

# CANADA AND UN PEACEKEEPING

Updated August 2020  
Monthly statistics update available at  
[www.peacekeepingcanada.com](http://www.peacekeepingcanada.com)

## OVERVIEW OF UN PEACEKEEPING AND CANADIAN DEPLOYMENTS

The work of the United Nations to restore peace and security currently involves more than 95,000 military, police, and civilian personnel, serving in 13 peacekeeping missions around the world.

Canadian contributions of military and police personnel are at a historic low, with only 34 individuals (24 military and 10 police) deployed to UN operations as of June 30, 2020 (Chart 1).

At the same time, UN peacekeeping is facing many challenges. The United States under the current administration has led efforts at the Security Council to reduce the size of many UN operations and wind down others.

Furthermore, the United States assessed contribution to the UN budget for peace operations is approximately 28%. However Congress continues to enforce an arbitrary 25% cap on U.S. contributions to UN peacekeeping. This cap has been in place since the early 1990s, leading to an accrued \$750 million in arrears.

UN peacekeeping has always been insufficiently funded, struggling to attain personnel levels mandated by the Security Council, as well as to properly equip and support ongoing missions.

The approved budget for UN Peacekeeping in 2019/20 is \$6.5 billion (US), a slight drop from \$6.69 billion (US) in 2018/19. This expenditure is less than 0.5% of total world military expenditure, which was \$1.9 trillion (US) in 2019 (an increase of 3.6% over 2018).

1. CANADA'S RANK AMONG CONTRIBUTORS TO UN PEACEKEEPING



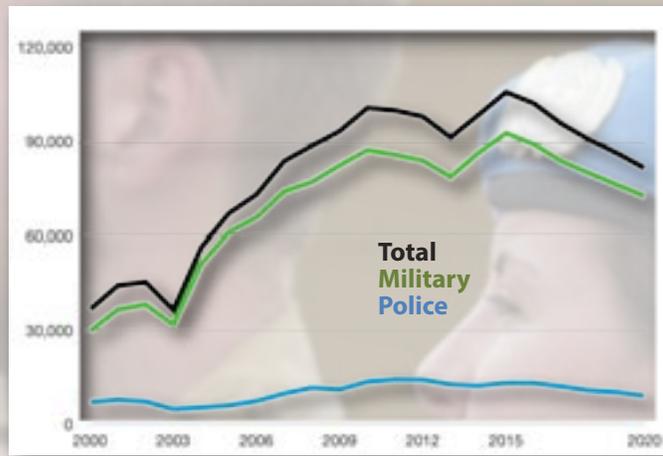
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# THE NEED FOR PEACEKEEPERS REMAINS HIGH

Since 1999, the size and number of UN missions grew, reaching a peak in 2015, then declining slightly (Chart 2). The recent decline is due in part to a natural winding down of some successful operations (in Haiti, Liberia, and Sierra Leone) and reductions in authorized troop levels in others, notably in Darfur, and D.R. Congo. However, pressure from the US and other member states to reduce the cost and scope of UN activities is also a contributing factor.

There is an urgent need to increase the capacity of UN missions in Mali, South Sudan, and D.R. Congo. A new mission is being created in Suda. These missions face enormous challenges to support the peace processes and protect civilians. There is also an urgent need for new missions in Yemen, Libya, and (eventually) Syria.

## 2. MILITARY AND POLICE PERSONNEL ON UN PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS



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## CANADA'S PEACEKEEPING PROFILE

Contributions from countries like Canada with advanced military and logistics capabilities are much needed to increase the UN's operational effectiveness. However, in recent years Canada has provided only a small and diminishing presence in UN missions. Aside from the previous air force contribution to Mali, the Canadian military contributes a total of only 23 personnel (7 to D.R. Congo, 1 to Cyprus, 11 to South Sudan and 4 to the Middle East). Canada has fallen from being the single largest contributor of UN peacekeepers, a position it held until 1992, to 80th position today with 34 total personnel currently deployed (Chart 1).

There are 8 Canadian women deployed as peacekeepers. While small in number, this does set an example in the percentage of women deployed (23%). Noteworthy also are some programs to support other nations' women in peacekeeping that are finally being implemented, including the much touted Elsie Initiative.

## 3. CANADIAN PERSONNEL DEPLOYMENTS (as of June 30, 2020)

UN PEACE OPERATION	CANADIAN PERSONNEL
MONUSCO (Dem. Rep. of the Congo)	7 military
UNFICYP (CYPRUS)	1 military
UNMISS (South Sudan)	9 military
UNTSO (Golan Heights, also Lebanon and Sinai Peninsula)	3 military
MINUSMA (Mali)	4 military, 10 police

In addition to personnel and training, Canada has just extended its C-130 service to the UN for a second year, from August 1 2020 to July 31, 2021. Based in Entebbe, Uganda, this is the first national contribution for multi-operation air service in UN history, with operations in D.R. Congo, and South Sudan in 2019-20.

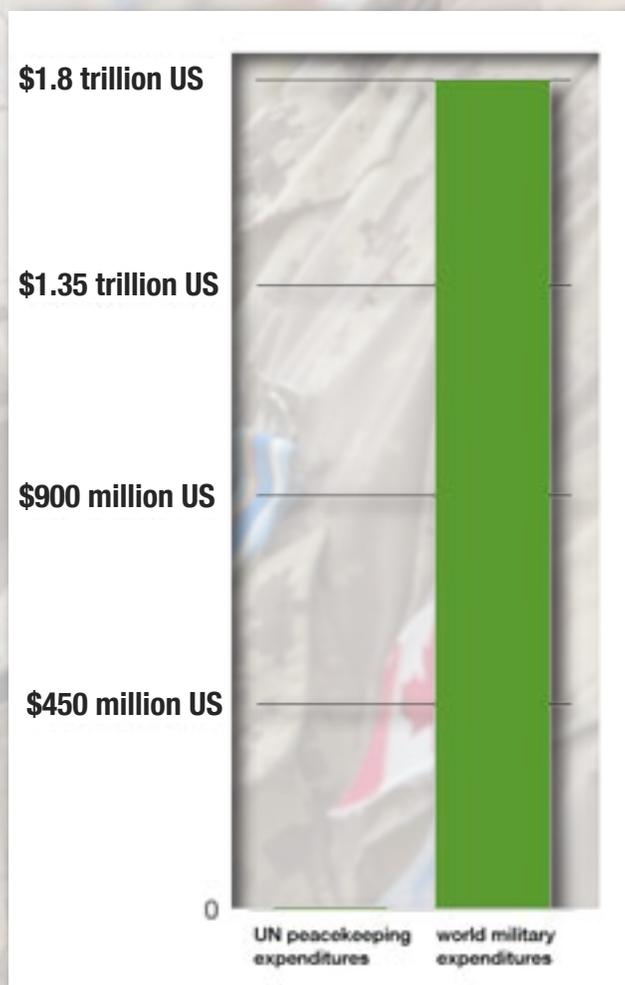
Canada contributes financially to the UN peacekeeping budget according to a formula determined by UN Member States. In 2018, Canada was assessed a contribution that represented 2.92% of the peacekeeping budget.

**In recent years Canada has made political commitments that have been only partly fulfilled.**

**For the record:**

- **Upon election in 2015 Justin Trudeau promised that Canada would re-engage in UN peacekeeping. The Prime Minister gave explicit instructions to this effect in Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan's Mandate Letter.**
- **At the September 2016 Peacekeeping Ministerial Meeting in London, Canada announced new personnel pledges (up to 600 military and 150 police).**
- **At the November 2017 Ministerial Meeting held in Vancouver the Prime Minister specified Canada's pledges. The 2017 commitments included training, transport aircraft and armed helicopters, a quick reaction force and a new project dedicated to increasing women's participation in peace operations.**
- **In March 2018 Defence Minister Sajjan announced a commitment to deploy an Aviation Task Force to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA).**
- **The December 2019 Mandate Letter from Prime Minister Trudeau to Harjit Sajjan tasked the Defence Minister to "Work with the Minister of Foreign Affairs to expand Canada's support for United Nations peace operations, including with respect to new investments in the women, peace and security agenda, conflict prevention and peacebuilding;"**

#### 4. UN PEACEKEEPING VS WORLD MILITARY EXPENDITURES



SOURCES: UN DATA and SIPRI

## OTHERS AROUND THE WORLD ARE STEPPING UP

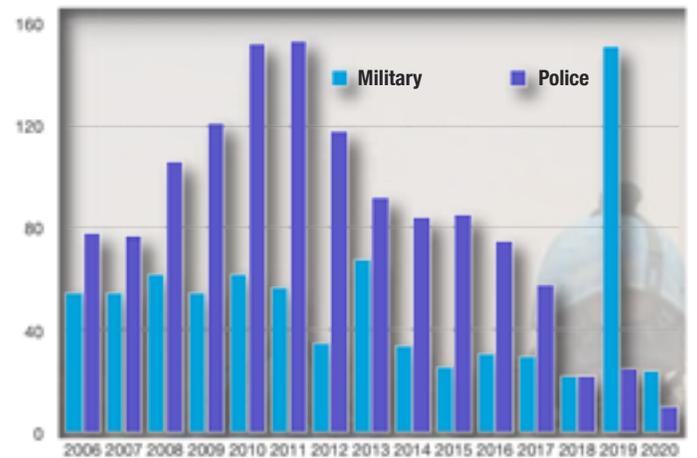
The world's leading uniformed personnel contributors (as of June 2020) are Ethiopia (6,638), Bangladesh (6,426), Rwanda (6,322), and Nepal (5,640). Fellow NATO members, such as Italy (930), Spain (797), France (683), and Germany (512), are contributing considerably more troops than Canada. Ireland contributes over 600. Currently, Canada ranks slightly ahead of Paraguay and is equivalent to Armenia in personnel contributions.

As a middle power with no significant external threat to its borders, a nation dependent on international trade and with an interest in a stable international order, Canada's interest lies in supporting and strengthening the multilateral system. Until 1995, Canada had participated in every UN peacekeeping mission.

The Liberal government maintains a goal to re-engage in UN peacekeeping. This includes a 2016 commitment to deploy up to 600 military and 150 police personnel, and the 2019 mandate provided to the Defence and Foreign Ministers to “expand Canada’s support for United Nations peace operations.”

Notwithstanding these public commitments, Canada's personnel contributions to UN peace operations remain at an all-time low and future deployments remain uncertain. The pledged Quick Reaction Force is taking years to deploy.

### 5. CANADIAN POLICE AND MILITARY PERSONNEL ON UN MISSIONS



Source for all tables, unless indicated otherwise: UN data

## WHAT CANADA COULD AND IS FAILING TO DO

**The UN Department of Peace Operations has announced new mission requirements to implement the Force Adaptation Plan for the peace operation in Mali. That plan calls for certain capabilities that Canada is well positioned to offer, such as helicopters (both Chinooks and Griffons, that Canada provided once before), monitoring capabilities, and rapidly deployable units.**

**The Trudeau government has sought to be a leader in the deployment, training and support of UN peacekeepers. But this has not been achieved. Much needs to be done for Canada to become once again a leader and a prolific peacekeeper.**