

Call for contributions: Member States

Member States are invited to respond to the guiding questions below relating to the review on the future of all forms of United Nations peace operations. Several questions are addressed specifically to current and former Host Countries and Troop- and Police-Contributing Countries to United Nations peace operations.

Questions for all Member States

1. What are the main challenges confronting peace operations today and what challenges are expected to be faced by peace operations in the future?

Peacekeeping operations are going through a moment of crisis. Over the last decade, the number of missions authorized by the UN Security Council decreased from 16 in 2011 to 11 in 2024. Since the establishment of MINUSCA (Central African Republic) in 2014, no new peacekeeping operation has been created by the UN. This scenario is a direct result of the geopolitical divisions that have shaped the positions of Council members, particularly the P5, often preventing decision-making, hindering the approval of new mandates, and weakening those under implementation.

Beyond the relative paralysis of the Security Council, there is a clear perception that peace missions are not adapted to the demands of contemporary reality. The dynamics of conflicts have evolved, becoming much more complex, involving the growing presence of extremist groups, transnational criminal networks, and the use of advanced military technologies by hostile actors, which increasingly challenge troop-contributing countries and the UN. In addition to these is the volatile and unstable contexts, often marked by humanitarian crises and protracted conflicts, as well as political and security fragmentation in host states. Thus, the traditional approach to crisis contexts—through robust, multidimensional mandates—is seen as less appropriate as such missions lack the flexibility, agility, and specialization needed to deal with a much more fragmented and constantly changing reality. The mismatch posed by robust missions is also linked to the growing budgetary constraints imposed on the UN, since such missions require significant commitments of financial, human, and material resources.

The weakening of mandates and the perception that missions are inadequate to the needs on the ground have aggravated difficulties in the relationship between missions and local governments, which have increasingly voiced criticism, arguing that missions should act more directly in supporting internal security, including combating armed groups. On the other hand, private security companies have emerged as an alternative for these governments, who are thereby in a better position to negotiate with missions, influence mandates, or even withdraw consent, as occurred with MINUSMA. There is also a view that host countries are weary of the presence of foreign actors on their territory, reinforcing rejection of UN peace missions and a preference for addressing their security challenges at the local/regional level.

The emergence of new technologies has also posed challenges for peace missions, transforming both how they operate in the field and the very nature of the threats they face. In a context marked by intense connectivity, rapid circulation of information, and increasingly sophisticated technological resources, missions are required to incorporate innovations that enhance their effectiveness, such as remote monitoring tools, artificial intelligence, and data analysis. Technology has thus been used as both a force multiplier and a facilitator for mandate implementation. On the other hand, the malicious use of such technologies increases the risks faced by troops in the field, through, inter alia, drones, cyberattacks, disinformation campaigns.

As future challenges, one may expect the proliferation of transnational conflicts, on land or at sea, involving multiple non-state actors with diverging interests; increased geopolitical volatility, in which global multipolarity and competition among major powers are likely to heighten instability; intensification of hybrid warfare, disinformation campaigns, fake news and hate speech, use of drones and artificial intelligence by hostile actors—requiring adequate training and doctrines for peace forces; growing difficulties in negotiating sustainable peace agreements; increased financial and political pressures on the UN and its member states, affecting the predictability and continuity of missions; and the need for continuous and comprehensive training of personnel deployed in peace operations.

2. How can United Nations peace operations adapt in response to current and future challenges (e.g., in terms of political and substantive work, mandates, operational and administrative requirements, capacities)?

The response to the main challenges facing peace missions depends on the concrete commitment of States — especially the permanent members of the Security Council — to the pursuit of political solutions to conflicts. Without such engagement, the UN's efforts will remain limited, weakening the legitimacy and effectiveness of its operations. The fragility of current mandates also directly impacts the influence missions can exert on the ground, as well as the importance attributed to them by host States and other local actors. Missions may come to be seen as inoperative or irrelevant, which undermines the political and social support necessary for their success, limits access to strategic information, and compromises the security and mobility of deployed contingents.

In the absence of more proactive action by the Security Council, it is important that missions are able to demonstrate concrete progress so that both governments and populations can perceive the benefits of their presence on the ground. This also helps to avoid the resort to anti-mission rhetoric adopted by governments in certain contexts. For this purpose, coordination and direct contact between missions, governments, and local communities — as well as clear objectives and the assurance of adequate resources for the execution of mandated activities — are indispensable.

It is also essential that, in drafting mandates, the Security Council does not neglect tasks aimed at addressing the root causes of conflicts. The prominence of civilian protection tasks in mandates, for example, raises expectations among local populations, requires high resource investment to succeed, and often places peacekeepers at risk without effectively addressing the origins of the conflicts. In this regard, Brazil believes that the preventive dimension of civilian protection should be prioritized. This requires a broad strategy to create a protective environment. In addition to compliance with International Humanitarian Law, relevant elements include, *inter alia*, dialogue with local populations, coordination with humanitarian actors, and the quality of information produced. It is essential to avoid excessively broad interpretations of the concept of protection of civilians, which could raise doubts about the objectives of the use of force, associate the United Nations with one party to the conflict, or even alter the conflict's dynamics, including by escalating tensions. While the protection of civilians is an important component of some contemporary peace missions, it should not become the *raison d'être* of peacekeeping nor should it be part of every mission's mandate. The Security Council, when designing mandates, should conduct a case-by-case assessment, based on available resources and concrete circumstances on the ground, in order to establish mandates that are adequate and sustainable.

Police contributions must also be recognized as an important part of peace missions, since supporting and strengthening local security forces is essential for the transition to sustainable peace. At the same time, in implementing civilian protection mandates, police units are often better suited than military components — for example, in arresting criminal leaders in IDP camps, conducting operations against gangs, or managing public order. Given the nature of many current security problems faced by States, police forces enjoy the advantage of being able to act more flexibly and precisely.

At the same time, missions should also undertake political efforts to resolve conflicts, such as conciliation and mediation, as they target the root causes of hostilities. From this perspective comes the defense of including peacebuilding elements from the outset of mandates. Peacekeeping and peacebuilding actions should be carried out simultaneously, not only as transitional elements. Peacebuilding activities should be a priority at all stages of peacekeeping operations. Peacekeepers can act as the first peacebuilders, helping to ensure the consolidation of conditions necessary for the withdrawal of such operations.

From a more operational perspective, adapting peace missions to current and future challenges will also require: clearly defined goals, objectives, and exit strategies; gender parity, with the integration of more women in all roles — from military and police to mediators and leaders — thus improving access and support for local women, facilitating communication with survivors of sexual violence and abuse, helping to create a safer environment for women, encouraging peacekeepers to better understand women's roles, and expanding the range of skills available in missions; enhancement of operational capacities through the use of drones for reconnaissance, satellites for monitoring, digital platforms for

communication with communities, geospatial intelligence, and advanced logistics; innovative approaches to civilian protection, through effective cooperation with key actors, including the host State, UN agencies, NGOs, and the International Committee of the Red Cross; more nimble logistical and administrative processes, reducing excessive bureaucracy and delays; clear definition of performance indicators and codes of conduct for troop contingents; promotion of an institutional culture of innovation, risk tolerance, and continuous learning; scenario-based planning, involving experts, civil society, and local communities; and operational planning, considering the following aspects for deployed peace forces: employment of agile and flexible military units; ability to operate in or influence maritime environments in order to support land-based actions; protection of deployed peacekeepers; intelligence activities; use of aerial assets; improved use of technology in communications, security, and medical/evacuation operations (MEDEVAC/CASEVAC); deployment of French-speaking military and police personnel; and commitment to meeting the targets set in the 2018–2028 Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy for women’s participation in peace missions.

3. What could United Nations peace operations be expected and mandated to do in the future? Under what conditions are United Nations peace operations least likely to be effective in achieving their objectives? Under what conditions are United Nations peace operations most likely to achieve their objectives?

It is necessary for mandates to be clear and objective, as well as to take into account the resources available for the assigned tasks. If these parameters are met, peace missions can be expected to continue working on the protection of civilians and support for institutional stability; on the promotion of free elections and democratic processes, with attention to the future sustainability of the host country’s government; on the adaptability and flexibility of the local government in addressing new threats; on post-conflict reconstruction and the strengthening of governance; and on the promotion of political processes aimed at diplomatic solutions and lasting peace agreements.

Among the conditions that reduce the effectiveness of peace missions are: lack of local or international political support; vague, unrealistic, or overly ambitious mandates; mistrust on the part of the local population, which may lead peacekeeping troops to be perceived as occupying forces or as parties to the conflict; in scenarios of asymmetric warfare, where multiple armed groups operate and the distinction between combatants and civilians is unclear, peace forces risk being seen as part of the conflict, thereby losing the trust of the population; insufficient resources, which limit the missions’ capacity to respond and their overall impact; and deployment in an active conflict setting, without a ceasefire or willingness to negotiate, which makes intervention extremely dangerous and challenging, heightening the physical security risks faced by peacekeepers.

Conversely, the conditions that enhance the effectiveness of peace missions include: political consensus, engagement of the local community, and the provision of adequate resources; a clear and feasible mandate with political support from member states, especially Security

Council members, specifying the rules of engagement and the mission's objectives; strong doctrine and leadership emphasizing the protection of civilians, when appropriate, and adaptation to local conditions; and accurate registration of the local population as an essential factor for success in operations against asymmetric threats.

More broadly, measures to reduce poverty and unemployment, investments in child and youth education, and psychosocial support initiatives are essential to prevent recruitment by criminal or terrorist groups.

4. What could be the role of partnerships, with regional organizations, international financial institutions, or other actors, in future United Nations peace operations? What are the opportunities and challenges presented by partnerships, and what principles should underpin them?

Partnerships can complement UN actions or serve as a preparatory stage for a future UN mission, as is the case with some operations led by the African Union or by African sub-regional organizations, offering advantages such as greater deployment agility and lower operational costs.

Brazil was one of the co-sponsors of Security Council Resolution 2719, adopted in December 2023, which proposes a model of partial financing, with UN resources, for operations conducted by the African Union. However, in the case of operations carried out by sub-regional organizations, the lack of a well-established framework to ensure compliance with international humanitarian law and international human rights law is a problem that cannot be overlooked.

Many missions implemented by these organizations operate under more robust mandates for the use of force, which raises concerns—especially in counter-terrorism actions, which often jeopardize the protection of civilians and the respect for humanitarian norms. In extremely complex contexts, there is a significant risk that such missions may become part of the problem. It is also worth noting that possible partnerships with regional or sub-regional organizations for the protection of civilians may create problems regarding the perception of UN impartiality—fundamental to its credibility and legitimacy on the ground—or even implicate it in violations.

There is also the case of missions based on ad hoc coalitions, such as the current Multinational Security Support Mission in Haiti (MSS). Although sometimes authorized by the Security Council, these operations face even greater challenges: they have a low level of institutionalization, problems in command and control structures, uncertainties regarding financing, difficulty in political coordination, and often an undefined doctrine. While they may play a relevant role in certain situations, such missions may suffer from legitimacy problems and lack clear accountability mechanisms and a solid institutional foundation.

5. Please share any other observations that may benefit the review.

There has been debate about employing peace missions to combat terrorism or other transnational crimes, including opening greater scope for the use of offensive forces. Indeed, there are examples where the limited use of force was an important component in supporting a political strategy and finding a way out of violent conflict. However, a number of factors indicate that this would not be the most appropriate path to restore the role of the UN or peace missions in maintaining international peace and security. There is a risk that missions making more proactive use of force, even under UN authority, could incur human rights violations, as well as in the increase in cases of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and harm to civilians during operations. Moreover, there is also the risk that the UN may come to be seen by local populations as a protector of authoritarian regimes, damaging its reputation and the mission's potential for action.

Transition processes have also been gaining renewed importance in recent years, appearing as one of the main elements highlighted by States in the Pact for the Future. This concern is consistent with the notion that missions should not remain in the field indefinitely, as well as with the need to sustain the gains achieved during the presence of troops. Transitions carry even greater weight in a context where the efficiency of peace missions is being questioned, since long deployments without evident and sustainable results—which may be immediately lost after the mission's withdrawal—generate further doubts about the purpose of this instrument.

In this regard, some elements that may contribute to the success of transition and drawdown strategies include: intensifying efforts to build the capacity and strengthen local institutions; implementing Quick Impact Projects (QIPs); social reintegration of ex-combatants as an integral part of the DDR process; security sector reform (SSR) with emphasis on training and human rights; reducing the military component through a temporary expansion of the police component and investment in strengthening the local police.

Additional suggestions include: the need for the review of all forms of peace missions to consider the growing importance of preventive diplomacy as an essential means of action to prevent the outbreak of violence; the importance of investing in continuous training and the development of local leadership to ensure the sustainability of missions, helping communities to build their own future; the importance of expanding strategic communication to strengthen public understanding and support for peace operations—also crucial for detecting and combating false information, disinformation, and hate speech; and the need to engage with political decision-makers to foster the inclusion of civil society in the peace process, thereby enhancing the legitimacy and effectiveness of actions on the ground.

Questions for Member States that are hosting United Nations peace operations or have hosted them in the past

6. From your national perspective, having hosted one or more United Nations peace operations, what are the most critical considerations and conditions for success?

7. Based on your country's experience, what lessons learned should inform future United Nations peace operations?

8. What positive and/or negative examples can you share in terms of how current or past United Nations peace operations have implemented their mandates in, or related to, your country/context?

Questions for current and former Troop and Police Contributing Countries

9. What factors shaped your country's decision to become a T/PCC to United Nations peace operations? What factors and considerations will determine whether your country will remain an active T/PCCs in future United Nations peace operations?

Among the elements that motivated Brazil's participation in peace missions, the following should be emphasized: commitment to international peace and security, as well as to the peaceful settlement of disputes and to multilateralism; the projection and strengthening of the country's international cooperation ties; international cooperation in the effort to provide humanitarian assistance; opportunities for training and experience for national forces, improving preparation for peace operations and enabling personnel to face complex challenges; exchange of knowledge and practices when working with international organizations and in interagency operations; opportunities to test, evaluate, compare, and update military doctrine, as well as the military equipment employed; improvement of skills in leadership, planning, and decision-making in complex and multifaceted contexts; projection of regional leadership, strengthening the country's international image and diplomatic influence; and the possibility of leveraging the Defense Industrial Base (BID), through international exposure of the equipment used by troops.

The continuity of Brazil's contribution will depend on a series of factors that will weigh on the State's position, based on political-strategic analysis and government decision. Among the relevant elements for such analysis are: availability of resources; political support to sustain involvement in peace missions; assessment of mission results, in order to analyze the efficiency of the efforts undertaken and the resources employed; the level of complexity and risk of the mission; and the level of military capability available to mobilize, train, equip, and sustain high-quality contingents abroad.

10. How would you assess the degree to which your views as a T/PCC were, or are, taken into consideration with regard to the mandates of United Nations peace operations and their implementation?

The influence of countries in defining or updating peace mission mandates is, above all, restricted to members of the Security Council. Despite the existence of consultation mechanisms with T/PCCs, as well as meetings of Force Commanders, the opinions expressed are merely recommendations, with the final decision on what should be included in the mandates remaining at the discretion of Security Council members.

This concentration of power is evident, for example, when countries such as Brazil — with broad operational experience and a long tradition of participation in peace missions, but outside the Security Council or without a large number of deployed troops — are left on the margins of mandate debates.

It would, therefore, be advisable to broaden the discussion of mandates with T/PCCs, particularly in the case of mandate renewals in which they are already concretely engaged.

11. From your perspective as a T/PCC, what are the most pressing challenges confronting the United Nations peace operations that you are involved in?

Although Brazil does not currently have a deployed contingent, the experiences gathered over time allow for the identification of some particular challenges in peace missions:

- The security risks faced by contingents have increased significantly due to the threat of terrorist groups, criminal organizations, and armed groups that frequently use disinformation, false information, and hate speech as weapons;
- Mandates that are unclear or excessively broad can create uncertainty and hinder action on the ground;
- Shortages of logistical resources and technical support directly affect operational capacity and the well-being of troops;
- Difficulties in coordination with other mission components can compromise the overall effectiveness of the intervention.

12. Based on your experience deploying peacekeepers, what capabilities and support would be needed for deployments in the future?

Robust physical and mental preparation of troops; individual technical enhancement (weapons, equipment, self-defense, communications, and health); strengthening of pre-deployment training in International Humanitarian Law (IHL), human rights, conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV), sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), conflict mediation/negotiation, local culture, and security; training focused on tactics for high-complexity environments, including combat in densely populated urban areas, asymmetric threats (such as improvised explosive devices – IEDs), and familiarity with surveillance and intelligence technologies; training in modern and interoperable equipment that ensures the

safety and effectiveness of troops; encouragement of the study of UN working languages to enable more fluid and empathetic communication with other mission members and local communities; engineering support for infrastructure reconstruction; specialized police units for training local security forces, crowd control, and law enforcement, strengthening the rule of law; psychological support and well-being mechanisms for peacekeepers; preparation of peace mission personnel to provide advice on international legal protection; improvement of capabilities to rapidly mobilize and transport large contingents of troops and equipment to remote operational areas; and specific military units crucial for adaptability and effectiveness:

- Quick Reaction Force (QRF) with robust logistics;
- Wheeled mechanized infantry battalions;
- Units with High-Mobility Light Tactical Vehicles (HMLTV);
- Platoons with 50% women;
- Explosive Ordnance Disposal Units (EOD);
- Attack helicopters and tactical transport aircraft;
- IED search and detection teams integrated into infantry and engineering units;
- Supporting units such as medical, engineering, signals, aviation, etc.;
- Counter-Rocket, Artillery, and Mortar capability (C-RAM);
- Use of solar panels for energy sustainability and reduced fuel consumption.

Brazil believes it is essential to reiterate the relevance of peace missions. Peacekeeping operations are an extremely flexible and relatively low-cost instrument to support political transitions and promote reconciliation. They contribute to creating space for dialogue, protecting vulnerable groups, strengthening institutions that sustain peace and good governance, as well as preventing the escalation of armed conflicts and reducing their effects on neighboring countries. These operations also consolidate the UN's role as the main international actor in the promotion of peace and security.

There are, however, limits to what peace missions can achieve. In this sense, it is unavoidable to return to the idea that there is no solution to armed conflicts and/or security crises outside the political sphere. Reiterating the importance of the political engagement of the parties involved, as well as of the Security Council, in favor of a lasting solution to conflicts is one of the foundations of Brazil's position regarding peace missions.

Recognizing the centrality of the UN and strengthening its institutional capacity are also essential. The UN remains the only institution with the necessary capacity to mobilize resources, finance, and deploy missions with a favorable cost-benefit ratio. Moreover, the organization benefits from decades of accumulated knowledge in peacekeeping operations, and it continues to enjoy an unparalleled level of international legitimacy.

It is important, however, that the Organization updates itself, developing greater coordination capacity to work efficiently both internally and with regional organizations. It is also relevant that mandates be more consistent with contemporary limitations. In the current context of geopolitical polarization and drastic budget cuts, there is no room for overly extensive mandates. New mandates need to be clear and objective and must include provisions for the resources required to carry out the assigned tasks. In mission planning, it is also important to define a final goal to be achieved within a given timeframe, in order to ensure the possibility of assessing the mission's success or failure and to prevent its implementation from being prolonged indefinitely.

The promotion of the Women, Peace and Security agenda remains central to Brazil's position in peace missions. It is essential to recognize the importance of guaranteeing women's full, equal, meaningful, and safe participation in all stages of peace processes, as well as at all levels and in all sectors of peace missions. In the context of the 25th anniversary of UNSC Resolution 1325 (2000), and of attacks on the principles underlying the agenda, the issue takes on even greater importance. It is essential to advance the implementation of the provisions of the resolutions on this agenda and to avoid setbacks. Local efforts aimed at rebuilding the social fabric, which often rely on the work carried out by local women, must also be valued. Political and financial support to grassroots women's organizations — which are generally at the forefront of rebuilding communities, promoting reconciliation, and providing essential services after conflict — must be strengthened.

The concept that sustainable peace requires comprehensive approaches to security remains valid, encompassing the root causes of violence as well as the social and economic situation on the ground. Effective peacekeeping models require an approach that integrates political, security, and sustainable development dimensions. This can be achieved through an adequate combination of peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities, which must be carried out simultaneously, not merely as elements of transition processes. Peacebuilding activities should be a priority at all stages of peacekeeping operations. Peacekeepers can act as the first peacebuilders, thus paving the way for sustainable peace.

Within this comprehensive approach, it is also essential to emphasize the centrality of conflict prevention in the pursuit of sustainable peace and to stress the importance of adopting proactive measures to mitigate the underlying causes of conflicts. Prevention strategies must be fully based on national priorities. It is crucial to highlight the cost-effectiveness of prevention initiatives. Conflict prevention is, in fact, one of the most economical and efficient ways to save lives, protect livelihoods, and safeguard the gains achieved through sustainable development.