

Special Political and Decolonization Committee

Chair: Juan Carlos Gonzalez

**Topic 1: Addressing the Humanitarian and Repatriation
Challenges of the Rohingya Crisis**

**Topic 2: Refining Peacekeeping Initiatives amidst African
Regional Conflicts**



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Welcome to United Nations General Assembly Fourth Committee!

Dear Delegates,

Hello and welcome to YMUN Singapore 2024! My name is Juan Carlos and I am ecstatic to be your Chair for the SPECPOL committee.

A little bit about myself, I am a first-year in Branford College at Yale University prospectively majoring in Economics and Mathematics. I currently live in Sammamish, Washington, but I have spent a fair share of my life living in the states of Connecticut and Texas. Despite my STEM focused major, I love exploring the humanities– the subjects philosophy, political science, and especially history fascinate me.

On campus I am a dedicated member of MUNTY, the competitive MUN team at Yale, and the Yale Chess club, but I can frequently be found around the campus for all different types of speaker events. I also have a love for food (I am so excited to try Singaporean cuisine), swimming, libraries, and chess.

The United Nations General Assembly Fourth Committee, better known as SPECPOL, holds paramount importance within the framework of the United Nations as it is instrumental in guiding the process of resolving contemporary issues, including but not limited to, decolonization, peacekeeping efforts, the Middle East, and peaceful uses of outer space.

Throughout the committee you will have two invaluable opportunities to discuss serious topics on the forefront of the world, the displacement of Rohingya people in Myanmar and peacekeeping efforts amid the multifaceted conflicts afflicting parts of Africa. In topic 1,



delegates are charged with the delicate task of fostering ethnic concord and establishing conditions for the safe return of the Rohingya, while also addressing the broader implications of their statelessness within Myanmar. This gathering is an imperative conduit for global cooperation, seeking long-lasting resolutions to the severe and ongoing challenge of displacement faced by the Rohingya community. In topic 2, delegates will explore the intricacies of maintaining peace, protecting civilian populations, and aiding in the healing and rebuilding of war-torn societies while navigating the nuances of political dynamics and resource allocation.

I cannot stress enough how excited I am to chair this committee and how invested I am in nurturing your growth as delegates. So as the competition date approaches, please feel free to contact me at juan.gonzalez@yale.edu with any questions or concerns regarding the committee, the conference, or Yale University. I am looking forward to listening to your fascinating ideas and welcome again to YMUN Singapore 2024!

Sincerely,

Juan Carlos Gonzalez

Chair of SPECPOL

YMUNS Director



Committee History

The Fourth Committee was initially tasked with handling all trusteeship and decolonization-related issues. The committee's workload lessened after all United Nations trust territories gained their independence and the trusteeship structure was dismantled. As a result, the Special Political Committee was combined with the Fourth Committee as established by GA Resolution 47/233 in 1993.

SPECPOL convenes biannually, bringing together representatives from UN member nations to deliberate on a diverse array of issues falling under its purview. Throughout its history, SPECPOL has addressed a spectrum of topics including, decolonization, the effects of atomic radiation, comprehensive review of peacekeeping operations, review of special political missions, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East, the report of the Special Committee on Israeli Practices and international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space.

This committee has played a crucial role in crafting resolutions that shaped the geopolitical landscape, fostering diplomatic solutions to conflicts between member nations and supporting nations in their path to self-governance.



Committee Structure

SPECPOL falls under the category of General Assemblies. GAs discuss issues on which the Security Council may carry out enforceable decisions and measures such as economic sanctions. SPECPOL cannot impose sanctions or authorize military action in its resolutions, thus, only issue recommendations that parties involved can choose to act on. All 193 member states are eligible to attend meetings and resolutions require a simple majority to pass.

This committee places emphasis on collaboration and cooperation in order to navigate the complex issues. Consequently, delegates are expected to take the time to think of and brainstorm creative and unique solutions prior and throughout the conference. This shall be reflected in policy positions, speeches, and comprehensive proposals that meaningfully and substantively address topics at hand.



Topic 1: Addressing the Humanitarian and Repatriation

Challenges of the Rohingya Crisis

Introduction

The Rohingya genocide is one of the most terrible human rights tragedies of the twenty-first century, taking place in Myanmar's Rakhine State. The Rohingya, a Muslim minority community, have been subjected to systematic persecution and violence by the Myanmar military and extreme elements among the Buddhist-majority population. The roots of this catastrophe may be traced back to the region's complicated historical and ethnic tensions, which have been worsened by the military junta's policies and the Rohingya's lack of inclusive citizenship. The magnitude of the atrocities committed, which included mass executions, sexual abuse, and the forced displacement of hundreds of thousands, drew international outrage and raised critical questions about the obligation to protect vulnerable communities in the face of such heinous crimes.¹

With the increase of violence in 2017, the situation of the Rohingya people garnered international attention, resulting in a large migration of refugees into neighboring Bangladesh. The acts against the Rohingya have been described as ethnic cleansing and genocide by the United Nations and other human rights organizations. The international response has included humanitarian assistance, diplomatic attempts, and calls for accountability. Addressing the intricate web of political, historical, and social reasons that contributed to the crisis, on the other hand, remains an ongoing task for the international community.²

¹ [The Rohingya Crisis and the Meaning of Genocide | Council on Foreign Relations \(cfr.org\)](https://www.cfr.org/rohingya/the-rohingya-crisis-and-the-meaning-of-genocide/p31252)

² [Myanmar Rohingya: What you need to know about the crisis \(bbc.com\)](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-41788321)



Tensions between Bangladesh and Myanmar have risen over the contentious topic of the repatriation of the Rohingya community. The Rohingya fled Myanmar under widespread violence and persecution, resulting in one of the world's greatest refugee crisis. While international pressure grew for the safe return of the Rohingya to their homes, the process is plagued by deep mistrust and worries about the displaced population's safety and rights. Before any repatriation, Bangladesh has been resolute in seeking the building of a conducive atmosphere in Rakhine State, protecting the security of the Rohingya, and ensuring their citizenship rights. Myanmar, on the other hand, claims that it is prepared for the repatriation of the Rohingya and has taken certain steps, but the lack of actual progress and the persistent human rights challenges in Rakhine continue to strain bilateral relations.³ The ongoing impasse reflects the complexities of addressing a humanitarian crisis entangled with historical animosities and underscores the need for diplomatic dialogue and international cooperation to find a sustainable and just resolution to the Rohingya displacement issue.

³ [‘Comprehensive’ solution needed to end mass displacement of Rohingya | UN News](#)



History

Colonial History

Myanmar, formerly known as Burma, has a rich and complex colonial history that significantly shaped its socio-political landscape. The British colonization of Burma began in the 19th century and lasted for nearly a century, from 1824 to 1948.⁴

During the colonial period, the British implemented various policies that had profound implications for Myanmar's ethnic composition and economic structure. The British exploited Myanmar's resources, transforming the economy to serve imperial interests. The extraction of teak, oil, and other valuable commodities fueled economic exploitation, leaving a lasting impact on Myanmar's development.

The British employed a divisive strategy, exacerbating existing ethnic and cultural differences to maintain control over the diverse regions within Myanmar. The arbitrary drawing of administrative boundaries without consideration for traditional territories led to the amalgamation of distinct ethnic groups, creating a volatile mix of identities within shared administrative units. The hierarchical system implemented by the British, which privileged certain groups in terms of administrative positions and economic opportunities, sowed seeds of resentment and inter-ethnic animosity. This preferential treatment, combined with the manipulation of ethnic identities for administrative convenience, set the stage for post-independence conflicts as ethnic groups vied for recognition, rights, and autonomy.⁵

The Rohingya People

⁴ [Myanmar - Colonialism, Exploitation, Resistance | Britannica](#)

⁵ [The Rohingya Genocide is Rooted in British Colonialism - Spheres of Influence](#)



The Rohingya community has had a historical presence in Myanmar spanning centuries, predominantly in the Rakhine State situated in the western part of the country. However, their historical narrative has been overshadowed by a legacy of isolation and mistreatment under military administrations since the 1940s. Notably, the official acknowledgment of the Rohingya identity has been conspicuously absent, and their plight has been marked by systematic exploitation and discrimination since the 1960s. A significant event in the 1970s, referred to as "Operation Dragon" in 1978, compelled approximately 300,000 Rohingya to seek refuge in Bangladesh.⁶ Despite their return the subsequent year, their living conditions remained dismal. The critical juncture in their oppression unfolded with the imposition of statelessness under the 1982 nationality law, effectively depriving them of citizenship. This stringent law, categorizing citizenship into three classes, presented formidable obstacles for the Rohingya, as meeting the intricate requirements to establish roots and obtain Burmese citizenship proved insurmountable. Notably, the discriminatory essence of the law is further accentuated by the recognition of 135 races as national races in Myanmar, marginalizing the Rohingya and challenging the legitimacy of their historical existence.⁷

The discriminatory ramifications of the 1982 Citizenship Law run counter to fundamental principles enshrined in international agreements. Specifically, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child underscore the right to nationality, systematically denied to the Rohingya. The law's consequence of rendering children born in Myanmar stateless directly contradicts efforts aimed at providing protection and safety for all

⁶ [Timeline: A visual history of the Rohingya refugee crisis | Doctors Without Borders - USA](#)

⁷ [The history of the persecution of Myanmar's Rohingya \(theconversation.com\)](#)



children in the country. Additionally, the law perpetuates racial discrimination at a national level, contravening global initiatives to eradicate such biases.

The impact of the citizenship law extends to issues of statelessness, leaving Rohingya children devoid of secure access to nationality. This vulnerability arises from a lack of institutional and legal protection owing to their non-citizen status. The right to movement is severely curtailed, with Rohingya requiring specific permits to travel within Arakan or to other countries, strictly enforced by village authorities. Furthermore, the systemic oppression encompasses forced labor, where Rohingya individuals of all ages, including children, are coerced into working without compensation for state-run enterprises and in constructing villages for non-Muslim migrants. Despite international opposition, the Myanmar government has yet to actively curb these practices, perpetuating a situation that jeopardizes and disrespects a specific segment of the population.⁸

Current Situation

Statelessness

Statelessness contributes significantly to their abuse and ongoing violations of their rights. The core of statelessness is that a person does not belong to any state. While statelessness infringes the right to nationality directly, it also jeopardizes many other rights that flow from it. According to international law, a de jure stateless person is someone "who is not considered as a national by any State under the operation of its law." A de facto stateless individual, on the other hand, is someone who cannot verify his or her nationality. "Everyone has the right to nationality," according to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. People who are regarded

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[UPR-Factsheet-The-1982-Citizenship-Law-and-Right-to-Citizenship-of-Minorities-and-Freedom-of-Movement.pdf \(progressivevoicemyanmar.org\)](https://www.progressivevoicemyanmar.org/UPR-Factsheet-The-1982-Citizenship-Law-and-Right-to-Citizenship-of-Minorities-and-Freedom-of-Movement.pdf)



as stateless do not have the ability to sue a state if that parameter is not followed. They remain on the outskirts of a state, with nowhere to turn. As a result of their lack of "existence" in the eyes of the state, those individuals are frequently victims of persecution and mistreatment. The simple fact that one is stateless generates a maelstrom of maltreatment and denial. In an international system based on states, not belonging to any of them, Rohingya have nowhere to turn for true legal protection.⁹

Rohingya Migration

The Rohingya began fleeing Myanmar in the 1970s, but they began migrating in large numbers to Bangladesh in the 1990s.¹⁰ Those individuals were later returned in Myanmar under the supervision of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. Despite this, many of them returned to Bangladesh due to the discriminatory conditions in Myanmar. On October 22, 2016, a military incident occurred, prompting many Rohingya to flee to Bangladesh in order to prevent atrocities.¹¹ The August 2017 attacks caused additional Rohingya to flee the country. An estimated 723,000 Rohingya have fled to Bangladesh since August 2017 as a result of deliberate massacres and assaults against them.¹² When we examine the facts more closely, the situation becomes clear.

More than 400,000 Rohingya people have been pushed out of Myanmar by religious extremists.¹³ Many of them have sought refuge in Bangladesh and neighboring nations. The Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) attacked 25 security officials in Rakhine on August

⁹ [The Rohingya: The world's largest stateless population | Médecins Sans Frontières Australia | Doctors Without Borders \(msf.org.au\)](#)

¹⁰ [Myanmar Rohingya: What you need to know about the crisis \(bbc.com\)](#)

¹¹ [Rohingya crisis timeline: How we got here - CNN \(archive.org\)](#)

¹² ['Like an open prison': a million Rohingya refugees still in Bangladesh camps five years after crisis | Global development | The Guardian](#)

¹³ [The world's fastest-growing refugee crisis is taking place in Myanmar. Here's why. - Vox](#)



25, 2017. This was the deadliest attack to that point, judging the situation's escalation unavoidable. Security forces responded with operations. It was stated that Muslims were assaulted without distinction throughout those operations. While the army claimed only a few casualties, human-rights organizations reported hundreds of civilian deaths. It was projected that 87,000 Rohingya would flee Myanmar at the time. While Burmese authorities classify ARSA as a terrorist organization, ARSA defines itself as a group of fighters working to safeguard the Muslim Rohingya in Myanmar. Despite these conflicting accusations, there has been no evidence linking the group to terrorist organizations outside of the country.¹⁴

Rise of Violence

In May 2012, an event involving a Rohingya lady who was raped and killed by three Muslim males rekindled ethnic conflict in Myanmar. Later, in June, Rohingya allegedly stopped a bus and slaughtered ten Muslim passengers. As the tensions rose, Thein Sein declared Myanmar to be in a state of emergency in June, claiming that the Rohingya represented a threat to the country. He urged to the UN that they be placed in camps and moved to third countries. The scenario swiftly escalated into communal violence. Conflicts between Rakhine Buddhists and Muslims in 2012 led in numerous deaths and even more displacements. Later, in 2013, a minor incident at a gold shop sparked unrest that killed over 40 people, and in August 2013, Muslim shops and property were torched during a riot. Furthermore, according to a UN statement, more than 40 Rohingya males were slain in 2014 as a result of an allegation of a police officer's murder in Rakhine. All of these occurrences clearly demonstrate the recent rise of tensions between Myanmar's various ethnic groups.

Denial of Rights

¹⁴ [Myanmar: Who are the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army? \(bbc.com\)](http://www.bbc.com/news/asia-40888888)



When it comes to victims, the rise in tension has definitely highlighted the Rohingya. Being a Muslim minority and not being acknowledged by the state are the factors that contributed to the rise of tensions. Furthermore, the government revoked the minority group's voting privileges in 2015, making their living conditions in Myanmar even more onerous. In 2016, the UNHCR report depicts an effort to erode every landmark in Myanmar that is part of the Rohingya memory. The state appears to be actively attempting to remove any link between Rohingya history and Myanmar history. According to accounts, Rohingya elites, persons with influence, and iconic figures have been targeted. As a result, Myanmar exhibits a distinct and extensive forgetfulness regarding the Rohingya. Following the events of August 2015, the government responded with a lengthy and violent process aimed at the minority community. The situation became so terrible that claims of human rights breaches were made, and it was recognized that the situation at hand was an ethnic cleansing.

The 2021 Military Coup in Myanmar

The military coup d'état in Myanmar on February 1, 2021, marked a significant turning point in the country's political history, reversing years of progress towards democracy. The coup was orchestrated against the civilian government following the 2020 general elections, which saw the National League for Democracy (NLD) secure a strong mandate.

The coup resulted from escalating tensions between the civilian government and the military, known as the Tatmadaw, over allegations of electoral fraud and the military's waning influence in national politics. The Tatmadaw's actions not only posed a severe breach of international law but also highlighted the fragility of Myanmar's democratic institutions.



This period saw a remarkable galvanization of public resistance, particularly by Generation Z, who played a crucial role in leading a revolutionary movement against the military regime. Young people, embracing digital tools and social media, became the vanguard of the Civil Disobedience Movement, calling for the restoration of democracy and the release of detained leaders.

The international community's response to the coup was marked by calls for sanctions and diplomatic interventions, underscoring the importance of upholding international law and human rights. The coup also intensified ethical challenges, particularly in the education sector, where teacher educators and students faced dire consequences for participating in protests and resisting the junta's rule.

Moreover, the coup reflected a tragic recurrence of Myanmar's historical pattern of military control, echoing the events of 1988. It led to increased economic and political dependence on external powers, notably China, as Western countries imposed sanctions.

In summary, the 2021 military coup in Myanmar represented a significant setback for the country's democratic aspirations, leading to widespread civil unrest, international condemnation, and a reevaluation of Myanmar's political future. The events following the coup highlight the enduring struggle for democracy and human rights in a nation marred by decades of military rule.

Refugee Camps in Bangladesh

The Rohingya refugee crisis, centered in the sprawling camps of Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh, stands as one of the most pressing humanitarian challenges of our time. As of 2023, these camps are home to approximately 1 million Rohingya refugees who have fled from



Myanmar to escape severe persecution and violence. Following the military attacks of August 25th, 2017, an estimated 723,000 Rohingya fled to Bangladesh, with over 11,000 refugees reported to have crossed into Bangladesh in a single day. This migration added to the 300,000 Rohingya already housed in Bangladeshi refugee camps, placing an enormous strain on Bangladesh's resources.¹⁵

The living conditions in the camps are alarmingly overcrowded, with an estimated density of over 40,000 individuals per square kilometer, far exceeding the emergency standards set by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).¹⁶ The makeshift shelters, mostly made from bamboo and tarpaulin, offer minimal protection and exacerbate issues related to privacy, dignity, safety, and hygiene.

Sanitation in the camps remains a critical concern. Access to clean water is limited, and inadequate sewage systems increase the risk of waterborne diseases. Clean and safe toilet facilities are scarce, impacting the health and well-being of refugees, especially vulnerable groups like children and the elderly. The healthcare infrastructure is also strained, with medical facilities and personnel being insufficient for the vast number of refugees. This situation has led to widespread acute and chronic malnutrition, especially among children, and many refugees suffer from trauma and stress-related disorders due to their experiences of violence and displacement.

Despite significant domestic challenges, Bangladesh has attempted to assist the refugees and ensure conditions for them to live in dignity. Four ministries – Home Affairs, Health and Family Welfare, Foreign Affairs, Food and Disaster Management – quickly organized a response to the refugee crisis. Additionally, a cholera immunization campaign was launched in the Cox's

¹⁵ [‘Like an open prison’: a million Rohingya refugees still in Bangladesh camps five years after crisis | Global development | The Guardian](#)

¹⁶ [Indefinite Hosting of Rohingya Refugees a Growing Concern for Bangladesh – The Diplomat](#)



Bazaar area by the World Health Organization (WHO) to protect the refugees from potential outbreaks.

Necessity for Lasting Solutions

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, emphasizes the urgent need for renewed support and solutions for the displaced and stateless Rohingya communities both within and outside Myanmar. Three years after the massive exodus of Rohingya refugees who fled to Bangladesh from Myanmar in August 2017, the situation remains challenging and has been further complicated by the COVID-19 pandemic. This committee and the international community is called upon to not only continue their support for the refugees and their host communities but also to adapt to evolving critical needs and expand the search for solutions. It's essential to recognize that approximately three-quarters of the Rohingya population now live outside Myanmar. Bangladesh, hosting over 860,000 registered Rohingya refugees and demonstrating significant humanitarian commitment, has become a major sanctuary for them. This act of generosity should be met with continued investment in both the refugees and the host communities in Bangladesh.

The long-term resolution to the Rohingya crisis lies within Myanmar. Implementing the recommendations of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State is crucial, a commitment the Government of Myanmar has made. Creating conditions for the safe and sustainable return of the Rohingya involves comprehensive societal engagement, resuming and enhancing dialogue between Myanmar authorities and Rohingya refugees, and implementing measures to build trust. These measures include lifting movement restrictions, assuring displaced Rohingyas can return to their original villages, and providing a pathway to citizenship.



Internationally, efforts should focus on maintaining the dignity and well-being of the Rohingya, preserving their hopes, and improving their future prospects. This involves seeking lasting solutions not only in Myanmar but also in providing study and work opportunities in asylum countries and third-country pathways for the most vulnerable. Recognizing the strength and resilience of the Rohingya people, who have been pivotal in the humanitarian response and support to their host communities, is vital. It is critical to ensure they are not forgotten and their courage and capacities are respected and recognized.¹⁷

Bloc Positions

Myanmar:

Myanmar's stance on the Rohingya crisis, a situation of immense complexity and international concern, reflects a confluence of internal policy, historical context, and national sovereignty concerns. From Myanmar's perspective, the crisis is often framed as an issue of internal security, stemming from longstanding ethnic tensions within its diverse population. The government of Myanmar has consistently labeled the Rohingya as "Bengalis," implying they are illegal immigrants from Bangladesh, and thus not recognizing them as an indigenous ethnic group of Myanmar. This denial of ethnic identity is a key element of Myanmar's policy, significantly impacting the Rohingya's access to citizenship and legal rights.

The humanitarian crisis in Rakhine State, where most Rohingya resided, is acknowledged by Myanmar, but often within the broader narrative of the region's development challenges. The government points to initiatives aimed at improving infrastructure, healthcare, and education in

¹⁷ [UNHCR: Rohingya crisis needs lasting solutions | UNHCR](#)



the area, although these efforts are rarely focused explicitly on the needs of the Rohingya community. The emphasis is on general development rather than addressing the specific humanitarian needs of the displaced and persecuted Rohingya population.

Regarding international intervention, Myanmar maintains a stance of resistance, citing the principle of non-interference in internal affairs. This position extends to a skepticism of, or outright opposition to, proposals seen as infringing on national sovereignty, including international investigations into alleged human rights abuses in Rakhine State. The government's approach is characterized by an effort to control the narrative and manage the crisis within its borders without external involvement.

In discussions on the repatriation of Rohingya refugees from Bangladesh, Myanmar's approach is cautious and conditional. While there is nominal agreement on the principle of repatriation, stringent conditions are often placed on the return of refugees, involving requirements for documentation or proof of residency that many Rohingya cannot provide. This approach effectively limits the possibility of their return, while ostensibly keeping the door open for repatriation under Myanmar's terms.

At the international level, facing global scrutiny and pressure, Myanmar attempts to demonstrate steps taken towards reconciliation and peace in Rakhine State. These steps might include agreements with neighboring countries, participation in regional dialogues, or limited cooperation with international organizations. However, these actions are often viewed as insufficient by the international community, given the scale of the crisis and the severity of the allegations of human rights violations.

Bangladesh:



Bangladesh has been the major recipient of Rohingya refugees, trying to flee violence and seek acceptance in a state. The Rohingya exodus to Bangladesh has created a rather complicated situation. Due to the resource scarcity that Bangladesh faced, repatriation of the refugees that had arrived from Myanmar often seemed like the only viable solution. Their integration seemed to be extremely difficult for the local authorities. Consequently, even though there has been support for those registered in the legal camps in Bangladesh, the rest are treated like illegal immigrants. Additionally, the civil society has nourished anti-Rohingya sentiments that are usually driven by the political groups and the media. Besides that, there have been allegations of registered refugees tortured and mistreated in order to be repatriated and cross the border to Myanmar. One cannot fail to recognise the statements of Rohingya people regarding their treatment. There are statements of people thrown into the Naf river as a means of forcing them to swim back to Myanmar. Undeniably the existence, together with the illegal status of those people, make them subjects of extremely inhumane treatment from local Bangladeshi authorities.

League of Arab States:

The Arab world has taken the stand to defend the rights of Rohingya and condemn Myanmar for its actions against them in light of the recent military crackdown in the Rakhine state. The Secretary General of the Arab League has given a press conference on 6th September of 2017. He called upon the Myanmar authorities to cease the use of violence against Rohingyas, to seek for all those responsible for the alleged atrocities and to ameliorate the living conditions of the Muslim minorities living in the Rakhine state



Organization of Islamic Cooperation:

OIC has condemned the alleged atrocities committed against the Rohingya⁶², whilst its Contact Group on Rohingya Muslim of Myanmar issued a Declaration in September 2017. The latter fully addresses the crisis in the Rakhine state. Specifically, the Meeting of the OIC Foreign Ministers blames the Myanmar security forces for conducting ethnic cleansing against Rohingyas, whilst it calls upon the Government of Myanmar to adopt a series of different measures aiming to ensure the protection

ASEAN:

Being the unique regional international organization in which Myanmar participates, has adopted a very mild stance towards the ongoing crisis in Rakhine state. According to the ASEAN Chairman's Statement issued on the 24th September of 2017, the ASEAN Foreign Ministers denounced the attacks conducted against Myanmar security forces as well as any form of violence which has led to deaths of civilians, destruction of properties and the fleeing of a huge number of people. Furthermore, they pinpointed the inter-communal character of the conflict taking place, whilst they expressed their support on the initiatives of the Government of Myanmar to cope with the situation and achieve peace and stability in the area. Nevertheless, the Statement issued following the Summit held in Manila in November 2017 did not include more than a single paragraph on the situation in the Rakhine state, reiterating the necessity of providing humanitarian assistance to those affected, as well as welcoming once more the steps taken by Myanmar authorities in order to stabilize the area and re-establish peace and the rule of



law. Notwithstanding the aforementioned, ASEAN is criticized for its silence towards the alleged atrocities against Rohingyas, even by its own members. In fact, Malaysia distinguished its view from the Statement of the 24th of September, whilst its representatives declared that there is no reference to Rohingyas and they considered the actions of the Myanmar military forces to be acts of clearance.

European Union:

The EU stance towards Myanmar could be separated in two different phases; the first lasted from 1988 to early 2011, when the government was exercised by the military junta, whilst the second one begun in 2011, as the democratic transition commenced. Given the multidimensional framework of external relations between EU and Myanmar, the former could not remain stagnant ahead of the outburst of the crisis in summer of 2017, insisting on being retroactive than being proactive. In early 1990s, EU was denouncing the human rights violations within the territory of Myanmar, whilst in 1996, it adopted a Common Policy providing for certain restrictive measures, including, but not limited to, arms embargo, prohibition of exporting from EU member states equipment that could be used for repression purposes, freezing on funds owned by Burmese regime officers and their families etc. The USA, as well as other western states (p.ex. Canada) followed similar models of sanctioning Myanmar. Despite Myanmar's adhesion in ASEAN and the simultaneous developments in the EU-ASEAN relations, the former's relations with Myanmar remained fierce in terms of imposing sanctions until 2011. During the recent years, the democratic transition under the aegis of a civilian government led to gradual decrease and now the termination of the EU sanctions against Myanmar, exempt from the arms embargo which will be active at least until August 2018. Besides, EU played a



significant role concerning the signing of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement in 2015⁵⁴. Nevertheless, EU maintained a suspicious behavior claiming that there are still a lot of challenges to be dealt with. By virtue of the aforementioned, in light of the new round of violence in Rakhine state, the Council of the European Union proceeded to certain conclusions in order to address the crisis and shape the stance of the Union towards Myanmar, following the principles posed by the UN. In particular, the Council stressed out the necessity of all forms of violence to be terminated, regardless by whom they are conducted. Furthermore, it called for the protection of civilians and human rights, as well as reiterated the obligation of the Government of Myanmar to safeguard the unperturbed return of the refugees and IDPs, as well as to allow the delivery of humanitarian assistance by the UN, ICRC and international NGOs. In the same context, the EU increased its humanitarian assistance to Bangladesh and it declared its willingness to expand it within the Rakhine state. The Council of the EU reiterated -among others- its serious concerns regarding the “ongoing widespread, systematic grave human rights violations committed by Myanmar/Burma military and security forces” by issuing in February “Conclusions” so as to address the humanitarian crisis and the situation regarding human rights in Myanmar and to call upon the latter to search for all those accountable. It is also of utmost importance to mention that the Council of the European Union concluded on suspending any invitation towards military officers of Myanmar and to reassess any form of defensive cooperation due to the excessive use of military force by the Myanmar forces. In addition also to the already existent restrictive measure of arms embargo, it declared that the EU may assess its stance in terms of imposing additional measures against Myanmar if no improvement takes place. Ahead of the recent developments, Federica Mogherini, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, welcomed the signing of the MOU between Myanmar and



Bangladesh on the return of refugees and expressed its will to monitor its implementation in accordance with the standards of international law.

United States:

The United States has consistently approached the Rohingya crisis through a lens of humanitarian concern and strategic policy. In addressing the plight of the Rohingya people, the U.S. has been vocal in condemning the acts of violence and systemic persecution they face in Myanmar. This stance is deeply rooted in America's long-standing commitment to human rights and the protection of minority groups worldwide. The U.S. recognizes the complexity of the situation, particularly the challenges posed by the large-scale displacement of the Rohingya to neighboring countries like Bangladesh.

The enormity of the refugee influx into Bangladesh has led the U.S. to advocate for international support to assist both the refugees and the host communities. Aware of the resource constraints in Bangladesh, the U.S. has been a significant contributor of humanitarian aid, aimed at alleviating the immediate needs of the refugees. This aid is not only a reflection of the U.S.'s commitment to humanitarian assistance but also a strategic move to maintain regional stability.

However, the United States is also cognizant of the challenges posed by the long-term presence of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. The integration of these refugees into Bangladeshi society presents considerable difficulties, given the existing socio-economic conditions. As such, the U.S. supports efforts for a safe, voluntary, and dignified repatriation of the refugees to Myanmar, under conditions where their safety, rights, and livelihoods can be guaranteed. The U.S. underscores the importance of creating conducive conditions in Myanmar for their return, including granting citizenship rights to the Rohingya, a key issue in the crisis.



Furthermore, the U.S. has been critical of the treatment of Rohingya refugees within certain contexts in Bangladesh. Reports of mistreatment and forced repatriation are matters of concern for the U.S. In response, the U.S. has called for the protection of all Rohingya refugees, regardless of their registration status, emphasizing the need for their humane treatment in line with international law.

In addition to providing humanitarian aid, the U.S. has utilized diplomatic channels to address the root causes of the crisis. Through engagement with both Myanmar and Bangladesh, as well as regional and international actors, the U.S. seeks to find a sustainable solution to the crisis. This includes advocating for accountability for the perpetrators of violence against the Rohingya in Myanmar, supporting international investigations, and imposing targeted sanctions.

Questions to Consider

These questions should guide delegates through their process of research and comprehensive solution building.

1. What are the root causes of the Rohingya refugee crisis in Myanmar, and how can these be addressed to prevent further displacement?
2. What measures can be taken to ensure the safe, voluntary, and dignified repatriation of Rohingya refugees from Bangladesh to Myanmar?
3. How can the international community support Bangladesh in managing the humanitarian needs of the Rohingya refugees, considering the strain on resources and infrastructure?
4. What role should regional organizations, like the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), play in resolving the Rohingya crisis?
5. How can the international community work with the government of Myanmar to ensure the granting of citizenship and basic rights to the Rohingya people?



6. What steps can be taken to ensure accountability and justice for the human rights violations committed against the Rohingya population?
7. How can the international community promote economic development and stability in Myanmar's Rakhine State to address the underlying factors contributing to the crisis?
8. What strategies can be implemented to protect the Rohingya from becoming victims of human trafficking and exploitation, particularly vulnerable groups like women and children?
9. How can education and healthcare services be improved for Rohingya refugees in the camps in Bangladesh and for those who return to Myanmar?
10. What long-term strategies can be developed to promote peaceful coexistence and reconciliation between the Rohingya and other ethnic groups in Myanmar?

Important Resources for Research

1. [Myanmar's Rohingya Genocide \(youtube.com\)](#)
2. [Rohingya genocide - Wikipedia](#)
3. [The history of the persecution of Myanmar's Rohingya \(theconversation.com\)](#)
4. [Myanmar and Buddhist extremism \(theconversation.com\)](#)
5. [Timeline: How the crackdown on Myanmar's Rohingya unfolded | Rohingya News | Al Jazeera](#)



Topic 2: Refining Peacekeeping Initiatives amidst African Regional Conflicts

Introduction

Since 1960, there have been more than thirty UN peacekeeping missions across Africa, the most of any region. Currently, half of the dozen UN peacekeeping missions around the world are in Africa and more than 50 thousand troops are deployed for UN operations in the continent. This instability is largely the result of the brutal exploitation of resources and people, also known as colonization.¹⁸

SPECPOL is instrumental to the UN's mission in Africa: the committee comprehensively reviews peacekeeping operations & special political missions. However, UN peacekeeping missions in Africa have faced numerous challenges, and common trends underscore the weaknesses that persist within these operations.

Human rights violations and instances of sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeeping personnel have marred the reputation of UN missions. Human Rights Watch documented the eight cases of sexual exploitation and abuse by UN peacekeepers, known as MINUSCA, during research in Bambari between January 16 and 30, 2016.¹⁹ On top of the lack of justice for these victims, these misconduct cases only undermine the credibility of the peacekeepers and erode the trust of local communities, hindering the establishment of a conducive environment for peacebuilding.

¹⁸ [The Role of Peacekeeping Missions in Africa \(cfr.org\)](http://cfr.org)

¹⁹ [Central African Republic: Rape by Peacekeepers | Human Rights Watch \(hrw.org\)](http://hrw.org)



Another glaring issue is the complexity of the conflicts themselves, often characterized by multi-faceted and deeply rooted disputes that require intricate solutions. In regions such as the Sahel, the Great Lakes, and the Horn of Africa, peacekeepers find themselves grappling with a volatile mix of ethnic tensions, political instability, and the presence of non-state armed groups. Moreover, the lack of a robust early warning and rapid response system to emerging threats that contribute to the escalation of conflicts put both peacekeepers and civilian populations at greater risk.

Another weak point lies in limited resources, both in terms of personnel and equipment, undermining the missions' capacity to cover vast and challenging terrains adequately, hampering their ability to effectively maintain peace and protect civilians.

Addressing all of these challenges is paramount to enhancing the effectiveness and credibility of UN peacekeeping efforts on the continent. And this will require unparalleled collaboration and creativity between member states to critically evaluate the current UN activity in the region and implement comprehensive solutions in order to redesign the UN's current approach to peacekeeping.

History

The intricate and tumultuous history of African regional conflicts presents a profound challenge for the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (SPECPOL) of the Model United Nations. This detailed historical analysis aims to explore the causes, evolution, and SPECPOL's past interventions in these conflicts, leading to an understanding of the current situation.



Colonial Legacy and Its Prolonged Impact

The root of many African conflicts can be traced back to the colonial era. European colonial powers, in their quest for territorial expansion, created artificial borders, grouping disparate ethnic and cultural groups into single administrative units. This disregard for indigenous socio-political structures led to a legacy of ethnic tensions and territorial disputes that persisted post-independence. Colonial policies often favored one ethnic group over another, sowing seeds of division that would later manifest in violent conflicts after the withdrawal of colonial powers.²⁰

Post-Independence Turmoil and Nation-Building Challenges

Post-independence, many African nations grappled with the challenges of nation-building within these artificially constructed borders. The power vacuums left by departing colonial administrations often led to internal power struggles, coups, and civil wars. Ethnic divisions, a colonial legacy, further fueled these conflicts. The Nigerian Civil War (1967-1970) and subsequent conflicts in countries like Rwanda and Sudan exemplify these struggles. During these times, SPECPOL's role was limited, as the focus was more on decolonization and less on the internal dynamics of the newly independent states.

Cold War Dynamics and External Influences

The Cold War era saw African conflicts being influenced significantly by external powers. The USA and the Soviet Union, in their bid to expand their spheres of influence, supported various factions in internal African conflicts. This external interference often

²⁰ [How Africa's colonial history affects its development | World Economic Forum \(weforum.org\)](https://www.weforum.org/articles/how-africa-s-colonial-history-affects-its-development/)



exacerbated the conflicts, making them more protracted and complex.²¹ During this period, SPECPOL's engagement was often overshadowed by the broader geopolitical interests of the superpowers, limiting its effectiveness in conflict resolution.

Ethnic Conflicts and Resource Struggles

Many African conflicts have ethnic dimensions, often rooted in historical grievances and competition for resources. The Rwandan Genocide of 1994 is a tragic example, where deep-seated ethnic divisions led to one of the most devastating human tragedies of the 20th century. Conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo and other regions have also been fueled by competition for control over rich natural resources. SPECPOL's response to these conflicts has evolved over time, with a greater emphasis on understanding the ethnic and resource-based dynamics and addressing them through more comprehensive peacekeeping and conflict resolution strategies.

SPECPOL's Evolving Role and Current Challenges

Over the years, SPECPOL has evolved from focusing primarily on issues of decolonization to addressing the complex nature of post-independence conflicts in Africa. This shift has been driven by an increasing awareness of the multifaceted causes of these conflicts, including the colonial legacy, post-independence power struggles, ethnic tensions, and resource conflicts. SPECPOL's current challenge lies in addressing these conflicts in a holistic manner, considering the historical context, current political dynamics, and the need for sustainable development and nation-building.

²¹ [How The Cold War Wreaked Havoc In Africa | HistoryExtra](#)



In summary, the historical trajectory of African regional conflicts reveals a pattern of colonial legacies, post-independence nation-building challenges, Cold War influences, and ongoing struggles over ethnicity and resources. SPECPOL's past interventions in these conflicts were often limited by the broader geopolitical context and a lack of understanding of the complex internal dynamics of African states.²² However, with an evolving mandate and a deeper understanding of these conflicts, SPECPOL is now better positioned to address the current challenges, focusing on comprehensive strategies that consider the root causes and aim for long-term stability and peace in the region.

Current Situation

The United Nations Special Political and Decolonization Committee (SPECPOL) stands at the forefront of global efforts to refine peacekeeping initiatives, with a particular focus on addressing the complex and persistent conflicts that afflict various regions of Africa. SPECPOL's mandate, grounded in the principles of peace, stability, and international cooperation, is paramount in addressing the intricate challenges faced in these conflicts and fostering lasting peace across the continent.

In recent years, Africa has been the epicenter of numerous conflicts, necessitating robust and effective peacekeeping interventions. The continent has witnessed an array of peacekeeping missions, each tailored to the specific context of the conflict zone.

Current Peacekeeping Initiatives in Africa:

²² Shackleton, C., & Gwedla, N. (2021). The Legacy Effects of Colonial and Apartheid Imprints on Urban Greening in South Africa: Spaces, Species, and Suitability. *Frontiers in Ecology and Evolution*.



MINUSMA in Mali

MINUSMA, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali, represents one of the most significant peacekeeping efforts on the African continent. Established in 2013, its objectives are multifaceted, including the stabilization of Mali, the protection of civilians, and the promotion of human rights. However, the mission faces daunting operational challenges.

MINUSMA operates in an environment characterized by asymmetric warfare and the presence of several armed extremist groups. These groups engage in guerrilla tactics, making them a formidable adversary for peacekeepers. The vast and inhospitable terrain of Mali exacerbates the logistical challenges, with peacekeepers often navigating through remote and hostile areas.

Despite these challenges, MINUSMA has achieved notable successes in promoting stability in Mali. It has facilitated political dialogue, supported the implementation of the peace agreement, and contributed to the protection of civilians. Yet, it is vital to acknowledge that the mission's effectiveness is contingent upon addressing its operational challenges.²³²⁴

MONUSCO in the Democratic Republic of Congo:

The United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) was established in 1999, making it one of the longest-running peacekeeping missions globally. The mission's mandate revolves around stabilizing the volatile eastern regions of the DRC, supporting the government, and addressing security challenges.

²³ [MINUSMA | United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali \(unmissions.org\)](https://unmissions.org/)

²⁴ [Assessing the Effectiveness of the United Nations Mission in Mali \(MINUSMA\) – Training for Peace](#)



MONUSCO operates in a politically complex environment with multiple armed groups vying for control. Its mandate encompasses a vast operational area that includes parts of North Kivu, South Kivu, and Ituri provinces. While MONUSCO has played a significant role in deterring violence and protecting civilians, its ability to comprehensively address the root causes of conflict and promote lasting stability remains a challenge.

The mission's impact on regional stability is complex, as it grapples with the intricate dynamics of local and regional actors, while also dealing with accusations of human rights abuses by some of its peacekeepers. Achieving a sustainable peace in the DRC requires addressing not only the immediate security concerns but also the underlying political and economic issues.²⁵²⁶

UNMISS in South Sudan:

The United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) was established in 2011, coinciding with South Sudan's declaration of independence. The mission's primary goals include the protection of civilians, monitoring human rights violations, and facilitating humanitarian assistance.

UNMISS operates in a nation plagued by political instability, ethnic tensions, and recurrent violence. Its operational strategies encompass a wide array of activities, from supporting conflict resolution efforts to providing humanitarian aid to displaced populations. However, the mission has faced numerous challenges in fulfilling its mandate, including limited access to conflict-affected areas and inadequate resources.

²⁵ [MONUSCO | United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the DR Congo \(unmissions.org\)](https://unmissions.org/)

²⁶ [The Effectiveness of the UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo | IPI Global Observatory \(theglobalobservatory.org\)](https://theipio.org/)



The current status of UNMISS underscores the complexities of peacekeeping in South Sudan. While the mission has made strides in protecting civilians and mitigating violence, achieving a sustainable peace in the country remains an elusive goal. Political and ethnic tensions continue to simmer, necessitating continued international engagement.²⁷²⁸

Analysis of Peacekeeping Operations: Challenges and Flaws

Financial Challenges:

The financial challenges confronting UN peacekeeping missions in Africa are substantial. As of 2020, the UN assessed an average annual cost of over \$6 billion for maintaining peacekeeping operations worldwide, with a significant portion dedicated to African missions.²⁹ This enormous budget reflects the complex nature of the conflicts that these missions are tasked with addressing.

For example, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) alone had an annual budget exceeding \$1 billion. The high cost stems from various factors, including the need for personnel, equipment, logistics, and infrastructure. Peacekeepers require robust training, well-maintained equipment, and adequate resources to operate effectively in challenging environments.³⁰ Furthermore, the geographical expanse of

²⁷ [UNMISS | United Nations Mission in South Sudan \(unmissions.org\)](https://unmissions.org)

²⁸ <https://effectivepeaceops.net/publication/unmiss/>

²⁹ [How we are funded | United Nations Peacekeeping](#)

³⁰ [UN Extends \\$1 Bil. MINUSMA Peacekeeping Mission in West Africa As Deadly Violence Surges – DIPLOMATIC TIMES](#)



many African missions demands substantial financial resources to cover transportation, communication, and medical support.

However, financial challenges persist. Many African nations contribute troops to these missions, demonstrating their commitment to peacekeeping. Still, they often face difficulties in meeting their financial commitments. Delays in funding can result in cash flow problems, affecting troop payments, procurement of essential supplies, and overall mission readiness. These funding issues highlight the need for reliable and timely contributions from member states and mechanisms to address discrepancies in financial responsibilities.

Operational Challenge

Resource constraints significantly hamper peacekeeping operations. Limited funding and personnel, coupled with equipment shortages, challenge the missions' capacity to respond effectively to conflicts. Geographical and logistical issues further complicate these operations. The vast, often rugged African landscapes pose considerable challenges for mobility and communication, while inadequate infrastructure can delay the vital transportation of supplies and personnel.

Human Costs:

The human costs of UN peacekeeping missions in Africa are deeply profound. Peacekeepers operate in volatile and often perilous environments where they face the risk of injury, illness, and even death while carrying out their duties. These dedicated individuals come from diverse backgrounds and nations, and their sacrifices are a testament to their commitment to promoting peace and security.



As of January 2022, more than 4,000 peacekeepers from various countries had lost their lives while serving in UN peacekeeping missions worldwide, with a significant number of these casualties occurring in African conflicts. These statistics underline the inherent risks of peacekeeping, as peacekeepers often find themselves in the midst of armed conflict, humanitarian crises, and complex political dynamics.³¹

Moreover, peacekeepers frequently bear witness to the human toll of conflicts, including the suffering of civilians, displacement, and human rights abuses. These experiences can take a toll on their mental and emotional well-being. The United Nations and member states must prioritize the mental health and well-being of peacekeepers, providing them with the necessary support, counseling, and resources to cope with the trauma they may encounter during their missions.³²

Abuses of Power by UN Officials:

Instances of abuses of power by UN officials within peacekeeping missions in Africa have raised significant concerns and pose ethical and moral challenges. Sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers represent a particularly troubling issue. According to a report from the United Nations in 2020, there were 54 allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse involving UN personnel in peacekeeping missions, with a significant number of cases reported in African contexts.³³

³¹ [International Day of UN Peacekeepers 2022 | United Nations Peacekeeping](#)

³² [The Mental Health of United Nations Peacekeepers Deserves More Attention — THE INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS REVIEW \(iar-gwu.org\)](#)

³³ [the facts: UN sexual exploitation and abuse allegations, 2020 — Code Blue: \(codebluecampaign.com\)](#)



These incidents not only violate the trust of local populations but also undermine the fundamental principles of peacekeeping, including respect for human rights and the protection of vulnerable individuals. They also have the potential to damage the reputation and legitimacy of UN peacekeeping as a whole. Addressing these challenges necessitates robust mechanisms for reporting and investigating misconduct, as well as accountability measures for those responsible. Moreover, it underscores the importance of rigorous vetting, training, and oversight of personnel within peacekeeping missions.

Political and Strategic Challenges

The mandates of peacekeeping missions often face limitations that can restrict their effectiveness. Balancing respect for state sovereignty with proactive intervention to protect civilians is a delicate task. Additionally, relationships with host nations can be complex, especially when their interests diverge from those of the peacekeeping mission. Building and maintaining trust with local authorities is crucial but challenging.

Mandate Limitations:

One significant challenge peacekeeping missions face is the limitations of their mandates. Mandates that are too restrictive or vague can hamper peacekeepers' ability to intervene effectively. Striking the right balance between respecting state sovereignty and taking robust action to protect civilians is a complex endeavor.³⁴

Host Nation Relations:

³⁴ [Protecting Peace? How the Protection of Civilians Contributes to Peace Processes | IPI Global Observatory \(theglobalobservatory.org\)](https://www.globalobservatory.org/protecting-peace-how-the-protection-of-civilians-contributes-to-peace-processes/)



Cooperating with local governments and institutions can be a delicate process, particularly when the host nation's interests diverge from the peacekeeping mission's objectives. Peacekeepers must navigate complex political landscapes, where alliances and allegiances may shift rapidly. Building trust with host nation authorities is essential for mission success.

Security and Safety Challenges

Peacekeepers frequently face direct threats from armed groups, insurgents, and criminal elements. Protecting peacekeepers is paramount for mission success and requires continuous evaluation and enhancement of security measures. Equally important is the protection of civilians, a core mandate of many missions. Achieving this goal amidst ongoing conflict and human rights abuses is an ongoing and complex challenge.

Threats to Peacekeepers:

Peacekeepers often find themselves in harm's way, with incidents of direct targeting and involvement in crossfires not uncommon. Armed groups, criminal elements, and insurgents pose significant threats to the safety of peacekeepers. The protection of peacekeepers is paramount to mission success and requires robust security measures.

Protection of Civilians:

One of the core mandates of peacekeeping missions is the protection of civilians. However, achieving this goal can be challenging in the midst of conflict. Civilians may be caught



in the crossfire, subjected to human rights abuses, or face displacement. Balancing the need to protect civilians with the practical challenges of doing so is an ongoing challenge.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the complex and dynamic nature of African regional conflicts presents formidable challenges to peacekeeping initiatives. The missions in Mali, the DRC, and South Sudan serve as prime examples of the multifaceted difficulties peacekeepers encounter. These challenges encompass operational limitations, political intricacies, security threats, and humanitarian concerns.

Addressing these challenges requires a holistic approach that goes beyond military intervention. Robust mandates, effective cooperation with host nations, and the protection of civilians are fundamental principles. The lessons learned from past failures, such as the Rwandan genocide, underscore the importance of early and decisive action.

Bloc Positions

United States of America

The United States has long been a proponent of robust peacekeeping efforts, particularly in regions of Africa beset by conflict and instability. In the arena of peacekeeping missions in Africa, the U.S. stance is shaped by a blend of humanitarian concerns, strategic interests, and a commitment to international security. The U.S. acknowledges the complexity of peacekeeping in Africa, where the terrain of conflict is often entangled with ethnic, political, and religious factors.



This recognition drives the U.S. to advocate for peacekeeping missions that are not only well-resourced and equipped but also have clear, achievable mandates.

In terms of support, the U.S. emphasizes the need for comprehensive training and capacity-building of peacekeeping forces. This approach is grounded in the belief that effective peacekeeping requires not just numbers but also well-prepared personnel capable of responding adeptly to the diverse challenges on the ground. The protection of civilians and the upholding of human rights are central to the U.S. perspective. In this light, the U.S. delegation would likely stress the importance of peacekeeping troops being vigilant protectors of human rights, actively preventing abuses and supporting humanitarian efforts.

Moreover, the U.S. recognizes that peacekeeping is not a standalone solution but part of a broader strategy encompassing political dialogue, conflict resolution, and support for good governance. Therefore, the U.S. might advocate for peacekeeping missions to work in tandem with diplomatic initiatives and processes that foster inclusive political solutions. Funding for these missions is another critical area of focus for the U.S. As a significant contributor to the UN peacekeeping budget, the U.S. calls for transparent and efficient use of funds, ensuring that resources are effectively allocated to achieve mission objectives.

Counterterrorism is another dimension of the U.S. stance in peacekeeping in Africa. With the rise of terrorist activities in certain regions of the continent, the U.S. might propose integrating counterterrorism objectives into peacekeeping mandates where relevant, ensuring that peacekeeping efforts also contribute to broader regional and international security.

Partnerships with regional bodies, particularly the African Union, are viewed by the U.S. as essential for the success of peacekeeping operations. Such collaborations ensure that missions are attuned to regional dynamics and benefit from regional expertise and insights. The U.S. also



emphasizes the need for accountability in peacekeeping, advocating for mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the conduct and effectiveness of peacekeeping forces.

In essence, the U.S. approach to peacekeeping missions in Africa in a Model United Nations framework is multifaceted, balancing the need for effective, well-resourced operations with a focus on human rights, regional stability, and comprehensive political solutions to conflicts. The U.S. stance reflects its broader foreign policy objectives of promoting global security and stability while also acknowledging the unique challenges and dynamics of the African context.

African Union

The African Union (AU), a pivotal entity in the realm of peacekeeping in Africa, confronts a landscape marked by multifaceted conflicts and security challenges. This continental body, representing the collective voice of African nations, grapples with the daunting task of fostering peace and stability across diverse political, ethnic, and social terrains. The AU's involvement in peacekeeping is driven by the philosophy of African solutions for African problems, emphasizing the need for initiatives that are deeply rooted in the understanding of the unique complexities of each conflict zone.

In the face of resource constraints, a perennial issue for the AU, the organization's capacity to effectively manage peacekeeping operations is often hampered. Limited funding, logistical challenges, and reliance on external support are constant hurdles in realizing the full potential of AU-led peacekeeping missions. Despite these challenges, the AU remains committed to upholding peace and security, often necessitating innovative approaches and partnerships to surmount the operational limitations.



The protection of civilians in conflict zones is a cornerstone of the AU's peacekeeping philosophy. This commitment is mirrored in the mandates of its missions, which prioritize safeguarding civilian populations, especially in regions where communities are susceptible to egregious human rights violations. The AU's stance on peacekeeping underscores the imperative to protect the most vulnerable, often in environments where government structures are either weak or complicit in the perpetration of violence.

Political engagement and conflict resolution are integral to the AU's approach to peacekeeping. Recognizing that military intervention alone cannot forge lasting peace, the AU champions a holistic strategy encompassing diplomatic efforts, political dialogue, and support for inclusive governance structures. The AU's emphasis on political solutions is indicative of its broader vision for sustainable peace, rooted in addressing the underlying causes of conflicts.

Moreover, the AU is acutely aware of the regional dimensions of conflicts and the transnational nature of security challenges in Africa. This awareness shapes its approach to peacekeeping, advocating for regional collaboration and a coordinated response to conflicts. The AU often serves as a platform for fostering regional cooperation, understanding that the stability of individual nations is inextricably linked to the broader peace and security of the continent.

European Union

The European Union (EU), in its role as a significant international stakeholder in African peacekeeping, confronts a landscape rife with complex security and humanitarian challenges. The EU's involvement in peacekeeping across the African continent is underpinned by a multifaceted approach that integrates humanitarian aid, development assistance, and a commitment to uphold human rights and the rule of law. Recognizing the interconnected nature



of peace, stability, and development, the EU has consistently emphasized the need for a comprehensive strategy in addressing the root causes of conflict in Africa.

Confronted with the multifarious nature of conflicts in Africa, the EU has been a proponent of collaborative and multilateral efforts in peacekeeping. This perspective is driven by the understanding that sustainable peace requires a coordinated response, leveraging the strengths and capabilities of various international actors, including the United Nations, the African Union, and regional organizations. The EU's commitment to multilateralism in peacekeeping is not only a reflection of its foreign policy ethos but also a pragmatic response to the transnational challenges posed by conflicts, which often have implications beyond the immediate region, including for Europe.

In the realm of peacekeeping, the EU has placed a significant emphasis on the protection of human rights and the maintenance of the rule of law. In scenarios where peacekeeping missions are deployed, the EU has advocated for robust mandates that prioritize the safety and security of civilian populations, particularly in areas where they are at risk of violence and human rights abuses. The adherence to international law and the accountability of all parties involved in peacekeeping operations are considered paramount by the EU.

Security concerns, particularly related to the implications of African conflicts for Europe, are a key aspect of the EU's approach to peacekeeping. Issues such as terrorism, radicalization, and unregulated migration are viewed through the lens of both African and European security. Consequently, the EU's support for peacekeeping missions often includes elements aimed at addressing these broader security concerns, with a focus on preventing the spillover of instability and its associated risks.



The EU's role in supporting peacekeeping missions extends to providing financial and logistical assistance. Recognizing the resource-intensive nature of peacekeeping operations, the EU has been a major contributor, advocating for sustainable and efficient use of resources to enhance the effectiveness and impact of missions. This support is critical, given the often-limited resources available for peacekeeping initiatives in Africa.

China

China, in its role as a global power and a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, presents a distinct perspective on peacekeeping missions in Africa, influenced by its foreign policy principles and strategic interests. In a Model United Nations setting, China's approach to African peacekeeping is likely to reflect a combination of commitment to non-interference, support for state sovereignty, emphasis on economic development, and increasing involvement in peacekeeping operations.

China has consistently adhered to the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other nations, a stance that shapes its approach to international peacekeeping. In African peacekeeping contexts, this means that while China supports UN missions, it typically advocates for solutions that respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the host nations. In a Model UN simulation, the Chinese delegation would likely emphasize the importance of respecting the political independence of African states and avoiding external imposition in conflict resolution processes.

Economic development is a key component of China's foreign policy, and this extends to its perspective on peacekeeping. China often views economic growth and development as fundamental to long-term stability and peace. Therefore, in a Model UN discussion on African



peacekeeping, the Chinese delegation might advocate for integrating development initiatives with peacekeeping efforts. This could include support for infrastructure development, investment in local economies, and bilateral cooperation between China and African nations as part of the broader peacekeeping and stabilization strategy.

China's involvement in UN peacekeeping operations has grown significantly in recent years. The country has become one of the largest troop contributors among the permanent members of the Security Council and has been actively participating in several UN peacekeeping missions in Africa. The Chinese delegation in a Model UN scenario would likely highlight this involvement, showcasing China's commitment to global peace and security. This increased participation also aligns with China's desire to play a more prominent role in global affairs.

Additionally, China's approach to peacekeeping is often pragmatic and oriented towards stability. The Chinese delegation might emphasize the need for practical and effective peacekeeping operations that can contribute to creating a stable environment, conducive to long-term development and conflict resolution. This approach is in line with China's broader foreign policy goals of creating a stable international environment that is beneficial for its own economic and strategic interests.

Questions to Consider

1. What are the root causes of conflicts in different African regions, and how can the UN address these underlying issues to prevent future conflicts?
2. How can the committee ensure that UN peacekeeping missions in Africa effectively protect human rights and prevent instances of abuse and misconduct by peacekeeping personnel?



3. What strategies can be implemented to enhance the coordination and collaboration between the UN and regional organizations like the African Union in resolving African conflicts?
4. How can the UN overcome resource constraints, both in terms of personnel and equipment, to improve the capacity of peacekeeping missions in Africa?
5. What measures should the UN take to address the complexity of African conflicts, including ethnic tensions, political instability, and the presence of non-state armed groups?
6. What role should non-governmental organizations (NGOs) play in supporting peacekeeping and humanitarian efforts in African conflict zones, and how can their involvement be effectively regulated and coordinated?
7. Should the committee prioritize diplomatic negotiations and peace talks over proactive military intervention in resolving African conflicts, and how can these approaches complement each other?
8. How can the UN establish a robust early warning and rapid response system to prevent the escalation of conflicts in African regions?
9. What reforms and improvements can be made within UN peacekeeping operations in Africa to enhance their effectiveness and credibility?
10. How can the committee foster international cooperation and collaboration among member states to critically evaluate and redesign the UN's current approach to peacekeeping in Africa, taking into account differing viewpoints and strategies?

Important Resources for Research



The following case studies can serve useful for learning from previous successes and failures of peacekeeping operations in Africa:

Rwanda 1994:

The Rwandan genocide in 1994 represents one of the most tragic failures of the international community to prevent mass atrocities. Despite early warning signs and a presence on the ground through the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR), the international response was inadequate. Lessons from this failure underscore the need for early and robust intervention in conflict zones with the potential for mass violence.

Somalia (UNOSOM II):

The United Nations Operation in Somalia II (UNOSOM II) faced significant challenges in a state with fragmented authority and no central government. The mission grappled with clan-based conflict, humanitarian crises, and attacks on peacekeepers. The experience in Somalia highlights the complexities of intervening in states with weak or nonexistent governance structures.

Darfur (UNAMID):

The United Nations-African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) faced limitations in its mandate and encountered difficulties in cooperating with regional forces. The mission struggled to address the root causes of conflict and protect civilians effectively. The Darfur case underscores the importance of clear and robust mandates, as well as effective collaboration with regional actors.

Further Resources:



1. [A Look at 10 UN Peacekeeping Missions in Africa - Africa.com \(www.africa.com\)](http://www.africa.com)
2. [The Challenges Faced by U.N. Peacekeeping Missions in Africa \(thestrategybridge.org\)](http://thestrategybridge.org)
3. [United Nations Peacekeeping Flaws and Abuses: The U.S. Must Demand Reform | The Heritage Foundation](#)
4. [UN Peacekeeping has a Sexual Abuse Problem | Human Rights Watch \(hrw.org\)](http://hrw.org)



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Topic 1

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Topic 2

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