

## **Call for contributions: Member States. Norway.**

*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.*

### **Reply to call for contributions to the UN peace operations review**

Norway is grateful for this opportunity to contribute to the ongoing review on the future of all forms of UN peace operations. The pressure on multilateral cooperation, international law and the UN, including multilateral responses to global peace and security challenges, is unprecedented in recent decades. The peace operations review, in tandem with the greater UN80 Initiative reform process, will be important to shore up, revitalize and strengthen the peace and security pillar of the United Nations. For Norway, an effective, well-functioning and impactful UN, including its peace and security pillar, is a critical national interest. We strongly support the Secretary-General's leadership of the UN reform process and encourage him to make ambitious and far-reaching reform proposals, also as they relate to peace operations, to ensure the UN's continued relevance and cornerstone role in global peace and security. Norway as a member state will lend him every support in this endeavor.

### **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?

1. Need for clearer and more targeted PO mandates and improved coordination mechanisms

United Nations peace operations face a complex set of structural and operational challenges that may undermine their effectiveness and credibility. A recurring challenge is the mismatch between missions' mandates, which in recent decades have become far longer and more complex (often referred to as "Christmas tree mandates"), and the resources, which have not expanded at nearly the same rate, if at all. Missions' mandates now often encompass an extensive list of tasks – ranging from political support and humanitarian aid to security and state-building – which frequently lack clear prioritization. The Secretary-General's recent review of UN mandate implementation demonstrates this clearly. While contributing to lasting peace requires close interplay between peacekeeping, peacebuilding and peacemaking, as well as with long-term development and often humanitarian aid under the so-called triple nexus approach, simply adding new objectives and tasks to a mission's mandate has proven an ineffective way of achieving this.

Extensive, unclear and unprioritized mandates are difficult, often impossible, for missions to deliver on, create unrealistic expectations, and limit impact – especially when combined with constrained financial and human resources. We believe clearer and more targeted mandates for the mission as such, and improving mechanisms for close coordination and cooperation with UN Country Teams and other actors to deliver on the peacebuilding, humanitarian and development components that are necessary for lasting peace, is a key part of the solution to this problem. Furthermore, peacekeeping operations are often deployed in states characterized by a fragile political environment. When a mission's goals differ from those of the host state, or when there is poor communication and lack of openness, trust deteriorates. The mission's legitimacy may also be undermined by inconsistencies in the education, training and equipment of peacekeepers, as well as limited interoperability between contributing countries. The lack of unified standards can reduce mission cohesion and effectiveness. Strategic communication (StratCom) is essential to clarify intentions, strengthen relations with host state and address mis- and disinformation.

Additionally, the lack of a well-defined exit strategy raises concerns about the long-term sustainability of peacekeeping operations once they are concluded. Cases such as the MINUSMA withdrawal in Mali illustrate how abrupt mission-endings can lead to governance vacuums. In some contexts, overreliance on peacekeepers may unintentionally further delay national responsibility and institutional development in host states.

## 2. Need to strengthen UN missions' ability to address dynamic and complex threats, including hybrid threats

In the coming years, peacekeeping operations are likely to face increasingly complex and dynamic threats. Climate-related crises can affect mission effectiveness and create space for armed non-state actors to expand their influence. Simultaneously, emerging technologies pose new security threats. Drones, cyberattacks, and disinformation campaigns or other hybrid threats may challenge both the safety of civilians, UN personnel, and the legitimacy of missions. UN missions need to be better equipped to address dynamic and complex threats, including hybrid threats. The increasingly transnational nature of the drivers of conflict, such as international organized crime and terrorism, further causes challenges for peace operations, especially in areas with already porous borders.

## 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)?

### 1. Mandates

UN peace operations should **support a political solution to a conflict**. UN peace operations should set out with a clear goal of what they wish to achieve in a conflict or post-conflict setting and a clear and measurable plan of how to get there, as well as a defined end state. Plans for transition to other types of peace operations or regional/ country offices should be in place from the start. Peacebuilding efforts must go hand in hand with peacekeeping efforts, as well as long-term development efforts and humanitarian assistance, in line with the triple nexus approach. The full, equal and meaningful inclusion of women, meaningful inclusion of youth, and broad inclusion of civil society are crucial, to ensure the whole of society is represented.

UN peace operations, and in particular peacekeeping operations, have developed from large multidimensional missions in the last couple of decades towards more narrow mandates with less resources. In the current geopolitical landscape, this shift may be necessary. However, this reorientation ultimately means that missions will be smaller, and more specialized, much as we see with military operations in other organizations or national operations. Peace operations will have a need to modernize in line with this new reality.

## 2. Training for peacekeepers

Given that peace operations will have to become more specialized and focus on a few select core tasks in every mission, the **peacekeepers of the future must also be better trained, equipped and specialized** to be able to solve the tasks they are given. Tailored training and capacity building will be important in this regard.

In relation to pre-deployment training for police personnel, we see benefit in making Job Specific Training (JST) in “Police Monitoring, Mentoring and Advising”, “Community-oriented Policing”, and “Police Capacity-building and Development”, mandatory for all PCCs.

Specialized police teams can also be an effective contribution to an operation. For most efficient use of Specialized Police Teams (SPT), the PCC who deploys a SPT, should provide the SPT with their own budget, either through the Contributing Country, the Mission or a Donor country.

## 3. Strengthen integration of civilian, military and police components of operations

In addition, field operations would benefit from **improved integration of civilian, military and police components at mission level**. Integrated planning of civilian, military and police components in missions should have a common and regularly updated strategy, develop joint operational plans, as well as flexibility to adjust those plans rapidly as the situation changes.

## 4. WPS and women’s participation in POs

As conflicts affect different segments of society differently, gender perspectives/analyses should be included in development and implementation of POs. A gender perspective is necessary to enable us to respond better to situations, increase the likelihood of success and handle the challenges in POs. An important tool to implementing the women, peace and security agenda is to increase participation by women in UN peace operations. For example, it is often easier for

women to establish contact with and gain access to local settings that are dominated by women and thus help to develop broader situational awareness. Norwegian personnel are expected to play a part in ensuring that local authorities and international forces respect everyone's rights in the area of operations. This can encourage the integration of a gender perspective and improve the extent to which women's and girls' security needs are met. Greater participation by women is also a goal in itself.

#### 5. New and innovative technologies

Further, peace operations should become better at integrating **new and innovative technologies**, including in the cyber domain, to tackle hybrid threats, disinformation and make use of tools for artificial intelligence where appropriate. Missions should be empowered to develop capability and capacities to respond to challenges generated in this domain, but today, for a variety of reasons, peacekeeping missions are lagging in terms of utilization of technological means. Better use of technology could strengthen reporting, monitoring and analyzing, improve situational awareness, automate base protection, and help with other crucial missions' tasks, creating better security and enabling success. The UN should seek partnerships with both Member States, but also directly with commercial partners to explore how technological means can transform and improve the way we do peacekeeping. These efforts should include eco-friendly and sustainable approaches. In this vein, there is also a need for peace operations to improve their strategic communication. Several missions are currently struggling with mistrust from the population due to perceived expectation breaches due to not being informed about the mission's actual tasks, mis- and disinformation campaigns - both intentional and unintentional - without being able to respond to and counter such information in a timely and meaningful manner. Deliberate strategies are required to respond, handle and at times counter harmful or false information. Training of personnel and a focus on community engagement with local communities are crucial elements in this effort. Shortening the bureaucratic procedures around approval of messaging is also needed.

If the UN is to implement new technology, adapt to current and future challenges, revise past peace operations, and modernize the organization, there is a need for improvement in the UN's internal communication as well as its command and control (C2) systems. A robust internal structure must be established to track mission development over time and ensure that lessons learned are not forgotten but actively applied to improve planning, training, and ongoing operations. Without such coordination and C2 mechanisms, troop-contributing countries (TCCs) risk being excluded from key processes, limiting their ability to contribute effectively. In turn, the UN may repeat past mistakes and struggle to remain relevant in an increasingly complex and evolving conflict landscape.

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?

### 1. Legitimacy, credibility and ownership

The cornerstone of UN Peacekeeping is the three principles of consent, impartiality and non-use of force, except in self defence or in protection of the mandate. It is crucial that these principles are upheld also in future peace operations, as well as being the foundation of current operations. In addition, three additional factors are required for mission success: Legitimacy, credibility, and national and local ownership. If a mission is not perceived as legitimate, operating with credibility, or trusted by the local and national host country, it will not be effective, even if it abides by the three original peacekeeping principles.

Ultimately, the lead role in advancing lasting political solutions for a conflict rest with the involved government(s) in the country/ region, and not with the UN or other actors. As mentioned, peace operations are most likely to achieve their objectives and be successful where there is a political will to solve the conflict, and with strong support, from the Security Council, from the international community and the host country, as well as a clear objective of the end state of an operation. In addition, once established, missions must gain the support and trust of local populations. This demands clear strategies for community engagement, strategic communication, and outreach to local populations and civil society. The police component of POs may play a central role in reaching these objectives.

### 2. Improve mechanisms to adjust POs to evolving situation

To succeed in a rapidly shifting conflict environment, peace operations, and particularly peacekeeping operations, should be set up with a larger degree of flexibility, adaptability and scalability, enabling them to adjust quickly to an evolving situation on the ground. Contingency plans should be strengthened for different types of scenarios, as well as clear transition and exit strategies.

### 3. Maintain focus on protection of civilians

The protection of civilians must remain a core task of the UN peace operations. However, we must look at the wider understanding of the term, as protection goes beyond physical protection from harm to also include conflict prevention, sustainable development efforts, and ensuring well-being for civilians, including providing safe spaces and preventing and responding to CRSV. The UNs role in promoting human rights should also be retained. As mentioned above, many of these tasks do not need be delivered directly by the mission itself, but by the UN Country Teams, other development actors, NGOs and civil society organizations – and of course by national governments. They are all vital components in sustainable peace.

### 4. Supportive role of UN peace operations

One area in which we can foresee the UN and peace operations should continue - and perhaps expand - their role, is in the supportive role. UN is uniquely positioned to be able to provide support for other missions, organizations or states due to their wide geographical network and knowledge of regions and conflict areas. The supportive role can take many forms, and include partnering with organizations, providing logistic capacities and support, manage and provide equipment and capabilities and by providing financial support, to mention some. Each partnership and supportive role would have to be designed on a case-by-case basis, depending on the need of the specific situation/ partner.

In addition to the traditional land-based UN operations, a larger role of the UN at the seas could be looked into, as suggested in the “The Future of Peacekeeping, New Models, and Related Capabilities” report. There are a number of unresolved disputes at sea relating to claims of territorial water and resources, piracy, human trafficking and more. The UN could have a role in monitoring and reporting in these areas, as well as a preventive role in some contexts like trafficking and piracy in close cooperation with other international organizations, as for instance Interpol, but also including regional and national actors.

**Regarding conditions under which UN POs are least likely to achieve their objectives,** we highlight peace operations with too broad mandate and lacking resources allocated, lacking political will of relevant stakeholders to achieve peace, and if the mission is not supported by peacemaking, peacebuilding, development and humanitarian efforts by other entities, inside and outside the UN. Additionally, operations that are not able to adapt to new circumstances and quickly alter plans may lose trust and credibility, undermining their chances of success.

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?

To ensure continued effectiveness and relevance of UN peace operations as instruments to maintain international peace and security, we see it as imperative to bring them in line with current realities and requirements. Engagement with partners and stakeholders across all levels is of paramount importance to ensure that peace operations can effectively implement their mandates.

In addition to a proactive approach to keep buy-in from host nations, the UN should also engage more actively with neighboring states as well as regional and sub-regional organizations, which in many contexts may have a positive impact on regional security dynamics. While recognizing comparative advantage of the UN peace operations in various scenarios, the UN should also support peacekeeping efforts by relevant regional organizations, in particular the African Union. Norway supports the implementation of Security Council resolution 2719 for the AU Support

and Stabilization Mission in Somalia.

In addition to state authorities, the UN peace operations should also listen to the voices of **local actors**, ensure **full, equal and meaningful inclusion of women**, and empower **youth**, in line with the WPS and YPS agendas.

**International Financial Institutions** can play a very important role in addressing key conflict drivers like poverty and unemployment, as well as improving state capacity, all prerequisites for sustainable peace. Better mechanisms for coordination, joint analysis and analysis-sharing, and more reconciled objectives and mandates would help improve synergies.

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

**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?*

*Not relevant.*

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

*Not relevant.*

*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?)*

*Not relevant.*

**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?

Norway has a longstanding tradition to participate in international peace and conflict resolution efforts. At the establishment of the UN after the second world war, Norway decided to contribute to peace and stability efforts, due to witnessing the devastating effects of war.

In Norway's recently adopted national security strategy, a world that seeks solutions based on international law is defined as one of Norway's fundamental security interests. International law and binding international cooperation form the foundation for peace and international security, and remain our first line of defence. International law provides the basis for resolving conflicts and safeguarding humanity's common interests. For a small country like Norway, this is particularly important. International law provides protection against the unregulated use of force.

It follows that Norway considers the UN peace operations to be a very important tool, and we plan to continue to contribute to POs in the future.

For a multilateral system to work, it is important that all parties contribute to capacity. However, we acknowledge that the UN is at a crossroads, and that there is a need for reform to stay relevant. The UN80 process is an important step in this direction. Norway is a strong believer in that the UN have had and continues to play a crucial role in international peace and security issues.

Norway plans to continue to contribute to UN peace operations for the foreseeable future in a variety of ways. This includes, but is not limited to, deploying military and police personnel, offering courses and training, providing gratis personnel, through research, financially and by providing political support. However, a substantively changed security environment at home could impact on the ability of our country to contribute. In the future, Norway's participation or contribution to POs will continue to be based on thorough assessment on a case by case basis of the particular operation and conflict situation, including on the capacity/capability needs of an operation, mission mandates and effectiveness to achieve peace and stability in the particular context, availability of relevant personnel and other resources, as well as security risks.

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?

As a small T/PCC we rarely seek to influence mandate renewals to any larger extent, except during periods when we have been an elected member of the Security Council. In Norway's view, TCCs, even with a small contribution of troops, have valuable experience that could positively contribute to improvement of mandates. We believe it would be valuable with a mechanism to consult TCCs.

Several large contributors of personnel to UN peace operations are represented in the UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). Involving the PBC more closely in the development of mission mandates, including by encouraging the Security Council to a greater degree than now requesting the advice of the PBC on mandate development and renewal, could be one important channel for T/PCC views to be heard and taken into greater consideration. The PBC, with its

clear focus on peacebuilding, root causes/conflict drivers, and sustaining peace, could contribute to qualitatively better mandates for UN peace operations more generally as well.

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?

Norway is currently involved in two PKOs, UNMISS and UNTSO. The challenges facing these two missions are vastly different.

In **UNMISS**, the most pressing challenge is the escalation of violence in the past few months, due to political instability, lack of good governance, and mistrust within the government. The cease-fire implementation is weak, and the political processes are failing to implement the peace agreement.

We see that the spread of mis- and disinformation also impacts peacekeepers, as false rumors are spread about the actions of peacekeepers and endangering their safety. In addition, the spread of such information can lead to mistrust in the mission in general.

The impact of climate change is severe in UNMISS, seeing how both the floods and the droughts are getting more intensive and more difficult to manage. These natural occurrences impact the missions' ability to reach local communities, move between locations, and deliver supplies and support in remote areas. There is a need for more air transport and dedicated capacities to mitigate this issue. With climate change, regional instability is further compounded by a complex conflict landscape, which presents significant challenges for UNMISS. Several armed non-state actors, youth groups, and sub-national organizations contribute to fragmentation of the conflict, often creating a highly complex and difficult-to-manage situation for peacekeepers.

For UN Police, including Norway's IPOs, we have noted a lack of monitoring and follow-up in regard to capacity building activities, particularly evaluation and monitoring mechanisms to assess impact. This is a concern, considering the high number of capacity building and training activities that are conducted in the mission.

For **UNTSO**, the key challenges lie in the unstable geopolitical landscape in which the mission operates. The dynamics in the Middle East are ever shifting, highlighted by the events of the past couple of years. UNTSOs' role in monitoring peace and ceasefire agreements and preventing isolated incidents from escalating is under pressure from a changed regional balance.

Norway have also deployed three International Observers (IOs) from the Norwegian Police Service to **UNVMC in Colombia**. The most pressing challenges that we see are the escalation of violence across regions and threats against social leaders and human rights defenders, which threaten the implementation of the Peace Agreement. In particular, the lack of a ceasefire between the ELN and the Colombian Government raises concerns.

However, for all three missions, the overarching issue today is the lack of appropriate funding, and the threat of further funding cuts. Significant cuts in funding will greatly impact the missions' ability to perform their mandated tasks.

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

Generally, and historically, the support and capabilities that have been offered to assist the deployment of peacekeepers have been satisfactory from our viewpoint, and we have not experienced major issues or concerns with the way the UN has assisted in this matter.

A few areas could still benefit from improvement. Firstly, there is a need for more comprehensive training, both pre-deployment and in mission. Training should be mandatory, standardized, and context-specific in the areas of human rights, protection of civilians, sexual exploitation and abuse prevention, cultural sensitivity, and specific operational skills.

Secondly, more support in the area of mental health and psychosocial support should be provided. There should be comprehensive programs to address the mental health and well-being of peacekeepers before, during, and after deployment.

Thirdly, the mandates for protection of civilians should be enhanced. POC mandates need to be proactive, robust and clear.

Finally, security procedures and contingency planning to ensure the security of troops is a top priority for T/PCCs. Continuous investment of sufficient resources in security is essential, as is efficient dialogue between the mission on the ground and UNHQ and capitals in situations of worsened security.