*.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ United Nations. *Global Issues: Peace and Security*.

⁴⁷ United Nations General Assembly. *Overall Policy Matters Pertaining to Special Political Missions (A/68/223)*, 2013.

panels and monitoring groups, country-specific political missions, and regional offices.⁴⁸ While the term “special political mission” didn’t emerge until the 1990s, UN political missions have existed for decades. For example, the first official UN mediator, Count Folke Bernadotte, was appointed in the 1948 Security Council resolution 186 (S-2) to assist the negotiation of a truce between the Arabs and Israelis in Palestine, assure the protection of Holy Places in that region, and facilitate the operation of common government services for the well-being of the population of Palestine.⁴⁹ In May 1948, Bernadotte requested that the UN send military personnel to aid him in the supervision of the truce negotiations; thus, the Security Council established the UNTSO as the first peacekeeping operation.⁵⁰ The work of Bernadotte as mediator and the UNTSO as military protectors in Palestine is a clear example of the intertwined, yet separate, relationship of PKOs and SPMs. As a more recent example of SPMs, a Special Envoy of the Secretary-General was appointed to Myanmar in 2018 to work with local government authorities to resolve Rohingya Muslim human rights crisis.⁵¹

Now there are 25 active SPMs around the world, with a mandate specific to country and issue. However, in recent years, Member States have complained that there is still too much overlap in the mandates between SPMs and PKOs.⁵² Essentially, SPMs provide political and diplomatic expertise for peacebuilding efforts, while PKOs consist mainly of military personnel and strategists. In recent years, however, the role of PKOs has expanded to encompass political and diplomatic services. So, although these two types of missions often work in tandem, there are now points where their responsibilities overlap. Both, for example, are tasked with monitoring elections and assisting government institutions in performing public duties.⁵³ Making the difference between PKOs and SPMs more distinct will enable both groups to be more accountable to a specific objective.⁵⁴ The main issue in mandate overlap is financial; in recent years the Fourth Committee has discussed methods of enhancing efficiency and reducing costs of peace operations. In a Fourth Committee review of SPMs in 2014, the delegate from the United States, Beth Jones, claimed that preventing duplication and overlapping of work in UN organs could contribute to building a cost-effective plan of handling the conflict with the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). She asserted that the rise of new conflicts, like that of ISIL, required new costs, and cutting back on overlapping administrative costs would allow more efficient use of funding. In this same meeting, the delegate from Iran, Hossein Maleki, suggested merging SPMs with PKOs to cut back on the costs of peacebuilding.⁵⁵ While such a merger has not happened, Secretary-General Antonio Guterres organized in 2017 a partial merger of the two departments in charge of PKOs and SPMs—the Department of Peacekeeping Operations

⁴⁸ Political and Peacebuilding Affairs. *DPPA Around the World*.

⁴⁹ United Nations General Assembly. *Appointment and terms of reference of a United Nations Mediator in Palestine (A/RES/186 (S-2))*. 14 May 1948.

⁵⁰ United Nations Peacekeeping. *UNTSO Fact Sheet*.

⁵¹ Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs. “Briefing to the Fourth Committee on ‘Comprehensive Review of Special Political Missions’, Under-Secretary-General Rosemary A. DiCarlo.”

⁵² United Nations. Meeting Coverage and Press Releases, “As Fourth Committee Reviews Special Political Missions, Focus Centers Upon Separate Funding, Bolstering Response to Realities on Ground”. 2014.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ United Nations. Meeting Coverage and Press Releases, “As Fourth Committee Reviews Special Political Missions, Focus Centers Upon Separate Funding, Bolstering Response to Realities on Ground”. 2014.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

(DPKO) and the Department of Political Affairs (DPO) respectively—to form the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA). However, the DPKO still exists in the form of the Department of Peace Operations (DPO). The continued existence of two separate departments to handle often co-dependent PKOs and SPMs is evidence of a continued administrative redundancy, resulting in wasteful costs and unclear distinction of in-field mandates.⁵⁶

Existing Framework

It is the responsibility of the UN Security Council to vote upon when and where any PKOs or SPMs will be established, as well as when they will be terminated. The General Assembly Fourth Committee is tasked with annually conducting a “comprehensive review of the question of peacekeeping missions and special political missions.”⁵⁷ While the Fourth Committee cannot establish PKOs or SPMs, it can make recommendations to the Security Council on ways to ensure that new and existing missions are successful. Additionally, in accordance with resolution 377 (1950), entitled *Uniting for Peace*, the General Assembly may discuss and implement collective action for peace if the Security Council fails to act due to the negative vote of a permanent member.⁵⁸ The Fourth Committee most directly interacts with PKOs and SPMs through its Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C34), which was established in 1965 with the adoption of resolution 2006 (XIX). This subcommittee is tasked with reviewing all issues related to peacekeeping, making recommendations, and reporting its findings to the Fourth Committee. The Special Committee consists of 147 Member States who are current or former contributors to peacekeeping operations, as well as observer intergovernmental organizations, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the African Union, European Union, and the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol).⁵⁹

In 2005, the General Assembly and the Security Council established a joint committee to address issues of peace, called the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). This commission consists of 31 Member States who are elected by the General Assembly, Security Council, and the Economic and Social Council. The PBC is meant to bring together all relevant actors and resources to discuss and propose strategy for post-conflict peacebuilding.⁶⁰ There are two more bodies that most directly interact with PKOs and SPMs: these are the DPO and the DPPA, as mentioned above. The DPO directly manages all existing PKOs, providing guidance for military components and maintaining contact with troop and financial contributors.⁶¹ The DPPA directly handles SPMs; most importantly, it monitors global political developments, detects potential crises, and arranges diplomatic preventative measures.⁶² Both departments are under the jurisdiction of the Security Council; however, they are also subject to review by C34.

Another important piece of the international framework for peacebuilding is the *UN Peacekeeping Operations Principles and Guidelines*. These Guidelines provide a general outline

⁵⁶ Gowan, Richard, and Ryan Rappa. *Global Peace Operations Review*. March 2018.

⁵⁷ United Nations. *Special Political and Decolonization (Fourth Committee)*.

⁵⁸ United Nations Peacekeeping. *Role of the General Assembly*.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ United Nations. *Peacebuilding Commission: Mandate*.

⁶¹ United Nations Peacekeeping. *Our History*.

⁶² Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs. *DPPA Around the World*.

for all peacekeeping missions, with guidelines for planning, implementing, and exiting from a PKO. Furthermore, this Document encourages cooperation with regional and other intergovernmental and humanitarian actors. The *UN Peacekeeping Operations Principles and Guidelines* also provides guidance to these entities for their work with UN PKOs. In general, these principles and guidelines are important in that they provide some clarification on the mandate, “nature, scope, and core business” of all activities on the spectrum of peacebuilding, including peacekeeping, peacemaking, and peacebuilding.⁶³ As for SPMs, the Secretary-General annually releases a report entitled, *Overall Policy Matters Pertaining to Special Political Missions*. This Report discusses past efforts and current recommendations to increasing effectiveness of SPMs. Most recently in his 2018 report, the Secretary-General emphasized transparency, accountability, gender perspective, and women’s equal participation as factors that increase effectivity.⁶⁴

In March 2018, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres launched the initiative Action for Peacekeeping (A4P), aimed at reforming UN peacekeeping in eight key areas: politics; women, peace and security; protection; safety and security; performance and accountability; peacebuilding and sustaining peace; partnerships; and conduct of peacekeepers and peacekeeping operations.⁶⁵ This initiative currently stands as the most applicable and pressing agenda in reforming and improving UN peace operations and has been endorsed by 156 Member States and regional organizations. It consists of a set of 45 commitments of collective action, which are delineated in the *Declaration of Shared Commitments on UN Peacekeeping Operations*. For example, one A4P commitment is to protect civilians by improving engagement with local populations to strengthen their understanding of peacekeeping missions. Specifically, it commits to train military units on coordinated approaches for interacting with communities in order to respond more effectively to threats. It is important to note that the A4P initiative is a general outline and direction for areas of reform, but is not an official resolution that actually reforms the nature of peacekeeping. Thus, Guterres has emphasized the need for Member States to develop a national plan for the implementation of these commitments. He has also pointed out that the A4P initiative is useful in that it will “refocus peacekeeping with more targeted mandates...and mobilize support for political solutions and better equipped and trained forces.”⁶⁶

Current Problems and Area of Action

Increasing Gender Equality in Peace Operations

From 1992-2017, women in major peace processes only made up three percent of mediators, three percent of witnesses and signatories, and nine percent of negotiators.⁶⁷ In this same time period, only nineteen percent of peace agreements contained references to women, and five percent contained references to gender-based violence—an unfortunate statistic as societies

⁶³ Department of Peacekeeping Operations. *United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines*. 2008.

⁶⁴ United Nations General Assembly. *Overall Policy Matters Pertaining to Special Political Missions (A/73/337)*, 2018.

⁶⁵ Secretary-General’s Initiative on Action for Peacekeeping. *A4P: Our Core Agenda for Peacekeeping*.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Council on Foreign Relations. “Women’s Participation in Peace Processes”. Updated 2019.

plagued with sexual violence are proven to be more conflict-ridden.⁶⁸ When women participate in peace processes, “the resulting agreement is 35% more likely to last at least 15 years.”⁶⁹ Some progress has been made for women in peacekeeping; in 1993, women made up only one percent of deployed uniformed personnel. Now, women make up twenty-two percent of the civilians working in peacekeeping operations—a growing force, but still highly disparate.⁷⁰ The presence of women peacekeepers is critical for providing a greater sense of security to women and children, providing role models for women in local communities, broadening the skill set of peacekeeping missions, and interacting with women in societies where women are prohibited from speaking with men, among other benefits. Most importantly, more women peacebuilders will increase women’s access and participation in political processes, thus building a more conflict-resilient society.⁷¹

One step the UN has taken to increase the role of women in peacebuilding is the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 in the year 2000. This was the first resolution to address the unique impact of armed conflict on women; it urged Member States to increase the representation of women at all levels of the peacebuilding spectrum, and it emphasized gender-sensitive training efforts.⁷² Since then, there have been seven more Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace, and Security, addressing a range of issues from gender dynamics in conflict zones to increasing the amount of women in leadership roles. The DPO has attempted to meet the mandate of these resolutions by deploying Gender Advisors to all multi-dimensional peace missions to ensure that women and girls have an equal voice throughout the peace process. Regional entities have also worked to increase the role of women in peacebuilding, such as the African Union, which established the Network of African Women Mediators to support SPMs. In recent sessions of the Fourth Committee, however, delegates have stressed that more needs to be done to increase the number of women involved in every aspect of peacebuilding. In the 73rd UN Session, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Rosemary A. DiCarlo emphasized that gender diversity in peace operations should remain a priority, and she pointed to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) as crucial in supporting government efforts to ensure gender equality in recent and upcoming elections, acknowledging that women made up one third of voters in October’s legislative elections.⁷³

Improving Accountability in Peace Operations

There are two issues prevalent in accountability efforts within UN peacebuilding. The first is misconduct accountability; over 1,000 peacekeepers have been repatriated for misconduct concerning sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA). Repatriation is generally the extent of UN punishment, leaving the responsibility of prosecution with Member States. However, many

⁶⁸ Leatherman, Janie. “Sexual Violence and Armed Conflict: Complex Dynamics of Re-victimization.” *International Journal of Peace Studies* 12, no. 1 (Summer 2007): 53-71.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ United Nations Peacekeeping. *Women in Peacekeeping*.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² United Nations Security Council. *Resolution 1325, S/RES/1325 (2000)*. 31 October 2000.

⁷³ United Nations. Meeting Coverage and Press Releases. “Delegates Focus on Reform of Peace Operations, as Fourth Committee Begins Its Consideration of Special Political Missions.” 2018.

Member States are slow to prosecute their own nationals for foreign misconduct.⁷⁴ The UN has a “zero tolerance policy” for SEA crimes and attempts to address these through a three-pronged strategy: prevention of misconduct, enforcement of UN standards of conduct, and remedial action. This strategy includes awareness-raising campaigns and investigations. However more needs to be done to hold violators accountable.⁷⁵ Between 2010 and 2019, there were 977 reported cases of peacekeeper SEA misconduct; however, only 197 of these have been substantiated—the rest are still pending or did not have enough information to be substantiated.⁷⁶ Such misconduct and lack of accountability thereof can and has tarnished the reputation of peacekeeping operations in some areas of the world, and more importantly stand as a violation of human rights from an entity that ought to be trusted.

The second issue is performance accountability; essentially, this means ensuring that peacekeepers constructively act to implement the tasks for which they were deployed. Poor performance held unaccountable can hinder the objectives of PKOs. In the worst cases, inconsistent defense can lead to fatalities, as in South Sudan when 30 internally displaced persons died amid reports that one peacekeeping unit had abandoned its post.⁷⁷ To ensure that peacekeepers are working effectively to meet their mandate, the A4P initiative plans to develop and implement a Comprehensive Performance Assessment System (CPAS) that will track performance through a unified methodology of data analysis rather than through independent performance reviews. The CPAS was already tested out in the 2018 assessment of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA). While CPAS might make peacekeeping units more accountable, more work needs to be done to actually instill change in peacekeeping units. As part of A4P, the Secretary General hoped to enhance training methods by improving the dissemination of new training material and verifying the operational readiness of troops and police.⁷⁸ The Fourth Committee can play a role in suggesting further ways to expand the training of peacekeepers, forming punitive measures for poor performance, and ensuring that data on accountability is used to improve actual in-field behavior. Furthermore, ensuring that the differing mandates between PKOs and SPMs are distinct will increase these missions’ accountability and effectivity.

Conclusion

Peacebuilding operations are vital to upholding the base mandate of the United Nations, which is to build and uphold peace and security across the globe. While both Peacekeeping Operations and Special Political Missions have successfully contributed to moments and islands of peace, there is still much room for reform. Women could play a crucial role in establishing and elongating peace in conflict-ridden areas, if allowed equal participation in peace processes. The reputation, and therefore effectiveness, of peacekeeping operations could be upheld if violators of the codes of conduct for peacekeeping missions were held accountable. Both of these issues

⁷⁴ Stimson Center. “Ending Impunity: New Tools for Criminal Accountability in UN Peace Operations.” September 2009.

⁷⁵ United Nations Peacekeeping. *Standards of Conduct*.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Bosco, Laura. “Prioritizing UN Peacekeeper Accountability.” International Peace Institute. 9 January 2017.

⁷⁸ United Nations General Assembly. *Report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, (A/72/19)*, 2018.

are of immediate and great concern as ongoing peace missions could benefit from the addition of women and the promise of accountability.

Questions to Consider

1. How can the Fourth Committee substantially influence reforms in peacekeeping efforts without overstepping the bounds of the Security Council?
2. What can be done to increase the number of women participating in immediate, ongoing peace processes?
3. How can the UN better encourage Member States to prosecute violators of international law who are merely repatriated?
4. What are some ways that the DPO and the DPPA can embody distinctly different and specific mandates?

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This article discusses specific cases of misconduct and lack of performance pertaining to the issue of accountability in UN PKOs.

Council on Foreign Relations. "Women's Participation in Peace Processes". Updated 2019. Accessed 24 July 2019 from: <https://www.cfr.org/interactive/womens-participation-in-peace-processes>

This website shows statistics on the amount of women involved in peacebuilding processes, as well as statistics on the benefits of equal women's participation in these processes.

Department of Peacekeeping Operations. *United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines*. 2008. Accessed 23 July 2019 from: https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/capstone_eng_0.pdf

This document contains a series of guidelines on how to establish, implement, and terminate a PKO. It clarifies the mandate of PKOs, discusses the spectrum of activities that encompass PKOs, and explains the UN framework of PKOs.

Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs. "Briefing to the Fourth Committee on "Comprehensive Review of Special Political Missions", Under-Secretary-General Rosemary A. DiCarlo." Accessed August 7 2019 from: <https://dppa.un.org/en/briefing-to-fourth-committee-comprehensive-review-of-special-political-missions-under-secretary>

This webpage is the most recent report to the Fourth Committee on a review of SPMs. It is useful as a description of the current issues in UN SPMs and suggestions on measures that can be taken.

Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs. *DPPA Around the World*. Accessed 23 July 2019 from: <https://dppa.un.org/en/dppa-around-world>

This is the official website for the DPPA. It includes information on all current SPMs and describes the mandate, funding, and implementation of SPMs.

Gowan, Richard, and Ryan Rappa. *Global Peace Operations Review*. March 2018. Accessed 7 August 2019 from: https://peaceoperationsreview.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/gpor_Peace_Operations_2018_full_final_WEB.pdf

This is review of UN Peacekeeping done by the Center on International Cooperation—a consortium of Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Scandinavian countries. This review focuses on current issues in management, gender parity, and in-field efficiency.

Leatherman, Janie. “Sexual Violence and Armed Conflict: Complex Dynamics of Re-victimization.” *International Journal of Peace Studies* 12, no. 1 (Summer 2007): 53-71. Accessed 7 August 2019 from: https://www.jstor.org/stable/41852954?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents

This study looks into the relationship between sexual violence and enduring conflict, specifically how sexual offenders are more likely to behave violently in other situations.

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This is the official resolution for the designation of a UN Mediator in Palestine. It outlines his powers and responsibilities. This is useful as an example of the types of responsibilities given to participants in SPMs.

United Nations General Assembly. *Overall Policy Matters Pertaining to Special Political Missions (A/68/223)*, 2013. Accessed 23 July 2019 from: <https://undocs.org/A/68/223>

This is the report of the Secretary-General to the Fourth Committee. It discusses the history and trends of past SPMs, as well as ways that policy pertaining to SPMs could be improved. This is just one in a series of annual reports on SPM policy by the Secretary-General.

United Nations General Assembly. *Overall Policy Matters Pertaining to Special Political Missions (A/73/337)*, 2018. Accessed 23 July 2019 from: https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/1642291/files/A_73_337-EN.pdf

This is the most recent report from the Secretary-General on SPMs. The issues emphasized in here are gender perspective, transparency, accountability, and geographical representation.

United Nations General Assembly. Report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, (A/72/19), 2018. Accessed 25 July 2019 from:
https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/1627951/files/A_72_19-EN.pdf

This is the most recent of the annual reports on PKOs to the Fourth Committee. It discusses gender issues, transparency, accountability, and partnerships in PKOs. It also offers policy recommendations for these issues.

United Nations. Global Issues: Peace and Security. Accessed 23 July 2019 from:
<https://www.un.org/en/sections/issues-depth/peace-and-security/index.html>

This website describes the matter of peacebuilding in detail and contains links to important resolutions on that topic. Most importantly, this website contains pages on each global issue before the UN.

United Nations. Meeting Coverage and Press Releases, “As Fourth Committee Reviews Special Political Missions, Focus Centres Upon Separate Funding, Bolstering Response to Realities on Ground”. 2014. Accessed 23 July 2019 from:
<https://www.un.org/press/en/2014/gaspd571.doc.htm>

This report covers a past Fourth Committee meeting that discussed the need to clarify the overlapping mandates of PKOs and SPMs. It also discusses funding for SPMs.

United Nations. Meeting Coverage and Press Releases, “Delegates Focus on Reform of Peace Operations, as Fourth Committee Begins Its Consideration of Special Political Missions.” 2018. Accessed 7 August 2019 from:
<https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/gaspd681.doc.htm>

This report covers one of the most recent meetings of the Fourth Committee on SPMs. It outlines current problems with SPMs and suggestions for reform.

UN Missions. United Nations Peace Operations. Accessed 23 July from:
<https://www.unmissions.org/>

This website lists all the current and past PKOs and SPMs. It provides links to the official website for each mission, which goes into detail about what that specific mission was for.

United Nations. Peacebuilding Commission: Mandate. Accessed 23 July 2019 from:
<https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/commission/mandate>

This website discusses the creation of the Peacebuilding Commission and outlines its mandate and structure.

United Nations Peacekeeping. *Our History*. Accessed 23 July 2019 from:
<https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/our-history>

This website outlines the history and initial purpose of UN PKOs. In general, this source is useful as the official website for UN PKOs, with links to information on funding, press releases, resources, etc.

United Nations Peacekeeping. *Role of the General Assembly*. Accessed 23 July 2019 from:
<https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/role-of-general-assembly>

This website discusses the mandate the General Assembly has with peacebuilding operations, namely funding and recommending to the Security Council.

United Nations Peacekeeping. *Standards of Conduct*. Accessed 25 July 2019 from:
<https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/standards-of-conduct>

This webpage lists the official standards of conduct for UN PKOs and discusses the existing mechanisms to deal with cases of misconduct.

United Nations Peacekeeping. *UNTSO Fact Sheet*. Accessed 23 July 2019 from:
<https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/mission/untso>

This website details the first UN Peacekeeping Mission and provides statistics on the number of military personnel, civilian peacekeepers, fatalities, and financial contributors. There is also a link on this website to all other current PKOs.

United Nations Peacekeeping. *Women in Peacekeeping*. Accessed 24 July 2019 from:
<https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/women-peacekeeping>

This webpage outlines the history of building the involvement of women in peacebuilding. It offers statistics on how many women have and do participate in PKOs. It also lists the benefits of involving women in peace processes.

United Nations Security Council. *Resolution 1325, S/RES/1325 (2000)*. 31 October 2000. Accessed 24 July 2019 from: <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/1325>

This resolution is the first to address the role of women in peacebuilding. It urges Member States to involve more women and opens the discussion on gender parity in PKOs, as well as sexual exploitation and women in leadership in PKOs.