

# The PRC's Policy Toward UN Peacekeeping Operations

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*The People's Republic of China's (PRC's) policy toward UN peacekeeping operations could be divided into three periods. Before 1971, the PRC denied the United Nations' authority to handle international disputes and dispatch peacekeeping troops. From 1971, the year Beijing's representative took a seat in the UN, to 1981, its foreign policy changed to new alignments with the Third World, and reconciliation with the Soviet Union and the United States. During this period, it chose not to participate in any voting related to peacekeeping operations. Since the 1980s, the PRC has needed a peaceful international environment to accelerate its national development; it thus supported almost all resolutions relating to the establishment of the peacekeeping missions and the extension of the existing ones. Moreover, it has also sent assistance to some troubled countries in carrying out peace work. However, its support of peacekeeping operations has not been without reservations, as it has claimed that such operations should be in accord with the principles of the UN Charter, and also should not contradict vital Chinese national interests.*

**Keywords:** PRC foreign policy; United Nations; peacekeeping operations

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The main purpose of the United Nations (UN) is to maintain international peace and security through the framework of collective security. This has included controlling some local conflicts through peacekeeping operations, which is not stipulated in the UN Charter. From 1947 to 1989,

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the UN set up fifteen peacekeeping missions to handle local conflicts. Because of their usefulness and their acceptance by the international community, an additional twenty-eight missions have been established since 1989.<sup>1</sup> It goes without saying that peacekeeping missions have become a major instrument for the UN to maintain international peace and security.

The People's Republic of China (PRC) is a permanent member of the UN Security Council, which has created all but two of the peacekeeping missions.<sup>2</sup> The PRC's attitude toward these operations plays an important role in their formation and mandates; thus, PRC policy in this area is worthy of study.

The PRC was unable to take a seat in the UN and replace the Republic of China (ROC) until 1971. Therefore, the first section of this study examines the PRC's attitudes before 1971. The next section discusses its 1970s policy of nonparticipation in voting concerning peacekeeping operations in the UN Security Council, followed by an analysis of why and how it has recently played an active role in such operations, and how it has taken advantage of them to protect its national interests.

### **The Period of Hostility Toward the UN**

In the first two decades after the PRC's founding in 1949, its attitude toward the United Nations was generally hostile because it perceived that "imperialist" countries, especially the United States, had supported the ROC's membership in the world organization. However, it was not totally opposed to the UN's principles.

As newly independent countries often advocate state sovereignty for national security reasons, the PRC, as a revolutionary socialist country facing the "containment" strategy of capitalist countries, had to emphasize

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<sup>1</sup>*UN Chronicle* 34, no. 1 (1997): 13.

<sup>2</sup>The United Nations Emergency Force I (UNEF I) in the Congo was established by the General Assembly in 1956; and the United Nations Security Force (UNSF) was sent to West New Guinea by the Secretary General in 1962 before the General Assembly passed a resolution of authorization.

the doctrine of national sovereignty to protect itself from possible outside encroachment.<sup>3</sup> Beijing charged the "imperialists" with making use of the UN to cloak their national interests under the name of limited sovereignty.<sup>4</sup> Zhou Gengsheng, a well-known international legal scholar, criticized Anglo-American legal efforts to push for acceptance of compulsory jurisdiction for the International Court of Justice (ICJ), stating that it was nothing less than the establishment of a so-called "world rule of law" at the expense of other countries' state sovereignty. Zhou believed the primary obligation of Third World countries was to safeguard the supremacy of state sovereignty.<sup>5</sup> In addition, he accused all UN practices on the ICJ and UN peace-keeping operations of denying or limiting national sovereignty. He also accused the "imperialists" of plotting to transform the UN into a de facto world government under the latter's domination, adding to charges by PRC scholars that the existing UN only served the interests of capitalist countries. Premier Zhou Enlai even proposed a new UN in an interview to a director of news editorial of a Middle East news agency: "The United Nations is under the control of the United States and other big powers. It increasingly serves the imperialists, and opposes the Asian, African, and Latin American peoples. If the United Nations does not correct its mistakes and reorganize itself, there should be a new revolutionary United Nations to replace it."<sup>6</sup>

During the 1950s and 1960s, Mao's theory of three separate worlds in international relations reigned in the PRC's foreign policy. The PRC spoke as the leader of the Third World countries who were liberating themselves from colonialism and emphasized nationalism; as a result, these countries opposed any foreign troops staying in their territories, believing their stay

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<sup>3</sup>Richard A. Falk, "Revolutionary Nations and the Quality of International Legal Order," in *The Revolution in World Politics*, ed. Morton A. Kaplan (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1962), 314; Ying Tao, "Recognizing the True Face of Bourgeois International Law from Some Basic Concepts," *Guoji wenti yanjiu* (International Studies) (Beijing), 1960, no. 1:51.

<sup>4</sup>Qian Su, "A Critique of the Advocacy Regarding the Question of Residents in Bourgeois International Law," *Guoji wenti yanjiu*, 1960, no. 5:49-50.

<sup>5</sup>Zhou Gengsheng, *Xiandai Ying-Mei guojifa sixiang dongxiang* (Trends of thought in modern Anglo-American international law) (Beijing: Shijie zhishi chubanshe, 1963), 53, 66.

<sup>6</sup>*Renmin shouce* (People's handbook) (Beijing: Dagongbao she, 1965), 349.

a violation of the sanctity of their national sovereignty. Beijing was also opposed to the UN handling Third World matters, insisting, in the words of Samuel Kim, that "the United Nations, in exercising its role in the maintenance of international peace and security, should not intervene in the internal affairs of states."<sup>7</sup>

A key case in this regard occurred when French and British troops landed at the northern end of the Suez Canal in 1956 after Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser announced the nationalization of the Suez Canal company. The PRC sharply condemned the action as an aggression, stating that the decisions and activities of the United States, the United Kingdom, and France had rudely "violated Egyptian sovereignty and exploited the people of Egypt," and supporting Egypt's actions, seeing them as a manifestation of its sovereignty and independence.<sup>8</sup>

It should be noted that the PRC did not oppose the purposes and principles of the UN itself, but rather the latter's manipulation by the United States and other capitalist powers. In condemning the Anglo-French military action in the Suez Canal crisis, the PRC declared it a violation of the UN Charter, which safeguards the sovereignty of member states.<sup>9</sup> However, it supported UN measures to stop the Anglo-French (and Israeli) invasion of the Egyptian Sinai.<sup>10</sup> At this point, Beijing virtually supported the Security Council's authority to handle the Suez Canal crisis, as the following official statement demonstrates: "After the Security Council of the United Nations passed the principles of peacefully solving the problem of the Suez Canal, the Egyptian government again and again sought to negotiate [with France and the United Kingdom] on the basis of those principles. However, the British and French governments refused Egypt's reasonable suggestions. Their refusal rendered negotiations impossible."<sup>11</sup> Beijing

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<sup>7</sup>Samuel S. Kim, *China, the United Nations, and the World Order* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1979), 215.

<sup>8</sup>See "Supporting Egypt's Opposition to the French and English Aggression," in *Renmin shouce* (1956), 401-6.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, 403.

<sup>10</sup>See note 7 above.

<sup>11</sup>*Renmin shouce* (1956), 404.

also sent notes to the United Kingdom and France to protest their joint military aggression as a violation of the UN Charter.<sup>12</sup> These notes specifically urged the British and French governments to "withdraw all their military forces from Egyptian territory. The Israeli invading military forces which were backed by the United Kingdom and France must also withdraw immediately from Egypt to the area behind the line of the cease-fire."<sup>13</sup> However, after the UN peacekeeping force (the United Nations Emergency Force I, UNEF I) was established in the area of Suez Canal to monitor the withdrawal of the British and French troops, the PRC strongly criticized the resolution of the Security Council, stating that the UN forces "have no right to occupy one inch of Egypt's territory on behalf of the aggressive forces of Britain, France, and Israel."<sup>14</sup>

With the sovereignty-centered theory of international legal order in mind, the PRC also opposed the United Nations sending peacekeeping troops to the Congo after it gained independence in 1960 and Belgium troops were sent in to suppress a revolt of the Force Publique. In a further complication, Belgium was accused of inciting Belgian officers in the Force Publique to action,<sup>15</sup> and it was also reported that PRC Premier Zhou Enlai assured Congo Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba that Beijing would send help if asked. Zhou also allegedly sent a message to Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev, urging him to watch the situation closely in case the Congolese needed Soviet military intervention.<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, the PRC was against the establishment of peacekeeping troops in the Congo (Operation des Nations Unies au Congo, ONUC). After the split of the Soviet Union and the PRC, Beijing accused Khrushchev of voting in the Security Council in favor of Resolution 143 (1960), which established the ONUC. An editorial in the *Peking Review* charged that Khrushchev "instructed the

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 405.

<sup>14</sup>*People's Daily*, February 5, 1957, quoted in Yitzhak Shichor, "China and the Role of the United Nations in the Middle East: Revised Policy," *Asian Survey* 31, no. 3 (March 1991): 256.

<sup>15</sup>Quoted in Alan P. Merriam, *Congo: Background of Conflict* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1961), 216.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., 215.

Soviet delegate at the United Nations to vote for the dispatch of forces of aggression to the Congo, which helped the United States imperialists suppress the Congolese people, and used Soviet transport facilities to move these so-called United Nations troops to the Congo."<sup>17</sup> The PRC held that the real purpose of the ONUC was to maintain Western countries' interests and block Congolese independence.

### **Nonparticipation in Voting on Peacekeeping Operations**

The PRC's representatives entered the UN in 1971, and although its hostile attitude toward the organization abated somewhat, it did not completely disappear. Since the mid-1960s, in addition to supporting anti-imperialists, Beijing had added anti-revisionism (against the Soviets) to its foreign policy, and was opposed to political deals with the United States and the Soviet Union. PRC representative Huang Hua stated at the Security Council that "China refuses, and will continue to refuse, to take part in the so-called five-power consultations."<sup>18</sup> Hence, the PRC's policy on the issue of peacekeeping operations was not to participate in voting.

The PRC's nonparticipation policy was first evidenced in the establishment of the United Nations Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) immediately after it entered the UN. In 1960, Cyprus gained its independence based on four documents: a Treaty of Establishment (signed by the United Kingdom, Cyprus, Greece, and Turkey), a Treaty of Guarantee (with the same signatories), a Treaty of Alliance (among Cyprus, Greece, and Turkey), and a Constitution for the Republic of Cyprus. Under the Treaty of Guarantee, the three signatories were to consult each other in case of a breach, but retained the right to intervene unilaterally to reestablish the political status quo specified by the treaty. The Treaty of Alliance allowed Britain to retain two sovereign base areas, and Greece and Turkey to station armed contin-

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<sup>17</sup>Editorial Article, *Red Flag*, November 21, 1964, quoted in Merriam, *Congo: Background of Conflict*, 97-98.

<sup>18</sup>*Peking Review* 16, no. 44 (November 2, 1973): 10.

gents on the island. In 1963, a series of political and constitutional crises occurred, and the Turkish government sent a military contingent to the aid of Turkish Cypriots. In 1964, the Security Council passed Resolution 186 to establish the UNFICYP.

The aim of the UNFICYP was to separate the Greek and the Turkish Cypriots. Two months after the PRC entered the UN, it delivered its first statement regarding the operation at the Security Council in December 1971, which discussed the extension of the UNFICYP. The PRC urged the parties concerned to settle their disputes peacefully and directly before elaborating its position: "As for the question of the United Nations' forces, the Chinese government has always had its own principled stand. This is well known to all representatives. Therefore, we will not participate in the voting for this resolution."<sup>19</sup> The PRC's policy of nonparticipation was later explained by representative Chuang Yen at a Security Council meeting regarding Cyprus: "The Chinese government has always held that the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of Cyprus should be respected by all countries. We are firmly opposed to aggression and subversion by any outside force against a sovereign state. The question of Cyprus should be settled by the people of Cyprus themselves. At present, it is of particular importance to maintain vigilance against the superpowers' taking advantage of the situation in Cyprus to meddle and fish in troubled waters."<sup>20</sup>

The statement of nonparticipation thenceforth became a principle that was followed for the next ten years. From the date the Security Council passed Resolution 305 (December 13, 1971) to the date the Security Council passed Resolution 486 (June 4, 1981), there were twenty Security Council resolutions with regard to the extensions of the UNFICYP; the PRC did not participate in fourteen, and abstained on six.<sup>21</sup>

Beijing's policy of nonparticipation toward UN peacekeeping opera-

<sup>19</sup>Ibid. 14, no. 52 (December 24, 1971): 18.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid. 17, no. 30 (July 26, 1974): 4.

<sup>21</sup>All the Security Council resolutions can be found in *Resolutions and Decisions of the Security Council*, which have been officially published by the United Nations each year since 1946.

tions was also displayed in the Arab-Israeli conflict. On October 25, 1973, following the Israeli-Egyptian war, the Security Council passed Resolution 340 to form the United Nations Emergency Force II (UNEF II) in the Sinai Peninsula. The PRC denounced the resolution as the result of Soviet-American manipulation behind closed doors, as Huang Hua stated:

The dispatch of the so-called UN emergency force will turn sovereign Arab states in the Middle East into an area under international control with infinite evil consequences in its wake, and will pave the way for further international intervention in the Middle East with the superpowers as the behind-the-scenes bosses. It is clear to all that what both of them are concerned about is merely the right of their respective military presence and that if they are not able to send in their own forces directly, they [will] try by all means to squeeze in the forces which they can influence so as to exercise indirect control. All pretexts are sheer hypocrisy. . . . Consequently, the Chinese delegation, as a matter of course, cannot be a party to the agreement on the composition of the so-called UN emergency force.<sup>22</sup>

From the date of its establishment to the date of its dissolution, there were a total of ten votes on the renewal of mandates and financing of the UNEF II; the PRC did not participate in any of them.<sup>23</sup>

The PRC's principled stand of nonparticipation also turned up in the General Assembly. On November 25, 1977, the General Assembly adopted a resolution on the situation in the Middle East. The PRC did not take part in the vote, as the Chinese representative charged the United States and the Soviet Union with having hegemonic designs in the region, claimed that it was imperative to "eliminate all their interference in Middle East affairs," and demanded the withdrawal of Israeli forces from occupied Arab territories.<sup>24</sup>

When the Security Council voted on Resolution 350 (May 31, 1974) to establish the UN Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) for supervising the cease-fire between Israel and Syria and the redeployment of their troops, Beijing did not participate. Before November 23, 1981, the date the Security Council passed Resolution 493, there were a subsequent sixteen

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<sup>22</sup>*Peking Review* 16, no. 45 (November 9, 1973): 18.

<sup>23</sup>See note 21 above.

<sup>24</sup>William J. Durch, ed., *The Evolution of UN Peacekeeping: Case Studies and Comparative Analysis* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 154-55.

votes concerning the extension of the UNDOF; the PRC did not participate in any of them,<sup>25</sup> and also refrained from taking part in the General Assembly voting on the financing of UNDOF on November 30, 1981.<sup>26</sup>

The same policy also applied to Lebanon, as the civil war in the country involved the interests of the PLO, Syria, Israel, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia, and Beijing once again claimed that foreign forces should not interfere in a state's domestic affairs. On March 19, 1978, the Security Council voted on Resolution 425, which established a UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) to supervise the withdrawal of Israeli forces. The PRC did not take part in the voting, as Chinese representative Lai Yali charged in his statement that the two superpowers had long been engaged in overt and covert struggles in the Middle East for the purpose of gaining greater control there, and thus had impaired the national rights of the Arabs and Palestinians. Lai added that China had always held a different position on using UN force in other countries, believing such use would pave the way for superpower interference.<sup>27</sup> The PRC did not take part in subsequent votes on the extension of the UNIFIL until December 1981,<sup>28</sup> and also did not vote in the General Assembly on the financing of UNIFIL until 1981.<sup>29</sup> In a final example, the PRC did not take part in the establishment of the UN Transition Assistance Group in Namibia (UNTAG) in 1978, which was to ensure the independence of Namibia through free elections under UN supervision and control.<sup>30</sup>

As a whole, from 1971, the year the PRC entered the UN, to mid-1981, it either abstained from or did not participate in voting in the Security Council on matters concerning peacekeeping operations. Furthermore, it did not participate in the General Assembly on the financing of these operations.

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<sup>25</sup>See note 21 above.

<sup>26</sup>Shichor, "China and the Role of the United Nations," 259.

<sup>27</sup>*Peking Review* 21, no. 13 (March 31, 1978): 25.

<sup>28</sup>See note 21 above.

<sup>29</sup>Shichor, "China and the Role of the United Nations," 259.

<sup>30</sup>UN Doc. S/Res/435 of September 29, 1978.

## **Participation in Peacekeeping Operations**

At the end of the 1970s, after the death of Mao Zedong, Beijing began to conduct an "independent foreign policy"; that is, Beijing started to emphasize its alignment with the Third World, and reconcile itself with the Soviet Union, keeping its distance from the United States. In the area of peacekeeping operations, it also changed its attitude.

Since the second half of 1981, Beijing has adopted a more positive role in UN peacekeeping operations. Not only has it participated in Security Council voting to support peacekeeping operations as long as, in its opinion, they have conformed to the principles of the UN Charter, it has also contributed funds and participated in some field operations.

In emphasizing the PRC's new support for peacekeeping operations, its deputy permanent representative Lian Yufan stated at a special political committee meeting on peacekeeping operations: "In this most turbulent and volatile world, there is a universal demand for strengthening the peacekeeping capability of the United Nations. The UN organization should not fail to meet such expectations." Lian then listed seven conditions for supporting UN peacekeeping operations, including the consent of the country or countries accepting it. Furthermore, the UN had to respect the accepting countries' independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity; no country or party could take advantage of peacekeeping operations to interfere in the internal affairs of the accepting countries. Peacekeeping operations also had to be neutral.<sup>31</sup> These conditions were nothing new, and were characteristic of traditional peacekeeping operations in the Cold War era; however, they have guided the PRC's recent policy toward peacekeeping operations.

Until the end of the 1970s, the PRC's African policy supported liberation movements against capitalist countries as it competed with the Soviet Union for influence in the region. It thus supported different liberation movements in Namibia, Angola, and Mozambique at different times in order to serve its own needs, in the hopes that the new regimes would be

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<sup>31</sup>*Beijing Review* 27, no. 46 (November 12, 1984): 12.

friendly with it. During that period, a turbulent Africa was suitable for the PRC to propagate its proletarian revolution theory. But in 1979, the PRC started to adopt an "open door" policy for modernizing agriculture, industry, science and technology, and national defense; since then, Beijing has been in need of a peaceful international environment for achieving its goals of modernization. As an armed conflict anywhere in the world could possibly hurt these goals, the PRC has fully supported the UN's efforts to safeguard peace and security. This change of policy is especially dramatic with regard to the UNFICYP. From December 14, 1981, the date the Security Council passed Resolution 495, to December 23, 1996, the date Resolution 1092 was adopted, there were forty-one resolutions approved concerning the UNFICYP. All of them were adopted unanimously except Resolution 541 (1983), a vote from which Beijing abstained.<sup>32</sup>

The PRC has also supported peacekeeping operations in the Middle East. While it formerly took a nonparticipation stand on the UNDOF, it fully participated in voting on thirty resolutions between Resolution 506 (1982) and Resolution 1081 (1996) regarding the extensions and the mandates of the UNDOF; all of the resolutions were adopted unanimously.<sup>33</sup>

The PRC's opposition to the major powers sending peacekeeping troops to the Middle East has also disappeared. When the Security Council approved Resolution 498 on December 18, 1981 regarding UNIFIL, it too voted in favor of the action. Through July 1996, there were thirty-three additional resolutions regarding UNIFIL extension and mandates and Beijing backed them all.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, it also backed the establishment of the Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM) by the Security Council to monitor the cease-fire along the Iraq-Kuwait border.<sup>35</sup>

In a further sign that the PRC has given up on its support for liberation movements, it has urged African belligerents to make peace with their legitimate governments. After civil wars ended in Angola and Mozam-

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<sup>32</sup>See note 21 above.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup>UN Doc. S/Res/689 of April 9, 1991.



bique, Beijing voted in favor of establishing the UNAVEM I (UN Angola Verification Mission) in 1988<sup>36</sup> and the UNAVEM II in 1991.<sup>37</sup> It also voted in favor of the establishment and extensions of the UN Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ) from 1992 to 1993;<sup>38</sup> the UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) from 1991 to 1995;<sup>39</sup> the UN Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) from 1993 to 1995;<sup>40</sup> and the UN Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) from 1993 to 1995.<sup>41</sup> In addition, it supported the formation of the UN Observer Mission in Uganda-Rwanda (UNOMUR) in 1993,<sup>42</sup> and favored implementation of the UNTAG (UN Transition Assistance Group) in Namibia, which was established in 1978 by Resolution 435.<sup>43</sup> Finally, in 1989, the PRC dispatched peacekeepers for the first time in its history, sending out twenty nonmilitary personnel to Namibia to supervise elections. In 1990, it also sent five military observers to the UN Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO, established in 1948) to monitor a cease-fire, and twenty military observers to the UNIKOM along the Iraq-Kuwait border in 1991.<sup>44</sup> In another example, when the African country of Somalia suffered from drought and fighting among warlords which resulted in a half million deaths, the Security Council passed a resolution calling for a complete embargo on all deliveries of weapons and military equipment to the country.<sup>45</sup> In March 1992, the Security Council decided to send peacekeepers under the UN Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM),<sup>46</sup> which was later extended in 1993 as UNOSOM II.<sup>47</sup> From 1992 (the establishment of the UNOSOM) to its final extension in

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<sup>36</sup>UN Doc. S/Res/626 of December 20, 1988.

<sup>37</sup>UN Doc. S/Res/696 of May 30, 1991.

<sup>38</sup>UN Doc. S/Res/797 of December 16, 1992; S/Res/882 of November 5, 1993.

<sup>39</sup>From S/Res/690 of April 29, 1991 to S/Res/1017 of September 22, 1995.

<sup>40</sup>From S/Res/866 of September 22, 1993 through S/Res/1001 of June 30, 1995.

<sup>41</sup>From S/Res/872 of October 5, 1993 through S/Res/1029 of December 12, 1995.

<sup>42</sup>UN Doc. S/Res/846 of June 22, 1993.

<sup>43</sup>UN Doc. S/Res/632 of February 16, 1989.

<sup>44</sup>*Beijing Review* 34, no. 23 (June 10-16, 1991): 14.

<sup>45</sup>UN Doc. S/Res/733 of January 23, 1992.

<sup>46</sup>UN Doc. S/Res/751 of April 24, 1992.

<sup>47</sup>UN Doc. S/Res/814 of March 26, 1993.



1995, fifteen resolutions were unanimously adopted by the Security Council,<sup>48</sup> and the PRC supported all of them.

However, when the Security Council decided to use multinational forces led by the United States to fight against rebellious groups in Somalia, Chinese scholars expressed their regret. A writer remarked in the *Beijing Review*: "The torturous experience in Somalia has taught the lesson that peace keeping must be limited to peace keeping. The internal affairs of one country can be solved only by the people of that country. The efforts of the international community can only be helpful or supplementary."<sup>49</sup> Another author wrote: "We should guard against large countries controlling the peacekeeping forces, and the sovereignty of small countries must be respected."<sup>50</sup>

The biggest threat to the PRC's vision of a peaceful neighboring environment in Asia in the 1980s was Soviet influence. During this time, it demanded that the Soviet Union terminate its occupation of Afghanistan and end its involvement in Cambodia. After the Soviets promised in 1988 to withdraw from Afghanistan, Beijing fully supported the UN Security Council efforts to institute the UN Good Office Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan (UNGOMAP) and supervise the Soviet withdrawal.<sup>51</sup> Beijing also cooperated with the Security Council to end the long civil war in Cambodia as a way of keeping Soviet influence out of that country, as it voted in favor of the establishment of both the UN Advance Mission in Cambodia (UNAMIC) and the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC).<sup>52</sup> After the peacekeepers began their operation, Beijing sent forty-seven military observers and an engineering battalion of four hundred men to Cambodia to help build airports, highways, and bridges.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>48</sup>From S/Res/751 of April 24, 1992 to S/Res/954 of November 4, 1994.

<sup>49</sup>Xu Kunming, "Balkan Situation Worsened," *Beijing Review* 37, no. 2 (January 10-16, 1994): 24.

<sup>50</sup>Liu Enzhao, "An Examination of UN Peacekeeping Operations," *ibid.* 36, no. 45 (November 8-14, 1993): 9.

<sup>51</sup>UN Doc. S/Res/622 of October 31, 1988 adopted unanimously.

<sup>52</sup>With regard to the establishment of the UNTAC, see UN Doc. S/Res/745 of February 28, 1992; the UNAMIC, S/Res/717 of October 16, 1991.

<sup>53</sup>*Beijing Review* 38, no. 40 (October 2-8, 1995): 1-19.

In a similar vein, the PRC has also supported UN peacekeeping operations in West and Central Asian countries. From the establishment of the UN Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) in 1993 through 1996, Beijing voted for all the Security Council resolutions regarding the UNOMIG,<sup>54</sup> and also supported the establishment and extension of the UN Mission of Observers in Tajikistan.<sup>55</sup>

As for Latin America, the PRC's policy, as Deng Xiaoping indicated in 1982, has centered on opposing hegemonism, safeguarding world peace, and strengthening unity and cooperation with the Third World. Under these principles, Beijing has attempted to establish and develop good relations with Latin American countries based on the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, covering mutual respect for state sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual nonaggression, noninterference in each other's internal affairs, equality, mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence. In 1989, the PRC backed the formation of the UN Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA),<sup>56</sup> which later grew into a security force that helped manage the demobilization of the Nicaraguan Resistance (the "Contras"). The PRC supported ONUCA from its establishment in 1989 to its dissolution in 1991.<sup>57</sup> In another case, the UN Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL) was set up to verify the implementation of all agreements signed by the government of El Salvador, and the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN). The mandates of the ONUSAL included monitoring the separation of forces and the cease-fire, the concentration of combatants, and the reintegration of the members of the FMLN into society, as well as the reduction and reform of the armed forces. The ONUSAL was established in 1991 and dissolved in 1994 with the mandates twice enlarged and extended, and the PRC voted in favor of all the Security Council resolutions relating to the mission.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>54</sup>UN Doc. S/Res/858 of August 24, 1993 through S/Res/1065 of July 12, 1996.

<sup>55</sup>UN Doc. S/Res/968 of December 16, 1994, and S/Res/999 of June 16, 1995.

<sup>56</sup>UN Doc. S/Res/644 of November 7, 1989.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid.; S/Res/650 of March 27, 1989; S/Res/653 of April 20, 1990; S/Res/654 of May 4, 1990; and S/Res/691 of May 6, 1991.

<sup>58</sup>Concerning the establishment, dissolution, and mandates of the ONUSAL, see UN Doc. S/

Since the end of the Cold War, the international climate changed from confrontation to relaxation and interaction among states. The UN's role of maintaining international peace and security has thus become more important. The foreign ministers of five permanent members of the Security Council issued a joint communiqué on September 29, 1990, stating, among other things, that UN peacekeeping operations illustrate the vital role of the organization in preventing and resolving regional conflicts. The communiqué also stressed the importance of the effective functioning of the peacekeeping operations and welcomed active UN involvement in that area.<sup>59</sup>

In a post-Cold War case, the PRC supported all the decisions from 1993 through 1994 regarding peacekeeping operations in Haiti,<sup>60</sup> but because of its opposition to hegemonism, it did not participate in voting on the draft resolution<sup>61</sup> for sending multinational forces led by the United States to Haiti to restore the Haitian democratic government.<sup>62</sup> A Chinese representative to the Security Council stated that the resolution set a "dangerous precedent,"<sup>63</sup> and an article in the *Beijing Review* charged that the multinational forces with violating Haitian sovereignty and interfering with Haitian internal affairs. The article further claimed that the operation served the interests of major powers, not justice, and it was no longer necessary for the United States to act as world policeman in the post-Cold War era. The author thus called for the international community to deploy a political mechanism to hold back U.S. hegemonism.<sup>64</sup> Even though Beijing criticized the resolution, it did not veto it; instead, it did not take part in the vote.

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Res/693 of May 20, 1991; S/Res/832 of May 22, 1993; and S/Res/888 of November 30, 1993.

<sup>59</sup> *UN Chronicle* 27, no. 1 (March 1990): 6.

<sup>60</sup> From S/Res/841 of July 31, 1993 through S/Res/933 of June 30, 1994.

<sup>61</sup> UN Doc. S/Res/940 of July 31, 1994, adopted by twelve to none, with two abstentions (Brazil and Rwanda) and one nonparticipation (the PRC).

<sup>62</sup> The multinational forces comprised troops from 25 countries. Of the 15,000 men, only 266 were contributed by 24 countries, the rest were Americans.

<sup>63</sup> *The New York Times*, September 2, 1994, A24.

<sup>64</sup> She Duanzhi, "A Doubtful Example of Interventionism," *Beijing Review* 37, no. 40 (October 3-9, 1994): 23.

The PRC's attitude toward UN peacekeeping operations in the former Yugoslavia has been more complex. Generally speaking, Beijing has supported peacekeeping operations in that country; however, it has not agreed that all the activities termed "peacekeeping" have truly been peacekeeping activities. Beijing concurs with the original Security Council resolution, which indicates that "the situation in Yugoslavia . . . constitutes a threat to international peace and security." It also agreed with the original purpose of the UN Protective Force in Yugoslavia (UNPROFOR), which "was an interim arrangement to create the conditions of peace and security required for the negotiation of an overall settlement of the Yugoslav crisis."<sup>65</sup> The PRC has generally supported peacekeeping activities within this mandate. For instance, it supported the Security Council's establishment of "pink zones" to protect the Croats in Bosnia.<sup>66</sup> It also voted in favor of the resolution to protect the Sarajevo airport and favored the delivery of humanitarian assistance,<sup>67</sup> as well as sustain a safe corridor between the airport and the city.<sup>68</sup>

However, the PRC has also believed that the major powers have vested interests in the region, and have turned the civil war into a stage for rivalry. It has thus been opposed to strengthening any one group at the expense of another. Thus, Beijing abstained from voting on the Security Council resolutions which called for member states under Chapter VII of the UN Charter to impose economic sanctions against Yugoslavia and the Serbians.<sup>69</sup> The PRC also opposed the Security Council resolution authorizing member states to take "necessary measures" to ensure the safety of UN and other personnel engaged in the delivery of humanitarian assistance.<sup>70</sup> "Necessary measures" implies that the UN was allowed to take military action to enforce the mandates of the Security Council. The PRC believed that taking military actions under Chapter VII of the UN Charter

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<sup>65</sup>UN Doc. S/Res/743 of February 21, 1992.

<sup>66</sup>UN Doc. S/Res/762 of June 30, 1992.

<sup>67</sup>UN Doc. S/Res/761 of June 29, 1992.

<sup>68</sup>UN Doc. S/Res/764 of December 3, 1992.

<sup>69</sup>UN Doc. S/Res/757 of May 15, 1992.

<sup>70</sup>UN Doc. S/Res/770 of August 13, 1992.

without the consent of Bosnia was not in harmony with the principle of state sovereignty and territorial integrity. It therefore opposed the use of UN military forces in Bosnia in the name of peacekeeping.<sup>71</sup>

As the situation in Bosnia deteriorated, the Security Council adopted a resolution to establish a multinational Rapid Reaction Force comprised of British, French, and Dutch forces, totalling 12,500 men. The PRC criticized the Rapid Reaction Force for its not being a peacekeeping force in the ordinary sense, but a "peace-enforcing" force. A *Beijing Review* writer specified several reasons why China was opposed to the force: (1) it partly consisted of marines and was equipped with artillery, air force fighters, and heavy weapons, which seemed more suited to waging war rather than keeping the peace; (2) a UN peacekeeping force was supposed to supervise a cease-fire or guarantee humanitarian assistance, but the Rapid Reaction Force was taking actions to rescue UN peacekeeping troops who were isolated under threat; and (3) the NATO generals in charge of Bosnian affairs would have the right to make military decisions independent of the UN envoy, or the Security Council. Therefore, the Rapid Reaction Force could become involved in the local fighting and change from a neutral party to a belligerent in the Bosnian conflict. The article concluded: "If the peacekeeping troops become involved in war, the UN peacekeeping mission will end, and the consequences will be serious."<sup>72</sup> From this it is obvious that the PRC upholds the principles of peacekeeping operations in the traditional sense, but nothing beyond that.<sup>73</sup>

From 1990 to the present time, twenty-eight peacekeeping missions have been established,<sup>74</sup> and the PRC has supported the establishment of all of them except for one calling for a multinational protection force in Alba-

<sup>71</sup>See UN Doc. S/Res/776 of September 14, 1992; S/Res/781 of October 9, 1992; and S/Res/816 of March 31, 1992.

<sup>72</sup>Sun Wei, "Peace-keeping' or 'Peace-forcing'," *Beijing Review* 38, no. 30 (July 24-30, 1995): 20.

<sup>73</sup>For traditional characteristics of peacekeeping operations, see International Peace Academy, *Peacekeeper's Handbook* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1984); *The Blue Helmet: A Review of United Nations Peace-keeping*, 2nd edition (New York: United Nations Publications, 1990), 5-7; Durch, *The Evolution of UN Peacekeeping*, 12-13; and Brian Ugruhart, "Beyond the 'Sheriff's Posse'," *Survival* 32, no. 3 (May/June 1990): 198.

<sup>74</sup>*UN Chronicle* 34, no. 1 (1997): 13.

nia. The resolution (Resolution 1101 of 1997) requested the Security Council to establish a "temporary and limited multinational protection force" to facilitate the safe and prompt delivery of humanitarian assistance and help create a secure environment for any international organizations in Albania. Chinese representative Qin Huasun said that the situation in Albania was a matter of internal affairs, and that involvement in such matters was "not consistent with the provisions of the United Nations Charter." Therefore, the PRC abstained from voting.<sup>75</sup>

### **Promoting National Interests Through Peacekeeping**

Beijing's independent foreign policy has not always centered on upholding international justice; it has voted on peacekeeping issues for other motivations as well. For example, Beijing voted for the establishment of UNMIH in 1993 (S/Res/867), which comprised four thousand peacekeepers, but when the Haitian government requested an extension of the UNMIH two years later, it refused its support. In addition, when the Security Council was asked by the Haitians to keep a peacekeeping force of 1,900 troops and 300 police officers in Haiti for another six months, Beijing hinted it would use its veto power to kill the draft resolution. The PRC did so to retaliate against the Haitians because they had invited ROC Vice-President Li Yuan-zu to visit Haiti. After Latin American nations in the UN insisted that Beijing change its stand and after about two weeks of consultations behind the scenes, the PRC finally agreed with the Security Council to extend the mission, but only for four months with 1,200 troops and 300 police officers.<sup>76</sup>

Another example of the PRC making use of peacekeeping operations as a tool to achieve its national interests can be found in its attitude toward the UN peacekeeping operations in Guatemala. After thirty-six years of

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<sup>75</sup>Ibid., 25.

<sup>76</sup>*The New York Times*, February 24, 1996, A5 and March 1, 1996, A8; *The Newsday* (New York), February 29, 1996, A21.

civil war, the Guatemalan government finally signed a peace accord with the guerrilla forces on December 29, 1996, in Guatemala City. The UN Security Council drafted a resolution for sending 155 military observers to Guatemala for three months to monitor the implementation of the accord; however, the PRC vetoed the draft resolution on January 10, 1997, pointing out that although it supported UN peacekeeping operations in general, its veto resulted from Guatemala's own disregard of the PRC's sovereignty and territorial integrity through its recognition of the "renegade province" of the ROC. The PRC's representative to the Security Council also noted that the Guatemalan government had invited the ROC Foreign Minister to attend the ceremony of the peace accord signing, and blamed Guatemala for siding with other countries since 1993 to seek the inscription of a new General Assembly agenda item aimed at establishing a committee to consider a UN membership for Taiwan. Beijing further stated: "Guatemala cannot expect on the one hand to do something that harms the sovereignty and territorial integrity of China while on the other hand requesting China to cooperate in peacekeeping."<sup>77</sup> After ten days of secret talks between the two countries, however, the PRC was appeased, and subsequently cast its vote in favor of Guatemala on January 20, 1997, upon which the resolution was adopted unanimously by the Security Council.<sup>78</sup>

The PRC also took advantage of a UN peacekeeping mission to the Central African Republic on August 6, 1996 to implement the peace accord signed by the central government and rebel groups. The Central African Republic had recognized the ROC since 1991, and no official from the PRC has visited since that time. However, the PRC's UN representative Qin Huasun was the monthly chairman of the Security Council in November 1997, and in October, he made use of his chairmanship position to lead a delegation to oversee peacekeepers in the Central African Republic for three days. The delegation included high-ranking Chinese governmental officials, and visited Banqui to have talks with President Ange-Félix Patasse. It was generally believed that Qin's visit led to some deals regarding

<sup>77</sup>*International Herald Tribune*, January 13, 1997, 5.

<sup>78</sup>*China Post* (Taipei), January 22, 1997, 1.

establishing diplomatic relations with the Central African Republic. On his return to the UN headquarters on November 6, 1997, Qin voted in favor of the Security Council Resolution 1136 to extend the peacekeeping mission there for three months. Two months later, on January 29, 1998, the Central African Republic announced the establishment of diplomatic relations with Beijing and severed ties with Taipei.

### **Conclusion**

The PRC's policy toward UN peacekeeping operations has been in keeping with the shifts in its overall foreign policy. Before it replaced the Republic of China in the United Nations, it rejected the authority of the UN to handle all international crises, believing the UN was dominated by Western countries with their own national hegemonic interests; for that reason, it opposed all UN peacekeeping activities. After it took its UN seat in 1971, its hostile attitude toward the peacekeeping efforts changed somewhat, but not completely due to its anti-imperialist and anti-revisionist policies toward the United States and the Soviet Union, respectively. Thus, Beijing's basic policy was to refuse to take part in "five-power consultations" in the UN, and in the field of peacekeeping operations, it chose the option of not participating in any voting concerning peacekeeping operations in the Security Council. The nonparticipation policy was also applied to voting in the General Assembly with regard to financing peacekeeping operations.

At the end of the 1970s, the PRC began to conduct an "independent foreign policy"; that is, it began to align itself with developing countries, and reconcile itself with the Soviet Union and the United States. In the 1980s, the PRC needed a peaceful international environment for its national modernization; hence, it ceased supporting liberation movements in other countries and made attempts to form good relations with their legitimate governments. In the second half of 1981, Beijing suddenly changed its policy in regard to peacekeeping operations from nonparticipation to participation; since then, it has voted in favor of nearly all operations except a few which have threatened its vital national interests, and has sent peacekeepers to troubled countries to help carry out peace work. However,

the PRC has stuck to some basic guidelines relating to these operations: (1) peacekeeping operations should not interfere with the internal affairs of the other countries, and military means should not be resorted to ever; (2) other nations should not be allowed to use the peacekeepers to impose their policies or views on a troubled nation; and (3) peacekeepers must observe strict neutrality, and refrain from becoming a player in any conflict.<sup>79</sup> In addition, the PRC's foreign policy has made use of peacekeeping operations to protect its state sovereignty and territorial integrity. In some cases, it has upheld international justice by criticizing the major powers for imposing their own values on other small countries; but at other times, it too has wielded its own power in the Security Council to achieve its own national goals.

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<sup>79</sup>See PRC Foreign Minister Qian Qichen's statement at the 50th Session of the UN General Assembly, *Beijing Review* 38, no. 42 (October 16-22, 1995): 19-21.