

United Nations Security Council

BACKGROUND GUIDE FOR DELEGATES

Committee	United Nations Security Council
Agenda	Reforming UN Peacekeeping Mandates to Address Proxy Warfare and State-Sponsored Militia Escalations in the Middle East
Conference	SCIMUN 2026 · The Eighth Edition
Venue	The Scindia School, Fort Gwalior
Dates	April 10–13, 2026
Theme	Pretia Imperii: The Cost of Power

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C H A P T E R I

Letter from the Chair

Delegates,

Welcome to the United Nations Security Council at SCIMUN'26.

The agenda before you engages with a form of modern conflict that rarely resembles conventional interstate war. Today's security landscape is increasingly shaped by armed groups operating with external backing, ambiguous chains of command, and varying degrees of political cover. These dynamics place significant pressure on the traditional limits of UN peacekeeping and demand careful, informed deliberation.

As your Executive Board, we will conduct the committee in a strictly procedural manner. The dais will remain neutral on matters of substance, apply the rules consistently, safeguard minority viewpoints, and ensure meaningful participation from both Permanent and elected members. The objective is not to 'win' a debate, but to work collectively toward outcomes that are legally grounded, operationally credible, and politically viable within the Security Council framework.

This Background Guide has been prepared to introduce the central dimensions of the agenda. It is not exhaustive and must not be cited as evidence in committee. Delegates are expected to verify facts, consult primary sources, and develop well-researched national positions supported by credible material. The quality of your preparation will directly shape the depth and direction of committee discussion.

We look forward to a rigorous, thoughtful, and solutions-oriented committee.

Ms. Yashvi Goyal, Chairperson · Mr. Krish Agarwal, Vice Chairperson

C H A P T E R I I

About the Council

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC), established in 1945, stands as the principal organ of the United Nations responsible for maintaining international peace and security. As the foremost authority on global security matters, the UNSC is tasked with addressing conflicts, preventing the outbreak of wars, and fostering conditions conducive to lasting peace. Through its decisive mandates, the UNSC plays a pivotal role in shaping the international community's response to security threats and crises worldwide.

The core functions of the UNSC include identifying and assessing threats to peace, imposing sanctions, authorising peacekeeping missions, and, when necessary, approving the use of force to restore international security. It serves as the primary platform for diplomatic negotiations and conflict resolution, bringing together member states to deliberate and decide on measures that uphold the principles of the UN Charter. By facilitating dialogue, mediating disputes, and endorsing peace agreements, the UNSC contributes to the prevention and resolution of conflicts across the globe.

In the specific context of emerging security challenges — such as terrorism, cyber threats, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction — the UNSC's role has evolved considerably. The Council works closely with various UN bodies, regional organisations, and national governments to develop coordinated strategies that enhance global security, including the establishment of specialised committees and working groups focused on counterterrorism, non-proliferation, and the protection of civilians in conflict zones.

Moreover, the UNSC significantly contributes to peacebuilding and post-conflict recovery efforts. Its resolutions often mandate peacekeeping operations that support the establishment of stable governance structures, the protection of human rights, and the promotion of the rule of law in fragile states. Its work underscores the intrinsic connection between security, development, and human rights, positioning the UNSC as a central actor in the pursuit of global stability and peace.

C H A P T E R I I I

Introduction to the Agenda

Over the past two decades, patterns of armed conflict in the Middle East have undergone a significant transformation. While earlier United Nations peacekeeping missions in the region were designed primarily to supervise interstate ceasefires and disengagement agreements, contemporary security environments increasingly involve non-state armed groups, militia networks, and external state sponsorship (SIPRI, 2023; ICG, 2022).

The United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), established in 1948, and subsequent missions such as UNDOF in 1974 and UNIFIL in 1978, were structured to operate within clearly defined interstate frameworks. These missions were primarily tasked with monitoring ceasefire lines, supervising disengagement agreements, and maintaining buffer zones between state actors.

Research indicates that contemporary conflicts in the region frequently involve proxy dynamics, wherein external states provide material, financial, or political support to non-state armed actors operating within another state's territory (Mumford, 2013; Byman, 2018). Such arrangements complicate attribution, blur distinctions between domestic and interstate conflict, and challenge traditional ceasefire-monitoring structures.

The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) notes that conflicts involving external support to armed groups can prolong hostilities and increase regional instability. The International Crisis Group has similarly documented the role of non-state armed actors in shaping political and security conditions in Lebanon and elsewhere (ICG, 2022).

These developments intersect directly with the institutional design of UN peacekeeping mandates. The Capstone Doctrine identifies three core principles of peacekeeping: consent of the parties, impartiality, and non-use of force except in self-defence and defence of the mandate (United Nations, 2008). Proxy warfare and state-sponsored militias complicate each of these principles:

Core Peacekeeping Principles Under Stress

- Consent may be formally granted by a government that does not exercise full control over all armed actors operating within its territory
- Impartiality may be questioned where armed groups perceive peacekeeping forces as reinforcing existing power structures
- Limited use of force becomes operationally constrained in environments characterised by asymmetric tactics and fragmented authority

The High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) observed that United Nations missions are increasingly deployed in contexts where political processes remain unsettled and violence involves multiple actors (United Nations,

2015). The report emphasised the importance of mandate clarity, political strategy, and alignment between authorised tasks and available resources.

The Middle East therefore represents a particularly significant test case for mandate design. The region contains some of the UN's longest-standing peacekeeping deployments, including UNTSO, UNDOF, and UNIFIL. However, the broader security landscape now includes militia entrenchment, cross-border sponsorship, and hybrid conflict dynamics.

Recent Security Council decisions further illustrate the evolving debate. Resolution 2790 (2025) extended the mandate of UNIFIL until 31 December 2026, describing the extension as final and anticipating subsequent transition planning. This development underscores ongoing discussions concerning mission effectiveness, exit strategies, and the long-term viability of traditional peacekeeping frameworks in environments shaped by non-state armed actors.

CHAPTER IV

Historical Timeline of UN Peacekeeping in the Middle East

► 1948 — Establishment of UNTSO

On 29 May 1948, the Security Council adopted Resolution 50 (1948), calling for a cessation of hostilities in Palestine and establishing a system of United Nations military observers to supervise the truce. This led to the creation of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), the first UN peacekeeping operation. UNTSO continues to operate as an observer mission in Israel, Lebanon, Syria, and surrounding areas.

► 1974 — Establishment of UNDOF

Following the Agreement on Disengagement between Israeli and Syrian forces after the October 1973 conflict, the Security Council adopted Resolution 350 (1974), establishing the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF). UNDOF was mandated to maintain the ceasefire between Israel and Syria and supervise the area of separation and limitation in the Golan Heights. The mandate has since been renewed periodically.

► 1978 — Establishment of UNIFIL

In March 1978, the Security Council adopted Resolutions 425 and 426, establishing the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). The mission was mandated to confirm Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon, restore international peace and security, and assist the Government of Lebanon in regaining effective authority in the area.

► 2006 — Expansion of UNIFIL Mandate

Following hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah in 2006, the Security Council adopted Resolution 1701 (2006). The resolution expanded UNIFIL's mandate, increased troop strength, called for a cessation of hostilities, and emphasised support to the Lebanese Armed Forces and the establishment of an area free of unauthorised armed personnel south of the Litani River.

► 2015 — High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO)

The High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations submitted its report to the Secretary-General, assessing the changing nature of conflict and recommending improvements in mandate clarity, political engagement, and operational capacity across UN peace operations.

► 2018 — Action for Peacekeeping (A4P)

The Secretary-General launched the Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) initiative, aimed at strengthening peacekeeping effectiveness through renewed political commitment, improved performance, and stronger protection of civilians.

► 2024-2025 — Recent Mandate Renewals

The Security Council renewed UNIFIL's mandate through Resolution 2749 (2024), and subsequently extended it through Resolution 2790 (2025) until 31 December 2026 — described as a final extension with transition planning anticipated thereafter. The UNDOF mandate continues to be renewed on a six-month basis.

CHAPTER V

Key Terms

| 4.1 Proxy Warfare

Proxy warfare refers to situations in which a state pursues strategic objectives indirectly by supporting non-state or sub-state armed actors operating within another state's territory (Mumford, 2013; Byman, 2018). Such support may take multiple forms, including financial assistance, the provision of weapons and equipment, training, intelligence sharing, and political or diplomatic backing. Byman (2018) observes that proxy relationships allow sponsor states to influence conflicts while limiting direct exposure and political costs. Mumford (2013) characterises proxy warfare as a form of indirect intervention that can complicate attribution and prolong conflict dynamics.

| 4.2 State-Sponsored Militias

State-sponsored militias are armed groups that receive sustained material, logistical, or political support from a state and may operate in alignment with that state's strategic interests (Staniland, 2015). These groups may function alongside formal state institutions, maintain parallel command structures, and exercise territorial or coercive authority independent of formal state control. Staniland (2015) highlights variation in the relationship between militias and state institutions, noting that sponsorship does not necessarily imply direct command and control.

| 4.3 Peacekeeping Principles

The United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines (Capstone Doctrine) identifies three core principles: the consent of the parties, impartiality, and the non-use of force except in self-defence and in defence of the mandate (United Nations, 2008). Consent refers to the approval of the main parties to the conflict for the presence of a UN mission. Impartiality requires that peacekeepers implement their mandate without favouring any party. The use of force is limited and must remain consistent with the mandate authorised by the Security Council.

| 4.4 Mandate and Mission Capability

A Security Council mandate defines the authorised tasks and scope of a peace operation. The HIPPO Panel emphasised the importance of aligning mandates with available resources and operational capacity (United Nations, 2015). Mandate clarity includes clearly defined priorities, realistic objectives, and measurable benchmarks. The Panel highlighted that overly broad or ambiguous mandates can create gaps between expectations and implementation.

| 4.5 Protection of Civilians (PoC)

Protection of civilians has become a central component of many contemporary UN peacekeeping mandates. The A4P initiative emphasises the strengthening of protection frameworks, performance standards, and accountability mechanisms. Protection tasks may include monitoring threats to civilian populations, supporting host-state institutions, coordinating with humanitarian actors, and using force where authorised to prevent imminent harm.

C H A P T E R V I

Background: UN Peacekeeping Missions in the Middle East

| 5.1 United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO)

UNTSO deploys unarmed military observers who supervise ceasefire agreements and support the implementation of related arrangements in the region. In addition to its primary monitoring responsibilities, UNTSO provides observer assistance to other United Nations peacekeeping missions in the Middle East. The mission remains active and primarily functions in an observational capacity, lacking enforcement authority.

| 5.2 United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF)

UNDOF's mandate includes maintaining the ceasefire, overseeing compliance within the designated area of separation, and reporting violations to the Security Council. The mandate is renewed for six months by Security Council resolutions. UNDOF operates within a defined geographical area in the Golan Heights and functions as a traditional observer mission focused on interstate disengagement.

| 5.3 United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)

UNIFIL was established in March 1978 through Security Council Resolutions 425 and 426. Its original mandate was to confirm the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon, restore international peace and security, and assist the Government of Lebanon in regaining effective authority in the area.

Following the hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah in 2006, Resolution 1701 expanded UNIFIL's mandate and authorised an increase in troop strength. The resolution called for a cessation of hostilities, support to the Lebanese Armed Forces, and the establishment of an area free of unauthorised armed personnel south of the Litani River. Resolution 2790 (2025) extended the mandate until 31 December 2026.

C H A P T E R V I I

Impact of Proxy Warfare on Peacekeeping Operations

| 6.1 Fragmentation of Armed Authority

Academic research identifies proxy warfare as a form of indirect intervention in which external states support non-state armed actors operating within another state's territory. Such arrangements may result in overlapping chains of command, ambiguous lines of accountability, and competing claims to territorial authority. Where state institutions do not exercise exclusive control over the use of force within their territory, the operational environment for peacekeeping missions becomes more complex.

| 6.2 Impartiality and Perception

The Capstone Doctrine defines impartiality as the implementation of the mandate without favour or prejudice to any party (United Nations, 2008). In contexts where non-state armed groups operate alongside or in parallel with state institutions, perceptions of partiality may arise, particularly where peacekeeping forces coordinate with recognised governments as part of their mandate. Bellamy and Williams (2010) note that impartiality does not require neutrality in the face of mandate violations, but requires adherence to authorised tasks and legal obligations.

| 6.3 Operational Risk and Asymmetric Threats

The High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations observed that UN missions increasingly deploy into environments characterised by multiple armed actors and continuing violence. In such contexts, peacekeepers may face asymmetric tactics, including indirect fire, improvised explosive devices, and targeted attacks. The Panel emphasised that mandates must be aligned with operational capacity, including mobility, situational awareness, and force protection.

| 6.4 Mandate Implementation Gaps

The HIPPO report highlighted the importance of mandate clarity and prioritisation. Where mandates are broad or lack clear sequencing, implementation may be affected by resource limitations, ambiguity in authorised tasks, political constraints within the Security Council, and host-state capacity limitations. Howard (2019) notes that the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations depends not only on mandate language but also on political support from Member States and alignment between mission tasks and available resources.

| 6.5 Civilian Protection Considerations

Protection of civilians has become a central element of many peacekeeping mandates. In environments where armed groups operate outside formal state command structures, protection tasks may require coordination with multiple actors and rapid response mechanisms.

CHAPTER VIII

The Executive Board

CHAIRPERSON

Ms. Yashvi Goyal

History, Politics, and Economics student at University College London. Engaged in public policy, education reform, and gender equity. A dedicated MUN participant and chair committed to rigorous debate and impartial facilitation.

VICE CHAIRPERSON

Mr. Krish Agarwal

A seasoned delegate with deep interest in global governance, strategic affairs, and policy architecture. Views a committee as a geopolitical chessboard. Brings composure, impartiality, and procedural precision to the dais.

A NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

This Background Guide is a starting point for research — not an exhaustive account, and not a document that may be cited or used as evidence in committee. Delegates are expected to undertake independent research, verify facts through primary sources, and develop well-researched national positions. The quality of preparation will directly shape the depth and direction of debate.

The United Nations Security Council at SCIMUN 2026 is designed not merely to test knowledge of the agenda but to develop the capacity for reasoned argument, diplomatic sensitivity, and genuine engagement with the issues at hand. Arrive prepared. Argue with precision. Negotiate with principle.

SUGGESTED READING

- United Nations Charter, Chapters V-VII — Articles 24, 25, 27, 39-42
- UN Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines (Capstone Doctrine, 2008)
- Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO, 2015)
- SIPRI Yearbook 2023 — armed conflict and multilateral peace operations
- Mumford, Andrew. Proxy Warfare. Polity Press, 2013
- Byman, Daniel. 'Proxy Power: Understanding Iran's Use of Terrorism.' Orbis, 2018
- Bellamy, A.J. and Williams, P.D. Understanding Peacekeeping. Polity, 2010

The Executive Board

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