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UN peacekeeping: Kazakhstan's contribution

Abstract. *The article provides a brief introduction of what UN peacekeeping is about, as well as highlights the role of the Republic of Kazakhstan in various peacekeeping operations. Peacekeeping had become an integral part of world politics at large due to its contribution toward the establishment of peaceful systems and environment. It saw a drastic transformation from its initial form, whereby it was used as a tool to defuse Cold War confrontation. Over time it was applied as an instrument in creating stability and peace in all parts of the world. However, it was not always successful and had mixed results throughout the history of its application. The data upon which the research relied was provided by the official UN mission reports and other research articles conducted by scholars. The article used the general scientific and special methods of scientific knowledge. Among the results of the research, we indicate the following: upsides and downsides for Kazakhstan's participation in peacekeeping operations, contributions, losses, and problematic instances of peacekeeping. The article is oriented toward the public, as a recap of major events within the peacekeeping framework. For more professional readers, it has several opening ideas for political discussions and raises questions about the importance of peacekeeping.*
Keywords: *peacekeeping, peacekeeping operations, UN, foreign policy, international security, international relations, humanitarian aid, the Republic of Kazakhstan.*

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Introduction

Many of us have come across the term “peacekeeping operation”, but not everyone has a complete understanding of all the features of these operations.

Often questions arise such as: “Who is sponsoring these operations?”, “Where do the volunteers, weapons, etc. come from?” (if at first glance this is just another burden on the state budget) and other, more in-depth questions.

In this article, we will briefly go through the history of peacekeeping operations, focusing on their contribution to the well-being of world

society, consider several turning points (which dramatically changed the goals or methods of these operations), find out how these operations can be useful to countries other than those in need of assistance and undoubtedly, we will define the role of the Republic of Kazakhstan, in particular, what are the contribution and participation of Kazakhstan in the peacekeeping activities of the United Nations.

Among other things, we will not bypass the question of the benefits of these operations for the Republic of Kazakhstan, which include raising the country's image and improving diplomatic relations with other countries.

Research methods

This article is based on the information and statistical data from various scientific works in the field of peacekeeping operations, as well as UN reports after operations that involved the participation of peacekeepers from the Republic of Kazakhstan. The study used comparative and systemic methods. The main reason for applying the above-mentioned methods was the vast number of different reports and data.

Discussion

First, it is necessary to provide an explanation of the concept of "peacekeeping operations." The United Nations conduct peacekeeping operations to ensure security and prevent conflicts. They are distinguished from other military operations by three main principles:

1) Non-use of force, except for self-defense – in all UN operations there is a principle that peacekeepers have no right to open fire or otherwise harm local parties. The UN believes in achieving a world without violence.

2) The consent of all parties – unlike most military operations, this clause is mandatory for all peacekeeping operations. If a country that needs assistance opposes a proposal for intervention by peacekeepers, the UN has no right to insist. There are a couple of exceptions to this principle, for example, if the government of a country was overthrown (e.g., by terrorist forces) or it commits crimes against humanity (genocide, human trafficking, etc.), the UN will not back down from its responsibilities and intervene.

3) Impartiality – all UN peacekeeping operations adhere to the principle of impartiality, none of the parties during conflicts is fundamentally malicious.

What is the purpose of peacekeeping operations?

All UN peacekeeping operations and peacekeeping, in general, are trying to achieve global and stable peace, security, and human rights protection. In terms of short-term goals,

these operations seek to lend a helping hand to countries in conflict. Their main goal is to help countries on their path from conflict to peace. Currently, peacekeeping operations have acquired additional functions:

1) Protection of the local population – during operations, one of the key tasks of peacekeepers is to protect the population. This ranges from providing physical security to providing medical care and creating a psychological sense of security for the population which is the responsibility of the United Nations.

2) Aiding in disarmament – in addition to nuclear disarmament, which is a very important factor for maintaining global peace, the UN is also interested in disarming the population on an individual basis. In many countries of the world, the civilian population is not allowed to own firearms, unfortunately, that is not the case for all countries, where any citizen without military experience can become the owner of a firearm if they please. In their study, Siegel and Ross [1] demonstrated the relationship between the level of gun ownership and the homicide rate in the United States (period 1881-2010). There are a lot of disagreements on this topic, but many scholars agree that a gun ban will significantly reduce the homicide rate.

3) Reintegration of persons with a military background and persons affected by the war back into society [2] – the UN also does not forget about people who have lost the opportunity to earn a living. Soldiers, mercenaries, and other people who do not have separate education or skills become unemployed in the environment of the global world. In such cases, the UN lends a helping hand and reintegrates them back into society through education and training. The UN also helps them with employment.

4) Protection and restoration of the rule of law is one of the most critical factors that affect the stability of the country at the end of any military operation and at the same time is a factor that is often ignored. Unlike other organizations, the UN is equally interested in the country's stability before, during, and after the visit of the peacekeepers. In this regard, protecting and restoring the rule of law is

critical, as the role of protecting populations at the end of UN operations falls into the hands of local law representatives. The role of the UN in this situation is to obstruct regimes that contradict human rights and to restore a credible government in the absence of one.

5) Providing electoral support [3] – legitimate elections contribute to the formation of a reliable government. The role of the UN, in this case, is to ensure legitimacy and equal opportunities for all presidential candidates. As the rule of law, the government is equally important to the country's autonomous existence after the end of the UN operations. In this case, it is necessary to ensure the sustainable existence of the country after the completion of the operation.

6) Discourage discord and disagreement – between government and indigenous people. The challenge for the United Nations in this area is to reach an agreement or compromise between both parties. It would not be an exaggeration to note that the absence of conflict is beneficial for all parties.

Types of peacekeeping operations:

There are several different methods for achieving order, keeping citizens safe, and ending conflicts – peacekeeping operations are just one of many methods to ensure these factors. Peacekeeping operations can also differ significantly from each other, and it is worth mentioning their differences.

1) Preventive diplomacy is the first step towards peace, which involves avoiding disagreements and resolving conflicts before they escalate. This category includes various measures to build trust, peace, and the collection of information about a potential threat to peace. In cases where the conflict reaches the stage of open hostilities, the preventive deployment of peacekeeping forces in the zone of potential conflict is applied.

2) Peace maintaining is a method used both before and during a conflict, which involves peacekeeping operations using military observers, or multinational armed forces, or peacekeeping forces of UN member states, or

member states of regional agreements. These operations should ensure that the terms of a ceasefire and separation of forces are respected after the armistice agreement has been reached. In this type of peacekeeping operation, the use of coercive measures is not allowed.

3) Post-conflict peacebuilding – this type of operation, as the name suggests, is applicable after a conflict is over. It is used to eliminate the causes of the conflict and to prevent the emergence of new factors that can contribute to the conflict. These include disarmament, reintegration of combatants, stabilization of the domestic economy, restoration of buildings, assistance in forming a government, and other factors.

4) Promotion of peace – actions leading to a compromise between the conflicting parties. This includes negotiation, mediation, reconciliation, and other peaceful means.

5) Peace enforcement – involves methods of forcing the aggressor into submission using various tactics, including economic and political sanctions, as well as peace enforcement operations (including the use of military force). The military force used is directed at military targets (arsenal rooms, barracks) in order to destabilize cohesion and composure.

Why the world needs peacekeeping operations?

It is not uncommon for conflicts in certain parts of the world to escalate to the point where local law enforcement agencies are unable to resolve them, or the same law enforcement agencies become victims of corruption and do not interfere with, and in some cases contribute to, the conflict. This often leads to a gradual decline of the country, loss of life among the local population, loss of economic balance, and lack of reliable government.

The objective of peacekeeping operations is to prevent such a situation, and different methods are applied to prevent unwanted circumstances. For example, in the event of conflicts between the population - peacekeepers suppress aggression peacefully, in case of violation of human rights

by the government of the country – peacekeepers take the side of the population and protect them without aggression against the government, and in the case of a corrupt government – they promote new, fair elections inside the country, to create a trustworthy government.

Peacekeeping operations are necessary because not every country can defend its interests and protect its population. Often there are external, unforeseen factors in the face of terrorists (Mali) [4, 5] or criminal organizations (Sahel) [6], intending to overthrow the government and establish their own order, and in some cases strike from within, for example, because of corruption. In both cases, there is no set plan for solving these problems, but fortunately, there are other countries that are not indifferent to the fate of others. They are willing to help but lack organization or preparation. The objective of the UN is to organize, train and distribute all these forces evenly, as needed.

If we assume a scenario in which events in the world would develop differently, and the UN as an organization did not exist, other countries would sooner or later interfere in the internal affairs of neighboring countries, whether in their own interests or in the interests of preserving peace and order. What sets this scenario apart from the current one is the role of the United Nations as an organizer.

Participation of the Republic of Kazakhstan in peacekeeping:

Kazakhstan has repeatedly taken part in maintaining global peace and has been participating in international peacekeeping efforts since 1993, making a significant contribution to strengthening regional and global security. Over the past few years, Kazakhstan:

- 1) Guarded the external borders of the CIS in the Tajik Afghan section.
- 2) Took part in clearing minefields in Iraq – an engineer-sapper detachment (KAZBAT) as part of the Coalition Stabilization Forces in Iraq.
- 3) Participated in the UN mission in Georgia, Nepal, Western Sahara, Côte d'Ivoire and Lebanon [7].

4) At the initiative of the First President, for 2017-2018, Kazakhstan increased the number of Kazakhstani peacekeepers participating in UN missions and rose from 112th place to 66th among the contingent supplying countries.

5) Participated in UNIFIL missions in the city of Naqurah, in southern Lebanon.

6) Successfully certified its peacekeeping courses “UN Staff Officers” and “Protection of Civilians” in the UN to prepare the military personnel of the UN member states before they are sent to peacekeeping operations. The certificates are valid until January 2, 2023.

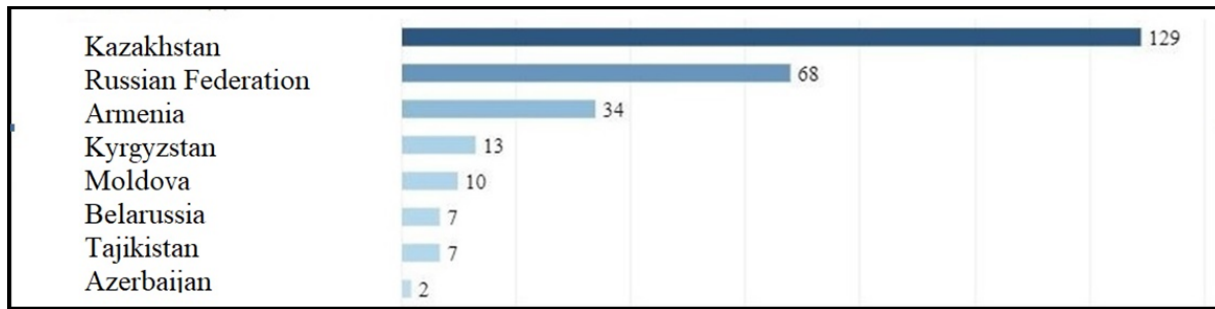
In connection with the increase in the number of experienced peacekeepers of the Republic of Kazakhstan, KAZCENT has good prospects for becoming a regional center for training peacekeepers.

Kazakhstani peacekeepers have shown valor and earned a reputation as professionals. They exhibit excellent military training, endurance, and the ability to act under pressure. Their ability to deal with any issue required is well known to the United Nations.

The success of Kazakhstani peacekeepers is directly related to the quality of the training of military personnel for the mission. Peacekeeping training in the Armed Forces of Kazakhstan is carried out by the Peacekeeping Training Center of the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Mine Clearance Center, and the Military Medical Center. Instructors prepare future peacekeepers in a comprehensive manner. Military personnel undergoes psychological testing, medical examination, English language proficiency tests, theoretical and practical exercises under the program of combat training for peacekeeping units of the Ground Forces of Kazakhstan in accordance with international standards. Those who have already returned from missions are actively sharing their experiences, passing on the knowledge that they have gained.

The participation of a national unit in a peacekeeping mission makes it possible to contribute to the strengthening of international security and serves to strengthen the country's authority as a responsible member of the international community. The active participation

Chart 1. Rating of CIS countries' contributions by the number of personnel for UN Missions
(Source: peacekeeping.un.org)



of Kazakhstan can be seen in Chart 1, which indicates the contribution of the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States to the UN (by the number of personnel). Kazakhstan has shown activity in comparison with other CIS countries in 2020.

On June 15, 2018, the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan decided on the direction of:

1. Officers of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Kazakhstan (up to 40 people) as military observers and staff officers for participation in UN missions in the Middle East, Cyprus, India and Pakistan, Lebanon, and Western Sahara [8].
2. Peacekeeping contingent (up to 120 military personnel) of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Kazakhstan to participate in the UN Interim

Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) mission as part of the Indian Armed Forces unit.

On October 31, 2018, a Kazakh peacekeeping company (120 people) was deployed in the eastern sector of the UNIFIL mission based on the mechanized company of the Indbat battalion.

Key dates of Kazakhstan's participation in peacekeeping operations are presented in Figure 1.

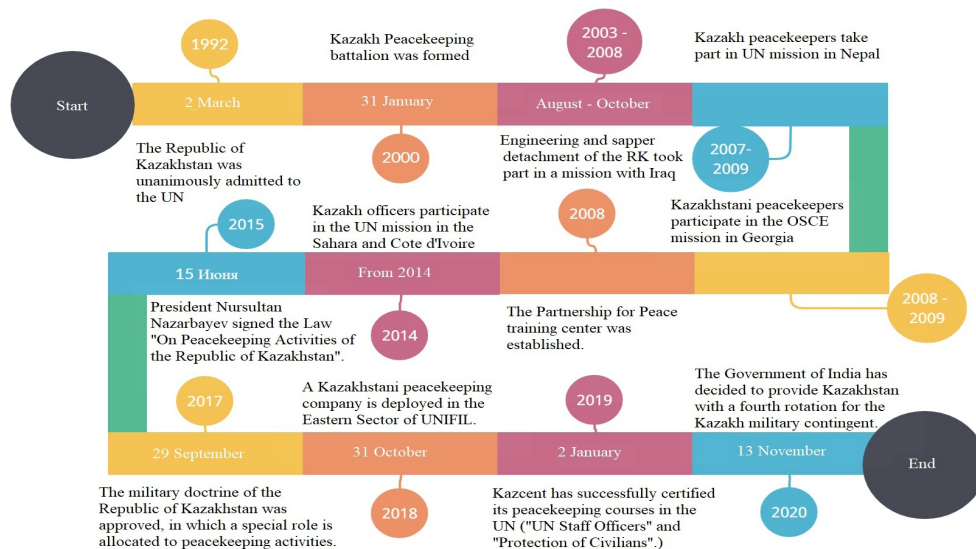
Results and findings

Benefits from peacekeeping operations for the Republic of Kazakhstan:

- 1) *Raising the country's image (soft power)*

It is indisputable that the countries that are more involved in world politics have the image of

Figure 1. Chronology of the participation of the Republic of Kazakhstan in UN peacekeeping operations.



strong power, especially if they have repeatedly extended a helping hand to other countries in difficult times. Kazakhstan's participation in peacekeeping operations indirectly contributed to the development of the country's image as peaceful and not indifferent, improving the country's reputation in the eyes of the world community. To some extent, participation in these operations has increased soft power and other countries' confidence in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

2) Improving relations with the UN and countries that needed help

In addition to the previously mentioned factors, participation in peacekeeping activities contributed to the improvement of relations between Kazakhstan and the UN, as well as the countries that received assistance from Kazakhstan. Citizens of many countries feel grateful for the sight of foreign soldiers who defend peace and human rights – even outside their homeland.

3) Maintaining the image of the country that is ready to help others [9]

It is very important to note the factor of trust and reliability of the country. This is especially important for Kazakhstan because, with each subsequent operation, Kazakhstan has enlisted the support of more countries. This has had an immeasurably positive impact on the foreign policy of our country.

4) Demonstration of professionalism and military training of peacekeepers from the Republic of Kazakhstan

It is worth mentioning the military aspect of these operations because they are one of the very few opportunities for demonstrating military power during peacetime. This point is important and has a role in the soft power of the country. The task of demonstrating military power is a moral attack on those who intend to disturb or disrupt the peace. They can be compared to methods of coercion, but they are less targeted and more demonstrative. A new "Military Doctrine of the Republic of Kazakhstan" was approved by the presidential decree, in which special attention was paid to peacekeeping operations [10].

5) Receiving support from the UN and other countries in different spheres

An important benefit from participating in UN operations is receiving support from this organization in other areas. One such example is Expo 2017, which has received recognition and support from the United Nations. Apart from the Expo, participation in peacekeeping operations guarantees good relations with the UN and other member states.

6) Creation of additional jobs (peacekeepers) for people with military training in peacetime [11]

Participation in UN peacekeeping operations is an opportunity for many citizens to find work. This is especially true for people with military training, knowledge and skills. In peacetime, finding a job in such conditions is quite difficult, and sometimes even impossible. Peacekeeping operations are the perfect solution that is both well paid, legal and will leave a positive mark on the resume.

7) Provision of international security [12]

The United Nations, like most states and organizations, is interested in creating and maintaining world peace. For Kazakhstan, the existence of perpetual peace on the entire globe means several advantages. In addition to the opportunity to reduce the military budget, Kazakhstan will be able to focus on more important areas - development, prosperity, and well-being of citizens. Military conflicts are obstacles to the achievement of development and improvement of the country in this system.

8) Humanitarian work and help for the humankind

We are all citizens of the Earth, and some of us who are more fortunate are not opposed by the idea of sharing with those in need. Participation in peacekeeping operations is an opportunity to lend a helping hand to humankind. It is also an opportunity to equalize our positions by improving the living conditions of those who need it more than others. Global peace and stability will bring many benefits. There are several theories according to which some parts of humanity are constantly limited in their capabilities. For example, the ongoing conflict in one part of the world will slow down the development of scientific fields, since instead

Figure 2. Benefits of participating in operations for peacekeepers

of developing ideas and theories, people living there will prioritize survival. Likewise, global hunger is another key limiting factor, as many of those struggling to survive and starving to death could have become specialists in engineering, space programs, or medicine.

9) *Exchange of experience with other countries, the establishment of cooperation [13]*

Peacekeepers are constantly sharing their experiences and skills with one another. This is very productive and opens many previously unknown or less popular methods for solving a particular problem to a wide audience. For example, peacekeepers from countries near deserts share their knowledge of finding water in extreme conditions, and those with more military knowledge can help newcomers adapt faster to new conditions (and combat), while others may have knowledge of how to talk to psychologically unstable people or know how to painlessly immobilize a person (for the purpose of arrest). Participation in such operations means constant self-improvement and expansion of knowledge.

10) *Passing on the gained experience to the fellow citizens*

It is also worth noting the experience which the peacekeepers share with their compatriots upon arrival home. This experience is unique in the sense that it cannot be obtained in an easy way in one's homeland without knowing other holders of this knowledge. The figure below provides a simple summary of the benefits for peacekeepers from participating in UN missions (see Figure 2).

As we can see, in addition to numerous benefits, peacekeepers also maintain their careers

in the military. The years spent in peacekeeping activities are not lost.

Cons of peacekeeping operations for Kazakhstan:

1) *Human casualties among military personnel*

It is important to remember that any military operation involves the possibility of human casualties. Sadly, UN peacekeeping operations are no exception. At the same time, the contribution of the fallen peacekeepers remains in the memory and is never forgotten. Without the participation of peacekeepers, the number of human casualties would have been much higher.

2) *Financial costs*

While there are various benefits to participating in UN peacekeeping operations, there are also financial costs. Kazakhstan contributes to the UN by training and sending peacekeepers to missions. The construction of buildings, the search for specialists and training are expensive. In addition, the Ministry of Defense of Kazakhstan has shown interest in the donation of military equipment (night vision goggles, military tech, etc.). However, the benefits far outweigh the financial costs.

3) *Loss of neutrality*

We can't forget about the potential loss of neutrality. There are operations, participation in which can complicate relations between countries. One of such examples is the peacekeeping operation in Karabakh [14], initiated by Russia. Now the authorities of Azerbaijan and Armenia are in an active dispute over the lands – the peacekeepers, while only doing their job, complicate relations between Russia and these

countries. In the event of a civil war, such as in Rwanda, the presence of peacekeepers can provoke unwanted reactions from residents [15].

4) *Worsening relations*

In addition to the disadvantages, there is a risk of deteriorating relations, which is not related to the nature of the operation itself but arises due to the incompetence of the peacekeepers or poor organization. The fact that local authorities do not punish peacekeepers for crimes further complicates matters. If the peacekeeper commits a crime, he or she will simply be deported and suspended from the operation.

Conclusion

Peacekeeping operations, while imperfect and not applicable in all cases, are a very important and successful part of world politics. Despite failures in some parts of the world, peacekeeping continues to grow and evolve. For example, in the Republic of Kazakhstan, one of the indicators of this is the adoption of new laws because of the experience gained from peacekeeping – such laws as “On Peacekeeping Activities”, adopted in 2015, and the Law “On Veterans”, adopted in 2020 [16], were introduced in the Republic of

Kazakhstan because of peacekeeping activities. Peacekeeping operations enable the world community to work collectively. Economically developed countries sponsor and provide equipment, while others provide military and other types of specialists. The question of benefits for the peacekeepers themselves is not ignored too, as the UN is providing them with salaries that are much higher than the standard for their position and length of service.

Peacekeeping makes it possible to restore order where it has been violated. This is especially important in cases where local law enforcement agencies are unable to fight back. Unlike other military operations, peacekeeping operations place particular emphasis on maintaining order after mission completion (helping locals to form a legitimate government).

There are many drawbacks associated with peacekeeping, but numerous advantages often justify the continuation of their application by the international community. In addition to establishing order and peace, they contribute to the friendship of people and the cohesion of all those who participated in the operations. Peacekeeping is a step towards meeting perpetual peace throughout the world.

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БҰҰ-ның бітімгершілігі: Қазақстанның үлесі

Аңдатпа. Мақалада БҰҰ бітімгершілік қызметі туралы қысқаша кіріспе ақпарат берілген және Қазақстан Республикасының әртүрлі операциялардағы рөлі көрсетілген. Бітімгершілік халықаралық жүйелер мен қолайлы ортаны құруға қосқан үлесі арқасында жалпы әлемдік саясаттың құрамдас бөлігіне айналды. «Бітімгершілік» ұғымы өзінің бастапқы түрінен түбегейлі өзгеріске ұшырады, нәтижесінде ол «қырғи-қабақ соғыс» конфронтациясын жою құралы ретінде пайдаланылды. Уақыт өте келе бітімгершілік барлық аймақтарда тұрақтылық пен бейбітшілік орнату құралы ретінде қолданыла бастады. Ол әрқашан сәтті бола бермейді және өзінің тарихында аралас нәтижелерге ие болды. Зерттеуге негізделген деректер БҰҰ миссиясының ресми баяндамаларында және ғалымдар жүргізген басқа да зерттеу мақалаларында келтірілген. Мақалада ғылыми танымның жалпы ғылыми және арнайы әдістері қолданылады. Зерттеу нәтижелерінің ішінде авторлар мыналарды атап өтеді: Қазақстанның бітімгершілік операцияларға қатысуының оң және теріс жақтары, жалпы бітімгершілікке қосқан үлестері, шығындары және проблемалық аспектілері. Бітімгершілік қызмет аясындағы маңызды оқиғалардың қысқаша мазмұны ретінде қалың жұртшылыққа арналған. Кәсіби оқырмандар үшін ол саяси пікірталастарға арналған кейбір кіріспе идеяларды ұсынады және бейбітшілік орнатудың маңыздылығы туралы сұрақтар қояды.

Түйін сөздер: бітімгершілік, бейбітшілікті қолдау операциялар, БҰҰ, сыртқы саясат, халықаралық қауіпсіздік, халықаралық қатынастар, гуманитарлық көмек, Қазақстан Республикасы.

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Миротворческая деятельность ООН: вклад Казахстана

Аннотация. В статье дается краткое введение в миротворческую деятельность ООН, а также подчеркивается роль Республики Казахстан в различных операциях. Поддержание мира стало неотъемлемой частью мировой политики в целом благодаря его вкладу в создание международных систем и благоприятной среды. Понятие «миротворческая деятельность» претерпело радикальные изменения по сравнению с его первоначальной формой, в результате чего оно использовалось в качестве инструмента для разрядки конфронтации времен холодной войны. Со временем миротворчество стало применяться как инструмент для создания стабильности и мира во всех регионах. Однако оно не всегда было успешным и имело неоднозначные результаты на протяжении всей истории его применения. Данные, на которых основывается исследование, были предоставлены официальными отчетами миссии ООН и другими исследовательскими статьями, проведенными учеными. В статье использованы общенаучные и специальные методы научного познания. Среди результатов исследования авторы отмечают следующее: плюсы и минусы участия Казахстана в миротворческих операциях, вклады, потери и проблемные моменты миротворческой деятельности в целом. Статья рассчитана на широкую публику как краткое изложение важных событий в рамках миротворческой деятельности. Для более профессиональных читателей она предлагает несколько вводных идей для политических дискуссий и поднимает вопросы о важности миротворчества.

Ключевые слова: миротворческая деятельность, миротворческие операции, ООН, внешняя политика, международная безопасность, международные отношения, гуманитарная помощь, Республика Казахстан.

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