

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4420

To repeal the 25 percent cap on United States contributions to United Nations peacekeeping operations, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 13, 2021

Ms. JACOBS of California (for herself, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Ms. BASS, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. PHILLIPS, and Mr. MALINOWSKI) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To repeal the 25 percent cap on United States contributions to United Nations peacekeeping operations, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “United States Commit-
5 ment to Peacekeeping Act of 2021”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds as follows:

8 (1) United Nations (UN) peacekeeping oper-
9 ations are a critical force-multiplier for the United

1 States, and decades of research has found peace-
2 keeping to be highly effective in reducing civilian
3 deaths, shortening the duration of conflicts, con-
4 taining the geographic spread of war, and reducing
5 the likelihood of conflict reoccurrence and sexual and
6 gender-based violence.

7 (2) The Government Accountability Office
8 found in 2006 and 2018 reviews that it is eight
9 times cheaper to financially support a United Na-
10 tions mission than to deploy United States military
11 forces.

12 (3) Every UN member state is legally required
13 to finance the UN's peacekeeping budget in order to
14 ensure that these missions are properly resourced,
15 and assessment rates are renegotiated every three
16 years by the UN General Assembly. In 2018 the
17 United States voted in support of the current rate
18 structure, which sets United States peacekeeping
19 contributions at 27.89 percent.

20 (4) Since fiscal year 2017, the United States
21 has accrued more than \$1 billion in debt on its fi-
22 nancial obligations to UN peacekeeping, due to con-
23 gressional enforcement of a 1994 law that limits
24 United States contributions to 25 percent of the

1 total UN peacekeeping budget in any fiscal year
2 after 1995.

3 (5) Since fiscal year 2000, Congress has, on a
4 bipartisan basis, lifted the 25 percent cap 15 times,
5 including retroactively for calendar years 2006–2008
6 during the Bush Administration.

7 (6) In 2019, the Department of State reported
8 to Congress the following impacts of growing United
9 States arrears to the UN: “(1) Loss of vote or in-
10 ability to be a member of governing bodies; (2) Di-
11 minished U.S. standing and diminished ability to
12 pursue U.S. priorities; (3) Reduced U.S. ability to
13 promote increased oversight and accountability
14 through reforms that promote efficiency, cost sav-
15 ings, and improved management practices; (4) Re-
16 duced standing needed to successfully promote quali-
17 fied U.S. citizens to assume senior management
18 roles; and (5) Impairments of peacekeeping missions
19 to operate, including addressing objectives that may
20 directly impact the national security of the United
21 States”.

22 (7) United States ongoing accrual of arrears is
23 having a negative impact on the financial health of
24 UN peacekeeping with low and middle-income coun-
25 tries, who voluntarily provide the bulk of the troops,

1 police, and equipment to these missions, not being
2 adequately reimbursed for their contributions and
3 shouldering an increasing financial burden.

4 (8) The People’s Republic of China is now the
5 second largest financial contributor to UN peace-
6 keeping, having gone from an assessment rate of
7 just 3 percent in 2008 to more than 15 percent in
8 2021, and is the ninth largest troop-contributor to
9 UN missions, providing more personnel than the
10 other four permanent members of the Security
11 Council combined.

12 (9) The People’s Republic of China has used
13 this expanded influence to argue against human
14 rights, civilian protection, and gender-based violence
15 personnel within UN peacekeeping operations, in
16 part using United States funding shortfalls as a pre-
17 text to downsize peacekeeping missions.

18 (10) Prior to fiscal year 2017, when the United
19 States was paying its peacekeeping dues at the full
20 assessed rate, the United States and the UN worked
21 together to institute a number of cost-saving and ef-
22 ficiency reforms, including reducing the cost per
23 peacekeeper by 18 percent, reducing the number of
24 support staff, and shortening the timeline between

1 when a mission is mandated and when personnel,
2 equipment, and services are fully deployed.

3 (11) Beginning in 2015 and with the support of
4 the United States, the UN strengthened measures to
5 combat sexual abuse and exploitation by peace-
6 keepers, including strict timelines for completing in-
7 vestigations; immediate response teams inside peace-
8 keeping missions to handle allegations; suspending
9 payments to countries whose troops face credible al-
10 legations of misconduct; repatriation of units en-
11 gaged in systematic abuse; establishing an online
12 database to track allegations and investigations; ap-
13 pointing the first Special Coordinator on Improving
14 the United Nations Response to Sexual Exploitation
15 and Abuse and the first Victims' Rights Advocate;
16 and establishing a trust fund to support and assist
17 victims.

18 (12) Improving U.S. financial standing at the
19 UN would allow the U.S. to more effectively advo-
20 cate for a range of reform efforts, including sup-
21 porting strategies that have been particularly effec-
22 tive in reducing sexual and gender-based violence
23 where peacekeepers operate, while also continuing to
24 strengthen measures to end instances of sexual ex-
25 ploitation and abuse in UN peacekeeping operations.

1 (13) In 2021, the top positions at nine UN spe-
2 cialized agencies, funds, and programs will be de-
3 cided, and the United States will be better posi-
4 tioned to argue for its own preferred candidates at
5 UN entities if it is in good financial standing at the
6 UN.

7 (14) In 2018, during the triennial scales of as-
8 sessment rate negotiations, the United States was
9 unable to deliver significant changes in rates due in
10 part to outstanding arrears.

11 (15) In 2021, the scale of assessments negotia-
12 tions will occur again and a demonstrated willing-
13 ness to pay United States assessments in full will
14 play an important role in garnering support from
15 other UN member states.

16 **SEC. 3. STATEMENT OF POLICY CONCERNING UNITED**
17 **STATES ENGAGEMENT REGARDING UNITED**
18 **NATIONS PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS.**

19 (a) IN GENERAL.—It is the policy of the United
20 States that the Permanent Representative of the United
21 States to the United Nations—

22 (1) support the development and implementa-
23 tion of standard performance assessment systems
24 and investigative measures to identify exemplary

1 performance and address mission-specific and sys-
2 tem-wide weaknesses;

3 (2) support the full implementation of a man-
4 agement reform agenda that decentralizes decision-
5 making authority, simplifies and streamlines policy
6 and processes, and strengthens accountability and
7 transparency for managing United Nations offices
8 and functions;

9 (3) advocate for the development of a common
10 political strategy in-country among relevant actors,
11 including regional organizations, Member States,
12 international financial institutions, and United Na-
13 tions agencies, funds, and programs;

14 (4) advocate for robust engagement with host
15 countries and local communities, including pushing
16 for resources to be directed to community-led peace
17 initiatives;

18 (5) support efforts to deploy more mobile,
19 adaptable, and agile forces for more effective peace-
20 keeping operations;

21 (6) support the development of a system-wide
22 strategy on sustainable peacekeeping transitions that
23 ensure planning and decision-making is based on
24 measurable benchmarks, including ensuring the pro-
25 tection of civilians;

1 (7) lead and advocate for efforts to promote
2 and protect internationally recognized human rights
3 standards regarding United Nations peacekeeping
4 operations, including the robust funding and support
5 of human rights positions;

6 (8) advocate for efforts to develop a more com-
7 prehensive plan for accountability and justice, par-
8 ticularly relating to tracking misconduct and inclu-
9 sion of survivors in decision-making, for peace-
10 keepers and other United Nations staff involved in
11 sexual exploitation, abuse, or other violations of
12 human rights that contravene United Nations and
13 United States rules, regulations, or values; and

14 (9) engage in dialogue with Member States to
15 secure a more favorable modification of United Na-
16 tions scales of assessments of the peacekeeping
17 budget that works to diversify the funding base and
18 create a sustainable funding plan.

19 (b) **ADVOCACY OF PEACEKEEPING REFORMS AT THE**
20 **UNITED NATIONS.**—The Secretary of State shall instruct
21 the Permanent Representative of the United States to the
22 United Nations to use the voice, vote, and influence of the
23 United States at the United Nations to accomplish the
24 policy specified in subsection (a), consistent with the na-
25 tional security interests of the United States.

1 **SEC. 4. REPEAL OF THE 25 PERCENT CAP ON UNITED**
2 **STATES CONTRIBUTIONS TO UNITED NA-**
3 **TIONS PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (b) of section 404 of
5 the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years
6 1994 and 1995 (Public Law 103–236; 22 U.S.C. 287e
7 note; relating to a limitation on United States contribu-
8 tions to United Nations peacekeeping operations) is re-
9 pealed.

10 (b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—
11 Section 404 of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act,
12 Fiscal Years 1994 and 1995 is amended by striking “(a)
13 REASSESSMENT OF CONTRIBUTIONS PERCENTAGES.—”.

14 **SEC. 5. REPORTS ON UNITED STATES EFFORTS TO**
15 **ACHIEVE UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING**
16 **REFORM.**

17 Section 4 of the United Nations Participation Act of
18 1945 (22 U.S.C. 287b) is amended—

19 (1) in subsection (c)—

20 (A) in paragraph (3)—

21 (i) by striking subparagraph (B); and

22 (ii) redesignating subparagraph (C) as
23 subparagraph (B);

24 (B) by redesignating paragraphs (4) and

25 (5) as paragraphs (5) and (6), respectively;

1 (C) by inserting after paragraph (3) the
2 following new paragraph:

3 “(4) UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING RE-
4 FORM.—A description of the status of United States
5 efforts in the United Nations to ensure the United
6 Nations—

7 “(A) develops and implements standard
8 peacekeeping operation performance assessment
9 systems and investigative measures to identify
10 exemplary performance and address operation-
11 specific and system-wide weaknesses;

12 “(B) fully implements a management re-
13 form agenda that decentralizes decision-making
14 authority, simplifies and streamlines policy and
15 processes, and strengthens accountability and
16 transparency for managing United Nations of-
17 fices and functions;

18 “(C) develops for each peacekeeping oper-
19 ation a common political strategy in-country
20 among relevant actors, including regional orga-
21 nizations, Member States, international finan-
22 cial institutions, and United Nations agencies,
23 funds, and programs;

1 “(D) fully engages with host countries and
2 local communities, including directing resources
3 to community-led peace initiatives;

4 “(E) deploys more mobile, adaptable, and
5 agile forces for more effective peacekeeping op-
6 erations;

7 “(F) develops a system-wide strategy on
8 sustainable peacekeeping transitions that en-
9 sure planning and decision-making is based on
10 measurable benchmarks, including ensuring the
11 protection of civilians;

12 “(G) implements a system-wide strategy to
13 protect internationally recognized human rights
14 standards within United Nations peacekeeping
15 operations, including robust funding and sup-
16 port of human rights positions within each
17 peacekeeping operation;

18 “(H) develops a more comprehensive plan
19 for accountability and justice, particularly relat-
20 ing to tracking misconduct and inclusion of sur-
21 vivors in decision-making, for peacekeepers and
22 other United Nations staff involved in sexual
23 exploitation, abuse, or other violations of
24 human rights that contravene United Nations

1 and United States rules, regulations, or values;
2 and

3 “(I) modifies the United Nations scales of
4 assessments of the peacekeeping budget to di-
5 versify the funding base and create a sustain-
6 able funding plan.”; and

7 (2) in subsection (d)(5), by striking subpara-
8 graph (B).

9 **SEC. 6. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.**

10 (a) **STRENGTHENING CONFLICT PREVENTION IN**
11 **UNITED NATIONS MISSIONS.**—Not later than 180 days
12 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary
13 of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional
14 committees a report analyzing the ways in which conflict
15 prevention aspects of United Nations missions may be
16 strengthened. Such report shall include—

17 (1) an analysis of the performance of existing
18 early warning and rapid response systems and rec-
19 ommendations for the improvement of such systems;

20 (2) an analysis on the performance of the civil-
21 ian components of United Nations special political
22 missions and peacekeeping operations and rec-
23 ommendations for strengthening such components;

24 (3) recommendations on how other United Na-
25 tions entities, including the United Nations

1 Peacebuilding Fund, special political missions, and
2 other agencies, funds, and programs could be better
3 coordinated in a joint strategy; and

4 (4) an assessment of the costs and benefits of
5 the Department of State and the United States
6 Agency for International Development sharing risk
7 analysis data with select multilateral organizations,
8 under specific circumstances, to better promote con-
9 flict prevention before peacekeeping engagement is
10 needed.

11 (b) ENSURING CONSIDERATIONS FOR MISSION
12 TRANSITIONS ARE BASED ON COMPREHENSIVE ASSESS-
13 MENTS OF CONFLICT DYNAMICS AND RISKS TO CIVIL-
14 IANS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the en-
15 actment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall submit
16 to the appropriate congressional committees a report that
17 analyzes the observed challenges, costs, and benefits of
18 transitioning United Nations peacekeeping operations to
19 host-country security forces, including—

20 (1) case studies of communities that maintained
21 peace and stabilization gains compared with commu-
22 nities that experienced a resurgence in instability, vi-
23 olence, or conflict at least five years after such a
24 transition;

1 (2) an analysis of the transition process and the
2 effectiveness of measures to maintain long-term
3 peace; and

4 (3) an assessment of any additional resources
5 needed to maintain peace and stabilization gains
6 achieved after such a transition.

7 (c) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DE-
8 FINED.—In this section, the term “appropriate congres-
9 sional committees” means—

10 (1) the Committee on Foreign Relations and
11 the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate; and

12 (2) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the
13 Committee on Appropriations of the House of Rep-
14 resentatives.

○