

General Assembly Responses to Conflict and Crisis Situations

A Follow-on Research Initiative to Assembly for Peace: A Digital
Handbook on the UN General Assembly's Past Practice on Peace
and Security

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CPR

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Executive summary

The Charter of the United Nations (UN) provides the Security Council (SC) with “primary responsibility” for international peace and security ([Article 24](#)); however, it also empowers the General Assembly (GA) to play a significant role in the maintenance of peace and security.¹ Over the past 80 years, the GA has engaged with a wide range of peace and security matters, including responding to “acts of aggression”, the outbreak or escalation of internal conflict and other use of force situations. The GA has responded to such situations with a range of measures, including calling for ceasefires or the withdrawal of forces, supporting good offices or mediation efforts, and calling attention to international law violations and humanitarian needs. The GA has also played an important role in keeping prolonged conflicts or crises on the agenda, calling attention to continued human rights or humanitarian issues, and using its convening power to address long-term, structural drivers of conflict.

This research study is part of a follow-on initiative to the 2024 [Assembly for Peace: A Digital Handbook on the UN General Assembly’s Past Practice on Peace and Security](#). This study builds on the learning from the second chapter of the Handbook on “[use of force](#)” with consideration of a greater number of situations (to a total of 46), five additional case studies in the [annex](#), and a more systematic analysis of when and how the GA typically responds to conflict outbreaks or other use of force situations. The analysis also draws linkages between use of force responses and the other practice areas in the 2024 Handbook, such as those on [good offices](#), [accountability initiatives](#) and [sanctions](#), and incorporates new material analysing GA attention to [humanitarian issues](#) as part of its conflict response.

Key findings:

- The GA has responded to a range of conflict or use of force situations throughout its history, from responding to outbreaks or escalation of hostilities, to creating mechanisms or processes to address drivers or root causes of conflict. GA responses to conflict outbreak or escalation have not declined over time – there are examples of meaningful and significant engagement with conflict and use of force situations in every decade.
- In cases of conflict outbreak or escalation, the GA has tended to wait to allow the SC to respond to the issue first, but it will step in where the SC fails to act or has left issues unaddressed. In 34 of the 46 cases examined, the GA stepped in following a veto of a proposed draft resolution or an imputed veto. Although in some cases the GA has waited several months following a veto, it has often responded within a few days or weeks, depending on the urgency of the situation.
- Some of the most high-profile GA responses to conflict have been in connection with the [Uniting for Peace](#) (UFP) resolution. However, the GA’s authority to respond to such situations is not contingent on the adoption of the UFP resolution. The GA has more often responded to conflict or crisis situations through resolutions passed during the GA’s regular sessions. Of the 46 conflict and use of force situations considered in this study, only 18 were dealt with through UFP-connected emergency special sessions. The vast majority of conflict and use of force situations considered in this study were responded to in regular session.
- The most common GA response upon an outbreak or escalation of conflict has been to call for a [cessation of hostilities](#) or for particular parties to halt attacks or aggression and to refrain from future engagement in hostilities. Such calls were often coupled with demands for specific measures, including refraining from certain types of attacks, calls to abide by negotiated ceasefire processes, calls for foreign parties to withdraw forces or equipment, and calls for Member States or other parties to refrain from interfering or intervening in other States, including by refraining from providing arms or support to parties to an internal conflict.

¹ In keeping with the style of the 2024 Handbook, the terms Security Council (SC), General Assembly (GA) and the United Nations (UN) will be abbreviated.

- After calling for a halt to hostilities, the next most prevalent types of responses were supporting or facilitating [good offices](#) (particularly in response to internal armed conflicts) and [identifying serious Charter violations](#), such as violations of sovereignty and acts of aggression.
- Since the 1990s, there has been a rise in GA resolutions identifying and calling for accountability for violations of human rights and international humanitarian law; and urging [humanitarian support](#). The last has involved calling for greater relief support from Member States, emphasizing the need to ensure safe and unhindered access to aid, or urging humanitarian corridors, ceasefires or pauses.
- Across all of these different responses, the GA has not only identified legal or Charter violations, or other patterns of concern; it has also created or supported mechanisms to address these issues. The GA has created mechanisms to monitor [ceasefires](#) or the [withdrawal of foreign forces](#), or supported such initiatives by the SC or regional or subregional organizations. It has created investigatory and pre-prosecutorial mechanisms to advance accountability, supported mediators and good offices initiatives, and mandated complex humanitarian relief operations.
- Though less common, in cases of extreme international law violations, or repeated non-compliance with prior resolutions, the GA has sometimes recommended greater [enforcement action](#), including recommending [sanctions](#), Chapter VII action or use of force in collective self-defence.

The five case studies in the annex provide concrete examples of how GA tools can be applied to advance conflict resolution and management, often complementing SC efforts:

- GA identification of acts of aggression and ethnic cleansing in [Bosnia and Herzegovina](#), and calls for accountability mechanisms, sanctions modifications and Chapter VII action informed subsequent SC and Member State responses.
- Building on SC efforts to address conflict minerals risks through sanctions, the GA transformed the [Kimberley Process](#) into a global, intergovernmental certification system to limit the risk of trade in minerals contributing to conflict.
- GA support for good offices, mediation and conflict mitigation measures in [Kampuchea](#) consistently throughout the 1980s (during a period of SC deadlock on the matter) laid the groundwork for conflict resolution and the Paris Peace Agreement; subsequently, GA resolutions supported accountability mechanisms and the establishment of a new peace operation.
- During a period when the active conflict and humanitarian crisis in Sudan was not on the SC's agenda, the GA throughout the 1990s supported one of the largest humanitarian relief efforts at the time, [Operation Lifeline Sudan](#), which also became a means of building confidence and contributing to political dialogue.
- From the onset of the civil war in the [Syrian Arab Republic](#), the GA supported regional organizations' mediation, ceasefire and ceasefire monitoring efforts. It also authorized a Joint Special Envoy, laid the groundwork for a SC peace operation and later authorized an innovative and precedent-setting accountability mechanism in the absence of SC action.

Contents

Executive summary	2
Introduction.....	5
Methodology and background on cases	5
Legal basis for General Assembly engagement on peace and security matters.....	8
Evaluating common General Assembly responses.....	10
Cessation of hostilities, ceasefires and other calls or measures to halt hostilities.....	10
Good offices and mediation	12
Identifying “acts of aggression” and other statements on Charter violations.....	15
Violations of human rights and international humanitarian law	16
Humanitarian access and response, including as relates to refugees or internally displaced persons.....	18
Provisions related to refugees and internally displaced persons	20
Withdrawal of foreign forces, armaments or materiel	22
Enforcement action, including sanctions and recommendations for use of force.....	23
Relationship with the Security Council and other bodies.....	25
Timing of General Assembly responses following vetoes.....	26
Nature of General Assembly responses in relation to Security Council resolutions	28
Relationship with other bodies	30
Conclusions on General Assembly practice with regard to conflict and use of force situations	31
Annex: Case studies	32
Bosnia and Herzegovina (1991–1996).....	32
Kimberley Process (2000–present).....	34
Kampuchea / Cambodia (1978–2003).....	35
Sudan: Operation Lifeline Sudan (1989–2005)	37
Syrian Arab Republic (2011–2021)	39

Introduction

Throughout its history, the General Assembly (GA) has responded to crises and conflict situations through a range of tools and measures – from condemning “acts of aggression” or other fundamental Charter violations, to calling for ceasefires and other de-escalatory measures after the outbreak of hostilities. It has also created mechanisms designed to help resolve conflict; address root causes or prevent future conflict; or monitor and gather information in ways that contribute to conflict resolution and accountability. In many of these situations, GA resolutions have been adopted in parallel to Security Council (SC) resolutions and included complementary provisions. Where the SC has been divided, though, the GA has stepped in to denounce violence or conflict triggers, offer pathways for restoring peace and security or address urgent humanitarian needs.

This research study builds on learning from the [Assembly for Peace: A Digital Handbook on the UN General Assembly's Past Practice on Peace and Security](#), produced in 2024 by United Nations University Centre for Policy Research (UNU-CPR) in response to a request from the General Assembly ([A/RES/77/335](#)). The 2024 Handbook was developed to provide a user-friendly guide for Member States on the powers and past practice of the GA on peace and security matters. This research study further analysed the cases within the 2024 Handbook dealing with conflict responses or use of force, as well as some additional ones not included in the 2024 Handbook, to better understand patterns in how the GA responds to such situations. The cases examined were not exhaustive – there have been other examples of GA responses to outbreaks of hostilities or other situations related to use of force beyond the 46 cases analysed. Nonetheless, this study offers a more systematic analysis of key use of force situations that the GA has responded to over the past 80 years.

Following a brief background on the methodology and Charter basis for GA engagement, this study will share the findings on the eight [most common categories of GA responses](#) that appear in GA resolutions, with each section noting trends surrounding the prevalence of these types of response, as well as common measures or language seen in GA resolutions. The penultimate section will consider the [relationship between GA responses to conflict and the SC](#), including the timing of GA adoption of resolutions following SC resolutions or vetoes, as well as any differences in content. The annex contains five additional case studies, supplementing the [61 cases](#) in the annexes of the original 2024 Handbook.

In keeping with the user-friendly style adopted in the original 2024 Handbook, hyperlinks in this brief connect to original UN documents or resolutions, five case studies in the [annex](#), or to case studies or material in the 2024 Handbook. For brevity, the terms Security Council (SC), General Assembly (GA) and the United Nations (UN) will be abbreviated throughout. Country names appear as they were recognized by the General Assembly at the time of the issue or resolution under discussion, which may differ from the present spelling or accepted names of those Member States.

Methodology and background on cases

This research brief draws from an analysis of 46 conflict or use of force situations that the GA has passed resolutions on since 1950. These 46 cases draw primarily from the case studies in the 2024 Handbook and, in particular, from examples in the second chapter on [use of force](#) and conflict situations. The 46-case sample also includes additional cases identified by UNU-CPR that were not originally included in the 2024 Handbook. In considering additional cases, researchers sought to include a greater number of cases from 1990 onward, given that this was seen as a gap in the case study selection in the 2024 Handbook.

In terms of the type of conflict or crisis situations, 25 of the 46 cases in the sample involve GA responses to state-on-state use of force situations. This includes invasion or external intervention, acts of aggression or hostilities between two Member States, and a small number of cases involving foreign forces or materiel deployed on or left behind on other Member States' territory. Twenty-one cases relate to GA responses to internal conflict. Additionally, a case study of the [Kimberley Process](#) in the annex offers an

example of how the GA has taken measures to address drivers or root causes of conflict. To illustrate some of these, the chart below lists 31 conflict situations or incidents considered in the overall sample.

For each of these 46 cases, researchers coded whether there were significant provisions (primarily operative paragraphs) on each of the five chapters of the 2024 Handbook, as well as particular subcategories of actions described in each.² Two categories of GA responses that did not feature prominently in the 2024 Handbook were added: provisions related to humanitarian issues and responses, and those related to rights or needs of refugees or internally displaced persons (IDPs). Additional features were also tracked to supplement the analysis, including whether the resolution lent significant support to conflict resolution initiatives by regional or subregional organizations or actors; whether the GA resolution followed a SC resolution, veto or other statement (and by what period of time); as well as other procedural details.

In some of these situations, the GA adopted more than one resolution in response to a particular conflict or crisis escalation. For the purposes of counting or trying to enumerate GA responses, the research analysis clumped resolutions together where they responded to the same conflict trigger or situation. This sometimes resulted in counting several resolutions on the same matter collectively – for example, counting all of the resolutions that were part of the [5th emergency special session](#) responding to the [Six-Day War](#) as one response.³ However, there were also cases where resolutions related to the same country matter and conflict were counted separately – for example, distinguishing the GA resolution in 2013 that followed reports of chemical weapons use in the Syrian Arab Republic ([A/RES/68/182](#)) from the GA resolutions that appeared to respond to the siege of Aleppo in 2016 ([A/RES/71/130](#)).

The chart below lists 31 of the 46 conflict or use of force situations considered in this study. These were selected to illustrate the breadth of cases, with several selected for each decade, and with a view to ensuring the representation of some of the newer cases that were not in a similar chart in the 2024 Handbook.

Table 1: Examples of General Assembly responses to conflict or use of force situations

Year(s)	Key event	General Assembly response
1950s		
1951	Outbreak of conflict and foreign intervention in the Korean Peninsula	Called out acts of aggression; called for ceasefire, withdrawal of forces; supported UN forces to continue enforcement action; requested arms embargo; mandated good offices and operational bodies to undertake confidence-building measures (Repatriation Commission).
1954	Chinese nationalist forces enter Burma	Supported good offices; called for disarmament and withdrawal of foreign forces.
1956	Soviet intervention in Hungary	Condemned intervention as contrary to the UN Charter; called for cessation of attacks and withdrawal of foreign forces; later supported special investigatory committee.
1958	Conflict escalation in Lebanon	Called for and facilitated withdrawal of foreign forces by expanding tasks of SC-created United Nations Observation Group in Lebanon (UNOGIL); supported good offices.
1960s		
1960	Escalating internal conflict in the Republic of the Congo	Called on Member States to refrain from military support to conflict parties; supported good offices; helped sustain mandate of SC-created peace operation, United Nations Operation in the Congo (ONUC).
1967	Six-Day War	Emphasized international humanitarian law (IHL) obligations; recommended humanitarian support; created an investigatory body (Special Committee) (1968).

² For example, the research team separately coded references to withdrawal of foreign forces and condemnation of acts of aggression, both of which appeared as examples of responses in the use of force chapter.

³ [A/RES/2252\(ES-V\)](#); [A/RES/2253\(ES-V\)](#); [A/RES/2254\(ES-V\)](#); [A/RES/2255\(ES-V\)](#); [A/RES/2256\(ES-V\)](#); [A/RES/2257\(ES-V\)](#).

1970s		
1971	Outbreak of India-Pakistan hostilities	Called for cessation of hostilities; called for cooperation on refugee assistance; called on the SC to take appropriate action.
1974	Foreign intervention, coup and civil conflict in Cyprus	Called for withdrawal of foreign forces and cessation of foreign intervention in affairs of Cyprus; supported good offices and humanitarian efforts.
1978–1998	Vietnamese forces invade Kampuchea	In 1979, called for withdrawal of foreign forces and for Member States to refrain from threats or acts of aggression and interference; supported good offices.
1979	Soviet intervention in Afghanistan	In 1980, reaffirmed sovereignty and non-interference, deplored the armed intervention; called for withdrawal of foreign forces, support for humanitarian aid, and SC action.
1980s		
1981	Israeli attack on Iraqi nuclear installation	Condemned attack; recommended sanctioning measures (including limits on arms) and SC enforcement.
1981	Israeli annexation of the Golan Heights	Declared annexation to be “aggression” and demanded its rescission; called States to sever military and economic support.
1982	Israeli hostilities in Lebanon	Called for ceasefire and withdrawal of Israeli forces; called for accountability mechanisms and investigations into civilian harm.
1983	US-led intervention in Grenada	Deplored intervention as violation of international law; called for its cessation and withdrawal of foreign forces.
1986	US strikes on Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Condemned attack; called US to refrain from use of force; critiqued sanctions on Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.
1989	US air and ground attacks in Panama	Deplored invasion as a violation of international law; demanded its cessation and withdrawal of US forces.
1990s		
1990–1998	Famine, humanitarian crisis and civil conflict in Sudan	Provided mandate for humanitarian coordination mechanism (Operation Lifeline Sudan, OLS) including humanitarian good offices; reinforcing humanitarian access and relief.
1991	Military coup and violence in Haiti	Condemned coup and human rights violations; supported SC and regional action to restore Government (including good offices, sanctions and Chapter VII action); mandated two peace operations (in 1993, 1999).
1992–1995	Conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina	Condemned Serbian aggression and IHL and human rights violations; urged support for accountability mechanisms and SC sanctions; called for Member States to support defence of Bosnia and Herzegovina.
1993–2001	Internal conflict in Afghanistan	Created a special political mission (United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan), enabling good offices and humanitarian efforts; called for cessation of hostilities and restraint on external support; created investigatory team.
1998–2003	Second Congo civil war	Called for compliance with ceasefire; identified human rights and IHL violations; urged safe and unhindered humanitarian access (A/RES/53/160 ; A/RES/54/179).
2000s		
2000–2001	Civil war in Somalia	Offered support for regional organizations’ good offices (Arta process); supported humanitarian efforts (A/RES/56/106).
2002	Israeli military operations in the West Bank	Condemned the use of force; called for all parties to abide by Geneva Conventions; called for provision of humanitarian assistance and services.
2001–2002	Escalating conflict in Sudan civil war	Supported regional organizations’ good offices and ceasefire efforts; called out human rights abuses; urged all sides to ensure humanitarian access and safe return (A/RES/57/230).

2008	Israeli operations in the Gaza Strip	In 2009, condemned military operations; supported SC calls for ceasefire and withdrawal of Israeli forces; called for all States to provide emergency relief and for unimpeded aid access.
2010s to present		
2011	Arab Spring uprising in Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Suspended Libyan Arab Jamahiriya from the Human Rights Council, citing gross and systematic human rights violations.
2014	Russian Federation annexation of Crimea	Reinforced Charter and international law obligations to refrain from threat or use of force and with respect to territorial integrity; declared referendum illegal.
2011–2016	Outbreak of civil war in the Syrian Arab Republic	Called attention to international law violations; supported regional organization good offices and ceasefire monitoring process; appointed a Joint Special Envoy; mandated investigatory body (International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism).
2021	Myanmar “state of emergency” , internal violence	Called for de-escalation of violence; denounced rights violations; called for safe and unimpeded humanitarian access; recommended arms embargo imposed by Member States.
2022–present	Conflict in Ukraine	Characterized invasion as aggression and Charter violation; demanded withdrawal of forces and halt to attacks; called attention to IHL and human rights violations, humanitarian needs.
2023–present	Hamas attack; Israeli military operations in Gaza	Called for humanitarian truce or ceasefire, release of hostages, protection of civilians, compliance with IHL and unimpeded humanitarian access; expressed support for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (a body mandated by the GA); called for international conference on a two-State solution.

Legal basis for General Assembly engagement on peace and security matters

The GA’s authority to engage on peace and security matters – including responses to acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace – lies in Articles 10, 11 and 14 of the UN Charter. [Article 10](#) authorizes the GA to discuss or make recommendations on “any matters within the scope of the present Charter”. [Article 11](#) empowers the GA to “discuss any questions relating to the maintenance of international peace and security” and to “make recommendations” to the States concerned or to call them to the attention of the SC. [Article 14](#) further authorizes the GA to “recommend measures for the peaceful adjustment of any situation”.

These Charter authorities give the GA broad authority to engage and make recommendations on any peace and security matters. However, GA resolutions are not binding. In considering the division of labour and respective authorities of the GA and the SC, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in its 1962 [Certain Expenses case](#) emphasized that the GA must refer any matter requiring “coercive or enforcement action” to the SC.⁴

The ICJ’s advisory opinions have emphasized that while GA recommendations are not binding, they are not limited to debate alone.⁵ They can engender and create active response mechanisms. The GA’s broad powers to make recommendations on peace and security, in combination with [Article 22](#)’s provision that the GA can establish “subsidiary organs” as it deems necessary, has allowed the GA to create mechanisms or bodies that can facilitate conflict resolution or management, including establishing peace operations (with the consent of the State in question), bodies that can help oversee conflict de-escalation measures or coordinate humanitarian aid, good offices or mediation committees, and fact-finding bodies or commissions of inquiry.

⁴ *Certain Expenses of the United Nations (Article 17, Paragraph 2, of the Charter)*, Advisory Opinion of 20 July 1962, I.C.J. Reports 1962, p. 151, p. 164. In the same opinion, the ICJ made clear the GA may consider matters related to peace and security, including those under consideration by the SC. *Certain Expenses*, p. 163. [Article 12](#) was initially interpreted as restricting the GA from taking up matters on the SC’s agenda, but over time consideration of matters by the SC and GA in parallel has become “accepted practice” and deemed consistent with the UN Charter ([A/ES-10/273](#), paras. 27–28).

⁵ The ICJ has noted that the GA’s powers “are not confined to discussion, consideration, the initiation of studies and the making of recommendations; they are not merely hortatory” but can include recommendations that “have dispositive force and effect”. [Certain Expenses](#), pp. 163–164.

The GA can take up peace and security matters – including passing recommendations related to ongoing conflicts or hostilities – through any of its regular sessions. No special Charter provision need be activated or cited, including when considering matters that are on the SC’s agenda. In situations where there is a veto or threat of veto in the SC over a peace and security matter, either the SC or the GA may adopt what is known as a [Uniting for Peace](#) (UFP) resolution.⁶ This creates a special procedure to facilitate prompt consideration by the GA of the matter through an emergency special session. For example, emergency special sessions were convened in conjunction with the UFP to enable prompt responses by the GA to the [Congo crisis of 1960](#); the Soviet intervention in [Hungary in 1956](#) and of [Afghanistan in 1979](#); and the [Six-Day War in 1967](#). While several of the more prominent cases in the 46 situations examined took place in a UFP context, the GA does not require the UFP to be activated to respond to a peace and security situation. Of the 46 situations examined, responses to only 18 happened via UFP-connected emergency special sessions. Even with these 18 situations, the GA addressed some of them in both regular sessions and in emergency special sessions. GA consideration of ongoing conflicts or other use of force issues has also taken place in [special sessions](#), such as were convened following armed clashes between France and Tunisia in 1961 ([A/RES/1622\(S-III\)](#)) and on three separate occasions on disarmament ([A/S-15/6](#) (1988); [A/S-12/6](#) (1982); [A/S-10/4](#) (1978)).

⁶ The UFP procedure was created via resolution 377(V) in 1950 ([A/RES/377\(V\)](#)). The UFP is not automatically triggered where there is a veto or a threat of a veto, but can be activated either by nine affirmative votes in the SC or a majority in the GA.

Evaluating common General Assembly responses

Across the entire 46-case sample, the following categories of responses were the most common. These are listed in order of the frequency with which they appeared in the cases, from the most prevalent to the least. The hyperlinks go to subsections of this study offering further discussion of each category:

- Urging a [cessation of hostilities or ceasefire](#), or for particular parties to cease their attacks or hostilities.
- Supporting [good offices and mediation efforts](#).
- Identifying major [Charter and international law violations](#), such as acts of aggression or violations of sovereignty and territorial integrity.
- Identifying and calling for a halt to [human rights or IHL violations](#), frequently accompanied by recommending or creating accountability mechanisms.
- Recommending greater [humanitarian access, aid or support](#).
- Recommending ways to address the needs or rights of [refugees or internally displaced persons](#).⁷
- Requesting [withdrawal of forces or equipment](#).
- Recommending that the SC or other Member States take [enforcement action](#), including application or enforcement of [sanctions](#), support for the collective defence of States or use of force.

Cessation of hostilities, ceasefires and other calls or measures to halt hostilities

Collectively, calls to cease hostilities, to introduce or abide by a cessation of violence, and for particular parties to halt hostilities were the most prevalent category of responses by the GA to conflict or crisis situations. This type of recommendation appeared in 32 of the 46 incidents, spanning a wide range of conflict and crisis situations. Most of the cases where this type of recommendation was not made involved situations in which the conflict was no longer active or other use of force situations where a ceasefire measure would not be appropriate.⁸ While this category of recommendation is one of the most common across all resolutions, there are distinct patterns in terms of the type of appeal, strongly dependent on whether the situation involved an internal conflict or external intervention.

Calls for an overall ceasefire or cessation of hostilities (mostly in internal conflicts): Upon the outbreak of a conflict or escalation in hostilities, the GA has often called for a ceasefire or cessation of hostilities. This occurred in 16 of the 46 situations examined – almost all internal armed conflicts.⁹ Examples include calling for a cessation of all armed hostilities in [Afghanistan at multiple points in the 1990s](#),¹⁰ calling for a “cessation of violence” in the context of the civil war in the Syrian Arab Republic from 2012 on,¹¹ and calling for a ceasefire in many resolutions responding to [Israeli operations in Gaza](#) since 2023.¹²

⁷ This is treated as a distinct category from humanitarian access and aid because, while such relief efforts are a common recommendation with regard to conflict-affected displacement, the GA recommendations also tend to go beyond this. In addition, issues related to refugees and/or displaced individuals tend to be dealt with in operative provisions separate from those related to humanitarian aid and access.

⁸ As an example of the latter, situations involving continued foreign military presence or materiel on another State’s territory would not be resolved by a ceasefire, but by requests for withdrawal.

⁹ There were only a few cases of GA resolutions calling for a ceasefire in the context of international armed conflicts, including, for example, in the [Suez crisis](#) and after the outbreak of hostilities between [India and Pakistan](#) in 1971.

¹⁰ See for example [A/RES/49/140](#) (1996), para. 3; [A/RES/51/195B](#) (1997), para. 3.

¹¹ See for example [A/RES/66/253B](#) (2012); [A/RES/71/130](#) (2016).

¹² See for example [A/RES/ES-10/21](#) (2023); [A/RES/ES-10-22](#) (2023); [A/RES/ES-10/26](#) (2024); [A/RES/ES-10/27](#) (2025).

Calling for specific parties to cease hostilities (mostly in international armed conflicts): In situations of external intervention and international armed conflict, the GA has tended to call for particular parties (usually the intervening party or aggressor) to cease hostilities, rather than broadly calling for a ceasefire.¹³ This pattern is true from some of the earliest examples of GA engagement on peace and security matters (calling for China to cease hostilities in [Korea in 1950](#)), up to the present (e.g. in the series of resolutions responding to the [Russian Federation's intervention in Ukraine since 2022](#)).¹⁴ The 2024 Handbook case studies provided further examples of this type of language following the 1956 [Soviet intervention in Hungary](#), the US-led intervention in [Grenada in 1983](#), and the 1989 US intervention in [Panama](#). In many of the same situations, the GA has also demanded that the intervening or attacking party refrain from further unlawful threat or use of force (e.g. following attacks on [Libyan \(A/RES/41/38\)](#), [Iraqi \(A/RES/36/27\)](#) and Ukrainian ([A/RES/ES-11/1](#)) territory).

While the GA has more often focused on State parties' involvement, it has also extended its demands that conflict parties halt attacks to paramilitary groups or non-State armed groups. For example, in the context of the conflict in [Bosnia and Herzegovina](#), the GA not only reinforced the SC's ceasefire calls, but also specifically called for attacks by Bosnian Serbs and "Serb paramilitary units" to cease ([A/RES/49/10](#), paras. 4, 5).

Condemning foreign interference or support to belligerents: In situations of internationalized civil conflict, the GA has sometimes reinforced its calls for cessation of hostilities or for halts to attacks by urging external actors (such as Member States) to cease providing support to conflict parties (both State and non-State parties). Past examples include:

- **Republic of the Congo:** In a resolution responding to the Congo crisis of 1960, the GA requested all States "to refrain from any action" which might "impede the restoration of law and order" or "undermine the unity, territorial integrity and the political independence of the Republic of the Congo" ([A/RES/1474 \(ES-IV\)](#)).
- **Afghanistan:** Throughout the 1990s, many of the various factions in Afghanistan's internal conflict received support or safe harbour from other Member States. The GA addressed this in many of the resolutions in which it also urged a ceasefire. In one 1999 resolution, for example, the GA strongly condemned "the fact that foreign military support to the Afghan parties continued unabated through 1999, and calls upon all States to refrain strictly from any outside interference and to end immediately the supply of arms, ammunition, military equipment, training or any other military support to all parties to the conflict in Afghanistan" ([A/RES/54/189A-B](#)).
- **Syrian Arab Republic:** In a 2014 resolution responding to the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic, the GA strongly condemned "the intervention of all foreign combatants in the Syrian Arab Republic, including those fighting on behalf of the Syrian authorities, and in particular Hizbullah, and expresses deep concern that their involvement further exacerbates the deteriorating human rights and humanitarian situation, which has a serious negative impact on the region" ([A/RES/68/182](#)).

Enabling ceasefire monitoring and mechanisms: In some situations, the GA has not only called for ceasefires or other cessation of hostilities commitments but also supported mechanisms to help monitor and keep such commitments on track, including through peace operations it has mandated:

- In 1956, the GA helped resolve the Suez crisis after vetoes by permanent members prevented SC action on the issue; it did so by establishing a peace operation, the [United Nations Emergency Force](#) (UNEF), to monitor and oversee the ceasefire process.
- Beginning in 2011, the GA supported a Plan of Action and diplomatic efforts by the League of Arab States (LoAS) to reach a cessation of violence in the [Syrian Arab Republic](#). Subsequent resolutions supported the LoAS monitoring mission and

¹³ The GA called for certain parties to halt hostilities in 11 of the 25 cases of external intervention or international armed conflict in this sample; in contrast, the GA called for a general ceasefire in only 3 of those cases.

¹⁴ An example is the 2022 GA resolution in response to the initial invasion, in which the GA demanded that the "Russian Federation immediately cease its use of force against Ukraine and ... refrain from any further unlawful threat or use of force against any Member State" ([A/RES/ES-11/1](#), para. 3).

later a Joint Special Envoy position that brought about a cessation of violence and plan for a political settlement, which were later monitored by a SC-authorized peace operation.

- Peace operations mandated or supported by the GA have helped negotiate or oversee ceasefires in the [Republic of the Congo](#), [Western New Guinea](#), [Afghanistan](#) and [Guatemala](#).
- The GA has lent support to regional organizations' efforts to broker, maintain or broaden ceasefires or cessation of hostilities agreements in Sudan ([A/RES/53/1 O](#) (1998)), the Democratic Republic of the Congo ([A/RES/54/179](#) (1999)) and the Syrian Arab Republic ([A/RES/66/176](#) (2011); [A/RES/66/253](#) (2012)).

Good offices and mediation

The second-most common GA response to outbreaks or escalation of conflict has been to support good offices or diplomatic measures. As detailed in the [good offices chapter](#) of the 2024 Handbook, this has included directly authorizing or mandating mediators or conflict resolution bodies or commissions, as well as kickstarting processes that can advance conflict resolution, such as convening diplomatic initiatives and conferences or encouraging preparatory steps among conflict parties.¹⁵ The GA has been particularly likely to recommend good offices measures when responding to internal armed conflict situations. In response to 19 of the 21 internal conflict or crisis situations examined, GA resolutions supported some form of good offices measures, often as the most prominent part of the GA response. Meanwhile, good offices only featured in 10 of the 25 situations involving external intervention or use of force.

Supporting the Secretary-General's good offices: Analysis of the cases where the GA has supported good offices suggests that one of the most common ways for the GA to do so is to request the Secretary-General to use his or her good offices to help mediate or address an ongoing conflict or crisis situation. The GA has requested the Secretary-General to exercise good offices in a range of situations, including to negotiate a political settlement and end to a conflict (e.g. in [Kampuchea](#) during the 1980s);¹⁶ to negotiate a more limited ceasefire or cessation of violence measures (as in the early stages of the Syrian civil war);¹⁷ or to negotiate for humanitarian access and safety (as in Sudan in the 1990s with [Operation Lifeline](#)).

Added value of GA support for Secretary-General good offices: GA support for the Secretary-General's good offices is important in three respects:

- The Secretary-General has only a limited, implicit authority to exercise good offices under the UN Charter; under [Article 98](#), the Secretary-General's mandate to exercise good offices is much stronger with explicit tasking by the SC or GA.¹⁸
- The GA's support may offer broader political backing and momentum behind the Secretary-General's efforts, which can be crucial when attempting to mediate on sensitive issues or situations.
- The GA can lend momentum to the Secretary-General's efforts by mandating other mechanisms or processes alongside those mediation efforts. These might include mandating other interim conflict management bodies (such as a [peace operation](#) or other [operational bodies](#)), mandating commissions or functions that help to advance confidence-building measures (as with the GA's mandating of the [Repatriation Commission in Korea](#) in 1951), or the GA using its convening authority to initiate an international conference in support of ongoing good offices measures (see case example below).

¹⁵ This has included appointing mediators related to the Israel-Palestine conflict (in 1948 and again in 1993, when a [Special Coordinator](#) was appointed following the Oslo Accords) and the civil war in the Syrian Arab Republic (2012), as well as special envoys or representatives on thematic issues.

¹⁶ Another illustration was the series of GA resolutions requesting the Secretary-General to exercise good offices in [Guatemala](#) in the early 1990s ([A/RES/45/15](#); [A/RES/46/109\(A\)](#)), contributing to a peace agreement and, later, a GA-authorized peace operation to help monitor it. See also the case studies in the 2024 Handbook on [Western Sahara](#) and [Myanmar](#).

¹⁷ Another example was during the 2008–2009 Gaza War when the GA expressed support for the Secretary-General's mission to the Middle East to try to secure a ceasefire ([A/RES/ES-10/18](#)).

¹⁸ Article 98 of the UN Charter provides that the Secretary-General is "to perform such functions entrusted" to him/her by the GA, the SC and the UN Economic and Social Council. This is considered the basis for the good offices function.

Case example: Kampuchea (1978–1980): From 1979 on, the GA asked the Secretary-General to use his good offices to reach a political settlement to the internationalized civil conflict in [Kampuchea](#), giving him a mandate that was otherwise absent, given SC divisions at the time. In addition to providing this mandate, the GA used its other tools to lend momentum to the UN-led mediation. In 1981 the GA convened an international conference on Kampuchea. This conference helped initiate what would become the major political track for negotiations on Kampuchea over the next decade and attracted international attention and support to the issue, which gave greater force to the Secretary-General’s efforts. The GA also supported an additional committee to help with preparatory steps and intermediate efforts to continue the dialogue, as well as supporting the Secretary-General’s ability to deal with the humanitarian crisis generated by the conflict. All of these measures supported the Secretary-General’s efforts to resolve the conflict, which ultimately led to a breakthrough in 1988 and subsequently a political settlement via the 1991 Paris Peace Agreements.

Supporting committees or commissions: The GA has frequently lent support to good offices through mandating commissions or committees related to specific conflict resolution efforts or functions, including committees of Member States that can function as contact groups. Under [Article 22](#), the GA can create subsidiary bodies, which can include good offices commissions or committees. The purpose or role of these committees can vary, including being mandated to:

- Identify solutions to diplomatic issues (e.g. the Special Committee on Palestine, which proposed the UN Partition Plan for Palestine ([A/RES/181\(II\)](#))).
- Take on a mediator role (e.g. the Good Offices Committee, comprised of Member State representatives, created to “bring about a cessation of hostilities” during the conflict on the Korean Peninsula ([A/RES/498\(V\)](#))).
- Play a preparatory role for peace talks (e.g. the Conciliation Commission in the Congo that was created in 1960 to conduct preparatory talks in the Republic of the Congo ([A/RES/1474\(ES-IV\)](#))).
- Enable confidence-building measures (e.g. the [Repatriation Commission in Korea](#) that facilitated prisoners of war return).
- Conduct fact-finding investigations (such as the [UN Special Mission to Afghanistan](#) during the 1990s) that can shape the issues on the agenda in a mediation process, as well as serving other accountability purposes.

Commissions and committees can also help to maintain momentum and keep attention on a protracted issue by serving as a mechanism to disseminate new information or create pressure on parties. For example, the GA established the [UN Special Committee against Apartheid](#) in 1962 to keep “under review” the racial policies of the Government of South Africa following non-compliance with SC and GA resolutions ([A/RES/449\(V\)A-B](#), para. 5). The Committee became one of the “most dynamic and action-oriented committees”, releasing annual reports and encouraging anti-apartheid-related public sessions that kept up public pressure and attention on the issue.¹⁹

Support to regional organizations and actors: [Chapter VIII](#) of the Charter encourages States to pursue conflict settlement first through regional arrangements. From the 1990s onward, the GA has increasingly used this as a primary avenue for supporting conflict resolution, by supporting the diplomatic efforts of regional or subregional organizations. For example, provisions lending support to regional or subregional organizations’ diplomatic efforts did not appear in any case in the 46-case sample prior to 1990; however, such provisions appear in most of the cases after 1990, particularly those involving internal conflicts or civil war dynamics. Of the 21 cases involving responses to internal conflict or civil war, references to regional or subregional actors’ engagement and mediation efforts appear in every resolution except for some of those pertaining to Gaza and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT), and the response to internal conflict and repression in Libya in 2011. The table below illustrates a number of ways the GA has supported regional and sub-regional actors’ efforts at conflict resolution:

¹⁹ Enuga Sreenivasulu Reddy, “United Nations Special Committee against Apartheid Reports”, in *Struggles for Freedom: Southern Africa* (New York, Ithaka Harbors, Inc., 2007).

Type of General Assembly support	Subject matter and context	Regional organizations(s) or actor(s) involved	General Assembly resolution
Welcoming and offering support to regional organization efforts towards conflict resolution	Efforts to mediate the post-2021 political crisis in Myanmar	Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)	A/RES/75/287 (2021)
	Renewed Geneva discussions over the disputed territory of Abkhazia (Georgia) following regional tensions	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)	A/RES/77/293 , para. 5 (2023)
	Reconstruction and mediation efforts during the civil war in Afghanistan in the 1990s	Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and regional States	A/RES/50/88 , para. 3 (1995)
	Diplomatic efforts to reach a political settlement to end the civil war in Somalia in the 1990s	Organization of African Unity (OAU); Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)	A/RES/47/167 (1992); A/RES/55/168 (2000)
	Regional and internal tensions in Afghanistan following the assumption of power by the Taliban in 1996	OIC	A/RES/51/195B , para. 4 (1996)
Requesting that the Security Council or other Member States support the mediation efforts of a regional organization	Efforts to restore democratic institutions following a coup in Haiti	Organization of American States (OAS)	A/RES/47/20 (1992)
Offering support to and urging compliance with regionally led action plans, ceasefires and peace processes	Supporting efforts to reach a “cessation of violence” as well as monitoring of the Action Plan in the Syrian Arab Republic	LoAS	A/RES/66/176 (2011); A/RES/66/253 (2012)
	Urging all parties to participate fully with the Arta Peace Process to end the civil war in Somalia	IGAD	A/RES/55/168 , para. 8 (2000)
	Lending support to the Machakos Protocol, which restarted the peace process during the second civil war in Sudan	IGAD	A/RES/57/230 , para. 3(c) (2002)
Lending support to and reinforcing calls for an international conference to advance dialogue and diplomacy	Proposal for an international conference to advance peace talks in Somalia	OAU, OIC, LoAS, the Standing Committee of the States of the Horn of Africa on Somalia	A/RES/47/167 , para. 2 (1992)
	Proposals to convene an international conference to address recovery and reconstruction in the Gaza Strip	Egypt and other regional actors	A/RES/ES-10/27 , para. 18 (2025)

Identifying “acts of aggression” and other statements on Charter violations

In keeping with its role in reinforcing Charter principles and international law, as well as its Article 11 responsibility to raise peace and security issues to the SC, the GA has very commonly used its platform to identify (1) fundamental violations of international law or the UN Charter such as “acts of aggression” or violations of sovereignty and territorial integrity; and (2) perceived threats to peace and security. Such language was identified in 27 of the 46 cases. The GA has long shown it was willing to call out “aggression” and violations of the UN Charter, from its earliest resolutions related to peace and security.²⁰ However, the GA’s role in identifying such violations, and specifically “acts of aggression”, became even more significant following the 1974 adoption of GA resolution 3314(XXIX), which defined the “existence of an act of aggression” as “the use of armed force by a State against the sovereignty, territorial integrity or political independence of another State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Charter of the United Nations” ([A/RES/3314\(XXIX\)](#), annex, art. 1). This was significant because it established a broadly agreed-upon definition of aggression for the first time and explicitly called the SC’s attention to this definition for use in guiding its decisions.

Since the adoption of resolution 3314(XXIX), the GA has explicitly characterized certain hostilities or attacks as “acts of aggression”, often referencing the resolution directly. For example, GA resolution 36/27 characterized [Israel’s attack on Iraqi nuclear installations](#) in 1981 as a “premeditated and unprecedented act of aggression” and an “escalation in the threat to international peace and security” ([A/RES/36/27](#), para. 1). In its 2022 resolution deploring the “aggression” by the Russian Federation against Ukraine as a violation of the UN Charter ([A/RES/ES-11/1](#), para. 2), the GA recalled resolution 3314 (XXIX) and its definition of aggression.

How did the General Assembly come to define an “act of aggression”? [Article 39](#) of the UN Charter set out that the SC “shall determine the existence of any threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression”. Yet the Charter itself never defined what constituted aggression.²¹ Early efforts by the International Law Commission and legal scholars to formulate a definition failed to gain consensus.²² This was an important issue for many Members of the Non-Aligned Movement within the GA during the Cold War, who thought that a definition of aggression might help protect them from outside interference or becoming caught up in proxy wars. In 1968, the GA established a Special Committee on the Question of Defining Aggression, which submitted its report in 1974 ([A/9619](#)).²³ In [resolution 3314\(XXIX\)](#) and its annex, the GA expressed its deep conviction that “the adoption of the Definition of Aggression would contribute to the strengthening of international peace and security”, including by having “the effect of deterring a potential aggressor” ([A/RES/3314\(XXIX\)](#)). The resolution has proven influential in contributing to standing international law definitions and interpretations of aggression, including the definition within the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

Identifying the elements of aggression: More frequently, the GA has stopped short of characterizing a situation as aggression directly but has identified the key elements within the definition of aggression. This includes recalling principles of respect for sovereignty and/or territorial integrity, the obligation of restraint from threat or use of force, prohibitions on acquiring territory through the use of force and/or general principles of non-interference in the affairs of another Member State. This has become an almost standard part of the GA’s response following an attack or other form of external intervention in another Member States’ territory. The GA adopted such language in resolutions following US strikes or military interventions in [Grenada](#) (1983) and [Panama](#)

²⁰ For example, in one of the most decisive early engagements by the GA, after SC deadlock, the GA stepped in to pass a resolution in 1951 finding that China had engaged in “aggression” in its deployment of troops on behalf of North Korea during the [Korean War](#) in 1950 and 1951 ([A/RES/498\(V\)](#), para.1).

²¹ In addition to the definitional issue, some scholars have observed that the SC has often been reluctant to exercise this “quasi-judicial” function and determine when such a violation has occurred. Oscar Schachter, “The quasi-judicial role of the Security Council and the General Assembly”, *American Journal of International Law*, vol. 58 (1964). See also Michael Ramsden, *International Justice in the United Nations General Assembly* (London, Edward Elgar Publishing, 2021), pp. 1–21.

²² Elizabeth Wilmshurst, “Definition of aggression: General Assembly resolution 3314(XXIX)”, Audiovisual Library of International Law. Available at <https://legal.un.org/avl/ha/da/da.html>.

²³ For a longer account of the Committee’s work, see United Nations Office of Public Information, “[Chapter III: the question of defining aggression](#)”, *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1974, vol. 28 (United Nations publication, 1974), pp. 840–848.

(1989), foreign interference in [Cyprus in 1974](#), Soviet intervention in [Afghanistan](#) in 1979, and tensions over the disputed territories of Nagorno-Karabakh ([A/RES/62/243](#) (2008)).

Reinforcing territorial integrity obligations in situations short of active conflict: The GA has also reminded parties of the obligation to respect sovereignty, territorial integrity and principles of non-interference in use of force situations that fall short of an active conflict situation. This has happened when military personnel or equipment have been deployed into foreign territory, as was the case when [Chinese \(Kuomintang\) forces](#) fled to Burma in 1952. It has also happened in situations in which such forces have remained in place after requests that they withdraw, as in the case of “Russian military forces and armaments” remaining in Moldova in 2018 ([A/RES/72/282](#)).

Effects of responses to identifying violations: Two types of effects have resulted from GA denunciations of acts of aggression or other major Charter violations. First, in many of these situations, the GA adopted resolutions after vetoes or deadlock in the SC.²⁴ In such situations, with an absence of SC censure of the hostilities, the GA resolution acted as the voice of record, reinforcing what it deemed to be a serious violation of the UN Charter and international law, and representing a public accountability measure in itself. There have also been situations in which the GA’s identification of serious Charter or legal violations (such as the existence of aggression) may have influenced subsequent SC or Member State responses, as illustrated in the case of [Bosnia and Herzegovina](#), as described below and in the [annex](#).

Case example: Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992): In 1991 and 1992, the SC took measures to try to address escalating conflict and a humanitarian crisis in the territory of the [former Yugoslavia](#), including authorizing a peace operation, introducing an arms embargo and requesting full cooperation with a UN peace plan. In response to a dramatically escalating humanitarian crisis and widespread reports of ethnic cleansing, the GA took a strong position, condemning Serbia, Montenegro and Serbian forces “for violation of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence” of Bosnia and Herzegovina ([A/RES/47/121](#), para. 2) and demanding the cessation of their “aggressive acts and hostility” (ibid., para. 3). Should Serbian and Montenegrin forces fail to comply with this and all related resolutions, the GA called for the SC to consider, under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, authorizing Member States to “use all necessary means to uphold and restore” Bosnia and Herzegovina’s sovereignty (ibid., para. 7(a)). This language represented a shift in tone; the crisis was no longer to be treated as an internal conflict or a humanitarian emergency but as an armed conflict involving serious Charter violations. SC resolutions subsequently adopted this shift in tone and also took up some of the specific recommendations the GA had made in its 1992 resolutions.

Violations of human rights and international humanitarian law

Since 1980, raising human rights and IHL violations, and/or the impact of conflict on civilians, has become an almost default component of GA resolutions responding to conflict situations, often with detailed treatment of the violations. This tendency is in keeping with the GA’s overall responsibility under [Article 13](#) of the UN Charter to undertake efforts towards the “realization of human rights”. Nonetheless, it is a more recent trend – human rights or IHL issues appeared prominently in only 5 of the 19 cases examined before 1991, but in 22 of the 27 cases examined from that year on. In addition, since 1990 the GA has trended towards

²⁴ Of the cases cited above, the GA resolution followed a veto or deadlock in the SC in the following cases: hostilities in the Korean Peninsula (1950); Hungary (1956); Grenada (1983); Panama (1989); Afghanistan (1979); Ukraine in 2014 and 2022. The SC did not pass a resolution in relation to the disputed territories of Nagorno-Karabakh.

responding to a given conflict situation primarily or only through human rights-focused resolutions, such as those originating out of the [Third Committee](#).²⁵

The nature of the language within these GA resolutions tends to be highly context-specific, with the GA often enumerating numerous IHL or human rights violations specific to that situation. The table below illustrates the range of IHL and human rights issues the GA has identified in past resolutions:

Type of international humanitarian law or human rights violation identified by the General Assembly	Context(s) where such violations were identified
Indiscriminate or excessive use of force against civilians, and/or “deliberate targeting of civilians and civilian infrastructure”	Syrian civil war (A/RES/71/130 (2016)) Afghan civil war (A/RES/50/88 (1995)) Second Congo civil war (A/RES/56/173 (2001)) OPT (A/RES/ES-10/7 (2000); A/RES/ES-10/20 (2018))
Use of “chemical weapons”	Syrian civil war (A/RES/68/182 (2013); A/RES/71/130 (2016))
Use of “anti-personnel landmines”	Second Sudan civil war (A/RES/53/1[O] (1998))
“Ethnic cleansing”	South Ossetia and Abkhazia in Georgia (A/RES/62/249 (2008)) Bosnia and Herzegovina (A/RES/49/196 (1994); A/RES/49/10 (1994))
“Arbitrary detentions”, charges, arrests; release of political leaders under detention; or references to “disappearances”	Myanmar (A/RES/75/287 (2021)) Haiti (A/RES/46/138 (1991)) Syrian civil war (A/RES/71/130 (2016)) Congo crisis (A/RES/1600(XV) (1961)) Namibia (A/RES/39/50 (1984))
Violations of the freedoms of expression, assembly and association, including violence against or killing of peaceful protestors	Myanmar (A/RES/75/287 (2021)) Syrian civil war (A/RES/70/234 (2015)) Haiti (A/RES/46/138 (1991))
Searches without warrant, ransacking of private and public buildings	Haiti (A/RES/46/138 (1991))
Rape or sexual violence	Haiti (A/RES/46/138 (1991)) Afghanistan (A/RES/77/10 (2022)) Bosnia and Herzegovina (A/RES/49/10 (1994))
Torture and inhumane treatment	Haiti (A/RES/46/138 (1991)) Syrian civil war (A/RES/66/176 (2011))
Suicide bombings and other asymmetric bomb attacks	OPT (A/RES/ES-10/12 (2002); A/RES/ES-10/13 (2003))
Summary executions or extrajudicial killings or punishments	Haiti (A/RES/46/138 (1991)) Afghanistan (A/RES/77/10 (2022)) Syrian civil war (A/RES/66/176 (2011)) OPT (A/RES/ES-10/12 (2003))

Accountability for violations: Many GA resolutions have not only highlighted IHL or human rights violations but have also encouraged or created accountability mechanisms to respond to these violations. The [accountability chapter](#) of the 2024 Handbook provides examples and case studies of accountability mechanisms the GA has created or mandated in the past, including fact-finding committees, commissions of inquiry and pre-prosecutorial bodies.

²⁵ See for example resolutions relating to human rights and the conflict situations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo ([A/RES/54/179 \(1999\)](#)); Sudan ([A/RES/57/230 \(2003\)](#)); and the Syrian Arab Republic ([A/RES/66/176 \(2011\)](#)).

Beyond creating new bodies, another common accountability strategy has been to encourage compliance with existing **domestic accountability mechanisms**. As an illustration, resolution 54/179 – passed in 1999 following a ceasefire breakthrough during the second Congo civil war – both expressed concern at “the perpetration of massacres” in specific locations (thus calling out the violations) and urged conflict parties to “cooperate fully with the National Commission of Inquiry on the alleged massacres” and other judicial processes (encouraging domestic accountability processes) ([A/RES/54/179](#), paras. 2(b)(i), 3(e), 4).

Case example: [Bosnia and Herzegovina](#) accountability mechanisms: GA responses to the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina illustrate two common responses in terms of accountability mechanisms and initiatives: supporting international mechanisms and urging SC accountability measures. In 1992, after identifying extreme war crimes and extreme human rights abuses, including “ethnic cleansing”, the GA urged the SC to consider recommending the establishment of “an ad hoc international war crimes tribunal” to punish perpetrators of war crimes ([A/RES/47/121](#), para. 10), a recommendation the SC took up in 1993 by establishing the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia ([S/RES/808](#)). After the tribunal was created, the GA requested Member States to support it through funding and other resources ([A/RES/49/196](#), paras. 8–10).

The GA has also recommended or supported **international accountability processes**, such as international tribunals, judicial processes and mechanisms (see also the case example below on GA support for such measures in [Bosnia and Herzegovina](#)).²⁶ Many GA resolutions have also lent support to the work of Special Rapporteurs and other Special Procedures mechanisms embedded in the UN human rights architecture, another means of supporting international accountability mechanisms.²⁷

Urging SC accountability measures: The GA has also frequently urged the SC to take accountability measures, from urging it to establish tribunals or other accountability mechanisms to referral to judicial bodies. In several of the resolutions related to war crimes and human rights abuses in the [Syrian Arab Republic](#), the GA called the SC’s attention to the issue, reminding the SC of its “primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and to take measures to put an end to all serious violations of IHL and all serious violations and abuses of international human rights law” ([A/RES/68/182](#), para. 12). It also implicitly recommended that the SC [refer the situation to the International Criminal Court \(ICC\)](#), an action the SC took under consideration but which was vetoed in 2014. Subsequent GA resolutions “regretted” that a draft resolution was not adopted and continued to pursue other [accountability responses](#) (e.g. [A/RES/69/189](#); [A/RES/71/203](#); [A/RES/75/193](#)).

Humanitarian access and response, including as relates to refugees or internally displaced persons

In the early period, most GA resolutions responding to conflict events did not include references to humanitarian assistance. However, since the late 1970s, calls for humanitarian relief or humanitarian access have become not only more prominent but also more explicit in their terms.²⁸ For example, although GA responses to the successive waves of internal conflict in [Afghanistan](#) in the 1990s covered many aspects of the crisis, several resolutions included specific appeals to Member States to support the Afghanistan Emergency Trust Fund for humanitarian and rehabilitation assistance, invited financial institutions and humanitarian

²⁶ Examples of these international mechanisms, as detailed in the 2024 Handbook, include recommendations of referrals to the ICC ([Democratic People’s Republic of Korea](#), [Syria](#)); lending support for international tribunals, as with the [Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia](#) or financial support for the Special Court of Sierra Leone ([A/RES/58/284](#)).

²⁷ These have included supporting access for the Special Rapporteur, Commission of Inquiry or other monitoring actors, as well as calling attention to the findings of such bodies. See for example [A/RES/79/182](#) (2024) (on Special Rapporteur access in Myanmar); [A/RES/ES-10/14](#) (2003) (citing findings of the Special Rapporteur on human rights in the Palestinian territories).

²⁸ Some resolutions prior to 1975 did reference humanitarian issues, though not as commonly. For example, the need for humanitarian supplies for the Hungarian people was noted in the GA resolution responding to the [Soviet intervention in Hungary in 1956](#). The GA’s 1967 resolution responding to the outbreak of the Six-Day War commended the efforts of UN agencies and humanitarian organizations and urged Member States and donors to contribute to emergency relief efforts ([A/RES/2252\(ES-V\)](#)).

agencies to contribute additional resources and called for warring parties to respect freedom of movement for aid agencies and the UN, as well as to stop looting supplies (see e.g. [A/RES/50/88](#) (1995); [A/RES/52/211](#) (1997), paras. 3–6). Additional examples of how the GA prioritized humanitarian relief, alongside relevant good offices measures, in [Kampuchea](#) (Cambodia) in the 1980s and in [Sudan](#) in the 1990s, are included in brief below and in the case studies in the annex.

Case example: [Kampuchea](#) (1979–late 1990s): Following the Vietnamese invasion of [Kampuchea](#) in 1978, the GA adopted a resolution ([A/RES/34/22](#)) that gave priority attention to the “widespread hardship and deprivation” of the population, including the existence of famine, and the “large exodus” of the population fleeing to neighbouring countries. The resolution strongly appealed to Member States and humanitarian organizations to increase humanitarian relief and refugee support (*ibid.*, paras. 1–4). These humanitarian appeals were given priority in the operative paragraphs, above the GA’s calls for withdrawal of armed forces and for all parties to cease “acts or threats of aggression” in South-East Asia. In near-annual resolutions for the next decade, the GA continued to empower the Secretary-General to coordinate humanitarian relief, which enabled the Secretary-General to convene pledging conferences and establish the UN Border Relief Operation to coordinate relief efforts.

Common language and provisions related to humanitarian response and access: Several provisions recur across GA resolutions, including appeals for Member States to facilitate or provide emergency relief, including by contributing to relief funds; calling on warring parties to allow the unhindered flow of humanitarian aid or necessary goods, or to otherwise cooperate in enabling provision of humanitarian aid; and encouraging the safe and unhindered passage of UN personnel or other medical or humanitarian personnel. The table below offers examples of situations where these common provisions have appeared:

Common language	Examples
Appealing to Member States and humanitarian organizations to facilitate or provide humanitarian aid or emergency relief on an urgent basis	- Following 1982 Israeli attacks on Lebanon (A/RES/ES-7/5; A/RES/ES-7/6) - Following 1978 Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea (A/RES/34/22) - Following a 1991 coup in Haiti (A/RES/47/20) - In the context of civil war in Sudan in the 1990s (A/RES/53/1[O]) - In the context of Israeli operations in Gaza, 2008–2009 (A/RES/ES-10/18)
Calling on warring parties to allow the unhindered flow of aid, food, medical supplies, water, fuel or other goods, or to cooperate fully in provision of humanitarian assistance	- Following the Soviet intervention in Hungary in 1956 (A/RES/1006 (ES-II)) - In response to Serbian attacks and actions in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1994 (A/RES/49/10) - In the context of civil conflict in Afghanistan in the 1990s (A/RES/50/88) - In the context of Israeli operations in OPT in 2002 (A/RES/ES-10/10) - In the context of escalating internal conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic in 2012 (A/RES/66/253)
Calling on Member States to fully support collective relief funds or response plans	- Following the Russian Federation’s 2022 intervention in Ukraine (A/RES/ES-11/2) - In the context of civil conflict in Afghanistan in the 1990s (A/RES/50/88; A/RES/52/211) - In the context of civil war in Somalia in the early 2000s (A/RES/47/160) - In the context of civil war in Sudan in the 1990s (A/RES/53/1[O])
Encouraging safe and unhindered access of humanitarian personnel, including freedom of movement for aid workers	- Following the Russian Federation’s 2022 intervention in Ukraine (A/RES/ES-11/2) - In relation to displacement from Abkhazia, Georgia (A/RES/77/293) - In the context of civil conflict in Afghanistan in the 1990s (A/RES/52/211) - In the context of the second Congo Civil War in 1998 (A/RES/54/179) - In the context of civil war in Sudan in the 1990s (A/RES/53/1[O]) - In the context of Israeli operations in Gaza, 2008–2009 (A/RES/ES-10/18) - Following internal violence in Myanmar in 2021 (A/RES/75/287) - In response to use of force following 2018 protests in Gaza (A/RES/ES-10/20) - In the context of operations in Gaza from 2022 to 2025 (A/RES/ES-10/26; A/RES/ES-10/27)

Extolling respect for the safety and security of UN and/or humanitarian personnel, medical facilities and staff	• In response to use of force following 2018 protests in Gaza (A/RES/ES-10/20) • In the context of operations in Gaza from 2022 to 2025 (A/RES/ES-10/26; A/RES/ES-10/27) • In the context of civil war in Somalia in the early 2000s (A/RES/56/106) • In the context of civil war in Sudan in the 1990s (A/RES/53/1[OI]) • Following the declaration of a “state of emergency” and internal violence in Myanmar in 2021 (A/RES/75/287) • In the context of the Russian Federation’s invasion of Ukraine in 2022 (A/RES/ES-11/2)
References to a humanitarian corridor, “pause” or ceasefire for humanitarian purposes	• In the context of operations in Gaza continuing in 2023 (A/RES/ES-10/21) • During the siege of Sarajevo amid the 1990s conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina (A/RES/48/88)

Operational and context-specific humanitarian recommendations: Beyond general calls for supporting or enabling humanitarian aid, some resolutions have engaged in a more detailed way with operational challenges necessary to ensure humanitarian aid. In a 1992 resolution responding to the siege of Sarajevo and obstruction of food and aid supplies in the former Yugoslavia, the GA urged the SC to consider taking measures to establish additional airfields and airports for humanitarian relief flights, and to pursue emergency airdrops as a “stop-gap measure” ([A/RES/47/121](#), para. 8). The box below on OLS provides a further example.

Some resolutions have also engaged with context-specific blockages and obstructions. In the late 1990s, when the Taliban exercised control as the de facto authorities of [Afghanistan](#), the GA responded to significant restrictions on women’s ability to seek medical care, food or other provisions by noting the need to ensure that assistance is distributed equally, with no discrimination in access or participation on the basis of gender ([A/RES/53/203\[B\]](#), para. 10).

Case example: [Sudan](#) (1989–late 1990s): In 1989, the GA authorized OLS, a major UN initiative that addressed humanitarian needs during the civil war in Sudan. Subsequent resolutions on OLS urged the international community to help fully fund and support the initiative.²⁹ Some specifically focused on assistance to improve transport links and infrastructure that would facilitate aid delivery, given access challenges due to both warring parties’ lack of cooperation (and active obstruction at points), as well as by poor transport links and flooding. Several of these resolutions also stressed the need for all parties to cooperate to improve aid delivery.

Provisions related to refugees and internally displaced persons

Of the 46 cases examined, 17 offered significant operative provisions related to refugees or IDPs. This was generally not the main focus of the resolution.³⁰ These operative provisions tended to be a mix of appeals to support the needs of refugees or displaced persons, or to respect their rights.

Such provisions have been included in GA resolutions from the earliest period – for example, in the GA resolutions responding to the Soviet intervention in [Hungary](#) in 1956 and the outbreak of conflict between [India and Pakistan](#) surrounding the territory that is now Bangladesh in 1971. In both cases, the GA drew attention to the issue and called for additional emergency assistance to the refugees, either as supported by Member States or by specialty agencies, such as the United Nations High Commissioner for

²⁹ Annual consideration of OLS began with resolution [A/RES/44/12](#) in 1989, followed by [A/RES/45/226](#) in 1990 and [A/RES/46/178](#) in 1991. Thereafter and through the late 1990s, the annual resolution was renamed “Emergency assistance to the Sudan” (see e.g. [A/RES/52/169\[F\]](#) (1997); [A/RES/53/1\[OI\]](#) (1998); [A/RES/54/96\[J\]](#) (1999)).

³⁰ One exception to this is the series of resolutions since 2008 responding to the conflict over Abkhazia in Georgia, and its aftermath. Most of these have put a significant, even predominant, focus on the right of return of those displaced (both internally in Georgia and as refugees in other countries), as well as other rights for these individuals. For example [A/RES/62/249](#) (2008); [A/RES/77/293](#) (2023).

Refugees ([A/RES/1006 \(ES-II\)](#), para. 1; [A/RES/2793 \(XXVI\)](#), para. 3). The GA also called for Member States to support and strengthen coordination with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees following the Soviet invasion of [Afghanistan](#) in 1979.

Drawing attention to the large number of refugees and IDPs generated by conflict, and calling for greater relief efforts and assistance, has also been prominent in GA resolutions responding to several internal conflict situations: the [former Yugoslavia](#) in the 1990s, the Syrian Arab Republic from 2012 onward (see e.g. [A/RES/66/253B](#); [A/RES/68/182](#)) and [Myanmar](#) since the declaration of a state of emergency in 2021.³¹ Several GA resolutions following the outbreak of conflict in [Ukraine](#) in 2022 also highlighted humanitarian needs for refugees and those displaced.³²

Enabling or facilitating return: Another common provision in GA resolutions dealing with refugees relates to enabling, supporting or facilitating their return. Even some of the earlier cases reference this issue – for example, by urging intensified efforts to create conditions necessary for the “voluntary return” of those who fled due to the 1971 [India and Pakistan](#) conflict ([A/RES/2793 \(XXVI\)](#), para. 2), or by calling on all parties to the 1974 [Cyprus](#) conflict to “undertake urgent measures” to enable refugees to return to their homes safely ([A/RES/3212 \(XXIX\)](#), para. 5).

Beginning in the 1990s, resolutions with language related to the “safe and voluntary” return of refugees or IDPs have become much more common and the language much more standardized. Illustrating this trend, in a resolution related to the ongoing internal conflict in Afghanistan in 1996, the GA urgently appealed to Member States and UN and humanitarian organizations to provide assistance enabling the “voluntary, safe and secure return of refugees and internally displaced persons, with dignity and honour” ([A/RES/51/195A](#), para. 8). Since then, there have been many instances of GA resolutions calling for “voluntary and safe”, “unhindered”, and/or “dignified return”.³³ The table below offers some examples of these terms used across different contexts:

Country situation	Language related to safe, voluntary or dignified return	Sample resolutions
Afghanistan , 1992–2001	Appealing for assistance to enable the “voluntary, safe and secure return of refugees and internally displaced persons”	A/RES/50/88 ; A/RES/51/195 ; A/RES/53/203 B
Ukraine , post-2022	Demanding that all parties protect “civilians fleeing armed conflict” to allow “voluntary, safe and unhindered passage”	A/RES/ES-11/2
Bosnia and Herzegovina , 1992–1996	Demanding “safe, unconditional and honourable repatriation of the refugees and deportees” and requesting assistance in facilitating the right to “return voluntarily ... in safety and dignity”	A/RES/46/242 ; A/RES/49/10
Myanmar , 2019–present	Calling for the creation of the conditions necessary for the “safe, voluntary, dignified and sustainable return” of “all refugees, including Rohingya Muslim refugees” and “forcibly displaced persons”	A/RES/74/246 ; A/RES/77/227 ; A/RES/79/182
Georgia, those who fled from Abkhazia and South Ossetia, 2009–2023	Calls to “create favourable security conditions conducive to the voluntary, safe, dignified and unhindered return of all internally displaced persons and refugees”	A/RES/63/307 ; A/RES/77/293 ; A/RES/79/292

Refugee rights and protection: While GA resolution provisions related to IDPs and refugees have more often focused on humanitarian assistance and needs, some have also referenced refugee rights and protection obligations under international law. One GA resolution passed in 1999 during the second Congo civil war called on all conflict parties in the Democratic Republic of the

³¹ The plight of refugees and displaced persons, in particular the Rohingya refugees, has been a recurring feature of GA resolutions related to Myanmar since 2021. See for example [A/RES/79/182](#) (2024); [A/RES/78/219](#) (2023); [A/RES/77/227](#) (2022); [A/RES/76/180](#) (2021). It also featured in some of the resolutions prior to the 2021 “state of emergency”. See for example [A/RES/75/238](#) (2020); [A/RES/74/246](#) (2019).

³² One of the early 2022 resolutions focused primarily on humanitarian assistance urged assistance and protection for refugees ([A/RES/ES-11/2](#)). A subsequent resolution expressed grave concern at the high number of displaced persons and refugees needing humanitarian assistance ([A/RES/ES-11/6](#)).

³³ Older resolutions tended to only mention either ‘safe’ return (e.g. [A/RES/3212 \(XXIX\)](#) (1974)) or ‘voluntary’ return (e.g. [A/RES/2793 \(XXVI\)](#) (1971)).

Congo to respect IHL provisions, including those related to the protection of “refugees and internally displaced persons within the territory of that country regardless of their origin” ([A/RES/54/179](#), para. 3(b)). The same resolution also called on the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to “take a leading part in efforts to prevent conditions that might lead to further flows of internally displaced persons and refugees within the Democratic Republic of the Congo and across its borders” (*ibid.*, para. 4(b); see also [A/RES/53/160](#)).

Where situations of protracted displacement persist, the GA has sometimes passed resolutions to stress the right of return for refugees or IDPs. Such provisions have been prominent in GA resolutions responding to:

- Refugees or those displaced from [Bosnia and Herzegovina](#) and other parts of the former Yugoslavia, particularly following the Dayton Peace Agreement ([A/RES/51/203](#) (1997); [A/RES/54/119](#) (1999)).
- The 2008 conflict and aftermath in the regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia in Georgia (see e.g. [A/RES/62/249](#) (2008); [A/RES/77/293](#) (2023)).
- The situation in the disputed territories of Nagorno-Karabakh ([A/RES/62/243](#) (2008)).
- Hostilities in [Israel and the Middle East](#) and Palestinians’ right of return ([A/RES/36/226\[A\]](#) (1981)).

Withdrawal of foreign forces, armaments or materiel

In 20 of the 25 cases of external intervention, invasion or other situations involving foreign forces or equipment on the territory of another State, the GA called for the foreign forces to be withdrawn. Such situations include many of those detailed in the 2024 Handbook, including Chinese intervention in the [Korean Peninsula in 1950](#); the French, British and Israeli intervention in Egypt during the [Suez crisis in 1956](#); [Soviet intervention in Hungary in 1956](#); the deployment of British and American forces in [Lebanon](#) and Jordan in 1958; the presence of French forces in Tunisian territory after clashes in 1961 ([A/RES/1622\(S-III\)](#)) and the Vietnamese and Chinese intervention in [Kampuchea \(Cambodia\) from 1978](#).³⁴

Calls for forces’ withdrawal in internal armed conflicts: GA calls for forces to be withdrawn in cases of internal armed conflicts have not been common but appeared clearly in 6 of the 21 internal conflict situations considered in this analysis. For example, in resolutions adopted amid internal crisis in the Republic of the [Congo](#) in the 1960s, the GA decided that “Belgian and other foreign military and paramilitary personnel”, including mercenaries, “shall be completely withdrawn” ([A/RES/1599\(XV\)](#), para. 2). In February 2012, the GA condemned the Syrian Government’s indiscriminate attacks on population centres and recommended that Syrian forces be withdrawn to their barracks ([A/RES/66/253](#), para. 6). Some resolutions pertaining to Israeli operations in Gaza or other parts of the OPT have also called for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from that territory.³⁵

There was also both direct and indirect support for withdrawal of forces in the GA resolutions following the second Congo civil war, an internal conflict that involved significant intervention from neighbouring States. GA resolutions in the early 2000s lent support to the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement and the Kampala disengagement plan ([S/2000/330](#)), both of which had at their core withdrawal of foreign forces and also disengagement and withdrawal (to designated buffer or disengagement zones) of various Congolese forces and parties (see e.g. [A/RES/55/117](#)). Some resolutions were even more explicit, with one in 2001 urging “all foreign forces to withdraw without delay” from Congolese territory ([A/RES/56/173](#), para. 3(g)).³⁶

³⁴ For further examples of GA calls for withdrawal of foreign forces (and sometimes contributing to mechanisms that enable this), see case studies in the 2024 Handbook on [Cyprus](#) (1974); [Afghanistan](#) (1980); [Grenada](#) (1983); [Panama](#) (1989); [Afghanistan](#) (1990s); [Ukraine](#) (2014, 2022).

³⁵ See for example [A/RES/ES-7/2](#) (1980); [A/RES/E-10/16](#) (2006); [A/RES/ES-10/18](#) (2009); [A/RES/ES-10/24](#) (2024); [A/RES/ES-10/27](#) (2025).

³⁶ A subsequent resolution in 2003 welcomed several of the peace agreements in which further withdrawal measures were agreed upon and also welcomed “the significant withdrawals of foreign troops” that had happened to that point ([A/RES/57/233](#)).

Calling for withdrawal of remaining forces or materiel: Calls for withdrawal of foreign forces have happened most commonly in the context of ongoing hostilities. However, the GA has also addressed the presence of foreign forces in another Member State's territory outside of an active conflict situation, often following a rise in regional or national tensions connected to their presence. Examples include Russian Federation forces' continued presence in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in the early 1990s (see e.g. [A/RES/47/21](#) (1992); [A/RES/48/18](#) (1993)) and in Moldova in 2018 ([A/RES/72/282](#)). In 2008, in relation to the disputed territories of Nagorno-Karabakh, the GA adopted a resolution demanding the "immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of all Armenian forces from all the occupied territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan" ([A/RES/62/243](#), para. 2).

Enforcement action, including sanctions and recommendations for use of force

The least common category of recommendations has involved calls for coercive action on the part of the SC or other Member States, for example calling for use of force or sanctions. The 2024 Handbook included examples of situations in which:

- The GA recommended support for collective enforcement action in response to foreign intervention in the [Korean Peninsula](#) in 1950, and recommended such measures in response to acts of aggression in [Namibia](#) and other parts of southern Africa from the late 1960s onward.
- The GA has recommended or supported the SC taking Chapter VII action, for example following a 1991 military coup in [Haiti](#). The case study on [Bosnia and Herzegovina](#) in the annex provides another more recent example of the GA urging the SC, under its Chapter VII authority to "restore the sovereignty" and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina "using all necessary means" ([A/RES/47/121](#), para. 7(a)) – a term usually understood to include use of force.
- The GA has supported more robust measures or use of force posture within a given conflict or post-conflict environment by authorizing or enhancing the mandate of [peace operations](#), including extending the tasks of a SC-authorized peace operation in the Republic of the [Congo](#) to include more robust internal policing, and authorizing a full policing and administrative peace operation in [Western New Guinea](#).
- The GA has recommended that Member States help [defend or repel an attack](#), or lend support to conflict parties, including in defence of [Bosnia and Herzegovina](#) in the 1990s, and calls to provide "material assistance" to Botswana, Mozambique and Zambia in the 1970s.

Recommendations on sanctions in response to use of force, lack of compliance

While the GA cannot impose [sanctions](#) given its lack of mandatory or coercive power, it has sometimes recommended sanctions or the tighter enforcement of existing sanctions in response to use of force or conflict situations. In the GA's response to the hostilities on the [Korean Peninsula](#) in 1951, for example, the GA created what is arguably the first sanctions regime (albeit not mandatory), appealing to all Member States to apply an embargo on all arms, ammunition and "implements of war" as well as petroleum and strategic transport goods ([A/RES/500\(V\)](#), para. 1(a)). It also mandated a reporting body to monitor the embargo and provide recommendations on its adjustment, creating a precedent for the sort of functions currently undertaken by SC-mandated [panels of experts](#).

Other situations in which the GA has supported sanctions in response to use of force situations include:

- Recommended "comprehensive and mandatory sanctions backed by force" on "the illegal regime" in [Southern Rhodesia](#) (now Zimbabwe) following both domestic repression and "acts of aggression against Botswana, Mozambique and Zambia".
- Recommended comprehensive mandatory sanctions and that Member States cease all dealing with South Africa in response to its "aggression" in [Namibia](#) and other parts of Southern Africa.

- Recommended tougher sanctions and tighter enforcement of SC-mandated sanctions in [Southern Rhodesia](#) and the [Portuguese Territories](#).
- Recommended that all Member States cease providing arms and related material to Israel following its 1981 attack on the [Osirak nuclear reactor in Iraq](#).
- Supported arms and oil embargoes imposed on [Haiti](#) by the SC and regional organizations following a 1991 coup and internal rights violations.
- Recommended that Member States “prevent the flow of arms” into [Myanmar](#) following the ousting of the democratically elected Government and heightened levels of internal violence in 2021.

Sanctions in response to non-compliance: The GA has been more likely to urge the SC to impose sanctions or to enforce them in situations where prior GA or SC resolutions have not been complied with. For example:

- In December 1981 after Israel failed to comply with numerous resolutions calling on it to withdraw from and cease [hostilities in Lebanon](#), the GA called upon Member States to apply sanctioning measures ([A/RES/36/226\[A-B\]](#), para. 13).
- In 1982, following Israel’s repeated failure to comply with GA and SC resolutions calling on it to reverse the [annexation of the Golan Heights in Syria](#), the GA adopted a resolution recommending a series of sanctioning measures for Member States to impose ([A/RES/ES-9/1](#), para. 12). This came after the veto of a SC resolution that would have recommended sanctioning measures.³⁷

Calls to adjust SC sanctions regimes: The GA has also recommended that the SC adjust or amend existing sanctions regimes in ways that might address ongoing conflict dynamics. In 1994, in the context of escalating attacks by Serbian forces on [Bosnia and Herzegovina](#) (and repeated lack of compliance with prior SC and GA resolutions calling for such attacks to stop), the GA offered its support for the prior sanctions measures taken by the SC and called for Member States to support them fully; however, it also explicitly encouraged the SC to exempt Bosnia and Herzegovina from the SC-imposed arms embargo so that it could defend itself ([A/RES/49/10](#), paras. 13, 20, 22).

³⁷ The 1982 draft SC resolution that was vetoed would not have used the SC’s sanctioning authority under [Article 41](#), but simply decided that Member States should “consider applying concrete and effective measures” to nullify the annexation and “refrain from providing any assistance or aid to and co-operation with Israel in all fields” ([S/14832/Rev.1](#)).

Relationship with the Security Council and other bodies

As part of the analysis for this brief, UNU-CPR examined the relationship and timing between SC and GA resolutions on the same matter, as well as any differences in the content and provisions of resolutions passed by the GA as compared to those adopted by or vetoed within the SC.

Deference to the SC: The strongest overall trend was for the GA to wait for the SC to engage on a peace and security matter before adopting a resolution on the matter. In 26 of the 46 situations examined, the GA resolution followed and appeared to be in response to a veto. In a further eight situations, there was an imputed veto, meaning that it was clear that the SC would not adopt a resolution on the matter because of objections of one of five Permanent Member States.³⁸ In only five situations examined did the GA appear to be leading on the matter, with no veto, clearly imputed veto nor SC resolution preceding the GA resolution adopted. Most of these involved prolonged conflict situations that the SC was not at that point actively engaged with.

GA authority to engage is not contingent on the UFP: The UFP resolution provides a useful procedural vehicle and political impetus to action; however, it does not provide any additional powers or authority to engage in peace and security, beyond what the GA already enjoys under the UN Charter. The GA has more often engaged with peace and security matters outside of UFP contexts than within them.

- **Overall, the majority of cases in this study were dealt with in regular sessions**, with only 18 of the 46 situations considered through a UFP-linked emergency special session. Even in some of those 18 situations where the GA considered the matter in an emergency special session, the GA passed additional resolutions on the matter in regular session, including those responding to SC vetoes.³⁹
- **The GA has responded to SC vetoes outside of a UFP context**, passing resolutions following vetoes of draft resolutions related to the Vietnamese and Chinese intervention in [Kampuchea](#) in 1979; US interventions or strikes in [Grenada](#) (1983), the [Libyan Arab Jamahiriya](#) (1986) and [Panama](#) (1989); the Russian Federation's intervention in Crimea in 2014; and the civil war in the [Syrian Arab Republic](#) between 2012 and 2016 (after several related resolutions were vetoed).
- **The GA has also adopted resolutions related to conflict or use of force situations outside of a veto context within its regular sessions.** This includes responding to situations that the SC had already adopted resolution(s) on, including on French-Tunisian clashes in 1961; foreign interference and civil conflict in [Cyprus](#) in 1974; Israel's pre-emptive attacks on [Iraqi nuclear installations](#) in 1981; and the conflict in [Bosnia and Herzegovina](#) in the 1990s. The GA has also taken up peace and security matters in its regular sessions that the SC had not taken any action on at the time (meaning there was no SC resolution or veto), including responding to the situation in the disputed territories of Nagorno-Karabakh ([A/RES/62/243](#)); and addressing issues related to prolonged internal conflict situations in Afghanistan, Somalia and Sudan at multiple points in the 1990s and early 2000s.⁴⁰

³⁸ This was often because one of the permanent members was a party to the conflict situation or had cast vetoes on the matter in the past and so a draft resolution was never brought to a vote or proposed. In two cases in the sample, the SC passed only a presidential statement, and this was taken as a sign that the issue would not be brought to a full resolution.

³⁹ An example is the GA's response to perceived "aggression" and repression by South Africa in [Namibia](#) and other parts of southern Africa. The GA passed a resolution on this matter almost annually from 1966 to 1988, including several in response to SC inaction or SC vetoes of draft resolutions on the matter. There were vetoes cast specific to the "situation in Namibia" in 1975 and 1976, and four in April 1981. The GA responded to most of these (as well as other related vetoes of resolutions relating to the "question of South Africa") in regular session; it only convened an emergency special session on the matter in September 1981.

⁴⁰ On Somalia, see, for example, [A/RES/55/168](#); [A/RES/56/106](#); [A/RES/57/154](#). On Sudan, see note [A/RES/57/230](#) and note 46 below. On Afghanistan, see, for example, [A/RES/48/208](#) (1993); [A/RES/49/140](#) (1995); [A/RES/50/88](#) (1996).

Timing of General Assembly responses following vetoes

The GA can move rapidly in response to a conflict outbreak or escalation, particularly following a SC veto. Within this sample, the GA adopted a resolution on average 1.3 months after a veto in the SC.

Quick GA responses after SC vetoes on urgent crisis situations: Where an emergency special session was called in connection with the UFP resolution, the GA has moved very quickly – sometimes within hours or days of the triggering event.⁴¹ For instance, following [Soviet forces' intervention in Hungary](#) in 1956, the GA convened an emergency special session on the same day that a SC resolution on the matter was vetoed, and passed its own GA resolution overnight. In the midst of [the Suez crisis](#) in 1956, the GA resolution was adopted within days of the commencement of hostilities, and three days after a resolution was vetoed in the SC. In 2022, the GA's emergency special session on [Ukraine](#) convened just five days after a resolution on the matter was vetoed in the SC. Of the 17 cases in this sample involving responses to vetoes through an emergency special session, the average elapsed time between the casting of a veto and a GA resolution adopted in response was just under 17 days.⁴² It was even shorter – just over seven days – if measured from when the decision to convene an emergency special session is made (through adoption of a UFP resolution), rather than the veto itself.

The GA can act quickly even when the issue is not considered in an emergency special session. For example, the GA took up the issue of US-led intervention in [Grenada](#) only five days following a veto on the matter in the SC, and in response to the US intervention in [Panama](#), only six days after the US and the United Kingdom (UK) vetoed a resolution in the SC, though the GA was in winter recess at the time.⁴³ After the occupation of [Crimea](#) in 2014, the GA convened just 12 days after a resolution on the matter was vetoed in the SC.⁴⁴ In December 2016, when the siege of Aleppo was ongoing in the [Syrian Arab Republic](#), the GA adopted a resolution ([A/RES/71/130](#)) condemning the siege and attacks on civilians four days after there was a veto to a similar draft resolution in the SC ([S/2016/1026](#)).

Nonetheless, while the GA can move quickly within regular sessions, the passage of a UFP resolution and an emergency special session does lend political impetus and can lead to faster response times. In the 12 situations examined of GA resolutions passed in response to SC vetoes through regular sessions, the average response time was 2.2 months after the veto. That contrasts with the average response time of just under 17 days in the context of resolutions passed in emergency special sessions.

Procedural and political factors behind slower response times: Although the overall trend is towards faster response times following a veto or clear evidence of SC inaction, in some cases, GA responses have followed several months after a conflict event or a veto. For example, following the US veto of a draft SC resolution that pertained to US aerial attacks on the [Libyan Arab Jamahiriya](#) in 1986, the GA waited until the next session (roughly seven months later) to pass a resolution on the matter. Similarly, the GA waited five months, until the next session, to convene an emergency special session in response to four SC vetoes of draft resolutions related to Namibia in April 1981.⁴⁵

⁴¹ Examples of the GA moving quickly in the context of an emergency special session were in response to the following conflict or crisis situations: hostilities on the [Korean Peninsula](#) (1951); [Suez crisis](#) (1956); [Soviet intervention in Hungary](#) (1956); [the Congo crisis](#) (1960); the [Six-Day War](#) (1967); [Soviet intervention in Afghanistan](#) (1980); [Russian Federation's intervention in Ukraine](#) (2022).

⁴² Although there were 18 situations in this sample in which the GA passed a resolution in an emergency special session, in one of these situations, the GA adopted a resolution ([A/RES/ES-10/7](#)) following the adoption of a SC resolution ([S/RES/1322](#)), rather than a veto. The context was an outbreak of violence within the Israel-Palestine conflict. An emergency special session can be reconvened upon the request of Member States and does not require a new veto to be reconvened.

⁴³ After the outbreak of hostilities between India and Pakistan in 1971, a UFP resolution was adopted following a veto of a draft SC resolution ([S/10446/Rev.1](#)) (13 December 1971) proposing a ceasefire, but an emergency special session did not need to be organized given that the GA was in session at the time, and there was an available agenda item. A GA resolution calling for a ceasefire and other measures ([A/RES/2793\(XVII\)](#)) (7 December 1971) passed within six days of the veto.

⁴⁴ The GA adopted resolution 68/262 ([A/RES/68/262](#)) on 27 March 2014, only eight days after a draft resolution containing similar provisions was vetoed in the SC ([S/2014/189](#)) on 15 March 2014.

⁴⁵ France, the UK and the US vetoed four draft resolutions on 30 April 1981 ([S/14459](#); [S/14460/Rev.1](#); [S/14461](#); [S/14462](#); [S/SUPP/1981/2](#)) calling for stricter enforcement measures against South Africa related to its presence in Namibia, including comprehensive mandatory sanctions under Chapter VII. Zimbabwe only requested an emergency special session in August 1981 ([A/ES-8/1](#)).

Several factors, including the urgency of the situation,⁴⁶ procedural obstacles (such as whether the GA is in session or has a ready agenda item) and political dynamics surrounding the resolutions can lead to a slower GA response. In both of the above cases, with the Libyan Arab Jamarihiya and the 1981 8th emergency special session on Namibia, procedural and political factors both may have been at play. During the period of time when both of these situations took place, the GA took a much longer recess. Thus in both case, the GA was in recess for most of the intervening months between the veto and the adopted GA resolution (a procedural hurdle). Substantively, the language in both resolutions appeared intended to revive the issue in the context of a new GA session, and to call the SC's attention toward the matter again.

The timing of the [8th emergency special session](#) on Namibia must be placed in the context of a much longer chain of GA action on Namibia; the GA had passed near annual resolutions on the matter in its regular sessions since 1966 (when it first declared South Africa's governance of the territory to no longer be valid ([A/RES/2145\(XXI\)](#))).⁴⁷ In many of those resolutions the GA urged a firmer SC response to South Africa's lack of compliance with prior SC and GA resolutions, including recommending that the SC impose mandatory sanctions. This issue of SC mandatory sanctions was one of the primary reasons for the four 1981 vetoes, and the GA emphasized this recommendation again, and SC action on it, in the 8th emergency special session resolution ([A/RES/ES-8/2](#)). As such, the emergency special session was less a response to an immediate conflict escalation – which might have necessitated a prompt response – and more part of a continuing dialogue between the GA and the SC on how to encourage enforcement and compliance with prior resolutions.

In some situations where there was a gap in the GA response time, the GA appeared to be **giving the SC time to respond** or waiting for other regional actors to engage. It took several months for the GA to respond following the declaration of a state of emergency by the armed forces in [Myanmar](#) on 1 February 2021, which effectively deposed the democratically elected Government and introduced a period of high levels of violence and rights abuses. The hesitation has been attributed to waiting to see not only if and how the SC would respond but also if efforts by the relevant regional organization, ASEAN, to resolve the issue diplomatically would gain traction. Only after it became clear that the SC would not take action – save for issuing a presidential statement on 10 March 2021 ([S/PRST/2021/5](#)) – did the GA adopt a resolution, on 18 June 2021, strongly condemning the use of force and violence, detailing numerous human rights violations and calling for sanctioning measures and good offices ([A/RES/75/287](#)). In several of the situations where the GA supported good offices initiatives led by regional organizations, it appeared to wait to pass a resolution until doing so would help spur momentum or might help prevent warring parties from abandoning ceasefire processes.⁴⁸

The table below offers a sample of the response time following a veto in the SC, including situations where the GA resolution was adopted in an emergency special session and in regular session:

Country situation	Vetoed Security Council resolution(s)	General Assembly resolution	Number of days after Security Council veto	Other procedural or contextual factors
Suez crisis , 1956	S/3710 , 30 October 1956; S/3713/Rev.1 , 30 October 1956	A/RES/997 (ES-I) , 4 November 1956	5 days after SC veto 4 days after UFP resolution	UFP context (ESS-I) UFP resolution: 31 October 1956

⁴⁶ For example, in the context of the second Sudanese civil war, there was a conflict breakthrough on 20 July 2002, with the signing of the Machakos Protocol (a cessation of hostilities agreement). The GA would ultimately pass a resolution providing support to this cessation of hostilities initiative and to the regional organization leading the peace process. However, given the absence of urgency, as the agreement had resulted in an initial decrease in violence, the GA did not pass this resolution until 18 December 2002 ([A/RES/57/230](#)), at a period when there was a need to renew momentum and encourage parties to stick to the agreement. The only related SC action on this matter was to issue a presidential statement on 10 October 2003, welcoming the agreement and encouraging parties to stick to the cessation of hostilities ([S/PRST/2003/16](#)).

⁴⁷ Details of GA engagement on Namibia are detailed in three separate case studies in the 2024 Handbook. *Assembly for Peace*, pp. 65–66, 85, 95–96.

⁴⁸ See example related to the Machakos Protocol related to the Sudanese civil war, in note 46. Two other examples include a GA resolution in 2008 that appeared an attempt to lend momentum to the OSCE-negotiated Madrid Principles to respond to conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh ([A/RES/62/243](#)), and a series of GA resolutions that appeared intended to lend support to the IGAD-mediated peace process in Somalia in the early 2000s, following and in connection with the Somalia National Peace Conference (the Arta process) and related transitional mechanisms ([A/RES/55/168](#), [A/RES/56/106](#), [A/RES/57/154](#)).

Soviet forces' intervention in Hungary, 1956	S/RES/3730 , 4 November 1956	A/RES/1004 (ES-II) , 4 November 1956	<1 day after SC veto and UFP resolution	UFP context (ESS-II) UFP resolution: 4 November 1956
Foreign forces and conflict tensions in Lebanon, 1958	S/4047/Rev.1 , 22 July 1958	A/RES/1237(ES-III) , 7 August 1958	16 days after SC veto <1 day after UFP resolution	UFP context (ESS-III) UFP resolution: 7 August 1958
Congo crisis , 1960	S/4523 , 17 September 1960	A/RES/1474(ES-IV) , 20 September 1960	3 days after SC veto and UFP resolution	UFP context (ESS-IV) UFP resolution: 17 September 1960
US-led intervention in Grenada , 1983	S/16077/Rev.1 , 27 October 1983	A/RES/38/7 , 2 November 1983	6 days	
US intervention in Panama , 1989	S/21048 , 23 December 1989	A/RES/44/240 , 29 December 1989	6 days	
Escalation conflict in Syrian civil war , 2012	S/2012/77 , 4 February 2012	A/RES/66/253 , 16 February 2012	12 days	
Occupation of Crimea , 2014	S/2014/189 , 15 March 2014	A/RES/68/262 , 27 March 2014	12 days	
Siege of Aleppo in Syrian Arab Republic , 2016	S/2016/1026 , 5 December 2016	A/RES/71/130 , 9 December 2016	4 days	
Russian Federation's intervention in Ukraine , 2022	S/2022/155 , 25 February 2022	A/RES/ES-11/1 , 2 March 2022	4 days after SC veto 3 days after UFP resolution	UFP-context (ESS-XI) UFP resolution: 27 February 2022
October 7 attack and operations in Gaza , 2023	S/2023/773 , 18 October 2023	A/RES/ES-10/21 , 27 October 2023	9 days	UFP-context (ESS-X , reconvened)

Nature of General Assembly responses in relation to Security Council resolutions

While the content is often similar where GA and SC resolutions have been adopted on the same matter, slight differences in content and language in these resolutions – as well as the type of language that appears in GA resolutions that followed vetoed draft resolutions – illustrate the different roles the GA might play.

Seconding or supporting SC recommendations: Where the GA passed a resolution after the SC had also adopted one on the same matter (20 of the cases in this sample), it often adopted language and recommendations that reinforced the SC resolution – for example, supporting calls for cessation of hostilities, as well as SC-imposed sanctions in [Bosnia and Herzegovina](#) in the 1990s; or reinforcing the SC position and recommendations adopted in response to external intervention in [Cyprus](#) in 1974. GA resolutions designed to support long-term or structural interventions to conflict dynamics can also be seen as complementary to SC action as

well. An example is the GA's formalization of the [Kimberley Process](#), which emerged in response to challenges in enforcing SC sanctions related to conflict minerals in countries such as Angola and Sierra Leone.

Suggesting additional measures or taking a stronger stance: While the language in GA resolutions often mirrors or supports that in SC resolutions (including recalling or urging compliance with past SC resolutions), the GA sometimes goes further, suggesting additional recommendations or steps to be taken, or taking a firmer stance than the SC had. After the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, the SC immediately passed two resolutions ([S/RES/508](#); [S/RES/509](#)) on 5 and 6 June 1982 that called upon all parties to cease all military activities and for Israel to withdraw its forces. These SC resolutions are noted and seconded in the GA resolutions that were adopted following them (through the reconvened 7th emergency special session: [A/RES/ES-7/5](#); [A/RES/ES-7/6](#)). However, these GA resolutions took a stronger tone (calling out Israeli attacks as “acts of aggression”), and featured additional recommendations, including on humanitarian relief, Secretary-General engagement and calls for enforcement in the event of non-compliance, a provision that had resulted in a vetoed SC resolution prior to this.⁴⁹

Another example of the GA going further than the SC concerned responses to an outbreak of conflict between French and Tunisian naval forces in 1961. The SC responded immediately, adopting a resolution ([S/RES/164](#)) on 22 July 1961 that called for a ceasefire and for forces to return to their original positions (France, as a party to the conflict, did not participate in this vote). However, returning to their original positions would have resulted in French forces still being present on Tunisian territory given that they retained a military base on Tunisian territory following independence. The GA resolution adopted on 25 August 1961 during a special session addressed this issue. It first reaffirmed the SC's resolution and called for French compliance with it, but then also recognized Tunisia's full sovereign rights and called for the “withdrawal of all French armed forces” from Tunisian territory ([A/RES/1622\(S-III\)](#)).

Pushing for enforcement: Recommending or demanding measures related to compliance with past SC or GA resolutions is a common theme in many GA resolutions, with such recommendations aimed either at the parties in question or urging the SC to take enforcement measures. The resolutions discussed immediately above following Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982 offer one example of this. Most of the situations in which the GA has called for [sanctioning measures](#) have also been part of a push for enforcement following non-compliance with prior resolutions. For example, although the GA's resolution responding to Israel's 1981 attack on [Iraq's nuclear installation](#) mirrored and supported many of the provisions of the SC resolution on the matter ([S/RES/487](#)), it went further by noting its concern that Israel's “acts of aggression” against Arab States were facilitated by aircraft and weapons supplied by the US ([A/RES/36/27](#)), as well as by calling for sanctioning measures and for the SC to institute “effective enforcement action” to prevent further acts of aggression (*ibid.*, paras. 4–5). The GA resolution in that case came several months after the SC resolution and so appeared intended to encourage greater enforcement of the initial SC provisions.

Holding the SC to account for its role in maintaining peace and security: Articles 10, 11 and 14 indirectly create an accountability role for the GA, to ensure that the SC is upholding its primary responsibility in the maintenance of peace and security. This accountability role might be exercised through the GA calling on the SC to take tougher enforcement or coercive measures, as illustrated in some of the above examples, as well as in the multiple resolutions related to [Namibia](#) throughout the 1970s and 1980s. The GA has also adopted language directly referencing the SC's failure to fulfill its responsibility to maintain peace and security, due to the negative vote of a permanent member. Such language is common in GA resolutions adopted in the context of UFP situations (e.g. [A/RES/498\(V\)](#); [A/RES/ES-8/2](#)), but similar language may also appear in cases where the UFP resolution is not invoked. For example, between 2011 and 2016, the GA adopted a series of resolutions related to escalating conflict and international law violations in the [Syrian Arab Republic](#), following five successive vetoes in the SC. In one of these resolutions in 2016 the opening preamble expressed “alarm that the responsibility of the Security Council to ensure prompt and effective action

⁴⁹ Between the adoption of the first two SC resolutions in response and the GA resolution, a draft resolution had been vetoed in the SC that stipulated that “in the event of non-compliance” the SC would “meet again to consider practical ways and means in accordance with the Charter” ([S/15185](#)) – a phrase that has often been used to signify consideration of coercive measures such as sanctions. After this veto, the GA resolutions adopted also suggested that in the event of non-compliance, that the SC “meet in order to consider practical ways and means” to enforce past resolutions ([A/RES/ES-7/5](#), para. 7; [A/RES/ES-7/6](#), para. 8).

has not been further discharged with regard to the Syrian Arab Republic” ([A/RES/71/130](#)). In operative paragraphs, the GA urged the SC to take additional measures to address the crisis and stressed “in this regard Article 11 of the Charter of the United Nations” (ibid.). A final route for the GA to send the signal that it believes the SC has failed to adopt appropriate resolutions is simply to adopt the provisions of the vetoed SC resolutions, sometimes verbatim, within a GA resolution. A table summarizing GA action following SC vetoes in the case study on the [Syrian Arab Republic](#) provides some examples of this.

Creating space for further SC action: In some situations, GA resolutions that come out ahead of the SC, either in terms of the timing of the resolution or in terms of taking a tougher position, may create space for the SC to engage more strongly. The SC was already engaged in the emerging conflict in the [former Yugoslavia](#) in the early 1990s. Nonetheless, a GA resolution in 1992 calling for the SC to consider Chapter VII support for Member States “to use all necessary means to uphold and restore” Bosnia and Herzegovina’s sovereignty – and by a near unanimous vote – lent broader global support for the SC to take more assertive action ([A/RES/47/121](#), para. 7(a)).

Two weeks after a 1991 coup in [Haiti](#), the GA adopted a resolution condemning it and demanding the immediate restoration of the “legitimate government” ([A/RES/46/7](#)). Subsequent GA resolutions passed in 1992 and 1993 continued to condemn the coup and call for the restoration of the former Government, and to support regional responses by the OAS.⁵⁰ The SC did not respond to the situation until nearly two years later. Directly referencing the prior GA resolutions, SC resolution 841 imposed a naval blockade and sanctions, including an arms and oil embargo ([S/RES/841](#), paras. 6, 8). Subsequent SC resolutions authorized Member States, under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, to take action to restore the “legitimate Government of Haiti” ([S/RES/940](#)), the first time that the SC had used Chapter VII to authorize the restoration of a government. In this example, the GA led, not followed, the SC in responding to the situation, and its strong stance appeared to create space for precedent-setting SC action on the matter.

Relationship with other bodies

In 20 of the 45 cases, GA responses lent support for initiatives led by regional organizations. Most often, this involved supporting the [good offices or mediation efforts](#) of the regional or subregional organization. However, GA resolutions also supported regional organizations’ other measures, including:

- Ceasefire initiatives and mechanisms (e.g. those of the LoAS in the Syrian Arab Republic in 2012 ([A/RES/66/253](#))).
- Calls for imposing and strengthening enforcement of sanctions (e.g. OAS sanctions following the 1991 coup in Haiti ([A/RES/47/20A](#))).
- Efforts to facilitate withdrawal of former forces and armaments (e.g. Russian forces and armaments remaining in Moldova in 2018 ([A/RES/72/282](#))).
- Identification of IHL and human rights violations (e.g. drawing on the OSCE’s identification of “reported ethnic cleansing” in Abkhazia, Georgia ([A/RES/62/249](#))).

⁵⁰ [A/RES/47/20A](#) (1992); [A/RES/47/143](#) (1992); [A/RES/47/20B](#) (1993).

Conclusions on General Assembly practice with regard to conflict and use of force situations

Throughout its history the GA has not hesitated to respond to outbreaks or escalations of conflict with a range of measures. It has called out what it deems to be “acts of aggression” or other fundamental violations of the UN Charter or of international law – in particular in situations where the SC has been unwilling to do so due to political divisions. It has called for parties involved in such acts to halt hostilities or other violations, and also recalled to external parties the principles of non-intervention and non-interference. This has included calling on external parties to refrain from continuing to support parties to internal conflicts through provision of weapons or support, and even lending support for the defence of Member States that have come under attack. In addition to calling for a ceasefire or a halt to hostilities, the GA has frequently enabled or supported good offices or mediation measures, particularly in the context of internal armed conflicts. As part of its response to conflict or crisis situations, the GA has increasingly identified IHL and human rights violations, encouraged accountability and supported humanitarian responses. The last has regularly included appeals for greater relief efforts and calls for all parties to ensure safe and unhindered access and the safety of humanitarian personnel and support for humanitarian ceasefires or pauses.

GA responses to conflict have not been rhetorical but have involved measures designed to enable or prompt conflict resolution or de-escalation. The GA has not only called for measures like ceasefires, cessations of hostilities or the withdrawal of external forces, but has also created mechanisms to enable and oversee such processes. It has mandated about a dozen peace operations or other operational bodies, including in Egypt, Indonesia, Haiti, Afghanistan and Guatemala. These have included armed peacekeeping missions, missions or operational bodies that have overseen and monitored ceasefires, functioned as transitional administrations, and those tasked with good offices and regional or humanitarian coordination. GA-authorized operational bodies, commissions and committees have helped identify solutions and diplomatic pathways in cases of protracted conflicts, laid the groundwork for ceasefire monitoring or peace talks and coordinated large-scale humanitarian aid.

GA resolutions have often been complementary to SC resolutions on the same matter, reinforcing or seconding the content of SC resolutions, but also emphasizing or raising different issues or points of view. As compared to SC resolutions, the GA has more often emphasized or provided more detailed provisions on human rights and IHL violations, and on humanitarian relief. The GA has also frequently used complementary resolutions (passed alongside SC resolutions on the same matter) to push for compliance with prior SC and GA resolutions, and to urge the SC or other Member States to take greater steps towards enforcement. Where there have been significant violations of the UN Charter or continued lack of compliance with past SC or GA resolutions and recommendations, the GA has supported greater enforcement action by the SC. This has included recommending or calling for sanctioning measures or even recommending Chapter VII enforcement action or support of States’ collective self-defence.

The GA has still tended to show deference to the SC’s primary responsibility in responding to peace and security issues. In many cases, it has waited to allow the SC to respond to the issue first and taken up the matter only after SC action. While, as noted above, the GA will often pass a resolution even if the SC has already done so, it may feel even more compelled to do so where there has been SC inaction. In only 5 of the 46 cases did the GA appear to be leading in its action; most GA resolutions were adopted following a veto or an imputed veto (32 of 46 situations in this sample). Although in some cases the GA has waited several months following a veto, it has more often responded within a few days or weeks, depending on the urgency of the situation. Within this sample, the GA adopted a resolution on average 1.3 months after a veto in the SC. These included responses taken both within UFP-linked emergency special sessions and GA resolutions adopted in regular session following a veto.

Overall, these findings suggest an important role for the GA in responding to outbreaks of hostilities or other conflict situations, in conjunction with the SC, regional organizations and other Member States and bodies within the UN system.

Annex: Case studies

Bosnia and Herzegovina (1991–1996)

After the end of the Cold War, the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia began to break apart amid rising political and ethnic tensions among its six constituent republics. The declaration of independence and subsequent recognition of Slovenia and Croatia in 1991, and then of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1992, sparked what would become the largest active conflict on European soil since the Second World War. From 1991 to 1997, the escalating conflict was addressed by numerous SC resolutions, two SC-supported peace operations, a SC-imposed sanctions regime and arms embargo, and major international accountability mechanisms. However, the SC's strong response was encouraged and amplified by the GA interjections into the debate, particularly in the early period.

General Assembly resolutions energize a more forceful response to “acts of aggression”

In February 1992, the SC authorized the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFRO) to monitor an initial ceasefire and facilitate continued de-escalation of the situation.⁵¹ On several occasions, the SC condemned “the abuses committed against the civilian population, particularly on ethnic grounds” (e.g. [S/RES/769](#), para. 4), and by October 1992 was “expressing grave alarm at continuing reports of ‘ethnic cleansing’” ([S/RES/779](#), preamble). Nonetheless, there was a sense that the measures taken by the SC did not match the urgency of the situation. Most of the operative paragraphs of SC resolutions in 1992 still used language like that of urging parties “to honour their commitments” and to abide by the UN peacekeeping plan ([S/RES/762](#), paras. 2–4) or focused on expanding the technical tasks of UNPROFRO, without calling out the perpetrators or signalling tougher measures. Even as “widespread reports of attacks on civilians, human rights abuses and shortages of food and medicine”⁵² reached the SC in August 1992, it used its Chapter VII authority only in support of humanitarian aid delivery ([S/RES/770](#)).

The first GA resolution to respond to the situation, passed on 25 August 1992, took a markedly different tone. By a decisive vote of 136 to 1 with only 5 abstentions, the GA expressed grave alarm and condemned the violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the widespread violations of IHL and human rights, including “ethnic cleansing” ([A/RES/46/242](#), para. 6).⁵³ It demanded an end to these practices and the massive and forcible displacement of parts of the population (*ibid.*). The GA took a step further a few months later, in December 1992, with resolution 47/121. By a vote of 102-0-57, it condemned Serbia, Montenegro and their associated forces for violating the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina and demanded that they “cease their aggressive acts and hostility” ([A/RES/47/121](#), preamble, paras. 1–3). It also urged the SC to take up its responsibility to maintain international peace and security and to “use all necessary means” under Chapter VII to “uphold and restore the sovereignty” and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina should Serbian and Montenegrin forces fail to comply (*ibid.*, para. 7(a)).

These resolutions were notable on several fronts. By using language like “aggressive acts” and by emphasizing violations of sovereignty and territorial integrity, the GA clearly indicated that the situation should not be treated as a deteriorating humanitarian crisis or internal armed conflict (as had been the case during SC negotiations in 1991 and the initial authorization of UNPROFRO), but as an international armed conflict. The direct naming of Serbian, Montenegrin and associated forces and the

⁵¹ Over the course of 1992, the SC gradually expanded UNPROFRO's mandate from initially limited operations in Croatia to facilitating humanitarian assistance to the city of Sarajevo and protecting “safe areas” around Sarajevo and other Bosnian enclaves ([S/RES/758](#); [S/RES/770](#); [S/RES/776](#); [S/RES/824](#); [S/RES/836](#)). For a more step-by-step discussion of the expansion of these tasks and the SC response, see United Nations Department of Public Information, “IV. Europe”, *Yearbook of the United Nations, 1992*, vol. 46 (United Nations publication, 1993), pp. 331-346.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 345.

⁵³ A SC resolution referencing ethnic cleansing was adopted less than two weeks before, on 13 August 1992 ([S/RES/771](#)), so the GA cannot be considered the first to use this language. However, the GA's roughly contemporaneous condemnation was stronger, also in combination with the language on aggression.

urging of the SC to “use all necessary means” is also significant. Even in other situations where the GA has denounced acts of hostility or aggression, it has often refrained from calling out the aggressors by name. Even when the GA has recommended [enforcement action](#), it has rarely called for Chapter VII action with the phrase “use all necessary means”, which is understood to include the use of force.

Moreover, these two resolutions did appear to encourage further SC action. A few months later, in February 1993, the SC determined that the situation in the former Yugoslavia constituted a threat to international peace and security and created what would become the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia ([S/RES/808](#)) – measures that were directly or implicitly recommended in the two 1992 GA resolutions.⁵³

General Assembly recommendations for tougher enforcement and defence of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and follow-on accountability

GA pressure for more significant measures to halt escalating attacks continued. Despite its shift towards a stronger position, the SC remained split over certain enforcement measures, in particular whether to ease the arms embargo to better enable Bosnia and Herzegovina to defend itself ([S/PV.3454](#)).⁵⁴ The GA had already urged all States to comply with SC-imposed sanctions in 1993,⁵⁵ a notable step given that since the 1980s the GA has rarely recommended [sanctions](#). Then, against the backdrop of escalating attacks on civilians and UN-designated safe areas in Srebrenica, Sarajevo and other enclaves, the GA adopted resolution 49/10 in November 1994. The resolution enumerated in great detail a range of IHL, human rights and other Charter violations, named their perpetrators, encouraged the SC to exempt Bosnia and Herzegovina from the SC-imposed arms embargo, and called upon Member States to “extend their cooperation to the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina in exercise of its inherent right of individual and collective self-defence in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter” ([A/RES/49/10](#), paras. 22, 23).⁵⁶ The SC did not take up this recommendation. A month later, in December 1994, the Russian Federation vetoed a draft resolution that would have tightened sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro ([S/1994/1358](#)).

The GA continued to be active throughout the remainder of the hostilities in the former Yugoslavia, responding with strong resolutions after instances of mass atrocities or IHL violations, such as following the July 1995 massacre of more than 8000 Bosniak men and boys in Srebrenica ([A/RES/50/193](#)).⁵⁷ In the same resolution, it welcomed the Dayton Agreement, which brought an end to the conflict. Subsequent resolutions welcomed the SC-authorized multinational Implementation Force (IFOR) and later the Stabilization Force (SFOR) under NATO command, which ushered in the post-conflict phase in the region ([A/RES/51/203](#) (1996)).

⁵³ The GA recommended that the SC establish an ad hoc international war crimes tribunal in December 1992 ([A/RES/47/121](#), para. 10). Resolution 46/242 explicitly characterized the situation as a threat to peace and security, and resolution 47/121 implicitly did so by suggesting the situation merited Chapter VII response.

⁵⁴ France, the UK, the Russian Federation and several other Council members expressed strong opposition to lifting the arms embargo, citing risks to UNPROFOR, humanitarian access and the broader peace process. Others, including Pakistan, Malaysia, Oman and Turkey, supported the exemption proposed by the GA and urged recognition of Bosnia and Herzegovina’s right to self-defence under Article 51 of the Charter.

⁵⁵ These sanctions were established in resolution 770 ([S/RES/770](#) (1992)). The 1993 GA resolution supporting those sanctions also condemned the systematic and large-scale violations of IHL and human rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina particularly those committed as policy and on a massive scale by Serbia and Montenegro and the Bosnian Serbs ([A/RES/48/88](#), paras. 12–14).

⁵⁶ The SC mandated arms embargo had been put in place in 1991 ([S/RES/713](#)). The resolution drew further attention to the plight of refugees and displaced persons, urging increased international support and humanitarian assistance ([A/RES/49/10](#), paras. 9–10).

⁵⁷ The resolution expressed outrage at ethnic cleansing, mass killings, rape and disappearances ([A/RES/50/193](#), para. 2); condemned the attacks on the Srebrenica and Žepa safe areas and the resulting disappearance of thousands (*ibid.*, para. 4); and held the Bosnian Serb leadership and allied political and paramilitary commanders primarily responsible for many of these acts (*ibid.*, para. 3), reaffirming the principle of individual accountability.

Kimberley Process (2000–present)

Throughout the 1990s, concerns grew about the role of illicit diamond trading in fuelling armed conflict, with Angola and Sierra Leone offering clear examples.⁵⁸ In Angola, the rebel group National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (known by its acronym in Portuguese, UNITA) appeared to be significantly financing its operations through profits from illicit diamond smuggling throughout the mid- to late 1990s. In Sierra Leone beginning in the early 1990s, the Revolutionary United Front seized control of diamond-rich areas to fund its insurgency, with the trade peaking in the mid-1990s. Use of these so-called conflict diamonds in Angola and Sierra Leone represented a broader pattern in which natural resource exploitation fuelled prolonged and transnational violence across West and Central Africa. In response to these dynamics, the SC imposed targeted sanctions, banning the import of diamonds from UNITA-controlled areas in Angola in June 1998 ([S/RES/1173](#)) and, in July 2000, restricting diamond exports from Sierra Leone unless certified by the Government ([S/RES/1306](#)).

Momentum for more coordinated international action began building with the release of a Panel of Experts report in March 2000 on violations of SC sanctions against UNITA, commonly known as the Fowler Report ([S/2000/203](#)). The report detailed how UNITA had systematically circumvented existing sanctions, including an arms embargo, travel and diplomatic restrictions, the diamond export ban, and an asset freeze and aviation ban.⁵⁹ In response, South Africa initiated a series of intergovernmental meetings, beginning in May 2000 in the town of Kimberley. These brought together key diamond-producing countries (such as Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Botswana), major trading hubs (including Belgium, the UK and India) and leading consumer countries (including the US, Canada, Australia and the Russian Federation). The process culminated in an intergovernmental ministerial statement in 2000 ([A/55/638](#)) to establish an intergovernmental process and “international certification scheme for rough diamonds” to respond to trade in conflict diamonds as a driver of prolonged wars.

Although this process grew out of SC efforts to address conflict minerals through sanctions, a broader framework would be needed to establish a more inclusive intergovernmental process. The SC lacks the mandate to establish universal trade governance frameworks. The GA had not directly taken up the issue of conflict minerals previously. Nonetheless, the GA was better positioned to foster broad-based intergovernmental consensus on international certification standards.⁶⁰ Building on the momentum from the meeting in Kimberley, in December 2000, the GA adopted resolution 55/56 ([A/RES/55/56](#)), which focused explicitly on the “role of diamonds in fuelling conflict” and formalized what is now known as the Kimberley Process.⁶¹ It called for the establishment of an international certification scheme and encouraged active participation by Member States, industry and civil society. The initiative was conceived as a voluntary framework combining government oversight, industry self-regulation and civil society engagement. Following further consultations and negotiations among Member States, the GA welcomed the launch of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme with resolution 57/302 ([A/RES/57/302](#)) in 2003 and encouraged wider participation.

Over two decades later, the Kimberley Process remains one of the most recognized multilateral efforts to regulate the international trade in conflict diamonds and to mitigate their role in financing armed conflict. As of 2024, it included 59 participants representing 85 countries and was estimated to cover over 99 per cent of the global trade in rough diamonds.⁶² While implementation and enforcement remain uneven, the process has been credited with raising international standards, embedding

⁵⁸ For descriptions of these issues, and of SC and GA attention to them in different country contexts, see Global Witness, “A rough trade: the role of companies and Governments in the Angolan conflict”, 1998; [S/RES/1343](#) (2001); [S/RES/1173](#) (1998); [A/RES/54/234](#) (1999); [S/2000/203](#) (2000).

⁵⁹ See [S/RES/864](#) (1993); [S/RES/1127](#) (1997); [S/RES/1173](#) (1998).

⁶⁰ Holly Cullen, “Is there a future for the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme for conflict diamonds?”, *Macquarie Law Journal*, vol. 12 (2013), pp. 63–64. Cullen notes that while the SC imposed binding sanctions in specific conflicts, the Kimberley Process emerged as a voluntary, multi-stakeholder initiative more appropriately situated within the GA’s inclusive, consensus-based framework.

⁶¹ The ministerial statement issued at the culmination of the meetings in Kimberley in May 2000 already referred to that initiative as the Kimberley Process ([A/55/638](#)), as was also recognized in resolution 55/56 itself.

⁶² Maheen Rasul, “An evaluation of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme’s efficacy in limiting the trade of conflict diamonds”, *Studies in Philosophy, Politics and Economics*, vol. 6, No. 1 (2024); [GA/12590](#).

certification in domestic systems and facilitating cooperation between governments, industry and civil society in reducing the flow of diamonds that fund conflict.⁶³ The GA continues to pass resolutions on it regularly, usually annually.

Kampuchea / Cambodia (1978–2003)

In December 1978, [Vietnamese forces invaded Kampuchea](#) (now Cambodia), ousting the Government of Democratic Kampuchea (also known as the Khmer Rouge), and supporting the establishment of the People's Republic of Kampuchea. In February 1979, China briefly deployed troops on Kampuchean territory in response to Vietnam's intervention. The SC met on three occasions between January and March 1979 to consider the issue; however, two proposed draft resolutions were vetoed by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR).⁶⁴ The GA took up the matter in November 1979 with a resolution proposing a range of conflict resolution and conflict management measures.

The GA would continue to pass annual resolutions on the situation in Kampuchea for the next decade, and was the lead institution supporting good offices and mediation of the conflict, as well as a range of other conflict mitigation measures. This not only helped to keep the issue on the agenda despite SC inaction, but also supported the mechanisms, initiatives and measures that would ultimately lead to resolution of the conflict in 1990 with the Paris Peace Conference (at which point the SC resumed its engagement). This case thus helps illustrate the range of measures and tools that the GA can use to respond to conflicts and crises, and also the complementary role it can play alongside the SC in addressing peace and security matters.

Immediate conflict response: prioritizing humanitarian needs alongside cessation of hostilities

The first GA resolution on the matter passed in November 1979, 10 months after the veto of a similar resolution in the SC ([S/13027](#)). As with most GA resolutions responding to external intervention, the resolution called upon all parties to cease hostilities and for all foreign forces to immediately withdraw and refrain from further threats of aggression or interference ([A/RES/34/22](#), paras. 6-7).⁶⁵ However, unusually for this time period, the resolution gave priority to humanitarian relief. The conflict had triggered a large displacement of Kampucheans to neighbouring countries, with 630,000 Kampucheans fleeing to the border with Thailand between 1979 and 1981.⁶⁶ Kampuchea was also experiencing one of the deadliest famines in modern history, which by conservative estimates had claimed several hundred thousand lives, further exacerbating internal displacement of Kampucheans and the need for humanitarian relief.⁶⁷ The GA resolution prioritized attention to this urgent crisis, with the first few operative paragraphs appealing to all States and international organizations to support humanitarian relief, requesting urgent "measures to resettle" displaced Kampucheans, welcoming the Secretary-General's efforts to coordinate relief, and urging all parties to cooperate in humanitarian assistance ([A/RES/34/22](#), paras. 1-4).

Arguably acting on the mandate given by the GA (as there was no parallel SC measure at the time), the Secretary-General convened a pledging conference in New York on 5 November 1979 ([A/35/501](#), para. 6) and implemented a multi-year Programme of Humanitarian Assistance to the People of Kampuchea, which was funded largely by voluntary contributions from Member States ([A/37/496](#), para. 10).⁶⁸ In its resolutions on the issue of Kampuchea from 1982 to 1989, the GA annually renewed the Secretary-General's mandate of "coordinating humanitarian relief assistance and monitoring its distribution", with particular attention to

⁶³ Rasul, "An evaluation of the Kimberley Process".

⁶⁴ The first vetoed draft resolution called upon all foreign forces to withdraw, and for all parties to observe a ceasefire and end hostilities ([S/13027](#)). The second called on all parties to cease hostilities and for the withdrawal of foreign troops, as well as the settlement of disputes by peaceful means ([S/13162](#)). For more on the context surrounding these vetoes, see *Yearbook of the United Nations* 1979, vol. 33 (United Nations publication, 1979), p. 271.

⁶⁵ The resolution further noted that the Kampuchean people "should be enabled to choose democratically their own government, without outside interference, subversion or coercion" (*ibid.*, para. 10).

⁶⁶ Kimmo Kiljunen, "The tragedy of Kampuchea", *Disasters*, vol. 7, No. 2 (June 1983), p. 133.

⁶⁷ Randle C. DeFalco, "Justice and starvation in Cambodia: the Khmer Rouge famine", *The Cambodia Law and Policy Journal*, vol. 2 (January 2013), p. 46.

⁶⁸ The Secretary-General designated the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) as lead agency for humanitarian relief alongside the International Committee of the Red Cross to manage camps for displaced Kampucheans on the Thai-Cambodian border. *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1980, vol. 34 (United Nations publication, 1983), p. 335.

“the Thai-Kampuchea border and in the various encampments in Thailand” ([A/RES/40/7](#), para. 11; [A/RES/44/22](#), para. 12).⁶⁹ The United Nations Border Relief Operation was established in 1982 and took over responsibilities for humanitarian relief in the border areas, working in conjunction with other UN agencies.⁷⁰ As early as 1980, the Secretary-General regarded Kampuchea as “among the most massive and complex humanitarian” relief operations undertaken by the UN ([A/35/501](#), para. 6). The effort would endure for more than a decade and ultimately involve 140 voluntary organizations and the operation of multiple refugee camps.⁷¹

Requesting and empowering the good offices of the Secretary-General

A key focus of the GA’s annual resolutions on Kampuchea from 1982 to 1989 was to empower the good offices of the Secretary-General, from requesting him to exercise good offices in the initial 1979 resolution ([A/RES/34/22](#), para. 11), to subsequent resolutions supporting his efforts to reach a comprehensive political settlement over the next decade ([A/RES/36/5](#), paras. 5, 8; [A/RES/37/6](#), paras. 3, 9; [A/RES/44/22](#), paras. 6, 10). The GA’s support for good offices gave the Secretary-General a clear mandate to pursue mediation, which was important given that the SC’s failure to pass a resolution meant there was no clear mandate coming from the SC on this issue.

To complement this, GA resolutions also created or supported other initiatives and mechanisms that could help advance the Secretary-General’s mediation. In both the initial 1979 resolution and a follow-on 1980 resolution, the GA proposed an international conference with the aim of reaching a “comprehensive political settlement”, which opened a new political track for dialogue, led by the Secretary-General over the subsequent decade ([A/RES/35/6](#), para. 2).⁷² The conference also established the Ad Hoc Committee of the International Conference on Kampuchea, composed of representatives of Member States, to “elaborate concrete proposals” with the conflicting parties and, in consultation with the Secretary-General, prepare a conducive environment for negotiations between parties at the next convening of the conference ([A/CONF.109/5](#), para. 6).⁷³ The initial conference and the follow-on committees illustrate how GA creation of other mechanisms, alongside support for Secretary-General good offices, can support good offices by lending momentum to talks and creating processes that enable further intermediary and preparatory steps towards conflict resolution. The additional support for the humanitarian relief efforts discussed above offers another example of how parallel GA action may advance the Secretary-General’s mediation position. Addressing other ongoing conflict factors (such as mitigating civilian suffering or addressing risk factors in border areas) can advance mediation efforts by contributing to confidence building, or reducing the risk of a relapse in talks due to deteriorating conditions on the ground.

Nearly a decade of such continued mediation efforts, spearheaded by the Secretary-General’s Special Representative, ultimately led to the first face-to-face talks between parties in July 1988.⁷⁴ The four key parties met for a series of talks in 1988 and 1989, laying the groundwork for the Paris Peace Conference held in July 1989. It was at this point that the SC re-engaged with the situation in Kampuchea. The permanent members participated in the Paris Conference, which resulted in an agreement between

⁶⁹ For further discussion of the connection between these border refugee camps and other conflict dynamics, see United Nations Office of Public Information, “Chapter X: Questions Concerning Asia”, *Yearbook of the United Nations* 1980, vol. 34 (United Nations publication, 1980), pp. 335-339; United Nations Office of Public Information, “Chapter VII: Asia and the Pacific”, *Yearbook of the United Nations* 1983, vol. 37 (United Nations publication, 1987), pp. 224-231; Kiljunen, “The tragedy of Kampuchea”, p. 139; Fergal Quinn and Kevin Doyle, “Cambodia and the United Nations 1980–2000 (and beyond)”, in *Cambodia and the West, 1500–2000*, T.O. Smith, ed. (London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).

⁷⁰ “The UN in Cambodia”, United Nations in Cambodia, n.d. (accessed 22 December 2025). Tony Jackson, *Just waiting to die? Cambodian refugees in Thailand* (Oxford, UK, Oxfam, June 1987), p. 1.

⁷¹ David Bull, *The Poverty of Diplomacy: Kampuchea and the Outside World* (Oxford, UK, Oxfam, 1983), p. 10; Y-Dang Troeung and others, “A Forum on remembering Cambodian border camps, 40 years later”, *Canadian Literature*, vol. 246 (2021). To illustrate the size of the operation, the largest camp held 180,000 people by 1989.

⁷² The International Conference on Kampuchea was held in New York from 13 to 17 July 1981, and the GA adopted the conference’s declaration, the Declaration on Kampuchea, which set out elements to be negotiated for a comprehensive political settlement ([A/RES/36/5](#), para. 3). The declaration included proposals to work towards a ceasefire, foreign forces withdrawal and the holding of free elections ([A/CONF.109/5](#), annex 1, para. 10).

⁷³ Throughout the 1980s, the Ad Hoc Committee held consultations with concerned States “with a view to increasing understanding of the issue” and “to encourage the initiation of a process of negotiation” ([A/CONF.109/9](#), para. 31); however, the committee ultimately did not prove as significant in the mediation as the Secretary-General’s efforts.

⁷⁴ The Secretary-General and his Special Representative for Humanitarian Affairs in South-East Asia conducted multiple visits to the region with the aim of assessing and gradually reconciling the positions of the concerned parties. In a 1985 report to the GA, the Secretary-General recorded, for the first time, elements of a comprehensive political settlement which had “a reasonable degree of convergence” between the concerned parties ([A/40/759](#), para. 13).

the parties in 1990.⁷⁵ The GA welcomed the signing of the Paris Peace Agreements in November 1991 and also lent its support to a [UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia](#) (A/RES/46/18, para. 2), which was established by the SC (S/RES/745, para. 2) to ensure the implementation of the agreements and the holding of elections.

Supporting post-conflict transition and accountability mechanisms

From the Paris Peace Conference onward, the SC took the lead in passing resolutions and creating mechanisms that would enable Cambodia's transition and post-conflict phase. Nonetheless, the GA continued to be involved, primarily in urging accountability mechanisms. In multiple resolutions between 1998 and 2001, the GA drew attention to the human rights violations committed by the Khmer Rouge and appealed to the Government of Cambodia to investigate or prosecute those leaders accused of such violations.⁷⁶ In 1998, the GA requested the Secretary-General to appoint a [Group of Experts](#) on the crimes committed during the Khmer Rouge regime from 1975 to 1979 (A/RES/52/135, para. 16). One of the recommendations of the Group of Experts in Cambodia was for the GA to create an ad hoc international tribunal to prosecute Khmer Rouge officials for crimes against humanity and genocide committed between 1975 and 1979, under its "recommendatory powers under Chapter VI of the Charter, especially Articles 11(2) and 13", if the SC failed to do so (A/53/850-S/1999/231).

In 2003, the GA formally approved an agreement between the Government of Cambodia and the UN concerning the prosecution under Cambodia law of crimes committed during the regime of Democratic Kampuchea (A/RES/57/228B). The [Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia](#) (ECCC) were formally established by the Cambodian National Assembly in 2001 and began operations in February 2006. The GA further supported the ECCC through funding and logistical support.⁷⁷

Sudan: Operation Lifeline Sudan (1989–2005)

In August 1988, during the Second Sudanese Civil War, famine, severe flooding and torrential rain struck Sudan, severely worsening humanitarian conditions and necessitating urgent, large-scale aid. Meanwhile, peace talks were stalled due to division within Sudan's ruling coalition and continued fighting with the opposition group, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A). In October 1988, the GA adopted a resolution requesting the Secretary-General, "in close cooperation with the Government of Sudan, to coordinate efforts of the United Nations system to help the Sudan in its emergency, rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts" (A/RES/43/8, para. 5). This and a series of resolutions over the subsequent decade lent support to a range of Secretary-General initiatives to strengthen humanitarian coordination in Sudan, and in the process created a productive mediation track around humanitarian access that laid the groundwork for later political reconciliation.⁷⁸

The humanitarian mission that resulted from the GA's request, OLS, began in April 1989. A first step, facilitated through the GA's authorization to the Secretary-General, was to negotiate and then take forward the Khartoum Plan of Action, which was an agreement reached under UN auspices between conflict parties and non-governmental organizations for the implementation of OLS.⁷⁹ It laid out key principles by which all parties would abide, including recognition of the neutrality of humanitarian relief and the guarantee of free access throughout Sudan. Another key component of the agreement was commitments by both sides to eight "'corridors of tranquility', along which supplies could be transported without interference for the entire duration of the relief operation" (A/44/571, para. 21). The Secretary-General's first report on the operation noted that "OLS has set an important and historic precedent among complex relief operations" for opposing sides agreeing to allow for assistance to reach civilians in need

⁷⁵ The agreement was endorsed unanimously the same year by the SC in its first resolution on the issue of Kampuchea since 1964 (S/RES/668).

⁷⁶ A/RES/54/171, para. 10; A/RES/55/95, para. 18; A/RES/56/169.

⁷⁷ A/RES/73/279; A/RES/71/272 A; A/RES/70/248 (IV); A/RES/68/247B.

⁷⁸ Following a request from Sudan's Permanent Representative to the UN (A/44/241), the item "Operation Lifeline Sudan" was added to the GA's agenda in September 1989. After 1991, the GA still considered OLS and related issues on an annual basis, under the title "Emergency Assistance to Sudan."

⁷⁹ The Khartoum Plan of Action was subsequently noted with appreciation in the GA's first "Operation Lifeline Sudan" resolution (A/RES/44/12, preamble).

on both sides of a conflict (ibid., para. 77). Reinforcing the Khartoum Plan of Action and encouraging its full implementation was highlighted in the first GA resolution following this agreement ([A/RES/44/12](#), preamble).

Despite this agreement to freely allow humanitarian aid, OLS operations over the next decade continued to depend on humanitarian negotiations and good offices to enable access, permission and safe passage. In practice both government and opposition forces limited access at certain points in time by denying flights or transport access for humanitarian actors, demanding taxation to facilitate aid or pay for commodities, or pressuring for aid to flow only through their structures or for them to control beneficiary lists.⁸⁰ Throughout the 1990s there were also repeated attacks near relief sites, some direct attacks and kidnapping of aid workers, and other insecurity and threats that constrained humanitarian access.⁸¹ Still acting under the GA mandate to coordinate aid, the Secretary-General's representatives within OLS had to continually negotiate with the conflict parties to address these issues throughout this period.⁸²

The GA supported and encouraged these continuing negotiations, for example, in 1993 noting with appreciation “the cooperation between the Government of the Sudan and the United Nations” resulting in “agreements and arrangements to facilitate relief operations and enhance their efficiency and effectiveness” ([A/RES/48/200](#), para. 1). Annual resolutions on OLS and emergency assistance to Sudan also urged conflict parties to ensure “the safety of humanitarian personnel, as well as safe and unhindered access for providing relief assistance to all affected populations” (e.g. [A/RES/45/226](#) (1990); [A/RES/47/162](#) (1992); [A/RES/53/1\[O\]](#) (1998)). In addition, the GA appealed to parties to end hostilities in order to facilitate relief efforts (i.e., [A/RES/51/30 \[II\]](#) (1996)) and urged conflict parties to “offer all feasible assistance, including facilitating the movement of relief supplies and personnel, so as to guarantee the success” of OLS ([A/RES/53/1\[O\]](#), para. 11).

As OLS continued, the GA at times was more specific in its responses to certain developments or incidents. For example, in 1999, the GA welcomed “the decision of the Government of the Sudan to provide access to the Nuba Mountains” ([A/RES/54/96\[II\]](#), preamble), a contested area in government territory that had previously been restricted.⁸³ In the same resolution, the GA condemned two violations of IHL: the abduction and later killing of four Sudanese nationals accompanying a humanitarian mission of the International Committee of the Red Cross by the SPLM/A and the detention of 11 humanitarian personnel of sub-Saharan international development organizations (ibid., paras. 12, 13). In this way, the GA used its authority to call out violations of international law and to encourage all parties' compliance with the commitments undertaken with respect to OLS.

The case of OLS illustrates how the GA can support good offices towards different ends – not just encouraging ceasefire or conflict resolution but also good offices aimed purely at facilitating humanitarian relief, which is in itself an important part of conflict response and mitigation. External analyses of OLS recognize the operation as “the first humanitarian programme that sought to assist internally displaced and war-affected civilians during an ongoing conflict within a sovereign country”,⁸⁴ essentially “fashioning the concept of negotiated humanitarian access to an active conflict zone”.⁸⁵ Some analysts suggested that this had further conflict resolution and peacebuilding dividends, creating space for dialogue between the conflict parties that enabled negotiations on humanitarian issues to give way to political topics.⁸⁶ Indeed, one analysis found that as the formal political process stalled, “humanitarian diplomacy replaced political diplomacy” and “OLS became the medium for political engagement”.⁸⁷

⁸⁰ Mark Bradbury, Nicholas Leader and Kate Mackintosh, “The ‘Agreement on Ground Rules’ in South Sudan”, Humanitarian Policy Group Report 4 (Overseas Development Institute, 2000), pp. 25–31. Ataul Karim and others, “Operation Lifeline Sudan – a review”, July 1996, pp. 35, 38, 46, 70–76; Human Rights Watch, *Famine in Sudan* (New York, Human Rights Watch, 1999).

⁸¹ Karim and others, “Operation Lifeline Sudan – a review”; Human Rights Watch, *Famine in Sudan*.

⁸² Mark Bradbury and others, “The ‘Agreement on Ground Rules’ in South Sudan”, pp. 25–31.

⁸³ According to some analyses, the Government had restricted aid to this area to prevent the local population from feeding or sheltering rebel groups. Audrey Bottjen, “What can Sudan's past teach us? – humanitarian access lessons from OLS and NMPACT”, The Conflict Sensitivity Facility, 6 February 2024.

⁸⁴ Karim and others, “Operation Lifeline Sudan – A review”, July 1996, p. 1.

⁸⁵ Maxwell, Santschi and Gordon, “Looking back to look ahead?”, p. 4 (citing Karim and others, “Operation Lifeline Sudan – A review”). See also The New Humanitarian, “Any Lessons from Operation Lifeline Sudan?”, 14 November 2014.

⁸⁶ Larry Minear, *Humanitarianism under Siege: A Critical Review of Operation Lifeline Sudan* (Trenton, New Jersey, Red Sea Press, 1991); Lam Akol, “Operation Lifeline Sudan: war, peace and relief in southern Sudan”, *Accord*, No. 16 (May 2005).

⁸⁷ Bradbury, Leader and Mackintosh, “The ‘Agreement on Ground Rules’ in South Sudan”, p. 27.

Another report found that there was “a profound connection between OLS and opportunities for peacemaking”, particularly given that the SPLM/A had not met with the sitting Government prior to OLS.⁸⁸ This new line of contact gave way to the first peace talks between the parties in June 1989; however, these were discontinued following a coup later that month.⁸⁹ Peace talks were taken up under the auspices of the IGAD later in the 1990s, and the GA repeatedly passed resolutions in support of this mediation.⁹⁰

Overall, this case illustrates another set of tools or ways that the GA can engage with crisis situations, and how GA authority can be used to empower the Secretary-General in conflict response.

Syrian Arab Republic (2011–2021)

After the outbreak of conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic in 2011, several proposed SC responses were stalled due to divisions among permanent members. The GA stepped in during this period, repeatedly calling for a cessation of violence and for compliance with human right standards, backing a regionally led observer mission and diplomatic efforts, urging all actors to support humanitarian relief and mandating the creation of a Special Envoy. Through these measures, GA resolutions not only supported immediate good offices and de-escalation efforts but also laid the groundwork for subsequent SC responses and for future accountability mechanisms and engagement by other actors.

Conflict outbreak and GA-led initiatives supporting a Special Envoy, good offices and cessation of hostilities measures

By mid-2011, initially peaceful protests in the Syrian Arab Republic inspired by the Arab Spring had transformed into the beginnings of civil war. Government crackdowns on protestors, including through mass arrests, use of live fire and heavy weapons, and deployment of tanks and troops to populated areas sparked international outcry and condemnation. As early as October 2011, the SC considered a draft resolution that would have demanded an immediate end to all violence, called on the Syrian authorities to cease violations of human rights and use of force against civilians, and requested the appointment of a Special Envoy ([S/2011/612](#), paras. 1–4, 6). However, the resolution was vetoed by the Russian Federation and China ([S/PV.6627](#), p. 2). In December 2011, the GA adopted a resolution taking up many of the provisions of this vetoed resolution. It strongly condemned the “grave and systematic human rights violations by the Syrian authorities”, calling on them to end such violations and to fully comply with a LoAS Plan of Action,⁹¹ which was oriented around a cessation of violence ([A/RES/66/176](#), paras. 1–3).⁹²

Following a second vetoed SC resolution in February 2012 ([S/2012/77](#)), which would have lent support to the Plan of Action and the diplomatic efforts of LoAS, the GA adopted a second resolution on 16 February 2012 that largely replicated the vetoed content. After strongly critiquing the widespread and systematic human rights violations, the GA requested the Secretary-General to support LoAS peace efforts through exercising good offices and the “appointment of a special envoy” ([A/RES/66/253](#), para. 11).⁹³ Drawing authority from this GA resolution, the Secretary-General and the LoAS Secretary-General jointly appointed Kofi Annan as

⁸⁸ Akol, “Operation Lifeline Sudan”, p. 54.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ For example, [A/RES/52/169\[F\]](#), para. 7; [A/RES/53/1\[O\]](#), para. 8.

⁹¹ The LoAS adopted a ‘Plan of Action’ (and an accompanying Observer Mission), which the Syrian Government signed on 19 December 2011. It subsequently deployed an Observer Mission from December 2011 to January 2012, which faced limitations on access and attacks on observers. See [S/2012/71](#); League of Arab States Observer Mission to Syria, Report of the Head of the League of Arab States Observer Mission to the Syrian Arab Republic for the period from 24 December 2011 to 18 January 2012, 27 January 2012, Document [259.12D](#).

⁹² GA resolution 66/176 was adopted on the report of the Third Committee ([A/66/462/Add.3](#)).

⁹³ Ten of the 12 operative paragraphs in the GA resolution had a direct parallel to provisions in the vetoed SC resolution, with most of these containing either verbatim or only slightly modified text to that in the SC resolution. The main substantive difference was that the SC resolution included a demand that the Syrian Government comply with the LoAS plan and enable access for the Observer Mission, while the GA resolution included the additional provision related to promoting good offices and the request to appoint a Joint Special Envoy.

the Joint Special Envoy on 23 February 2012, an action that was subsequently recognized and welcomed by the SC ([S/PRST/2012/6](#)).

The Special Envoy role became the centrepiece of early diplomatic efforts to resolve the civil war, with Annan's six-point peace plan laying the groundwork for a short-lived cessation of violence plan and an SC-authorized peace operation, the United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria (UNSMIS), to monitor it ([S/RES/2042](#); [S/RES/2043](#)). Although ultimately the six-point plan and UNSMIS' mandate lapsed,⁹⁴ GA action in this period illustrates an important bridging role. The GA stepped in to authorize and advance conflict resolution and management measures and bodies following SC vetoes; these GA-authorized initiatives advanced conflict resolution measures to a point that led to SC re-engagement with a critical peace and security matter. The Joint Special Envoy position was subsequently transitioned into a UN Special Envoy (rather than jointly with LoAS) from 2014, and became what is now considered a Special Political Mission (a form of peace operation).⁹⁵

Continuous attention to international law violations, humanitarian needs and accountability measures

From the earliest resolutions, the GA expressed its strong concern for and condemnation of violations of international human rights and humanitarian law. However, as the situation shifted towards a protracted conflict following the failure of the Plan of Action and stalling of the Geneva talks, condemnation of international legal violations and calls for accountability became an even more prominent focus of GA resolutions. From 2012, the GA began adopting annual resolutions under the item "Situation of human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic". These resolutions frequently documented a wide range of violations, often with extensive detail and references to other UN accountability mechanisms and actors.⁹⁶ From 2016, this became the main avenue for GA engagement on the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic.

Some GA resolutions were clear and direct responses to particular legal violations or incidents – such as the use of chemical weapons on civilians in Gouta in 2013 ([A/RES/68/182](#)) and the IHL violations associated with the siege of Aleppo in 2016 ([A/RES/71/130](#)). Others focused generally on demands for civilian protection and condemned attacks on civilians and civilian objects and indiscriminate attacks,⁹⁷ and in some resolutions, siege and starvation tactics.⁹⁸ Many of the resolutions also condemned and detailed at great length specific human rights violations, in particular torture and inhumane treatment, arbitrary detentions and detainee abuses, extrajudicial killings and forced disappearances.⁹⁹

All of these resolutions could be seen as an accountability measure in themselves, as they act as an official register of violations, called out or condemned in the widest intergovernmental forum. In doing so, the GA also frequently cited reports of other accountability bodies or monitoring mechanisms (e.g. the Commission of Inquiry created by the Human Rights Council) or expressed a need to ensure access for those monitoring and documenting human rights violations.¹⁰⁰ This can also be a means of supporting and reinforcing these accountability mechanisms and actors.

⁹⁴ After a brief pause in fighting, violence resumed. An intermediate SC resolution extending UNSMIS made its continuation contingent on reaffirmed commitments to cease violence, which did not materialize ([S/RES/2042](#), paras. 5–7). As a result, when the mission's mandate expired on 19 August 2012, the SC did not renew it. See also "UNSMIS: United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria: UNSMIS background", United Nations Peacekeeping, n.d. (accessed 2 February 2026). Even during this period, the GA exerted pressure by adopting resolution 66/253 B, which condemned ongoing violations, supported the Special Envoy and his six-point plan, and emphasized the Government of Syria's non-compliance with prior SC resolutions ([A/RES/66/253 B](#), paras. 2–6).

⁹⁵ Since 2016, the Office of the Special Envoy for the Syrian Arab Republic has been categorized as a Special Political Mission in UN planning and budget documents ([A/70/7/Add.11](#)). It is now considered to be supported by and reporting to SC authorization ([S/RES/2254](#)).

⁹⁶ See e.g. [A/RES/67/262](#) (2012); [A/RES/70/234](#) (2015); [A/RES/71/203](#) (2016); [A/RES/72/191](#) (2017); [A/RES/73/182](#) (2018); [A/RES/74/169](#) (2019); [A/RES/75/193](#) (2020); [A/RES/76/228](#) (2021).

⁹⁷ Such statements recur in almost all of the Syrian Arab Republic resolutions, but the resolutions with the strongest demands on civilian protection and/or the most detailed listing of IHL violations are [A/RES/67/262](#) (2013); [A/RES/71/203](#) (2016); [A/RES/74/169](#) (2019); [A/RES/75/193](#) (2020).

⁹⁸ For example, [A/RES/71/130](#) (2016); [A/RES/73/182](#) (2018); [A/RES/74/169](#) (2019).

⁹⁹ For example [A/RES/67/262](#) (2013); [A/RES/71/203](#) (2016); [A/RES/74/169](#) (2019).

¹⁰⁰ For example, resolution 71/203 noted the concerns raised by the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic ([A/RES/71/203](#) (2016)). Other resolutions have requested special rapporteurs or investigatory bodies ([A/RES/67/262](#) (2013)) or demanded unhindered access for and full cooperation with the Commission of Inquiry ([A/RES/74/169](#) (2019); [A/RES/75/193](#) (2020)).

Additionally, the GA took extraordinary measures to advance referral to judicial bodies and legal prosecution – to a greater degree than in almost any other situation considered in the 2024 Handbook. Already in late 2013, the GA was urging formal accountability with a resolution ([A/RES/68/182](#), para. 10) that implicitly encouraged the SC to [refer the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic to the ICC](#) (the only route to enable ICC jurisdiction, given that the Syrian Arab Republic has not ratified the Rome Statute). In May 2014, the SC considered a draft resolution ([S/2014/348](#)) that would have referred the situation to the ICC, but it was vetoed by the Russian Federation and China ([S/PV.7180](#), p. 4). Subsequently, from late 2014, the GA almost annually adopted resolutions that “regretted” this and noted the important role that the ICC could play in ensuring accountability.¹⁰¹

With this avenue closed, in December 2016, the GA established the [International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism \(IIIM\)](#) ([A/RES/71/248](#)). The IIIM was mandated to collect, preserve and analyse evidence of grave international crimes and to prepare files to support future prosecutions in domestic, regional or international courts. The IIIM has been recognized as an innovation in accountability mechanisms. The Human Rights Council has recently created similar accountability mechanisms based on this model to support collection of evidence and prosecutions with respect to human rights violations in [Myanmar](#) and [Afghanistan](#).

Although the weight of most of the resolutions was on legal violations and accountability, most also stressed the need for safe and unimpeded humanitarian access, for ensuring necessary medical evacuation and other humanitarian support.¹⁰²

Accountability vis-à-vis the Security Council

The GA’s engagement vis-à-vis the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic from 2011 onward not only highlights a range of tools that the GA can use to respond to crisis and conflict situations, but also the GA’s accountability role vis-à-vis the SC. From 2011 through 2016, the GA stepped in shortly after five SC vetoes to give authority or impetus to recommendations, mechanisms and initiatives in those vetoed resolutions. This included efforts to pressure for a cessation of violence, for full compliance with international law, to cease particular attacks (such as those surrounding Aleppo) and for specific conflict resolution mechanisms, like support for the LoAS Plan of Action, the appointment of a joint Special Envoy, and the monitoring activities and full implementation of the Special Envoy’s six-point plan. The table on the next page, at the end of this case study, offers a comparison of these SC vetoes, corresponding GA actions and the key measures enabled by it.

The GA stepping in where the SC has been unable to agree on measures can be seen as part of the checks and balances built into the UN Charter. As illustrated in the chart above, the GA used several of these resolutions to call out SC failures to take measures that would fulfil its primary peace and security responsibilities, and to underline the GA’s [Article 11](#) power to refer matters and situations to the SC. This is a core element of the GA’s accountability role vis-à-vis the SC. The GA also referenced or “regretted” the SC’s failure to adopt measures with regard to the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic in other post-2016 resolutions – for example, in those related to the SC’s failure to refer the Syrian Arab Republic situation to the ICC (discussed in the prior section).

The 2024 Handbook [conclusions](#) noted that an important role of the GA is its ability to keep items on the agenda, even when the SC is deadlocked. The GA’s persistence in annually raising attention towards the human rights and humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic and the need for accountability – even as the issue remained a non-starter in the SC – illustrates this role.

Security Council vetoed resolution	General Assembly resolution following veto	Key measures or initiatives enabled by General Assembly action
S/2011/612 , 4 October 2011 – Would have called for an immediate end to all violence and for Syrian authorities to cease HR violations	A/RES/66/176 , 19 December 2011 – Calls on Syrian authorities to put an end to all HR violations and calls for immediate end to all	Encouraged early conflict de-escalation through calls for halts to human rights violations and

¹⁰¹ For example [A/RES/69/189](#) (2014); [A/RES/71/203](#) (2016); [A/RES/76/228](#) (2021).

¹⁰² For example [A/RES/66/253\(B\)](#) (2012); [A/RES/74/169](#) (2019); [A/RES/75/193](#) (2020); [A/RES/75/287](#) (2021).

and cease use of force on civilians; supported LoAS mediation; requested good offices and appointment of Special Envoy; expressed intention to consider Article 41 measures (sanctions) in case of non-compliance.	violence; supports LoAS Plan of Action; invites the Secretary-General to support LoAS good offices and observer mission.	escalating violence. Lent support to LoAS Plan of Action and observer mission.
S/2012/77 , 4 February 2012 – Would have condemned widespread and gross violations of HR and use of force on civilians by Syrian authorities; demanded Syrian Government end all HR violations and attacks and cooperate with LoAS Plan of Action and other accountability bodies; welcomed Secretary-General support to LoAS efforts.	A/RES/66/253 , 16 February 2012 – Condemns widespread and systematic violations of HR and use of force on civilians by Syrian authorities; calls upon Syrian Government to end all HR violations and attacks on civilians; demands that the Syrian Government comply with the LoAS Plan of Action; requests Secretary-General support LoAS efforts, including with appointment of a Special Envoy.	Reinforced LoAS efforts and Plan of Action as a way to enable cessation of hostilities. Appointed Joint Special Envoy, a proposal that had been vetoed in SC draft resolution S/2011/612 .
S/2012/538 , 19 July 2012 – Acting under Chapter VII, would have expressed grave concern at escalation of violence and called upon all parties to comply with the six-point plan; demanded that all Parties cease violence and work with the Joint Special Envoy to implement the transition plan; and renewed the mandate of UNSMIS.	A/RES/66/253B , 3 August 2012 – Expresses “deep concern” at the lack of progress on the six-point plan” and deplores “the failure of the Security Council to agree on measures to ensure the compliance of Syrian authorities with its decisions”; condemns Syrian regime's use of heavy weapons, indiscriminate shelling and HR violations; lends full support to the Joint Special Envoy, and demands that all parties implement prior SC resolutions to achieve a cessation of violence; stresses accountability and encourages “the Security Council to consider appropriate measures in this regard”.	Took steps to salvage the six-point plan enabling a cessation of violence and UNSMIS monitoring amid SC inaction. Held the SC to account for not taking forward measures to compel compliance or ensure accountability.
S/2016/846 , 8 October 2016 – Would have demanded that all parties comply with prior SC resolutions; urged immediate implementation of cessation of hostilities and safe and unhindered humanitarian access; and expressed full support for the Special Envoy. S/2016/1026 , 5 December 2016 – Would have set a deadline (24 hours) for all parties to cease attacks on Aleppo; demanded immediate implementation of cessation of hostilities; demanded that all parties comply with IHL and ensure humanitarian access; demanded full implementation of political process and offered support for Special Envoy.	A/RES/71/130 , 9 December 2016 – Demands an immediate and complete end to all attacks on civilians and an end to all sieges, including in Aleppo; demands immediate cessation of hostilities as described in prior SC resolutions; demands all parties comply with obligations under IHL and IHRL; demands that all parties fully comply with prior SC resolutions; reaffirms support for political process and efforts of Special Envoy; emphasizes need for accountability; urges the SC to take additional measures to address the crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic, “in particular the devastating humanitarian crisis”, and “stresses in this regard Article 11 of the Charter of the United Nations”.	Called attention to extreme violations and urgent situation in Aleppo. Held the SC to account by explicitly referencing the GA’s Article 11 responsibility to call matters to the SC’s attention.

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