



Spotlight UN-AU Partnership

Resolution 2719, establishing a framework for African Union-led peace operations (AUPSOs) to access funding from the UN peacekeeping budget, strengthens Africa's security architecture and advances the critical partnership between the UN Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council.

AUPSOs function under the Peace and Security Council of the AU, which was established in the aftermath of crises in the 1990s, including the Rwandan genocide, to intervene in situations involving war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity.

This agreement directly addresses the U.S. interest in overcoming funding gaps that previously prevented the success of AU-led operations while maintaining the U.S. veto and say over any AUPSO that uses UN funds.

PEACEKEEPING REFORM

With U.S. support, the UN has taken on several initiatives to improve the effectiveness, efficiency and accountability of peacekeeping operations.

One such example is the Action for Peacekeeping Plan (A4P). Approved by UN Member States in 2018, A4P has increased the implementation of policies responding to instances of sexual exploitation and abuse and works to update current peacekeeping approaches to ensure the efficiency of missions. **A4P has produced new strategic plans for seven of the 11 UN missions.**

Burden Sharing

Increased burden-sharing for international peace operations has been a priority for every modern U.S. administration. In 2023, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 2719, allowing the African Union (AU) to access UN funding on a case-by-case basis for peace operations. The decision was designed to overcome funding shortfalls among AU members and provide better burden-sharing in a region that has experienced high levels of a violence from extremist and paramilitary forces like the Russian-led Wagner Group. **Through U.S. support of AU financing, the UN has become a counterweight to malign actors in critical regions like the Sahel - without deploying U.S. troops.**

Budget Reform

U.S. engagement with the UN has successfully reduced the peacekeeping budget and number of peacekeeping missions. In the last eight years alone, **the peacekeeping budget has been reduced by \$1 billion** and five missions.

Sexual Exploitation

With strong U.S. support, the Security Council passed Resolution 2272, **expanding the authority of the Secretary-General to repatriate entire military and police units that engage in widespread or systematic violations.** This power has been used in the Central African Republic to expel troops from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Republic of the Congo and Gabon.

In addition to these efforts, the UN expanded its vetting process for civilian personnel in peacekeeping missions and **now requires troop-contributing countries to deploy national investigation officers (NIOs)** to lead inquiries into allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse. While the host nation is responsible for the prosecution of violations, the UN assists throughout the process.

The UN has also appointed victims' rights advocates at UN Headquarters and in the field to ensure victims have access to urgent assistance, can safely file complaints and receive timely information on the progress of their case.