

UN Peacekeeping Missions

July 5, 2021

United Nations member states agreed recently to a budget of around \$6 billion for the world body's 12 peacekeeping missions for the next year. There was a delay in passing a new \$6 billion budget by the UN General Assembly, triggering a possible shutdown of the operations.

In news: UN member states agree to \$6 billion peacekeeping budget, averting shutdown

Placing it in syllabus: Foreign Affairs

Dimensions:

- Peacekeeping budget issue
- How are the operations funded?
- Principles behind the missions
- Significance of peacekeeping Missions
- Indian contribution to the peacekeeping mission

Content:

Peacekeeping Budget Issue:

- The 193-member **UN General Assembly budget committee** agreed to the peacekeeping budget for the year through June 30, 2022.
- Top UN officials said that UN peacekeeping missions, most of which are in Africa and the Middle East, had been advised to start putting contingency plans in place in case a new budget was not adopted by June 30.
- Some diplomats said changes to negotiating procedures, issues with logistics and tough talk pitting China against Western countries had threatened to delay an agreement.
- UN peacekeeping chief Jean-Pierre Lacroix had said, missions would be severely limited and unable to carry

out such measures as protecting civilians, helping tackle Covid-19 and supporting political efforts and mediation.

How are the operations funded?

Overall Financing

- The financing of UN Peacekeeping operations is the collective responsibility of all UN Member States. (Decisions about establishing, maintaining or expanding a peacekeeping operation are taken by the UN Security Council)
- Every Member State is legally obligated to pay their respective share towards peacekeeping. This is in accordance with the provisions of Article 17 of the Charter of the United Nations.
- The General Assembly apportions peacekeeping expenses based on a special scale of assessments under a complex formula that Member States themselves have established.
- This formula takes into account, among other things, the relative economic wealth of Member States, with the five permanent members of the Security Council required to pay a larger share because of their special responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Budgets of peacekeeping operations:

- Budgets of peacekeeping operations are based on the missions' mandate from the Security Council. As such, they are strategic documents aligning resources to achieve the overall objectives of the operation.
- Each peacekeeping operation has its own budget and account which includes operational costs such as transport and logistics and staff costs such as salaries.
- The UN has no military forces of its own, and Member

States provide, on a voluntary basis, the military and police personnel required for each peacekeeping operation.

- Peacekeeping soldiers are paid by their own Governments according to their own national rank and salary scale.
- Countries volunteering uniformed personnel to peacekeeping operations are reimbursed by the UN at a standard rate, approved by the General Assembly, of US\$1,428 per soldier per month as of 1 July 2019.
- Police and other civilian personnel are paid from the peacekeeping budgets established for each operation.

Principles behind the missions:

- UN Peacekeeping is the largest and most visible representation of the United Nations. It is a collective investment in global peace, security, and stability.
- Peacekeepers protect civilians, actively prevent conflict, reduce violence, strengthen security and empower national authorities to assume these responsibilities.
- This requires a coherent security and peacebuilding strategy that supports the political strategy.
- UN peacekeeping helps host countries to become more resilient to conflict, laying the groundwork to sustain long-term peace, including by addressing root causes of conflict.
- A strong and effective partnership between the UN Secretariat, the Security Council and the countries that contribute uniformed personnel, has made possible for 55 peacekeeping operations around the world to have, through the years, successfully completed their mandate.

Significance of peacekeeping Missions

Protecting Civilians:

- Civilians have increasingly become the victims of armed conflict. In response, the Security Council has made protecting civilians a focus of modern peacekeeping.
- Mandates and rules of engagement were clarified to ensure that peacekeepers had the authority to act.
- More than 95% of peacekeepers today are mandated to protect civilians

Preventing conflicts

- UN Peacekeepers help prevent conflict to reduce human suffering, build stable and prosperous societies to help enable people to reach their full potential.
- Peacekeepers help strengthen national and sub-national institutions to address the root causes of conflict such as discrimination, inequalities and marginalization.
- Civil Affairs officers engage extensively with local communities by working on social cohesion, extension of state authority and mitigation of local conflicts.
- Interactions at the local level are crucial to implement mission-mandated tasks and to enhance a mission's credibility.

Building Rule of Law and Security Institutions

- Rule of law and security institutions, both national and local, are vital elements for stabilizing countries and bringing sustainable peace.
- Through systematic and targeted measures, UN Peacekeeping addresses the situation of those individuals and communities most affected by conflict, with the overarching goal of assisting national political processes, conflict resolution and stabilization.
- Rule of law activities in peacekeeping are people-centred initiatives. They are tailored to local realities and assist communities to produce concrete peace dividends, such as access to basic services

through mine/explosive hazard removal.

Promoting human rights

- Human rights is a core pillar of the United Nations. All staff in peace operations have the responsibility to ensure the protection and promotion of human rights through their work.
- Most multi-dimensional UN peace operations have a human rights team.
- The teams implement the human rights-related mandates given to missions and they help to mainstream human rights across all mission activities.

Empower women

- Violent conflict disproportionately affects women and girls and intensifies pre-existing gender inequalities and discrimination.
- Women are also active agents of peace in armed conflict, yet their role as key players and change agents of peace has been largely unrecognized.
- UN Peacekeeping operations are mandated by the Security Council to implement the Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security across all peace functions
- They work to ensure women's priorities are central to peace and security decisions at all levels

Deliver field support

- The effectiveness of peace operations always depends on the operational support it receives.
- The Department of Operational Support (DOS) helps peace operations succeed by providing support solutions that are rapid, effective, efficient and responsible.
- It works together with UN and non-UN partners to plan, mobilize and sustain 35 peacekeeping, special political and other field missions in the world's most complex environments.

Indian contribution to the peacekeeping mission:

- India's contributions to UN peacekeeping operations (UNPKOs) have been underscored by the experience and professionalism of India's armed forces.
- India today is the **largest contributor of troops to UNPKOs**. More than 200,000 Indian troops have served in 49 of the 71 UNPKOs deployed so far.
- As an "original" founder-member of the United Nations, India has not hesitated to respond to the calls of the UN to contribute troops for maintaining international peace and security.
- India's participation in the initial UNPKOs resulted in a growing pool of Indian military officers seconded to the UN whose professionalism and experience have contributed to UN peacekeeping doctrine
- UNTAG saw Indian peacekeepers assist in the creation of the institutions of an independent Namibia.
- India became the first country to **demonstrate the effectiveness of women as UN peacekeepers** in peacebuilding with the deployment of the **first all-female formed police unit (FFPU)** to the UNPKO in Liberia (UNMIL) in 2007.

Out of the 3802 troops from UN member-states **who have given their lives defending** the UN Charter between 1948-2018, the **highest number (164) are from India**.

Mould your thought: Why is the UN Peacekeeping operations (UNPKO) important? How are UNPKOs funded? Discuss India's contributions to peacekeeping operations.

Approach to the answer:

- Introduction
- Discuss the importance of UNPKO
- Mention the funding model of UNPKO
- Discuss the budgeting of individual Missions

- Discuss India's contributions to the missions
- Conclusion