

Striving for Peace: Addressing Human Rights Challenges in UN Peacekeeping Operations

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Abstract

United Nations (UN) peacekeeping operations have been pivotal in global efforts to stabilize conflict zones and mitigate violence for over seven decades. Utilizing soldiers, police personnel, and civilian peacekeepers from diverse backgrounds, these missions aim to implement multidimensional mandates while upholding international legitimacy. Beyond traditional roles of maintaining peace and stability, modern peacekeeping endeavours encompass a spectrum of responsibilities, including civilian protection, demobilization, and human rights enforcement, thereby fostering the transition from conflict to peace. However, amidst these noble goals, the UN has faced persistent criticism regarding human rights violations and sexual abuse by peacekeepers.

This paper delves into the UN's efforts to address legal and policy concerns, ensuring human rights protection and restoring the integrity of peacekeeping. It examines normative frameworks guiding peacekeeping missions and the evolving role of human rights therein. Despite advancements, challenges persist, including ambiguous mandates, political discord, and accountability deficits. Ambiguities in conceptual frameworks further complicate operationalization, necessitating clarity and coherence in mandates and implementation.

Recommendations for improvement include prioritizing civilian protection and human rights, fostering political consensus, and addressing discrepancies in resource allocation. Additionally, measures to ensure accountability, including penalties for troop-contributing countries and re-evaluation of peacekeepers' immunity, are vital.

In conclusion, while UN peacekeeping remains indispensable in global peace efforts, addressing human rights violations and enhancing accountability are imperative to uphold its integrity and effectiveness.

INTRODUCTION

The United Nation's efforts in regards to stabilisation and conflict migration has been greatly aided by the institution of peacekeeping for more than 70 years. Peacekeeping is a crucial tool possessed by the United Nations to position soldiers and policemen from across the world, and integrate them with civilian peacekeepers with an aim to further multidimensional mandates, whilst harbouring high levels of international legitimacy¹. These

¹ "UN peacekeeping: a force for global peace and stability," Better World Campaign, available

strengths enable peacekeeping to aid the conflict-struck nation navigate the challenging path from conflict to peace. In addition to keeping warring parties apart and stabilising conflict zones, modern peacekeeping operations are needed to ensure that civilians are protected, and provide aid in the demobilisation, demilitarization, and rehabilitation of erstwhile combatants, and also assist the conduct of elections, along with upholding, and advancing the cause of human rights, and thereby reinstating the rule of law².

Contrary to the development of human-rights functions of UN peacekeeping, the UN has had to endure criticism regarding acts of sexual misconduct committed by UN peacekeepers in a number of missions since the 1990s. The UN Secretary-General released a “Bulletin on Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse” in 2003 as a response to growing concerns in this regard³. Ever since, the number of accusations made against UN civilian and military staff is recorded in yearly reports submitted to the General Assembly⁴.

This paper will go into detail about the steps taken by the UN to address legal and policy issues in order to prevent violations of human rights and preserve the integrity of the vital institution of peacekeeping. It will also discuss the normative and conceptual issues that come up when upholding human rights while conducting peacekeeping operations, such as the use of force to defend human rights and the peacekeepers’ accountability concerns.

Historical Overview Of Un Peacekeeping And Normative Framework Regarding Human Rights In Peacekeeping Operations

The United Nations (UN), with peacekeeping forces

at: <https://betterworldcampaign.org/resources/briefing-book-2022/peacekeeping-global-peace-stability> (last visited on 12 May 2024).

2 Id.

3 Teresa Haller, “The Role of the United Nations in the Prevention of Genocide”, Assumption University, available at: <https://digitalcommons.assumption.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1075&context=honorsthesis> (last visited on 12 May 2024).

4 Id.

on the ground, suffered two terrible setbacks in its efforts to stop genocide in the 1990s. The UN as a result of these incidents was forced to seriously address human rights violations in a peacekeeping mission. Two UN reports on these events, published in 1999, acknowledged grave shortcomings⁵.

Even with a few noteworthy successes, there is still much work to be done to close the gap between words and deeds so that civilians are not, as they are far too frequently, used as props in conflicts. It is a difficult and complicated task that involves taking on unsolvable political issues in nations with severely divided communities, a dearth of conflict mediation and resolution processes, and shakily operating state institutions⁶.

The possibility that the state may encourage violence against civilians, if not actively participate in it, can occasionally complicate matters. The cause of protection of civilians often suffers because of the intrinsic flaws in its legal and policy framework, in addition to the shaky political support and conceptual uncertainty prevalent on the international level⁷.

In 1999, the UNSC gave the “UN Mission operating in Sierra Leone” (UNAMSIL) clear instructions to do whatever is within its purview and jurisdictions where it was deployed to provide protection to civilians who are facing an immediate threat of physical harm⁸. Since then, the Security Council has explicitly mandated every new UN peacekeeping operation to safeguard civilians. The inclusion of mandate regarding human rights and civilian protection is supported by a complex web of policy and normative framework, and institutions spanning the entire UN structure such as the UN Charter, the international framework for human rights and humanitarian law, Security Council resolutions and directives, internal UN policies and guidelines⁹.

5 Makoto Katayanagi, “UN Peacekeeping and Human Rights,” in J. Genser and B. Stagno Ugarte (eds.), *The United Nations Security Council in the Age of Human Rights* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 123.

6 Id.

7 Id.

8 Bertrand G. Ramcharan, “The Security Council and the protection of human rights,” available at: https://crpf.gov.in/writereaddata/images/pdf/The_Security_Council_and_the_Protection_of_Human_Rights.pdf (last visited 21 May 2024).

9 Id.

Comprehensive analyses of UN peacekeeping’s track record in protecting civilians reveal a number of crucial lessons and difficulties. In addition to the challenging environment in which peacekeeping operations are conducted and the intricacy of the mandate, some of the important concerns in this regard are:

- Absence of political backing for peacekeepers’ involvement in human rights protection;
- Concerns regarding the extent of the Security Council’s mandate; and
- A deficiency of consistency and agreement regarding the difficulties associated with multifaceted peacekeeping operations, particularly the issue of overloaded agendas, resource limitations, limited capabilities, and leadership-related concerns¹⁰.

The broad range of duties and obligations involved in multifaceted peacekeeping missions significantly affects the defense of civilians and human rights¹¹. A typical peacekeeping operation’s primary goal is to facilitate a peace process, but it also has to support a number of other goals, like strengthening state authority, building capacity, maintaining the rule of law, establishing infrastructure for police and law enforcement, integrating genders, protecting children, and providing support to non-governmental organisations and civil society¹².

Since these are all regarded as priorities, the defence of human rights and civilian protection has to contend with dozens of other issues for political support, funding, and attention. Furthermore, a number of the mandates and tasks overlap and have ambiguous language, requiring a variety of skills and abilities¹³.

Presence of Human Rights Mandate In Peacekeeping Missions:

The 1990s horrors, particularly the genocide in

¹⁰ Supra note 7.

¹¹Allard Duursma, Corinne Bara, et.al., “UN Peacekeeping at 75: Achievements, Challenges and Prospects” 30(4) *International Peacekeeping* 415, 419 (2023).

¹² Nicola Johnston, *Peace Support Operations, Inclusive Security*, available at: https://www.inclusivesecurity.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/38_peace_support.pdf (last visited on 14 May 2024).

¹³ Id.

Rwanda in 1994 and the massacre at Srebrenica in Bosnia in former Yugoslavia, motivated UN to focus on human rights and issues such as internal displacement and refugee crisis during peacekeeping missions¹⁴. Up until that point, the majority of people associated peacekeeping as a narrow tool that stood between parties in conflict and had a largely secondary part. The prospect of either observing or, even, escaping whilst numerous defenceless civilians were being slaughtered provoked severe criticism and called into question the legitimacy and credibility of the United Nations and the international order to further the aims of peace and security, and prompted serious assessments of peacekeeping¹⁵.

The outcome was a promise to prevent atrocities like those in Rwanda and Srebrenica from happening again as well as a statement that the international community had a responsibility to step in when such situations occurred. The clear intervention tool was UN peacekeeping. As stated at the time in the UN Secretary-General’s report to the General Assembly, the Civilian suffering could no longer be disregarded or minimised because it gets in the way of political goals or negotiations¹⁶. It is essential to the Organization’s primary mission. It is not acceptable to assign accountability for civilian protection to another party. The only global institution with the scope and power to put an end to these practices is the United Nations.

Notwithstanding these admirable declarations, horrific crimes against civilians persisted during hostilities, which inevitably led to UN peacekeeping being involved in safeguarding the human rights of the civilians. This pattern is demonstrated by the recent conflicts in South Sudan, Mali, among other such examples in Africa and the failures of missions in Mali and Haiti show the harmful effects of not just failure of protecting human rights of civilians but also its contribution to such horrific situations certain occasions¹⁷.

¹⁴ Supra note 7.

¹⁵Claire Klobucista and Mariel Ferragamo, “The Role of Peacekeeping in Africa,” *Council on Foreign Relation*, available at: <https://www.cfr.org/background/role-peacekeeping-africa> (last visited on 14 May, 2024).

¹⁶ Supra note 7.

¹⁷ Supra note 13.



The UN's primary goal of facilitating international cooperation is seen as being seriously jeopardised if this expectation is not met, which could seriously damage the UN's legitimacy and credibility and aid in bringing about peace. Stated differently, UN peacekeeping has evolved into the last-resort tool in cases involving human rights and situations involving aid¹⁸.

Outside this useful aspect, UN peacekeeping's commitment to upholding human rights and safeguarding civilians and refugees is seen as fundamental to the organization's main goal of maintaining peace. Experience demonstrates that systematic violations of human rights and population displacement not only result from conflict, but also feed it¹⁹. When people do not feel safe and secure, there cannot be peace, and when people are routinely threatened or mistreated, there cannot be public confidence necessary for the establishment of long-term security and peace.

Concerns Surrounding Accountability Regarding Misconduct By Peacekeepers:

The Peacekeeping Operation plays a major role in maintaining and enforcing international peace and security. A crucial aspect of the same is that, as the most potent actor in the global system, it is primarily in charge of promoting and defending human rights during peacekeeping missions. But unfortunately, peacekeepers frequently participate in egregious human rights abuses that damage the UN's reputation as a whole. In order to prevent civilian assaults, torture, and other human rights violations, it is imperative that international human rights law shall be applicable and upheld during a peacekeeping mission²⁰. This ensures that those responsible for such atrocities are made answerable for their conduct and that justice is served to those

who have been wronged²¹.

Furthermore, it is frequently noted that serious accusations of sexual misconduct, including sexual abuse and exploitation, plague UN missions²². These concerning occurrences are increasing rather than declining²³, even though the UN and the Secretary General have stated time and time again that they will tolerate no sexual misconduct when carrying out peacekeeping missions. Eight South African peacekeepers were accused of being involved with brothels that had been set up close to the South African camp. These accusations were made against the deployed UN peacekeepers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). There have previously been other instances of this kind in the Central African Republic, Haiti, and the Congo.

The UN does not have the authority to prosecute under the current legal framework, even though it can look into the alleged crimes, suspend the peacekeepers involved, or place them in detention until the investigation is finished.

While it is true that maintaining the honour and integrity of the peacekeeping institution requires accountability, addressing these issues can be difficult. There are several challenges along the way, including a vague legal framework in this area and immunity granted to peacekeepers for actions taken while performing their duties, which limits accountability on the part of individual peacekeepers as well as other stakeholders like the United Nations (UN) and even the nations that provide troops.

Role And Impact of Human Rights In Peacekeeping Missions

In its early years UN peacekeeping did involve some work related to the protection of human rights. For example, the Arab Armistice Agreements were

18 Human Rights and Peacekeeping, available at: https://cdn.peaceopstraining.org/course_promos/human_rights_2/human_rights_2_english.pdf (last visited on May 14, 2024).

19 Id.

20N.D. White, "In Search of Due Diligence Obligations in UN Peacekeeping Operations: Identifying Standards for Accountability" 23 *Journal of International Peacekeeping* 3-4, 203-225 (2020).

21 Id.

22 Skye Wheeler, "UN Peacekeeping Has a Sexual Abuse Problem", Hrw, available at: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/01/11/un-peacekeeping-has-sexual-abuse-problem> (last visited on May 14, 2024).

23 "Guterres Vows to Improve UN's Handling of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse", UN News, available at: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/03/1114012> (last visited on May 14, 2024).

adhered to by the United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation (UNTSO), which covers issues pertaining to the rights of prisoners of war and the repatriation of displaced civilians²⁴. In addition to reporting on how police handled civilians during searches and seizures, UNFICYP (“United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus”) has helped to preserve and restore law and order. A dedicated human rights unit emerged in several peacekeeping missions during the early 1990s, including UNTAC (“United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia”) as well as the United Nations Transitional Administration in Eastern Slavonia, Baranja, and Western Sirmium (UNTAES)²⁵.

Contrarily, the United Nations Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL) began as a human rights verification mission before evolving into a multifaceted peacekeeping effort²⁶. The UN now pays more attention to human-rights work in such missions and more broadly in peacebuilding exercises, along with the upsurge of multidimensional (second-generation) peacekeeping and based on the learnings gained post the traumatic experience in Srebrenica along with Rwanda. This section will outline the conceptual evolution of the relationship between peacekeeping and human rights before reviewing pertinent real-world initiatives:

Normative Development

Secretary-General Kofi Annan convened a High-Level Panel in March 2000 and requested that it perform an exhaustive assessment of UN peace and security operations and provide a well-defined set of recommendations for further endeavours. In honour of panel chair Lakhdar Brahimi, the report is known as the Brahimi Report, for its direct, critical, and constructive viewpoint. The report recognised that a human rights component was necessary for a peace operation to be successful in peacebuilding. The significance of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) organising and executing the human rights-related elements of peace operations was also underlined in the report, with greater closeness²⁷.

24 *Supra* note 7.

25 *Id.*

26 *Id.*

27 *Id.*

Extreme humanitarian conditions were a source of concern for the Security Council when it came to international peace and security, even before the Brahimi Report. “The deliberate targeting of civilian populations or other protected persons and the committing of systematic, flagrant and widespread violations of international humanitarian and human rights law in situations of armed conflict may constitute a threat to international peace and security,”²⁸ the Security Council stated when discussing the protection of civilians. The importance of human rights in relation to peace and security was overtly stated in the Report prepared by the Secretary-General titled, “In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All” as well²⁹.

Certain resolutions on peacekeeping adopted by UNSC also acknowledge this. It also raised grave concern about ongoing attacks on civilians and humanitarian personnel, as well as about continuing and widespread sexual violence, in Resolution 1769 (2007), which also established the AU/UN Hybrid Mission in Darfur (UNAMID)³⁰. The Security Council also reiterated its concern regarding the situation in Darfur potentially having further negative effects on the rest of Sudan and the region. The Darfur situation was also deemed to be a threat to global peace and security³¹.

The intersection amongst human rights and UN peacekeeping has become more evident with the spread of human rights norms throughout the world and the growing recognition of international obligations to shield civilians from grave human rights abuses, as most recently demonstrated by the notion of “Responsibility to Protect.” It is further affirmed by the aforementioned Capstone Doctrine³².

28 Security Council resolution 1296 (2000) protection of civilians in armed conflict, U.N. Doc. S/RES/1296 (2000).

29 In larger freedom: Towards development, security, and human rights for all; report of the Secretary-General, U.N. Doc. A/59/2005 (2005).

30 Ved P. Nanda, “The Protection of Human Rights Under International Law: Will the U.N. Human Rights Council and the Emerging New Norm Responsibility to Protect Make a Difference” 34(3) *Denver Journal of International Law and Policy* 176 (2007).

31 *Id.*

32 B. Howe, B. Kondoch, et.al., “Normative and Legal Challenges to UN Peacekeeping Operations” 19 *Journal of*



The doctrine affirms that international human rights law is a fundamental component of the normative framework regarding UN peacekeeping operations. It stipulates that UN peacekeeping operations must adhere to the fullest respect for human rights and should endeavour to promote human rights by putting their mandates into practice³³.

The “Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations”, that thoroughly examines every aspect of peacekeeping, has also opined that the nations that provide troops and police must take all necessary steps regarding civilian protection, in obedience with the Charter, international humanitarian law, human rights law, and the central principles of peacekeeping, while taking into account the mandate, the conditions on the ground, and the applicable rules of engagement for the military and the police, respectively.³⁴

However, due to a disproportionate lack of staff and funding to carry out the ambitious mandates or the political priority of human rights-based warning, there has been a lack of coherence between theoretical mainstreaming and operations on the ground³⁵.

Ambiguities in Conceptual Context

It is important to consider that the fundamental ideas of humanitarianism, human rights promotion and protection, responsibility to protect, and civilian protection are applied in diverse and occasionally conflicting contexts, despite the broad agreement that the UN should act to improve the circumstances of civilians in conflict – is closely tied to the absence of political harmony. These ambiguities have a detrimental effect on operationalization and implementation, cause confusion, and erode political support.

The term “protection of civilians,” as an example, is often used by the Security Council in a variety of contexts. While it primarily refers to “physical protection,” it also seems to encompass other, more expansive viewpoints, such as human rights³⁶. For instance, MINUSCA was given the mandate

International Peacekeeping 1-2, 1-31 (2015).

33 Id.

34 Supra note 7.

35 Id.

36 Supra note 35.

to “protect, without prejudice to the primary responsibility of the CAR Authorities and the basic principles of peacekeeping, the civilian population under threat of physical violence” in Resolution 2448, which renewed MINUSCA’s mandate³⁷. Since 1999, when it first required UNAMSIL to protect civilians, the Council has essentially been using this formulation, with a few small but significant modifications. Previous resolutions adopted the phrase “threat of violence” instead of the phrase “imminent threat of violence,” presumably due to the term “imminent” causing ambiguity. and confusion³⁸.

It has been suggested that the Security Council employs the phrase “physical protection” when it covers the issue of civilian protection due to the wording used in the resolutions, specifically the use of phrases like “all necessary means,” “civilians under threat,” along with “within area of operation or presence,” as well as the essential concepts derived from the debate surrounding the first mandate³⁹, however, the Security Council does not state that clearly. Furthermore, other resolutions’ language makes references to ideas that go beyond simple physical protection. The resolutions’ standard disclaimers – “consistent with principles of peacekeeping,” “within their capacities and areas of deployment” – appear to restrict the scope of the mandate and foster more ambiguity, in effect, by allowing a peacekeeping mission to remain inactive in a situation wherein it is devoid of the necessary “capability.” On the surface, this makes sense, but it leaves room for ambiguity and provides no guarantee that the mission will be held responsible for such inaction⁴⁰.

The Impact of Political Support on Ability Of Peacekeeping Operations To Protect Human Rights

It is reasonable to assume that protecting civilians and human rights during peacekeeping operations

37 I. J. Wani, “United Nations Peacekeeping, Human Rights, and the Protection of Civilians”, in T. McNamee and M. Muyangwa (eds.), *The State of Peacebuilding in Africa* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2021).

38 Id.

39 Id.

40 Id.

has significant political support as well as a strong moral and normative commitment. However, shaky political support is not uncommon. This reflects how the protection mandate is changing as well as the general ambivalence that exists in the world today about human rights, sovereignty, and the extent of international intervention. It is clear that there are concerns about the protection of human rights at the UN Security Council, which establishes the mandate for a peacekeeping initiative⁴¹.

Further, it is only under rare circumstances that we are able to see an agreement among members regarding the parameters of mandates, and members typically have differing expectations and understandings of specific peacekeeping missions. That is unusual even though each mission should, in theory, be determined after considerable thought and consideration. Rather, the procedure is frequently done without putting in much thought, involving some political dealings and little attention put into how the mandate is to be carried out. During implementation, the secretariat is responsible for taking on the challenging task of dividing up limited resources among conflicting demands. This leads to confusion and insignificant exchange⁴².

As a result, it is critical to have a common political objective, a mutual understanding of the circumstances, and a clear understanding of the resources and degree of resolve is needed to support and further a politically supported solution. Presently, the lack of political support is foreshadowing majority of issues regarding the mandate to protect civilians, such as ambiguous boundaries, divided tasks and responsibilities, resource scarcity, and lack of political support during crucial implementation phases.

Recommendations For Improvement In The Normative And Policy Framework Regarding Peacekeeping

Put civilian protection and human rights at the forefront of UN peacekeeping efforts Once again

Despite a few notable successes, the UN has a
41 *Supra* note 35.
42 *Id.*

terrible record when it comes to defending human rights and safeguarding civilians. Mandates have, for the most part, promised more than they have delivered. Reports of attacks on civilians, sometimes with UN peacekeepers present, are far too common. There are also too many examples of the system either not reacting quickly enough or failing to stop threats against civilians. Comprehensive evaluations of UN peacekeeping operations reveal significant obstacles, including feeble and inconsistent political backing, vague and conventional understandings, divergent perspectives among major stakeholders regarding the extent of the mandate, systemic and structural inconsistencies, and insufficient resources and competencies. This record makes it abundantly evident that the current situation is untenable. UN peacekeeping needs to perform better, not just talk the talk.

Encourage political agreement on the civilian protection and human rights

It is incorrect to believe that the concepts of civilian protection and peacekeeping are sound. Equivocation, politicisation, and a fragile consensus persist on significant issues. Therefore, it is critical to have an open discussion to find new agreement on the goals, applicability, and extent of the mandate for protecting civilians and its role in peacekeeping, as well as a realistic evaluation of what peacekeeping can and cannot accomplish. In order to bridge the divide between the Security Council, which defines mandates, and other actors who share some of the responsibility for implementation, this complex issue needs to be addressed more openly in a process involving all key actors.

Examine the seeming contradiction between respect for national sovereignty and conventional peacekeeping:

It is necessary to find a solution to the seeming contradiction between the norms regarding human rights and the traditional principles of peacekeeping, especially with regard to the consent requirement and the fundamental deference to sovereignty. The host state's indefensible obstinacy perpetually impedes efforts to protect civilians by refusing requests for patrols, limiting the movement of peacekeepers, and prohibiting visits to locations of

human rights violations. In these situations, waiting for consent compromises the safety of the public. On the other hand, the host state’s primary duty to defend and protect human rights must be upheld and enforced with greater vigour. Without this, peacekeeping efforts will be limited and ultimately unsuccessful. The Security Council must show that it is determined to carry out its mandate. Profoundly worded resolutions and threats are insufficient, and if they are disregarded with impunity, they may even be detrimental to global order and the Security Council’s credibility.

Reduce the discrepancy between the resources required to ensure the success of the missions as per their mandates

As others have pointed out, the Security Council should seriously consider the operational consequences of mandates as well as the resources and other capabilities required to carry them out. Trying to do more with less is an ineffective approach. UN missions ought to prioritise establishing a more coherent link between the political, military, and diplomatic aspects of their mandate, in addition to maintaining an adequate staffing and supply level. Moreover, the UNSC ought to stay engaged throughout the entire mandate’s execution and, above all, keep providing political support—including to accountable heads of missions. To prevent neighbours and regional organisations from occasionally acting as spoilers, the Security Council should insist on adherence to established international norms, approach subsidiarity cautiously, and stay actively involved.

The UN must put in place measures to guarantee accountability

The right to supply troops for peace operations may be revoked or peacekeeper reimbursements may be severely reduced for states that do not hold their troops to the standards they have agreed upon. It is not appropriate to withhold the monthly compensation of peacekeepers who are directly involved in any way in an act involving human rights. If it is determined that reparations are required for crimes committed

by peacekeepers or losses resulting from the government’s negligence, penalties should also be subtracted from peacekeeping payments to the country providing the troops. In addition to the same the concept of immunity enshrined upon the peacekeepers must be reconsidered.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the evolution of UN peacekeeping underscores its critical role in global stability and conflict resolution over the past seven decades. Despite its noble mandate to safeguard civilians, promote human rights, and facilitate peace processes, UN peacekeeping operations have faced significant challenges and criticism, particularly concerning instances of sexual misconduct and human rights violations by peacekeepers.

Efforts to address these issues have been undertaken through policy reforms, increased accountability measures, and a growing emphasis on human rights within peacekeeping mandates. The establishment of guidelines, reports, and committees dedicated to addressing misconduct reflect the UN’s commitment to upholding its principles and preserving the integrity of peacekeeping missions.

However, there remains a gap between the ideal and the reality on the ground. Political support, resource allocation, and legal frameworks often fall short of ensuring effective civilian protection and human rights promotion. Ambiguities in mandates, competing priorities, and inadequate funding hinder the full realization of peacekeeping objectives.

Moving forward, it is imperative for the UN and its member states to prioritize civilian protection and human rights within peacekeeping efforts. This requires not only strengthening accountability mechanisms and addressing misconduct but also fostering political consensus, allocating sufficient resources, and clarifying mandates to ensure the effective implementation of peacekeeping operations. Only through concerted and sustained efforts can UN peacekeeping truly fulfill its mandate to promote peace, protect civilians, and uphold human rights in conflict-affected regions worldwide.

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