

Leading Within United Nations Peace Operations



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Leading Within United Nations Peace Operations



Following recent attacks in the centre of Mali, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) has responded with more frequent and robust foot and vehicle patrols. In the Bandiagara market, joint regular patrols are conducted by UNPOL officers and Malian Security Forces, with the aim to help build confidence amongst the local community and contribute to durable peace in the area. The patrol convoys meet with government and military officials and speak with civilians along the way. UN Police officers greet an officer of the Malian Security Forces. 3 June 2019. UN Photo by Gema Cortes.

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Leading Within United Nations Peace Operations

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Write to the Course Author »



If you have a question about leadership in the United Nations system or would like clarifications about a course topic, use the “Course Author Question” feature in your student classroom to write Lieutenant General (Retired) Jasbir Lidder.

Foreward

The peace operations environment has changed fundamentally in the last decade, witnessing political divides, unconventional threats, and climate instability. Consequently, United Nations peace operations require results-driven leaders who understand and adapt to the transformative nature of new conflicts.

The thrust and flow of *Leading Within United Nations Peace Operations* are to provide knowledge and guidance on the spectrum of activities that engages mission leaders strategically and operationally. The focus is on practitioner orientation supplemented with case studies and on-the-ground experience.

The course commences with an overview of the United Nations peace and security architecture and linkages within the United Nations System that impact peace operations. It then addresses strategic planning by the Secretariat and on mission, emphasizing the interactive processes that yield mission concepts and directives.

The course then discusses the multidimensional convergence of stakeholders, with host State leads and a people-centred approach. Maneuverer-based culture is recommended for strategic thought and civil-military coordination. Finally, the course summarizes flexible mission support for operational-intensive provisioning and green peacekeeping, with the integration of technology as a force multiplier.

While there are no fixed or template solutions, I hope the course motivates leaders to apply out-of-the-box thinking for effective peace operations. Good luck!

— Lieutenant General (Retired) Jasbir Lidder, June 2023



El-Ghassim Wane (standing at left), Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Mali and Head of MINUSMA, visits the Ménaka Region in Mali, together with officials from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). Mr. Wane reviews the troops from Togo and Nigeria serving with MINUSMA in the Ménaka region in Mali. 22 March 2023. UN Photo by Harandane Dicko.

Method of Study

This self-paced course aims to give students flexibility in their approach to learning. The following steps are meant to provide motivation and guidance about some possible strategies and minimum expectations for completing this course successfully:

- Before you begin studying, first browse through the entire course. Notice the lesson and section titles to get an overall idea of what will be involved as you proceed.
- The material is meant to be relevant and practical. Instead of memorizing individual details, strive to understand concepts and overall perspectives in regard to the United Nations system.
- Set personal guidelines and benchmarks regarding how you want to schedule your time.
- Study the lesson content and the learning objectives. At the beginning of each lesson, orient yourself to the main points. If possible, read the material twice to ensure maximum understanding and retention, and let time elapse between readings.
- At the end of each lesson, take the End-of-Lesson Quiz. Clarify any missed questions by rereading the appropriate sections, and focus on retaining the correct information.
- After you complete all of the lessons, prepare for the End-of-Course Examination by taking time to review the main points of each lesson. Then, when ready, log into your online student classroom and take the End-of-Course Examination in one sitting.

» ***Access your online classroom at
<www.peaceopstraining.org/users/user_login>
from virtually anywhere in the world.***

- Your exam will be scored electronically. If you achieve a passing grade of 75 per cent or higher on the exam, you will be awarded a Certificate of Completion. If you score below 75 per cent, you will be given one opportunity to take a second version of the End-of-Course Examination.
- A note about language: This course uses English spelling according to the standards of the *Oxford English Dictionary* (United Kingdom) and the *United Nations Editorial Manual*.

Key Features of Your Online Classroom »

- Access to all of your courses;
- A secure testing environment in which to complete your training;
- Access to additional training resources, including multimedia course supplements; and
- The ability to download your Certificate of Completion for any completed course.

LESSON 1

The United Nations Peace and Security Architecture



“United Nations peacekeeping is an investment in global peace, security, and prosperity. Around the world, the Blue Helmets are the concrete expression of the Charter’s determination ‘to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war’.”¹

— António Guterres

UN Photo by Evan Schneider.

In This Lesson »

- Section 1.1 The United Nations System
- Section 1.2 United Nations Organs and Agencies
- Section 1.3 United Nations Peace Operations
- Section 1.4 United Nations Reforms

Lesson Objectives »

- Highlight the background and role of United Nations peace operations.
- Understand the United Nations system and the role of its agencies, funds, and programmes.
- Learn the responsibilities of the United Nations General Assembly and Security Council.
- Understand the authorization and categorization of United Nations peace operations.
- Identify agreements and protocols with host States and troop- or police-contributing countries.
- Recognize United Nations reforms.



Mark Rutte (centre right), Prime Minister of the Netherlands, speaks with Jacinda Ardern (centre left), former Prime Minister of New Zealand, in the General Assembly Hall during the high-level week of the seventy-seventh session of the United Nations General Assembly. 23 September 2022. UN Photo by Loey Felipe.

Section 1.1 The United Nations System

The Charter of the United Nations

The United Nations was created¹ in the shadow of the Second World War by a world determined to “save succeeding generations from the scourge of war”² during the United Nations Conference on International Organization held in San Francisco in April 1945.³ Fifty nations signed the *Charter of the United Nations* on 26 June 1945. The General Assembly has amended the *Charter* five times;⁴ it currently consists of 111 articles and 19 chapters describing the purposes, principles, membership, organs, and scope of United Nations activities.

- 1) United Nations, “Milestones in UN history 1941–1950”, United Nations. Available from: <<https://www.un.org/en/about-us/history-of-the-un/1941-1950>>.
- 2) United Nations, *Charter of the United Nations*, 26 June 1945. Available from: <<http://www.un.org/en/sections/un-charter/un-charter-full-text>>.
- 3) United Nations, “Milestones in UN history 1941–1950”.
- 4) United Nations, Dag Hammarskjöld Library, “Can the UN Charter be amended, and how many times has this occurred?”. Available from: <https://ask.un.org/faq/140440?utm_source=fbia>.



View a video introduction of this course at <https://youtu.be/GZObj_0d0tQ>.

The Chapters address four major areas:⁵

1. Peace and security;
2. Economic and social issues;
3. The trusteeship system; and
4. The judicial organs.

The articles describe the functions, rules, and procedures of the six principal organs. The General Assembly can be considered the principal legislative organ and the Secretariat the executive body. The *Charter* ends with Provisional Rules of Procedure (among others, the privileges and immunities of United Nations officials), Transitional Security Arrangements (needed at the end of the Second World War), Amendments, and the Ratification and Signature.

Knowledge about the *Charter* is a prerequisite for understanding decision-making in international affairs, the interrelationship between Member States and the United Nations, as well as the relations between the Organization's various entities. The United Nations family of organizations — known as the United Nations system — is complex, as it tries to address almost all global areas of political, economic, and social activity. The "system" consists of six principal organs, their subsidiary bodies, programmes and funds, research and training institutes, functional and regional commissions, expert and ad hoc bodies, as well as 15 specialized agencies, trust funds, secretariats of conventions, and other related organizations. In addition, there is a large number of other international, governmental, non-governmental, and civil society organizations that are in some way linked to the United Nations system. All those actors, together with other entities outside the system concerned with international issues, constitute what is generally called the international community.

The founding document of the United Nations can be read online,⁶ enabling the learner to reference the articles mentioned in this course. The key principles of the *Charter* include:

- The sovereign equality of all Member States;
- The peaceful settlement of international disputes;
- Refraining from the use of force; and
- Non-intervention in the domestic affairs of States (except for enforcement measures under Chapter VII).

Organization of the United Nations System

As of 2023, the United Nations has 193 Member States.⁷ Additionally, there are two permanent non-Member Observer States (the Holy See and Palestine) and 21 intergovernmental organizations participating as observers and maintaining permanent offices at United Nations Headquarters in New York. Although the *Charter* does not make it compulsory, most Member States establish a diplomatic mission in New York to represent them on a permanent basis at United Nations Headquarters and advise their governments on relevant technical aspects associated with United Nations peace operations as well as representing their nations on United Nations committees and working groups.

The United Nations comprises six major organs (although the Trusteeship Council is currently inactive) and has many associated specialized agencies, programmes, and related organizations operating around the world. Figure 1-1 illustrates this structure. In addition to its headquarters in New York, the United Nations has three additional headquarters in Geneva (Switzerland), Nairobi (Kenya), and Vienna (Austria). It maintains a significant presence in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia), Bangkok (Thailand), Beirut (Lebanon), and Santiago (Chile) and has many other offices worldwide.

5) Georgetown Law Library, "The Main Organs of the United Nations". Available from: <<https://guides.ll.georgetown.edu/c.php?g=365747&p=7140280>>.

6) United Nations, *Charter of the United Nations*.

7) United Nations, "Member States", United Nations. Available from: <<https://www.un.org/en/about-us/member-states>>.

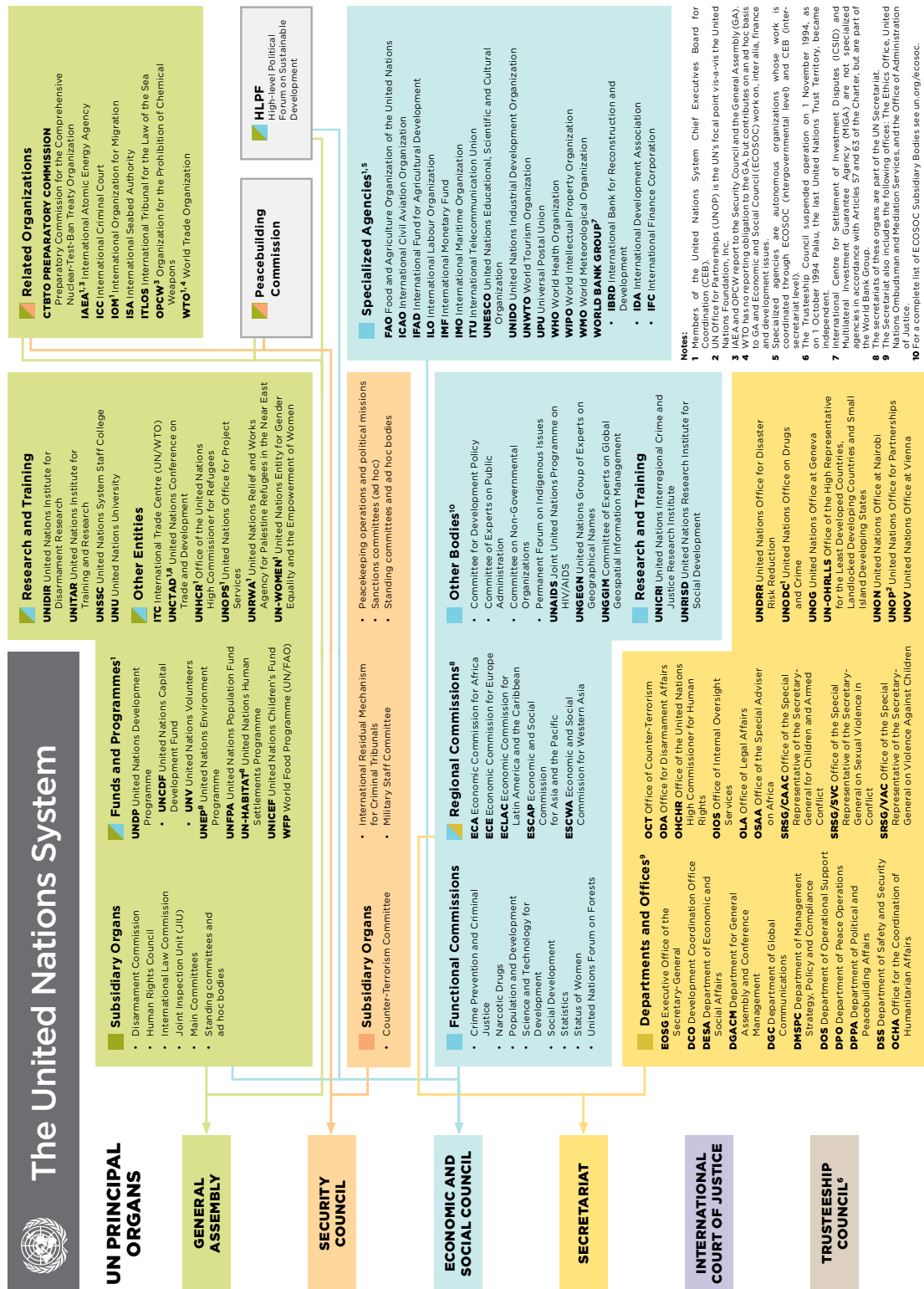


Figure 1-1: The United Nations System

Source: United Nations, "The United Nations System", July 2021. Available from: <<https://www.un.org/en/delegate/page/un-system-chart>>.

Section 1.2 United Nations Organs and Agencies

The main bodies⁸ of the United Nations are the General Assembly,⁹ the Security Council,⁹ the Economic and Social Council,¹⁰ the Trusteeship Council,¹¹ the International Court of Justice,¹² and the Secretariat.¹³

The General Assembly

The United Nations General Assembly¹⁴ is the main deliberative policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations. All 193 States are represented in the General Assembly, making it the only United Nations body with universal representation. Each September, the full United Nations membership meets in the General Assembly Hall in New York to begin the annual session and participate in the general debate, which many heads of State attend and address.

Decisions on important questions, such as those relating to peace and security, the admission of new members, and budgetary matters, require a two-thirds majority, while decisions on other questions require a simple majority. The responsibilities of the General Assembly include shared responsibilities with the Security Council. The General Assembly elects a President¹⁵ each session to serve a 12-month term.

The Security Council

The United Nations Security Council is primarily responsible for maintaining international peace and security under the *Charter*. It has 15 Members, five of which are permanent (China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America) and 10 non-permanent Members selected for two years each. Each Member has one vote. Under the *Charter*, all Member States are obligated to comply with the decisions of the Security Council.

The Security Council takes the lead in determining the existence of a threat to peace or an act of aggression. It calls upon parties to a dispute to settle it peacefully and recommends adjustment methods or settlement terms. In some cases, the Security Council can resort to imposing sanctions or even authorizing the use of force to maintain or restore international peace and security. The Security Council has a presidency¹⁶ that rotates every month. Article 29 of the *Charter* states that the Security Council “may establish such subsidiary organs¹⁷ as it deems necessary for the performance of its functions”.¹⁸

The United Nations Secretariat

The Secretary-General is the head of the United Nations Secretariat, with tens of thousands of international staff members working at duty stations all around the world, who carry out the day-to-day work of the United Nations as determined by the Security Council, the General Assembly, and the organization’s other principal bodies.

8) United Nations, “Main bodies”. Available from: <<https://www.un.org/en/about-us/main-bodies>>.

9) United Nations, “United Nations Security Council”. Available from: <<https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/>>.

10) United Nations, “Economic and Social Council”. <<https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/>>.

11) United Nations, “Trusteeship Council”. Available from: <<https://www.un.org/en/about-us/trusteeship-council>>.

12) International Court of Justice, “International Court of Justice”. Available from: <<https://www.icj-cij.org/home>>.

13) United Nations, “Secretariat”. Available from: <<https://www.un.org/en/about-us/secretariat>>.

14) United Nations, “General Assembly of the United Nations”. Available from: <<https://www.un.org/en/ga/>>.

15) United Nations, “General Assembly of the United Nations, President of the 77th session”. Available from: <<https://www.un.org/pga/77/>>.

16) United Nations, “Security Council Presidency”. Available from: <<https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/presidency>>.

17) United Nations, “Subsidiary Organs Branch”. Available from: <<https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/subsidiary-organs-branch>>.

18) *Charter of the United Nations*, Article 29.



A wide view of the General Assembly Hall as Secretary-General António Guterres (at podium and on screen) addresses the opening of the seventy-seventh session of the General Assembly Debate on the theme: "A watershed moment: transformative solutions to interlocking challenges". 20 September 2022. UN Photo by Manuel Elías.

The Secretary-General is the "chief administrative officer"¹⁹ of the organization appointed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Security Council for a customary five-year, renewable term, which traditionally has a two-term limit. The Secretary-General is a symbol of the organization's ideals and an advocate for all the world's peoples, especially the poor and the vulnerable.

United Nations staff members are recruited internationally and locally and work in duty stations and on peace operations in the field around the world. However, serving the cause of peace in a violent world is a dangerous occupation. Since the founding the United Nations, hundreds of brave people have given their lives in its service.²⁰

The United Nations is funded primarily by Member States²¹ from two sources: assessed contributions and voluntary contributions for specialized agencies and subsidiary organizations. Assessed contributions are payments that all Member States are required to make and provide funding for the principal functions of the Secretariat under the regular and peace operations budgets. In addition, specialized agencies have their own assessed budgets.²² The cost of United Nations peace operations has grown over the years, and each Member State is legally obligated to pay its respective share towards peace operations.

The General Assembly²³ apportions peace operation expenses based on a special scale of assessments under a complex formula that Member States have established. This formula considers, among others, the relative economic wealth of Member States, with the five permanent members of the Security Council being required to pay a larger share because of their special responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. In 2020–2021, in descending order according to the amount contributed, the United States, China, Japan, Germany, and the United Kingdom were the top five contributors.

The Fifth Committee²⁴ of the General Assembly determines the scale of assessments for contributions to the regular budget every third year. Since peace operations vary in number and duration, contributions to the peace operations budget also fluctuate from year to year.

19) United Nations, "The role of the Secretary-General". Available from: <<https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/the-role-of-the-secretary-general>>.

20) United Nations, "Remember the fallen". Available from: <<https://www.un.org/en/memorial/>>.

21) Permanent Mission of France to the United Nations in New York, "5 things to know about the UN funding". Available from: <<https://onu.delegfrance.org/5-things-to-know-about-the-un-funding>>.

22) United Nations Peacekeeping, "How we are funded". Available from: <<https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/how-we-are-funded>>.

23) United Nations Peacekeeping, "Role of the General Assembly". Available from: <<https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/role-of-general-assembly>>.

24) United Nations, "Administrative and Budgetary Committee (Fifth Committee)". Available from: <<https://www.un.org/en/ga/fifth/index.shtml>>.

The approved budget for United Nations peace operations for the fiscal year 2022–23 is \$6.45 billion,²⁵ which grew by approximately 1.16 per cent compared to the 2021–22 budget. This budget covers ten missions, one support operation, three logistics bases, and the support account that finances Headquarters personnel who backstop them. The “big four” multidimensional missions (United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali [MINUSMA], United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan [UNMISS], United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic [MINUSCA], and United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo [MONUSCO]) account for nearly 70 per cent of this budget.²⁶

Lesson 3 discusses the functions of the departments involved in conflict management, including the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) and the Department of Peace Operations (DPO). On 1 January 2019,²⁷ a new peace and security architecture came into effect. The Department of Political Affairs (DPA) and the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) were merged to form the new DPPA, while the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) became the DPO. The DPPA and DPO now jointly oversee eight regional divisions, each division managing a mix of peace operations, special political missions, and non-mission settings. The Department of Operational Support (DOS)²⁸ provides operational support to all United Nations Secretariat entities globally and, when needed, exercises delegated authority on behalf of clients.

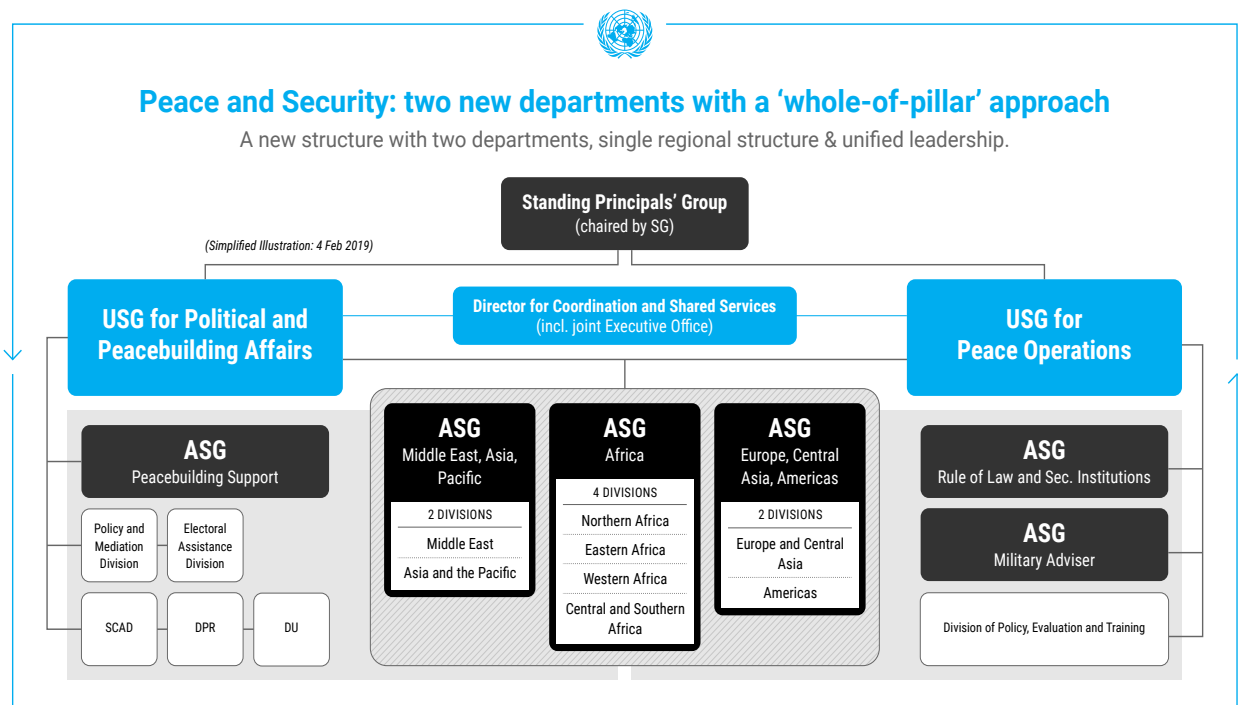


Figure 1-2: New United Nations Peace and Security Pillar Organigram

Source: United Nations, "Peace and Security: two new departments with a 'whole-of-pillar' approach". Available from: <https://reform.un.org/news/peace-and-security-pillar>.

25) United Nations, "General Assembly approves \$6.45 billion budget for peacekeeping". Available from: <https://www.un.org/en/delegate/general-assembly-approves-645-billion-budget-peacekeeping>.

26) Relief Web, "The 2022 UN Peacekeeping Budget: Signs of Progress or a Fleeting Moment of Consensus?", 20 July 2022. Available from: <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/2022-un-peacekeeping-budget-signs-progress-or-fleeting-moment-consensus#:~:text=Observations%20about%20the%20new%202022%20UN%20peacekeeping%20budget&text=This%20is%20the%20first%20time,skyrocket%20by%20over%2014%20percent>.

27) United Nations, "Peace and Security Pillar". Available from: <https://reform.un.org/news/peace-and-security-pillar>.

28) United Nations, "Department of Operational Support". Available from: <https://operationalsupport.un.org/en>.



The International Court of Justice (ICJ) held public hearings (by video link) in the case concerning the Dispute over the Status and Use of the Waters of the Silala (Chile v. Bolivia) at the Peace Palace in The Hague, started on 1 April 2022. 4 April 2022. UN Photo by Frank van Beek.

United Nations Agencies, Funds, and Programmes

United Nations peace operations²⁹ form part of the larger United Nations system, which comprises more than 30 affiliated organizations, funds, programmes, and specialized agencies, each with its own work, leadership, and budget.³⁰ These funds, programmes, and agencies are financed through voluntary rather than assessed contributions. In the context of peace operations, they work jointly to contribute towards overall peace, stability, and development objectives.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP),³¹ the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF),³² the World Food Programme (WFP),³³ and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)³⁴ are the major players operating with United Nations peace operations, along with all other United Nations entities that are part of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT).³⁵ The UNCT monitors and responds to emergencies, mitigates conflict distress, progresses developmental needs, and addresses humanitarian concerns. United Nations Peacebuilding³⁶ and humanitarian aid³⁷ are coordinated with this team, headed by a Resident Coordinator. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)³⁸ is the focal point in the Secretariat for synergizing a coherent humanitarian response.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)³⁹ is a neutral organization working closely with United Nations peace operations personnel for humanitarian protection and assistance for victims of war and armed violence. The organization's work is guided by international humanitarian law,⁴⁰ particularly the Geneva Conventions

29) United Nations Peacekeeping, "What peacekeeping does". Available from: <<https://peacekeeping.un.org/en>>.

30) Better World Campaign, "UN Funds, Programs and Specialized Agencies". Available from: <<https://betterworldcampaign.org/resources/briefing-book-2022/united-nations-programs-funds-agencies>>.

31) United Nations Development Programme, "United Nations Development Programme". Available from: <<https://www.undp.org>>.

32) United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, "United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund". Available from: <<https://www.unicef.org>>.

33) World Food Programme, "World Food Programme". Available from: <<https://www.wfp.org>>.

34) United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, "UNHCR, The UN Refugee Agency". Available from: <<https://www.unhcr.org>>.

35) United Nations Sustainable Development Group, "How we work". Available from: <<https://unsdg.un.org/about/how-we-work>>.

36) United Nations, "Peacebuilding". Available from: <<https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/>>.

37) United Nations, "Deliver humanitarian aid". Available from: <<https://www.un.org/en/our-work/deliver-humanitarian-aid>>.

38) United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Creative Community Outreach Initiative (CCOI)". Available from: <<https://www.un.org/en/ccoi/ocha-united-nations-office-coordination-humanitarian-affairs>>.

39) International Committee of the Red Cross, "International Committee of the Red Cross". Available from: <<https://www.icrc.org/en>>.

40) International Committee of the Red Cross, "War & Law". Available from: <<https://www.icrc.org/en/war-and-law>>.

and Additional Protocol I.⁴¹ Moreover, the ICRC also enjoys a right of initiative such that wherever international humanitarian law does not apply, the ICRC may offer its services to governments with this constituting interference in the internal affairs of the State concerned.⁴²

Further Reading »

For more details on the United Nations system, readers should refer to the POTI e-learning course *An Introduction to the UN System and Its Role in International Peace and Security* (updated in 2022). The course is available at: <<https://www.peaceopstraining.org/courses/intro-en-2022/>>.

Section 1.3 United Nations Peace Operations

United Nations peace operations have proved to be an effective tool for maintaining international peace and security. With 70 years of history,⁴³ United Nations missions have persevered, adapting to challenging operating environments to deliver their mandates. Contemporary multidimensional peace operations are called upon not only to maintain peace and security but also to facilitate peace processes, protect civilians, conduct the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of former combatants,⁴⁴ support the organization of elections, protect and promote human rights,⁴⁵ and assist in restoring the rule of law and extending legitimate State authority.

The United Nations deploys different peace operations, including United Nations political missions⁴⁶ and special envoys.⁴⁷ Peace operations personnel are civilian,⁴⁸ military,⁴⁹ and police⁵⁰ personnel, all working together. Within a particular region or a mission area, several United Nations organizations, as well as personnel of other international and regional players, may have been deployed for an extended period. Mission leadership must be aware of the multiple issues and actions occurring in that region, their changing dynamics, and their linkages to mission goals. Twelve peace operations⁵¹ are currently deployed. A top priority for United Nations peace operations gender policy⁵² is to increase the number of women peace operations personnel,⁵³ including the number of women staff officers and military observers, whose proportion should be increased to 25 per cent by 2028.⁵⁴ As of December 2022, 21.84 per cent of staff officers and military observers in peace operations were female, meeting the 2022 target of 19 per cent of women deployed.⁵⁵

41) International Committee of the Red Cross, "The Geneva Conventions and their commentaries". Available from: <<https://www.icrc.org/en/war-and-law/treaties-customary-law/geneva-conventions>>.

42) International Committee of the Red Cross, "The ICRC's mandate and mission". Available from: <<https://www.icrc.org/en/mandate-and-mission>>.

43) United Nations Peacekeeping, "UN peacekeeping: 70 years of service & sacrifice". Available from: <<https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/un-peacekeeping-70-years-of-service-sacrifice>>.

44) United Nations Peacekeeping, "Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration". Available from: <<https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/disarmament-demobilization-and-reintegration>>.

45) United Nations, "Protect human rights". Available from: <<https://www.un.org/en/our-work/protect-human-rights>>.

46) United Nations, "DPPA around the world ". Available from: <<https://dppa.un.org/en/dppa-around-world>>.

47) United Nations, "Current presences ". Available from: <<https://dppa.un.org/en/current-presences>>.

48) United Nations Peacekeeping, "Civilians". Available from: <<https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/civilians>>.

49) United Nations Peacekeeping, "Military". Available from: <<https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/military>>.

50) United Nations Peacekeeping, "UN Police". Available from: <<https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/un-police>>.

51) United Nations Peacekeeping, "Where we operate". Available from: <<https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/where-we-operate>>.

52) United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations. "Policy: Gender Responsive United Nations Peacekeeping Operations", 1 February 2021. <<https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/gender-responsive-un-peacekeeping-operations-policy-en.pdf>>.

53) United Nations Peacekeeping, "Gender". Available from: <<https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/gender>>.

54) United Nations Department of Peace Operations, "Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy, 2018–2028", 4. Available from: <<https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/uniformed-gender-parity-2018-2028.pdf>>.

55) United Nations Peacekeeping, "2022 Operational effect and women peacekeepers: Addressing the gender imbalance (December 2022 data)", December 2022. Available from: <https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/operational_effect_and_women_peacekeepers_december_2022.pdf>.

United Nations peace operations draw their legality from Security Council resolutions,⁵⁶ often called mission mandates. The mandate defines the size, role, tasks, timelines, budget, and division of responsibility. The Security Council may invoke different chapters of the *Charter of the United Nations* when authorizing the deployment of United Nations peace operations. Chapter VI⁵⁷ (in particular, Article 33) and Chapter VII⁵⁸ (in particular, Article 42) form the basis for missions to respond to threats to peace, breaches of peace, and acts of aggression in the international community, while Chapter VIII⁵⁹ (in particular, Articles 52–54) specifically provides for action by regional organizations as approved and monitored by the Security Council. However, the Security Council need not refer to any specific chapter when passing resolutions.

Upon authorizing the peace operation, a Status-of-Forces Agreement (SOFA) (such as that for the United Nations Mission in Sudan [UNMIS])⁶⁰ is signed between the host State and the United Nations⁶¹ that establishes the framework under which United Nations personnel operate in a foreign country and how the domestic laws of the foreign jurisdiction apply to personnel in that country. A SOFA does not constitute a security arrangement; instead, it establishes the rights and privileges of foreign personnel present in a country in support of the larger security.⁶²

The essential planning factor for United Nations peace operations is the assurance of support from Member States in providing human and other resources to support the mission. Mutually agreed-upon understandings, which include memorandums for deployment and reimbursement⁶³ between the Secretariat and troop- and police-contributing countries, are essential for the joint planning and execution of peace operation policies and strategies. The Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System (PCRS)⁶⁴ aims to establish a more predictable and dynamic process of interaction between United Nations Headquarters and Member States and strengthen the timely and quality deployment of peace operations capabilities.



The United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and partners opened a new settlement area in Arua district, northern Uganda, in February 2017, to host thousands of refugees arriving from South Sudan. The new Imvepi settlement was opened after the Palorinya settlement reached its refugee-hosting capacity. 19 June 2017. UN Photo by Mark Garten.

56) United Nations, "United Nations Security Council".

57) United Nations, *Charter of the United Nations*.

58) United Nations, *Charter of the United Nations*.

59) United Nations, *Charter of the United Nations*.

60) United Nations, "Agreement between the Government of Sudan and the United Nations concerning the status of the United Nations Mission in Sudan". Available from: <https://unmis.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/old_dnn/sofa.pdf>.

61) Department of Peace Operations, *United Nations Infantry Battalion Manual (UNIBAM), Second Edition*, January 2020. Available from: <https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/3._military_-_1_united_nations_infantry_battalion_manual_unibam.pdf>.

62) Chuck A. Mason, "Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA): What Is It, and How Has It Been Utilized?", CRS Report for Congress, 18 June 2009. Available from: <<https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/pdfs/ADA502337.pdf>>.

63) United Nations Peacekeeping, "Deployment and reimbursement". Available from: <<https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/deployment-and-reimbursement>>.

64) United Nations Peacekeeping, "Military".

UNMISS SOFA »

The SOFA between the United Nations and the Government of the Republic of South Sudan concerning UNMISS was signed on 8 August 2011. This agreement legally advanced this peace operation according to international treaties and organized the relationship between various government institutions and UNMISS.

The SOFA entailed commitments by both parties, South Sudan and UNMISS (established on 8 July 1996 by Security Council resolution 1996 (2011)ⁱ and which called for a military component of approximately 7,000 troops that took effect the day following South Sudan's declaration of independence). Under the SOFA, the government of South Sudan agreed to the conventions on the privileges and immunities related to in-country United Nations peace operations personnel, based on the 1946 *Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations*.ⁱⁱ



South Sudan and UNMISS sign Forces Agreement. 8 August 2011. Watch the signing of the agreement here: <<https://www.unmultimedia.org/avlibrary/asset/U110/U110809e/>>.

The SOFA also committed UNMISS to work with impartiality and in respect of all local laws and regulations. Moreover, UNMISS ensured that they would operate under international conventions applicable to the conduct of military personnel, including the four Geneva Conventions of 1949ⁱⁱⁱ and their Additional Protocols of 8 June 1977^{iv} and the UNESCO Convention of 14 May 1954 for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict.^v

This SOFA served as a milestone that urged all government institutions and the public to cooperate with the new United Nations peace operation in building peace and stability in the newly established State of South Sudan. This document served as an essential strategic reorientation for UNMISS, which was created off the back of UNMIS.

Read the full SOFA here: <https://unmiss.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/unmiss_sofa_-_english_version_0.pdf>.

ⁱ United Nations Security Council, resolution 1996 (2011), S/RES/1996(2011), 8 July 2011. Available from: <<https://unmiss.unmissions.org/un-security-council-resolution-1996-2011>>.

ⁱⁱ United Nations, Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations, 13 February 1946. Available from: <<https://www.un.org/en/ethics/assets/pdfs/Convention%20of%20Privileges-Immunities%20of%20the%20UN.pdf>>.

ⁱⁱⁱ The Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949. Available from: <<https://www.icrc.org/en/doc/assets/files/publications/icrc-002-0173.pdf>>.

^{iv} Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949. Available from: <https://www.icrc.org/en/doc/assets/files/other/icrc_002_0321.pdf>.

^v UNESCO, 1954 *Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict with Regulations for the Execution of the Convention*. Available from: <https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/1954_Convention_EN_2020.pdf>.

Section 1.4 United Nations Reforms

The United Nations Secretariat has undertaken major reforms⁶⁵ over the years to adapt and upgrade its effectiveness through consultative efforts. The report *An agenda for peace: preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping*,⁶⁶ published by Boutros Boutros-Ghali in 1992, is among the first vision documents released by any United Nations Secretary-General. In this report, besides providing expanded definitions of peacemaking and peacekeeping, Boutros-Ghali introduced the concept of post-conflict peacebuilding.

The publication in 2000 of the Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, commonly called the Brahimi Report,⁶⁷ was a watershed, calling for an inclusive approach to peacekeeping and peacebuilding, addressing underlying causes of conflict, describing the need for clear, credible, and achievable mandates, and calling for the development of rapid and effective deployment capabilities through a global logistics support strategy.

Following the Brahimi Report, United Nations Member States and the United Nations Secretariat continued major reform efforts, including the changes to the financing of peace operations⁶⁸ issued in 2006 and the resolution adopted by the General Assembly on the 2005 World Summit⁶⁹ establishing the Peacebuilding Commission. These efforts were continued in 2008 by publishing a document entitled *United Nations Peacekeeping Operations Principles and Guidelines*, usually known as the Capstone Doctrine,⁷⁰ which outlined the most important guidance for United Nations peace operations personnel in the field.

The Report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, entitled *A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility*,⁷¹ set out a broad framework for collective security for the twenty-first century. It reinforced the need for conflict prevention, protection of civilians as a core obligation of the Member States of the United Nations, field orientation, support for rapid deployment, and strong, accountable leadership.



A view onto the Manhattan skyline from the United Nations Headquarters during the week of the General Assembly's annual General Debate. Silhouetted at left, the Empire State Building; at right, the Chrysler Building. 22 September 2017. UN Photo by Rick Bajornas.

65) United Nations Peacekeeping, "Reforming peacekeeping". Available from: <<https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/reforming-peacekeeping>>.

66) United Nations, *An agenda for peace*, A/47/277, 17 June 1992. Available from: <<http://undocs.org/a/47/277>>.

67) General Assembly and Security Council, *Comprehensive Review of the Whole Question of Peacekeeping Operations in all their Aspects*, A/55/305-S/2000/809, 21 August 2000. Available from: <<https://undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=A%2F55%2F305&Language=E&DeviceType=Desktop&LangRequested=False>>.

68) General Assembly, *Overview of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations: budget performance for the period from 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005 and budget for the period from 1 July 2006 to 30 June 2007*, Report of the Secretary-General, A/60/696, 24 February 2006. Available from: <<https://www.undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=A%2F60%2F696&Language=E&DeviceType=Desktop&LangRequested=False>>.

69) General Assembly resolution 60/1, *2005 World Summit Outcome*, A/RES/60/1, 24 October 2005. Available from: <https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_RES_60_1.pdf>.

70) Department of Peace Operations, *United Nations Peacekeeping Operations Principles and Guidelines*, 18 January 2010. Available from: <https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/peacekeeping/en/capstone_eng.pdf>.

71) General Assembly, *Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit*, Note by the Secretary-General, A/59/565, 2 December 2004. Available from: <<https://undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=A%2F59%2F565&Language=E&DeviceType=Desktop&LangRequested=False>>.

Two additional publications recommended for reading are *A New Partnership Agenda: Charting a New Horizon for Peacekeeping*⁷² and the study *Improving Security of Peacekeepers*,⁷³ also known as the Cruz Report. The *New Horizon* report laid out four priority areas to reinvigorate the dialogue with stakeholders — policy development, capability development, planning, and oversight. The Cruz Report calls for a proactive approach in the field to harness technology, training, and accountability.

Secretary-General António Guterres's Action for Peacekeeping (A4P)⁷⁴ initiative was launched in 2018 and forms the Secretary-General's core agenda for changing all aspects of peace operations. It has eight specific commitment areas: politics; women, peace, and security; protection; safety and security; performance and accountability; peacebuilding and sustaining peace; partnerships; and the conduct of peace operations and their personnel.

The *Strategy for the Digital Transformation of UN Peacekeeping*⁷⁵ emphasizes the need for innovative, data-driven, and technology-enabled peace operations consistent with the A4P⁷⁶ initiative and A4P Plus (A4P+)⁷⁷ priorities.

Further Reading »

For more details on the Capstone Doctrine, peace operation doctrine, definitions, procedures, and policy, readers should refer to the POTI e-learning course *Principles and Guidelines for UN Peacekeeping Operations*. The course is available at: <<https://www.peaceopstraining.org/courses/principles-and-guidelines/>>.



Aerial group photo of staff in Geneva simulating the Sustainable Development Goals logo on United Nations Staff Day. 28 October 2016. UN Photo by Jean Marc Ferré.

72) DPO/DFO, *A New Partnership Agenda, Charting a New Horizon for UN Peacekeeping*, July 2009. Available from: <https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/newhorizon_0.pdf>.

73) United Nations, *Improving security of United Nations peacekeepers: We need to change the way we are doing business*, 19 December 2019. Available from: <https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/improving_security_of_united_nations_peacekeepers_report.pdf>.

74) Secretary-General's Initiative on Action for Peacekeeping, *A4P: Our core agenda for Peacekeeping*. Available from: <<https://www.un.org/en/A4P/>>.

75) DPO/DOS, "Strategy for the Digital Transformation of UN Peacekeeping", 17 September 2021. Available from: <<https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/strategy-digital-transformation-of-un-peacekeeping>>.

76) United Nations Peacekeeping, "Action for peacekeeping (A4P)". Available from: <<https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/action-for-peacekeeping-a4p>>.

77) United Nations Peacekeeping, "A4P+: Action for peacekeeping priorities 2021-2023". Available from: <<https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/a4p-action-peacekeeping-priorities-2021-2023>>.

End-of-Lesson Quiz »

1. **The United Nations was founded in:**
 - A. 1925
 - B. 1945
 - C. 1965
 - D. 1985
2. **Does the United Nations have more than one Headquarters?**
 - A. No, the only United Nations Headquarters are in New York.
 - B. Yes, the United Nations has four Headquarters, in New York, Addis Ababa, Bangkok, and Santiago.
 - C. Yes, the United Nations has four Headquarters, in New York, Geneva, Nairobi, and Vienna.
 - D. Yes, the United Nations has eight Headquarters around the world.
3. **Which is the only United Nations body with universal representation?**
 - A. The Security Council
 - B. The General Assembly
 - C. The Economic and Social Council
 - D. The International Court of Justice
4. **The United Nations Security Council has _____ members.**
 - A. five
 - B. 10
 - C. 15
 - D. 20
5. **How long is the term of the Security Council presidency?**
 - A. One month
 - B. Twelve months
 - C. Five years
 - D. Ten years
6. **Which of the Security Council members are permanent members?**
 - A. China, Germany, Japan, the Russian Federation, and the United States
 - B. India, France, Japan, the Russian Federation, and the United Kingdom
 - C. China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States
 - D. France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States
7. **Who manages the United Nations Secretariat?**
 - A. The Security Council
 - B. The General Assembly
 - C. All the principal bodies of the United Nations
 - D. The Secretary-General
8. **United Nations staff members are recruited _____ .**
 - A. locally only
 - B. internationally only
 - C. locally and internationally
 - D. in the field
9. **What are contemporary multidimensional peace operations called upon to do?**
 - A. To maintain peace and security
 - B. To facilitate peace processes
 - C. To conduct disarmament and demobilization
 - D. All of these
10. **Which United Nations Secretary-General launched Action for Peacekeeping (A4P)?**
 - A. Boutros Boutros-Ghali
 - B. Kofi Annan
 - C. Ban Ki-Moon
 - D. António Guterres

Answer Key provided on the next page.

End-of-Lesson Quiz »

Answer Key »

1. B
2. C
3. B
4. C
5. A
6. C
7. D
8. C
9. D
10. D