

Country: Guyana

Issue: Forming a Convention Governing Accountability for UN Peacekeepers

Committee: United Nations Department of Peace Operations (UNDPO)

ISSUE AND POSITION: The accountability of United Nations peacekeepers is fundamental to the legitimacy and credibility of peace operations worldwide. While UN missions are mandated to protect civilians and uphold international law, misconduct by peacekeepers directly undermines trust in the UN and inflicts lasting harm on vulnerable areas. Guyana firmly advocates the creation of an enforceable accountability framework that strengthens oversight and guarantees justice for victims.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: Guyana recognizes the issue of peacekeeper accountability stems largely from the jurisdictional structure governing UN personnel, whereby peacekeepers remain subject to the legal authority of their troop-contributing nations rather than host states. This system, though intended to encourage participation in peacekeeping operations, has frequently resulted in delayed investigations, uneven enforcement and limited accountability for serious offenses. Persistent allegations of sexual exploitation, abuse of power and other misconduct across multiple missions have exposed significant deficiencies in current accountability mechanisms. Despite the adoption of zero-tolerance policies, oversight procedures and training initiatives, enforcement has remained inconsistent and transparency limited. For Guyana, these failures threaten not only the moral authority of peacekeeping operations but also their operational effectiveness.

PROPOSED ACTION ON ISSUE: To decisively address these challenges, Guyana proposes the GUARD plan whose acronym stands for Guidelines, Uniform Investigations, Accountability Enforcement, Reporting Mechanisms, and Disciplinary Consequences). The first portion, Guidelines, mandates the implementation of binding accountability guidelines under UNDPO authority, clearly defining prohibited behavior, investigative procedures and minimum consequences for violations. Guidelines would be incorporated into peacekeeping mandates and pre-deployment training requirements, ensuring all personnel operate under uniform expectations regardless of mission or troop-contributing country. Uniform Investigations calls for standardized investigative procedures for all allegations of serious misconduct, coordinated through UNDPO in cooperation with the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOs). Investigations would follow fixed timelines, utilize trained and independent personnel and prevent delays caused by jurisdictional ambiguity. Accountability Enforcement requires contributing nations to formally cooperate with UN investigations and judicial follow-up processes as a condition of continued participation in peacekeeping operations. Nations that fail to investigate cases would face harsh consequences, including suspension from future deployments and exclusion from leadership positions. This measure directly addresses impunity by tying accountability to participation incentives. Reporting Mechanisms strengthens transparency by creating a centralized UNDPO reporting system that publishes data on allegations, investigations and outcomes. Regular reporting to the General Assembly would enhance oversight while ensuring due process and victim privacy. Increased visibility of enforcement outcomes reinforces trust among communities and nations. Disciplinary Consequences confirms that misconduct leads to clear and enforceable penalties including dismissal and referral for national prosecution is appropriate. Guyana declares this proposal serves as a comprehensive and actionable plan to restore confidence in peacekeeping operations, protect populations and reaffirm the UN's commitment to discipline, justice, and the rule of law.

Works Cited

- “Statement delivered by H.E. Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett, Permanent Representative of Guyana to the United Nations, at Security Council Open Debate on 'Advancing adaptability in United Nations peace operations: responding to new realities.’” *Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, 24 March 2025,
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