

BRAZIL'S PARTICIPATION IN UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS: EVOLUTION, CHALLENGES, AND OPPORTUNITIES

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The United Nations (UN) peace operations emerged in the post-1945 context as a new instrument of maintaining peace by means of a collective security system. That was a period when specific actions (such as peace operations) were undertaken in order to create a stable international environment. Since the first UN mission in 1947, the United Nations Special Committee for the Balkans (UNSCOB), Brazil has been ready to engage, through military, police and civilian personnel. This path continues today, with the Brazilian presence in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) being the main example in quantitative terms.

Among the 71 peacekeeping operations undertaken by the UN from 1948 to 2017, Brazil participated in 46, in addition to another five under the aegis of the Organization of American States (OAS). In these seventy years, the country contributed with over 57,000 personnel, including military, police and civilian experts.

The last 27 years have been the most expressive in terms of Brazilian participation in UN peace operations. Notable examples include the United Nations Angola Verification Mission III (UNAVEM III), the United Nations Operation in Mozambique (UNOMOZ), the International Force East Timor (UNTAET), the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (INTERFET),¹ the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNMISSET), the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), the MINUSTAH and the UNIFIL.

Brazil's leading role in MINUSTAH, a mission endorsed by Chapter VII of the UN Charter and with a large number of armed troops, may point to a horizon with Brazilian presence in future peace operations, which can be explained by the country's willingness to satisfy its foreign policy and defense interests. Participation in UN peace operations offers Brazil a broader international insertion, provides the country with greater decision-making power in multilateral forums, validates a multilateral perspective of action within the international system, creates an image of trust in Brazil before international partners, and endorses the UN's directives on a peacebuilding process that is guided by the security-development nexus.

Despite the numerous difficulties, challenges and uncertainties regarding Brazilian participation in other large-scale UN peace operations, it is impossible to deny the progress in Brazil's trajectory, contributing to strengthen national interests and project the country on the international scenario. Therefore, it is important to explore in a strategic way, in future opportunities, the good performance that Brazil has demonstrated in peace operations.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. It is worth noting that the INTERFET is not a peacekeeping operation, but a stabilization mission authorized by the UNSC under Chapter VII.