



## THEMATIC DOSSIER: Peacekeeping and the Global South

## ТЕМАТИЧЕСКОЕ ДОСЬЕ: Миротворчество и Глобальный Юг

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### Non-Western Peacekeeping as a Factor of a Multipolar World: Outlines of Research Program

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**Abstract.** This paper describes the contours of a research program on peacekeeping and peacebuilding, representing the interests of Non-Western countries (the world's majority). The article is based on both individual developments of its expert authors in the theory and practice of peacekeeping, international law and development cooperation, as well as on generalized conclusions of eight international workshops on Non-Western peacekeeping, held by the Department of Theory and History of International Relations of the RUDN University in 2020—2021 with the participation of leading Russian and international experts. Particular attention is paid to the current moment in international peacekeeping associated with the “power transit” (from the United States to China, and more broadly, from the West to the Non-West) and the power vacuum observed in a number of regions. Conclusions are drawn about the crisis of humanitarian intervention and the system of liberal peacekeeping in general. At the same time, the remaining instruments of Western structural power in the field of peacekeeping are examined in detail, covering both personnel representation in the UN and the practice of ‘penholding,’ as well as the discursive hegemony of the “Collective West.” The main directions in the development of Non-Western academic discourse in the field of peacemaking and peacebuilding are explored in the context of building a multipolar world. Special attention is paid to the problems of regional human rights systems in the context of the protection of civilians and post-conflict peacebuilding. The study concludes that Non-Western countries have a significant influence on the formation of international norms in the field of peacekeeping (rule-changers), but so far do not act as norm-setting actors in world politics (rule-makers).

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**Key words:** peacekeeping, Non-Western IR, theory of peacekeeping, UN, reforms, post-Western world, new bipolarity, multipolarity, conflicts, peacekeeping operations, PKOs






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## Незападное миротворчество как фактор многополярного мира: контуры исследовательской программы

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**Аннотация.** Представлены контуры исследовательской программы по миротворчеству и миростроительству, представляющей интересы незападных стран (мирового большинства). В основу статьи легли как отдельные наработки ее авторов — экспертов в области теории и практики миротворчества, международного права и международной помощи, так и обобщенные выводы восьми научных семинаров по незападному миротворчеству, проведенные кафедрой теории и истории международных отношений РУДН в 2020—2021 гг. с участием российских и ведущих международных экспертов. Особое внимание в работе уделяется текущему моменту в международном миротворчестве, связанному с «властным транзитом» (от США к КНР, и шире — от Запада к не-Западу) и силовым вакуумом, который наблюдается в ряде регионов мира. Делаются выводы о кризисе гуманитарных интервенций и системы «либерального миротворчества» в целом. Вместе с тем подробно рассматриваются сохраняющиеся инструменты западной структурной власти в области миротворчества, охватывающие как кадровое представительство в ООН и практику «кураторства» (penholding), так и дискурсивную гегемонию «коллективного Запада». Исследуются основные направления развития незападного академического дискурса в сфере миротворчества и миростроительства в контексте построения многополярного мира. Сделан акцент на проблематике региональных систем прав человека в контексте защиты гражданского населения и постконфликтного миростроительства. Авторы приходят к выводу, что незападные страны сегодня существенно влияют на формирование международных норм в сфере миротворчества (rule-changers), но пока не выступают в роли нормоустанавливающих акторов мировой политики (rule-makers).

**Ключевые слова:** миротворчество, незападные ТМО, теория миротворчества, ООН, реформы, постзападный мир, новая биполярность, многополярность, конфликты, операции по поддержанию мира, ОПМ

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**Вклад авторов.** *Д.А. Дегтерев* — Введение, Миротворчество в период «властного транзита», Рудименты либерального миротворчества, Как вернуть миротворчеству первоначальный смысл?, Заключение; *С.А. Бокерия* — Дискурсивная гегемония; *А.Б. Мезяев* — Рудименты либерального миротворчества, Как вернуть миротворчеству первоначальный смысл?; *Я.Н. Аду* — От псевдоуниверсальности к учету региональных прав человека; *П.В. Шамаров* — Как вернуть миротворчеству первоначальный смысл?.

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## Introduction

As is well known, the state has a monopoly on the use of force within its borders, which is exercised on its behalf by the national security structures. In the existing system of international relations, established after World War II, according to Article 24 of the United Nations (UN) Charter, the UN Security Council (UNSC) has “primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security” by the UN members.<sup>1</sup> The UNSC, in turn, authorizes peacekeeping operations, which are designed to eliminate threats to international security.

Peacekeeping does not exist on its own, in a vacuum, but is an instrument of collective supranational power politics, whose objectives are determined by the dominant perceptions of challenges and threats to international security (Paris, 2023). The permanent members of the UN Security Council play an important role in shaping these perceptions, but the resulting vector depends on the specific balance of power on the world stage at a particular moment in time.

Thus, during the Cold War, the collective security component in world politics was determined by the activities of NATO (the United States and its allies) and the Warsaw Treaty Organization (the USSR and its allies), as well as by the system of strategic stability agreements. Each of the military blocs had its

own pool of political allies within the UN, which legitimized its actions.

The 1990s and 2000s saw the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, the erosion of the system of representation of the interests of Non-Western countries in the UN, which make up the world’s majority, and the dismantling of the system of strategic stability agreements. NATO as a structural power of the “Collective West” in the security sphere (Strange, 2004, pp. 45—63) acquired a quasi-global character. During the “unipolar moment” (Krauthammer, 1990), the “Collective West,” having gained a temporary power advantage, used it to promote its values and perceptions of peacekeeping, distorting its original nature, which led to a “political and legal aberration of international peacekeeping” (Shamarov, 2020).

De facto, the UN began to turn into an element of the structural power of the “Collective West.” Indeed, the combination of the military potential of individual Western countries, NATO, the European Union (EU) and the UN peacekeepers (in various combinations) became a decisive and uncontested multilateral force that led to the destruction of a number of states (Yugoslavia, Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, and Syria). In world politics, it was “1984” with doublethink according to G. Orwell: “War is peace.”<sup>2</sup> Behind the façade of the beautiful words “peacemaking” and “peacekeeping” (Balezin, Mazov & Filatova, 2019) was hidden the infliction of incalculable suffering in order to preserve “hegemonic stability.”

<sup>1</sup> United Nations Charter (full text) // United Nations. 1945. URL: <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/full-text> (accessed: 21.05.2023).

<sup>2</sup> Orwell G. 1984. New York : Signet Books, 1950.

However, in recent years, the balance of power in the international arena has changed dramatically (Degterev, 2019), the era of “power transit” (the transition of global power from the United States to China, and more broadly, from the “Collective West” to the “Collective Non-West”) has started (Degterev, Ramich & Tsvyk, 2021), and a “post-liberal moment in UN peacekeeping” has arrived (Dunton, Laurence & Vlavourou, 2023, p. 218). The conceptual foundations of a new, Non-Western peacekeeping (as an antithesis to the liberal Western peacekeeping) largely depend on the successful conceptualization of war and peace, primarily by Russia and China, two permanent members of the UN Security Council.

A century ago, the Russian international lawyer F.F. Martens proposed his vision of peaceful resolution of disputes between states (Martens, 1996). Two Hague Peace Conferences were convened (1899 and 1907), which concretized the basic principles of settlement of disputes at that time. At present, the Russian Federation as a “distinctive state-civilization, a great Eurasian and Euro-Pacific power”<sup>3</sup> also has unique opportunities for “cultural triangulation,” i.e. generalization of the experience of peacekeeping and peacebuilding of various countries and peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America, which is also recognized by international experts (Mine, 2023, pp. 48—49).

In order to analyze the experience of the Global South, the Department of Theory and History of International Relations at RUDN University organized eight international workshops on Non-Western peacekeeping in 2021—2022, with the participation of several hundred leading experts.<sup>4</sup> Rethinking this

experience is largely the basis of this paper. Structurally, it consists of several parts. The first part deals with the specifics of the current stage of development of peacekeeping (“Peacekeeping in the period of ‘power transit’”), and the elements of the structural power of the “Collective West” in peacekeeping (“Vestiges of liberal peacekeeping,” “Discursive hegemony”). Then, the main directions of the “reset” of contemporary peacekeeping are presented (“How to return

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Transformations. March 31, 2021. URL: <https://youtu.be/08WXBb5LRTw> (accessed: 21.05.2023); Scientific Seminar “Dilemmas of Contemporary Peacekeeping in West Africa” // Center for Applied Analysis of International Transformations. June 16, 2021. URL: <https://youtu.be/YEefylw-xi0> (accessed: 21.05.2023); Scientific Workshop “Peacekeeping Issues in the Horn of Africa” // Center for Applied Analysis of International Transformations. October 18, 2021. URL: <https://youtu.be/b0YVXt7hRoI> (accessed: 21.05.2023); Scientific Seminar “Dilemmas of Modern Peacekeeping in the African Great Lakes Region” // Center for Applied Analysis of International Transformations. November 29, 2021. URL: <https://youtu.be/tMyGUqxjLu4> (accessed: 21.05.2023); Scientific Seminar “Peacekeeping in Southeast Asia.” Part 1 // Center for Applied Analysis of International Transformations. April 21, 2022. URL: [https://youtu.be/V\\_BQfn\\_ipIk](https://youtu.be/V_BQfn_ipIk) (accessed: 21.05.2023); Scientific Seminar “Peacekeeping in Southeast Asia.” Part 2 // Center for Applied Analysis of International Transformations. April 21, 2022. URL: <https://youtu.be/pxIIMKB2z8w> (accessed: 21.05.2023); Scientific Seminar “Peacemaking, Peacebuilding and Mediation in the Middle East” // Center for Applied Analysis of International Transformations. October 11, 2022. URL: <https://youtu.be/vHU7lbht3x4> (accessed: 21.05.2023); Scientific Seminar “Peacekeeping, Peacebuilding and Mediation in Latin America” // Center for Applied Analysis of International Transformations. November 22, 2022. URL: [https://youtu.be/Ci8Y9xLYeoM?si=5\\_oQ9tV5VTYI54bT](https://youtu.be/Ci8Y9xLYeoM?si=5_oQ9tV5VTYI54bT) (accessed: 21.05.2023); Scientific Seminar “Non-Western Peacekeeping.” Part 1 // Center for Applied Analysis of International Transformations. December 8, 2022. URL: [https://youtu.be/JrXy\\_2fCHU8](https://youtu.be/JrXy_2fCHU8) (accessed: 21.05.2023); Scientific Seminar “Non-Western Peacekeeping.” Part 2 // Center for Applied Analysis of International Transformations. December 8, 2022. URL: <https://youtu.be/JXZlfnvnaXU> (accessed: 21.05.2023); Scientific Seminar “Non-Western Peacekeeping.” Part 3 // Center for Applied Analysis of International Transformations. December 8, 2022. URL: <https://youtu.be/7Y0hHjsRMXE> (accessed: 21.05.2023).

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<sup>3</sup> Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation // President of Russia. March 31, 2023. (In Russian). URL: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/70811> (accessed: 21.05.2023).

<sup>4</sup> See: Scientific Seminar on the Theory of Modern Peacekeeping. Part 1 // Center for Applied Analysis of International Transformations. March 31, 2021. URL: <https://youtu.be/HHrRdAshveM> (accessed: 21.05.2023); Scientific Seminar on the Theory of Modern Peacekeeping. Part 2 // Center for Applied Analysis of International

peacekeeping to its original meaning?”, “From pseudo-universality to the consideration of regional human rights”).

### **Peacekeeping in the Period of “Power Transit”**

The 1990—2000s became a period of expansion of liberal interventionism in international peacekeeping and peacebuilding, when entire states and even regions were reformatted according to the Western “patterns.” The UN peacekeeping budgets and personnel peaked by 2012. No new major peacekeeping operations have been announced since 2014 (Dunton, Laurence & Vlavonou, 2023, p. 217). As a multipolar world emerged, humanitarian interventions were carried out “with increasing difficulty” each time (the Libyan crisis was an important turning point), until they finally stalled in Syria in the mid-2010s.

In response to the support of the “Collective West” for the anti-Assad coalition, Non-Western countries began to support the government of B. al-Assad, which led to a proxy war, a phenomenon typical of the Cold War period (Khudaykulova, 2016). Against this background, the role of the “middle powers” (Türkiye and Iran) with their special vision of “positive peace” (Ranjbar & Chikrizova, 2023), approaches to fighting terrorism (Boyle, 2019) is increasing, with the Russian Federation acting as an important stabilizing actor in Syria with the consent of the legitimate government. The Ukrainian crisis and the launch of the Special military operation only confirmed the further inability of the Western coalition to achieve victories in military operations against Non-Western countries.

With the withdrawal of the US troops from Afghanistan and the reduction of the US (and NATO) presence in Syria and Iraq, a power vacuum is beginning to emerge in Eurasia (especially in the Middle East). The Western power actors are providing less and less support for peacekeeping efforts, while Non-Western actors are increasingly debating the political

goals of military interventions (Dunton, Laurence & Vlavonou, 2023, p. 216). The role of Non-Western actors in conceptualizing peacekeeping approaches is increasing (Badache, Hellmüller & Salaymeh, 2022). As China’s participation in international organizations and global governance increases (Grachikov & Xu, 2022), Chinese peacekeeping activity rises significantly (Dubrovsky & Khudaykulova, 2022; Khudaykulova, 2019b). Chinese approaches (including the achievement of long-term peace by improving the socio-economic situation) are also shared by many African countries, which is of particular concern to the Western scholars (Paris, 2023, p. 238, 241). China is already starting to set trends in a number of areas, while being classified by the West as a “Non-Western and illiberal” security provider (Fung, 2022).

There is also a crisis in the conceptual foundations of the Western world order and peacebuilding, as even the most loyal politicians and experts (even in the United States!) are unwilling to talk about the real development of civil society and the promotion of democratic values in Afghanistan and Iraq after trillion-dollar interventions.<sup>5</sup> In other words, liberal interventionism turned out to be largely discredited, even within the Western academic circles.

In fact, the role of the UN as a global security provider is declining, and there is a shift to “limited peacekeeping” and “lowest common denominator” operations, i.e. with a minimal military component in terms of political objectives, on which a consensus is being achieved among Western and Non-Western countries (Dunton, Laurence & Vlavonou, 2023, p. 216).

<sup>5</sup> Degtarev D. A. “Spreading Progress Beyond Aid Programs”: The Return of Liberal Messianism in U.S. International Development Policy // *Rosstrudnichestvo*. April 24, 2023. (In Russian). URL: <https://rs.gov.ru/news/rasprostranyaya-progress-za-predelami-programm-pomoshhi-vozvrashhenie-liberalnogo-messianstva-v-amerikanskuyu-politiku-sodejstviya-mezhdunarodnomu-razvitiyu/> (accessed: 21.05.2023).

Leading Western experts call this phenomenon “pragmatic peacemaking.” In fact, it is a euphemism for the crisis of liberal interventionism. In 2023, a special issue of *the Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* entitled “Multipolarity and Pragmatic Peacebuilding” was published on this topic (Cassin & Zyla, 2023; Dunton, Laurence & Vlavourou, 2023; Karlsrud, 2023; Paris, 2023).

Against this background, the role of individual countries and regional organizations as security providers is increasing, to the point that J. Karlsrud suggests focusing on a new type of peacekeeping — the UN Support Mission (of other actors’ operations) (Karlsrud, 2023, pp. 264—266). However, regional security providers have a number of “innate” limitations. Thus, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) was initially created as a political organization designed to fight the three “forces of evil” (separatism, terrorism, extremism), and does not act as a classical guarantor of regional security. A rather interesting, original experience of peacekeeping has been accumulated in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) (Vershina, Koldunova & Kuklin, 2023). The normative and value-based approaches tested within ASEAN and the SCO are of interest in the context of conceptualizing Non-Western peacekeeping (Honrada & Bokeriya, 2023).

In January 2022, the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), with Russia’s dominant role and participation, successfully conducted a peacekeeping operation in Kazakhstan (Syssoyeva, 2023; Shamarov, 2022b), but the organization’s goal is to ensure the independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty of the six member states exclusively. The stabilizing role of the Russian peacekeepers in Transnistria and Nagorno-Karabakh region remains (Shevchuk, 2023; Lyubimov & Shamarov, 2022, pp. 18—19).

In Africa, the balance of power between extra-regional security providers is changing dynamically. Thus, in recent years, the Russian Federation has acted quite successfully as an alternative security provider in such countries as

the Central African Republic<sup>6</sup> and Mali, against the backdrop of the gradual withdrawal from the region of the Western coalition led by France, which coordinates both national forces and the EU operations, and indirectly — the UN (Davidchuk, Degterev & Sidibe, 2022). In fact, a “security decoupling” is developing on the continent, with countries choosing one of the collective security blocs in the context of the “new bipolarity” (Vasiliev, Degterev & Shaw, 2023, pp. 6—8).

The African peace and security architecture is underdeveloped, as is the application of the “African solutions for African problems” formula,<sup>7</sup> with ad hoc structures such as the Sahel Five and *the Multinational Joint Task Force* (MNJTF) playing a key role in counterterrorism in the Sahel (Dieng, 2019; Welz, 2022). The role of regional organizations in Africa is generally ambiguous at present. The issue of the agency (actorness) of the African Union (AU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and other subregional organizations is acute, as the EU, the U.S. and the former metropolises, financing the bulk of the peacekeeping budgets of these structures, largely control their decision-making process (Adu & Mezyaev, 2023; Degterev, 2023, pp. 264—267).

Paradoxically, but within the framework of the Western-centric world, the role of regional organizations of the Global South is primarily to restrain the regional hegemon from spreading its influence, including military power, in the region. In addition, in Article 4 of the Constitutive Act of the African Union, one after another, there are largely contradictory provisions *g* (“non-interference by any Member State in the internal affairs of another”) and *h* (“the right of the Union to intervene in a Member State pursuant to a decision of the Assembly in respect of grave circumstances, namely: war crimes, genocide and crimes

<sup>6</sup> See the article of A.L. Bovdunov in this issue (*Editor’s note*).

<sup>7</sup> See the article of T.S. Denisova and S.V. Kostelyanets in this issue (*Editor’s note*). See also: (Bokeriya, 2022).

against humanity”).<sup>8</sup> In the long term, as the “power transit” progresses, it is expected that not only individual countries, but also a number of regional organizations of the Global South will move into the orbit of influence of the Non-West.

Traditionally, there have been discussions on the UN platform about ways to reform peacekeeping (Nikitin, 2016; Khudaykulova, 2019a; Zagorsky, 2015; Zaemsky, 2004), but the potential for these actions is limited under the current configuration of the international system, including the strengthening of the Non-West as a security provider with the dominance of the West as a security regulator (see below). Most likely, after the completion of the “power transit” and the achievement of strategic stability within the framework of the “new bipolarity,” post-Western mechanisms for ensuring global security will be institutionalized. The new norms will make it possible to establish the new balance of power and stop the violent confrontation for some time (Davydov, 2002). However, it is necessary to develop the conceptual foundations of post-Western peacekeeping today.

### Vestiges of Liberal Peacekeeping

Despite the decline of its influence in the global economy and, less obviously, in world politics, the “Collective West” still retains the key levers for managing international peacekeeping. At first glance, this is not so obvious, since from a formal point of view, for example, the number of citizens of the Russian Federation and a number of other Non-Western countries among the UN officials is more than sufficient (the Russian Federation is traditionally among the countries that are “over-represented” in the UN). However, this is a superficial assessment. As in the case with the definition of sovereignty, a deeper analysis is needed — is there only legal (formal) sovereignty, or is there also empirical sovereignty (Jackson & Rosberg, 1982)?

<sup>8</sup> Constitutive Act of the African Union // African Union. 2000. URL: [https://au.int/sites/default/files/pages/34873-file-constitutivact\\_en.pdf](https://au.int/sites/default/files/pages/34873-file-constitutivact_en.pdf) (accessed: 21.05.2023).

Western scholars note that the controlling stake in the UN peacekeeping belongs to the Western “troika” of permanent members of the UN Security Council (P3), consisting of the US, UK and France (Dunton, Laurence & Vlavourou, 2023, p. 217). Let us consider below a number of tools that allow the West to maintain control over the UN peacekeeping operations.

We have conducted an in-depth analysis of the staff of the UN peacekeeping units (Amara, Degterev & Egamov, 2022, pp. 84—85), which revealed the following. The UN Department of Peace Operations is responsible for developing policy for the planning and conduct of peacekeeping missions. Since 1997, i.e. for the last 25 years, this department has always been headed by a representative of France. The position of “chief of peacekeepers” has been successively occupied by Bernard Miyet (1997—2000), Jean-Marie Guéhenno (2000—2008), Alain Le Roy (2009—2011), Hervé Ladsous (2011—2017), and Jean-Pierre Lacroix (2017 — present). For France, this is an additional opportunity to manage conflicts and control the UN missions in its traditional area of interest, Francophone Africa (Davidchuk, Degterev & Sidibe, 2022).

Although 2/3 of the UN peacekeeping contingents are made up of nationals of some 20 developing countries, they are mainly headed by representatives of the Western countries. For example, *the UN Multidisciplinary Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali* (MINUSMA), which has 14,000 peacekeepers, is led by about 15 French officers who, in contact with the UN Department of Peace Operations, ensure the promotion of the interests of the “Collective West” by using the human potential of Non-Western countries. As the conflict between the “Collective West” and Non-Western countries deepens in the context of the China — US “power transit,” especially after the start of the Special military operation in Ukraine, it is unfortunately no longer possible to talk about the use of armed forces under the auspices of the UN “in the common interest.”<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> United Nations Charter (full text) // United Nations. 1945. URL: <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/full-text> (accessed: 21.05.2023).

An equally interesting trend can be traced in the leadership of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA). The Department, formed by the merger of the Department of Political Affairs (since 1992) and the Peacebuilding Support Office, is responsible for the most sensitive and controversial issues of state-building and the management of political field missions. Between 1952 and 1993, its predecessor, the Department of Political and Security Council Affairs, then the Department of Political Affairs, was headed by representatives of the USSR/Russia. This practice was interrupted by the two-year leadership of the representative of Sierra Leone, followed by the permanent leadership of representatives of the “Collective West” in the spirit of the “unipolar moment.” Since 2007 (16 years), the USA has held the “reins” of the DPPA. Its current head, Rosemary A. DiCarlo, specialized in modern literature and Slavic languages during her studies, and previously served as Deputy Permanent Representative of the United States to the UN.

The nationality of senior DPPA officials in the field also confirms the trend of the dominance of nationals of Western states. 14 of 21 special and personal representatives, envoys, and advisers to the Secretary-General whose activities fall under the responsibility of the DPPA come from the countries of the “Collective West” (Amara, Degtarev & Egamov, 2022, pp. 84—85).

Overall, at the end of 2020, the largest number of senior positions (D1 — D2, i.e., department directors and above, out of a total of 380) were held by the Western Europe and North America citizens. The largest number of such positions was occupied by representatives of the following countries: USA — 43, Germany, Great Britain, Italy — 18 each, France — 16, Canada — 14. All these are countries of the “Collective West,” and they are members of NATO. Among the Non-Western countries, India (14), China (13), Russia (9) and Egypt (7) have the largest number of leading positions. In total, representatives of the “Collective West” countries hold several times

more senior UN positions than representatives of the “Collective Non-West.”

This unequal distribution is explained by the financial contributions of the countries, but it is unlikely to change it even in the medium term. Moreover, many representatives of developing countries, after being appointed to senior positions in the UN system, take up citizenship in the Western countries. It is noteworthy that “conflict bipolarity” also leads the Western experts to carefully analyze the composition of the UN staff (Levin, 2023).

In addition, we are talking about the “penholding” system that has developed in the UN Security Council in recent decades with regard to certain countries and situations. These are penholders (coordinators) who prepare draft resolutions on certain situations, which give them a privileged position as to what to include and what not to include in these drafts. Surprisingly, former colonial powers have “turned out” to be the penholders of situations in their former colonies. And in a number of cases, aggressor states became such penholders with regard to the situations in the countries-victims of their aggressions. Thus, for example, France “became” the penholder of situations in its former colonies (Mali, Central African Republic (CAR)), and the United States became the penholder of Sudan, which they bombed in 1998.

The system of “penholding” allows the respective coordinators to ignore the positions not only of the curated state itself, but also of all other interested parties. For example, France, as the penholder of the situation in the CAR, systematically ignores the position of the government of that country, the African Union, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and, finally, of all three non-permanent African members of the Security Council (A3) on the issue of lifting the arms embargo.<sup>10</sup> Once again, France presented its own draft of UNSC

<sup>10</sup> Security Council, 78th year: 9352nd meeting, Tuesday, 20 June 2023, New York // UN Digital Library. June 20, 2023. URL: <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4013918?ln=en> (accessed: 21.06.2023).



resolution at the Council meeting on July 27, 2023 (in order to exercise its penholding over the CAR), which once again failed to address the issue of the Central African government's right to purchase arms. Russia and China abstained from voting precisely because the penholder ignored the position of the CAR government and the African states.<sup>11</sup>

The “penholding” system remains an important mechanism of control by the “Collective West” over key UNSC actions. Its informal nature also prevents real control or participation by the states concerned. For example, after the Republic of Mali publicly rejected France as the penholder for Mali at the UNSC on June 16, 2023, France nevertheless maintained its position and continued to draft resolutions on the situation in the country.

The control of the “Collective West” over peacekeeping operations has even been documented in a peculiar judicial way. Thus, during the trials at the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, a number of defendants, first of all the former President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia S. Milosevic, presented convincing evidence that the leaders and staff of the UN Mission in the former Yugoslavia sided with one of the parties to the armed conflict and even directly participated in military actions against the other side. The transcripts of the trials of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and, to a large extent, of the International Tribunal for Rwanda provide an important evidence of the process of the “Collective West” seizing control of the UN peacekeeping operations and subsequently using these missions to legally consolidate Western aggression in the bodies of international criminal justice (Mezyaev, 2006).

By the 2000s, a number of peacekeeping missions had turned into direct security tools of the new colonialism (neocolonialism of a new

type) (Bokeriya et al., 2022, pp. 679—680). And some of them began to fulfill the function of protecting terrorist groups from the military and police operations of the governments of the respective states, for example, in Mali. For this reason, on June 16, 2023, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Mali called for the immediate cessation of the UN Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). The Malian Minister stated that the Mission had failed to adequately respond to the security situation in the country and that the prospects for its continuation did not meet the security needs of the Malian people. Moreover, the Malian authorities also rejected the UN Secretary-General's proposals to modify MINUSMA.<sup>12</sup> On June 30, 2023, the UNSC voted to terminate the mission.<sup>13</sup>

An important element of the structural power of the “Collective West” in the field of peacekeeping is the existence of a number of human rights organizations with extensive networks. Many of them work directly “in the field,” being the primary sources of information on military conflicts and war crimes. At the same time, the absence of Non-Western representatives in the problematic territories does not allow the formation of a reliable and alternative point of view. In the Russian Federation, including in the context of the Ukrainian crisis since 2014, the potential of such structures is clearly insufficient (Khudaykulova, 2014). A similar situation is observed in other Non-Western countries. The biased position in the coverage of certain armed conflicts is further promoted by the world's leading media, forming the structural power of the “Collective West” in the communication sphere (Degterev, 2022, pp. 363—366).

<sup>12</sup> Security Council, 78th year: 9350th meeting, Friday, 16 June 2023, New York // UN Digital Library. June 16, 2023. URL: <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4013656?ln=en> (accessed: 21.06.2023).

<sup>13</sup> Security Council, 78th year: 9365th meeting, Friday, 30 June 2023, New York // UN Digital Library. June 30, 2023. URL: <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4014353?ln=en> (accessed: 01.07.2023).

<sup>11</sup> Security Council, 78th year: 9388th meeting, Thursday, 27 July 2023, New York // UN Digital Library. July 27, 2023. URL: <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4017203?ln=en> (accessed: 28.07.2023).

## Discursive Hegemony

However, the main element of the Western structural power in peacekeeping is intangible. This is the dominance in academic and peacekeeping research. Non-Western scholarship in the field, meanwhile, remains largely “provincial” (Sokolov & Titaev, 2013). The Western-promoted norms tend to dominate and become universal, displacing the “bad local practices” of the Non-Western world (Acharya, 2016, p. 1158).

The “Collective West” controls the discourse, the meanings, the beliefs that establish and regulate the norms and values, including those reflected in the training materials and standards of the Blue Helmets (Dunton, Laurence & Vlavourou, 2023, p. 225), and thus controls the goal-setting. The Western discursive power in the field of international peacekeeping and peacebuilding has in fact acquired an uncontested character, being maximally disseminated within the conventional academic tradition, in scientific journals included in the main bibliometric systems, as well as in the UN Secretariat.<sup>14</sup> Of the 20 Nobel Peace Prize and Economic Prize laureates who cooperated with the UN until 2009, only two were from the Non-Western world (K. Annan and A. Sen) (Acharya, 2016, p. 1157).

The lack of a direct reference to peacekeeping in the UN Charter and the absence of an official doctrine of the UN peacekeeping led to a broad interpretation of any form of peacekeeping based on the narrow group interests of Western countries without taking into account the provisions of international legal documents. Peacekeeping is seen as an alternative to the system of collective security enshrined in the UN Charter, and the practice of peacekeeping is constructed with explicit and implicit ways of interpreting Chapters VI and VII of the UN Charter.<sup>15</sup> An

<sup>14</sup> See the interview with A.M. Evstigneeva in this issue (*Editor's note*).

<sup>15</sup> United Nations Charter (full text) // United Nations. 1945. URL: <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/full-text> (accessed: 21.05.2023).

example of the expansive interpretation of the UN peacekeeping has been the “virtuoso” development of the concept of human security, which has overshadowed debates on crisis prevention, the state, and sovereignty.

The ambiguity of the “peacekeeping” concept itself and different understandings of its meaning have also played a significant role in the emergence of disputes about “intervention.” Some researchers identify intervention with military intervention, while others with diplomatic pressure, political or economic sanctions (Benner, 2013). A similar problem related to the lack of a common international understanding exists with regard to the notion of human security. Until the academic community of different countries comes to a consensus on the definition and component composition of the concept of human security, it will be difficult to justify its use and application in practice (Bokeriya, 2017, p. 322).

The failure of the concept of humanitarian intervention necessitated its transformation into the doctrine of *Responsibility to Protect* (R2P) as “a more robust response to the worst human rights violations” (Morris, 2015). At the same time, the R2P concept created a new legal basis for the use of force to justify military aggression and became a powerful tool of influence for the Western community, including mediation, negotiation, sanctions, and the involvement of international non-governmental humanitarian organizations (Bokeriya, 2018). Thus, this Western concept has become one of the methods of proxy warfare and a radical transformation of the very meaning of state sovereignty. By promoting the R2P concept, the West hoped to expand its global hegemony and adapt the UN’s activities exclusively to the realization of its own foreign policy interests.

The Russian Federation took an active part in the preparation of the elements of the Responsibility to Protect concept, which were included in the final document of the 2005 World Summit.<sup>16</sup> However, as noted by the

<sup>16</sup> 60/1. 2005 World Summit Outcome. Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 16 September 2005 //

former Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations, V.I. Churkin, since the adoption of this document, some countries have not given up attempts to broaden the interpretation of the concept. Moreover, the approaches of many countries within the framework of the UN Human Rights Council and the Peacebuilding Commission are also characterized by politicization and the desire to impose their own priorities, which greatly reduces the effectiveness of these mechanisms.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, Russia was wary of R2P and the first attempts to implement it — the idea of creating an expert working group on the protection of civilians (2008), attempts at arbitrary and overly broad interpretation of the concept itself (2009), proposals to form a special Security Council mechanism on R2P (2010) (Baranovsky, 2018, p. 116).

The lack of a universal interpretation and definition of peacekeeping has contributed to the development of different approaches to defining its nature and content, which has led to a “political aberration of peacekeeping semantics” (Shamarov, 2020) and a deliberate deformation of the traditional vision of the foundations of the UN peacekeeping, which contradicts the principles and goals of the UN Charter.

It is noteworthy that the main Western approaches to peacekeeping and peacebuilding, including the concepts adopted in the form of the UN General Assembly resolutions, and widely used in the practice of both national power actors and international organizations, came out of the academic environment. At the first stage, they were the subject of academic debates among researchers in the field of international security, but initially they were of an applied nature in the spirit of so-called *policy*

*science*, i.e. practice-oriented science. Founded in the early 1980s on the basis of the Copenhagen Security School, this trend subsequently began to legitimize regime change operations under the auspices of humanitarian intervention.

Another example of the formation of a new discourse (and, consequently, a new political and legal reality) relates to the sphere of development cooperation, which is closely related to peacebuilding issues. The inclusion of Goal 16 “Promote peaceful and open societies for sustainable development...” into the UN Sustainable Development Goals in 2016 (Bartenev, 2015), the further strengthening of the conceptual link between security and development (Security — Development Nexus), and the attribution within the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development’s (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the share of spending on peacekeeping operations to official development assistance has subsequently led to important practical changes. In particular, it caused the securitization of international aid and the blurring of the line between international development programs and support for armed opposition, thereby blurring the sphere of responsibility of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the UN Security Council.

The securitization of international aid was accompanied by a gradual transition of the world’s leading donors to the 3D model (Diplomacy, Development, Defense), when all three functions become a tool for achieving national security goals (Degterev, 2020, pp. 67—68). In the early 2000s, the US and Canada moved to this concept, in 2020 — de facto the UK (the entry of the responsible for aid Department for International Development into the structure of the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office). In January 2018, the integrated approach to the management of external conflicts and crises was institutionalized in the relevant decisions of the EU Council.

United Nations. September 16, 2005. URL: [https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A\\_RES\\_60\\_1.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_RES_60_1.pdf) (accessed: 17.05.2023).

<sup>17</sup> Vitaly Churkin Spoke about the Mistakes and Prospects of the UN // *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*. October 22, 2015. (In Russian). URL: <https://rg.ru/2015/10/23/oon.html> (accessed: 25.05.2023).

## How to Return Peacekeeping to Its Original Meaning?

The systematic violation of the basic principles and norms of the UN Charter and of peacekeeping, the tendency towards military solutions to the problems of mass violence, and the decline in the effectiveness of conflict resolution suggest that UN peacekeeping is experiencing an existential crisis, is losing its direction and true meaning, and is at a crossroads.

Western experts consider the “unipolar moment” as the lost “golden age” of international peacekeeping, when entire countries were reformatted, and “the liberal ideological orientation of peacekeeping became more explicit” (i.e., it was always implicitly present) (Dunton, Laurence & Vlavourou, 2023, p. 216). Accordingly, their interpretation implies that a return to the 1990—2000s era is desirable (but hardly feasible).

In contrast, the Russian Federation and other Non-Western countries gravitate toward the ideals set forth in the UN Charter during the previous period of strategic stability (Kellett, 1999). These include the classic principles of peacekeeping — consent of the parties (consent facilitates cooperation with the parties to the conflict, thereby maintaining peace), impartiality (no preference for the parties to the conflict and strict adherence to the mandate of the operation), non-use of force except in self-defense and protection of peacekeepers (peacekeepers act with the consent of the parties and may use force only in self-defense and in defense of the mandate, in accordance with international humanitarian law). Non-Western countries pay increased attention to the issue of sovereignty in its classical, Westphalian interpretation, and fear interference in their internal affairs (Ribeiro, Mesquita & Lyra, 2021, pp. 209—211).

An important aspect of the UN peacekeeping operations is their focus on the protection of civilians. In recent years, three “clusters” of such reorientation have actually emerged: first, the task of providing physical

protection itself; second, peacebuilding programs; and third, human rights monitoring (with special attention to gender aspects, sexual violence, etc.). The heads of today’s UN peacekeeping missions explicitly state that their main and priority tasks are the protection of civilians. For example, Lieutenant General Mohan Subramanian, Head of *the UN Mission in South Sudan* (UNMISS), Lieutenant General Otávio Rodrigues de Miranda Filho, Head of *the UN Peacekeeping Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo* (MONUC), and other heads of the UN peacekeeping missions have explicitly stated this in the UN Security Council.<sup>18</sup>

The Russian Federation has a special position regarding this trend. On the one hand, Russia recognizes that the protection of civilians can be one of the elements of the UN peacekeeping missions (and even an “integral” element), but on the other hand, it opposes this task becoming an end in itself for peacekeeping as a whole. In addition, Russia questions whether the reorientation of peacekeeping missions to the protection of civilians as a priority enhances the effectiveness of these missions. The Russian Federation also raises the general question of the need for additional reflection on the realistic mandates of the UN peacekeeping missions to protect civilians.<sup>19</sup> A situation is emerging when peacekeepers are assigned tasks that they simply cannot physically fulfill with the means at their disposal.

The Russian Federation and other Non-Western countries have a number of interesting concepts related to the perception of peacekeeping, peacebuilding and international order (Kaveshnikov, 2023; Martynov, 2016; Boyle, 2019). However, there is a need to operationalize the main provisions of these concepts and to transform them from ideas *per*

<sup>18</sup> Security Council, 78th year: 9389th meeting, Friday, 28 July 2023, New York // UN Digital Library. July 28, 2023. URL: <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4017473> (accessed: 21.08.2023).

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

se into norms (Acharya, 2016, p. 1158). Thus, the various indicators of effectiveness in the field of peacekeeping and peacebuilding are only the “bottom floor” of conceptual theory building. The second level are the so-called “theories of change” and state-building concepts, such as assistance to “democratic opposition” or “free media” (in the Western interpretation),<sup>20</sup> mechanisms of civil-military cooperation (Shamarov, 2021, p. 13). In the Non-Western interpretation, it should be about observing the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of the state, the indivisibility of borders and territorial integrity, respect for the existing political regime. Finally, the third (upper) level is the proper “umbrella” conceptual theories (the same R2P).

The “completion” of all three conceptual floors described above is an opportunity to move to the rank of *rule-maker* countries (Degterev, Ramich & Tsvyk, 2021, p. 216). It seems that in peacekeeping and peacebuilding, none of the Non-Western countries can claim this status, although some (including Brazil, Russia and China) do not belong to obedient *rule-takers*. Rather, they occupy the niche of countries that influence the formation of international norms (*rule-changers*). For example, in November 2011, during the Libyan crisis, Brazil proposed the concept of *Responsibility While Protecting*, which is a soft (constructive) criticism of the Western concept of R2P.

In fact, it is about rising power “moderate revisionism” as an attempt to play a larger role in global norm-setting (Ribeiro, Mesquita & Lyra, 2021, p. 209). In many ways, this corresponds to the attitudes of C. Escudé’s peripheral realism (Eremin, 2021), i.e. the severity of criticism of Western approaches to peacekeeping increases as the actorness of the conceptualizing country itself strengthens. For example, the comparative importance of respecting sovereignty in peacekeeping operations is higher for the People’s Republic of

China (PRC) than for Brazil (Ribeiro, Mesquita & Lyra, 2021, p. 221). The PRC conceptualized its approaches by publishing in 2020 the White Paper “China’s Armed Forces: 30 Years of Participation in UN Peacekeeping Operations.”<sup>21</sup> Russian experts also advocate the need to conceptualize the Russian Federation’s approaches to peacekeeping and develop its doctrinal foundations (Shamarov, 2021, p. 11; 2022a).

A separate direction in the development of Non-Western academic discourse is connected with the elaboration of the status of so-called failed or rogue states. According to the Western (primarily American) terminology, these are the countries that do not observe the “rule-based order” (the US rules), in view of which all “civilized mankind” is simply obliged to exclude them from international communication, making them rogue states of the 21st century. These include such states as North Korea, Iran, Myanmar, Venezuela, Cuba, Syria, Sudan, Mali, the CAR and others. Sanctions have been imposed on these states, their accounts in international banks have been frozen, and the legitimacy of the national leaders has been questioned. The main reason for this is the unwillingness of the governments of these countries to submit to the Western hegemony and the rules imposed on them.

Meanwhile, these countries are among the most active supporters of the formation of a multipolar world. The question is how to conceptualize the status of these countries in international political science, which has a neutral (e.g., “sanctioned countries”) or even moderately positive connotation (“truly sovereign, anti-hegemonic powers”).

From a broader theoretical perspective, there is the question of developing alternative, Non-Western methodologies for assessing the

<sup>20</sup> See the article of A.N. Bogdanov in this issue (*Editor’s note*).

<sup>21</sup> Full Text: China’s Armed Forces: 30 Years of UN Peacekeeping Operations // The State Council Information Office of the People’s Republic of China. September 18, 2020. URL: [http://english.www.gov.cn/archive/whitepaper/202009/18/content\\_WS5f6449a8c6d0f7257693c323.html](http://english.www.gov.cn/archive/whitepaper/202009/18/content_WS5f6449a8c6d0f7257693c323.html) (accessed: 21.05.2023).

vulnerability and stability of states, which would allow not to “label” countries as undesirable for the “Collective West” and manage them through international rankings (Ivanov, 2015), but to objectively assess their level of domestic political stability and socio-economic progress. For example, in recent years, the positive perception of the Russian Federation as a security provider in the CAR has increased, but unbiased, including quantitative assessments are needed to clearly illustrate the social progress achieved with the support of the Russian Federation in this country.<sup>22</sup> The Statehood Index, one of the components of the Political Atlas of Modernity project (MGIMO University project implemented in 2005—2007), can serve as a prototype for such a cross-country ranking (Melville, 2007). There is a need for more active conceptualization of such projects with broad involvement of the academic community from the Russian Federation and other Non-Western countries.

### **From Pseudo-Universality to Addressing Regional Human Rights**

As noted above, human rights monitoring in the context of the protection of civilians is an important element of peacekeeping operations. Equally important is the role of human rights issues in the context of post-conflict peacebuilding, including transitional justice. It is no coincidence that UN Secretary General K. Annan noted the need to “pay equal attention to the three high goals” of the UN: development, security and human rights.<sup>23</sup>

The Preamble of the UN Charter, adopted in the aftermath of the consequences of the World War II, emphasizes the importance of affirming “faith in fundamental human rights” in order “to save succeeding generations from

the scourge of war.”<sup>24</sup> Thus, human rights were practically removed from national jurisdiction and transferred to universal one (Kartashkin, 2009, p. 81). The international community, represented by the UN, began to define their content by developing and adopting international legal norms within the nine<sup>25</sup> major conventions (Kartashkin, 2009; 2015; Abashidze, 2010).

The first universal human rights document, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR),<sup>26</sup> was adopted as a result of a compromise between the socialist camp led by the USSR and the capitalist bloc led by the U.S. and its satellites (Kartashkin, 2009; Degtarev, 2013). Despite the objections of the USSR and its allies to the content of the UDHR, the countries of the socialist camp did not vote against its adoption, but abstained for the sake of reaching a compromise between the two blocs (Humphrey, 1983, p. 433). Saudi Arabia already objected to the UDHR on religious grounds, including Article 18 on the right to change religion, which contradicted the norms of the Qur’an (Humphrey, 1983, p. 435).

However, the major objections to the provisions of the UDHR from Asian and African countries are related to the fact that at the time of the drafting and adoption of the Declaration (1948), most of these states were still under colonial rule and simply could not express their opinion on the content of this “universal document.” Today, most of these countries are to some extent opposed to the concept of the universality of human rights (Adu, 2012), as it has become an excuse for the West to interfere in the internal affairs of the states of the Global South in order to dominate

<sup>24</sup> United Nations Charter (full text) // United Nations. 1945. URL: <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/full-text> (accessed: 21.05.2023).

<sup>25</sup> Human Rights Instruments // United Nations. URL: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-listings> (accessed: 26.05.2023).

<sup>26</sup> Universal Declaration of Human Rights // United Nations. December 10, 1948. URL: <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights> (accessed: 26.05.2023).

<sup>22</sup> See the article of A.L. Bovdunov in this issue (*Editor’s note*).

<sup>23</sup> Presentation of the Report “In Larger Freedom” // UN Secretary General. March 21, 2005. (In Russian). URL: [https://www.un.org/ru/sg/annan\\_messages/2005/largerfreedom.shtml](https://www.un.org/ru/sg/annan_messages/2005/largerfreedom.shtml) (accessed: 26.05.2023).

them (Kane, 2003). During the “unipolar moment,” the “Collective West” set the rules of the game to the point of “deconstructing” several Non-Western countries “in the name of humanitarian considerations” (Mount, 2018).

Non-Western countries are trying to form their own concepts of human rights, taking into account religion, culture, traditions, and other social norms and values. Today, there are three main regional systems (concepts) of human rights protection, which are based not only on universal approaches, but also take into account the specifics of certain regions of the world (Open Society Foundations, 2017). These are the European System for the Protection of Human Rights, based on the 1950 European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms,<sup>27</sup> the Inter-American System for the Protection of Human Rights, initiated on the basis of the 1969 Convention on Human Rights and the African System for the Protection of Human and Peoples’ Rights, based on the 1986 Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights.<sup>28</sup> In addition to the main regional systems of human rights protection, Asian<sup>29</sup> and Islamic<sup>30</sup> systems of human rights protection are also being formed.

The trend towards the regionalization of human rights, which developed after the independence of most Asian and African countries in the 1960s and 1970s (Cavallaro & Brewer, 2008), is linked to the phenomenon of

cultural relativism (Donnelly, 1984). While the instruments of the European concept of human rights are a logical continuation of the universal concept, the African, inter-American, Asian and Islamic concepts are based on different approaches. Thus, the Arab concept of human rights is based on Sharia law (Al Ali, 2015), which causes its sharp rejection by Western countries.

The African ideology of human rights does not separate the individual from society and assumes that the rights of the individual should be correlated with social harmony. This is reflected in African philosophical ideas, including Ubuntu (Waghid, 2014; Sharma, 2013). Ubuntu assumes that a person exists only in relation to others. During the Russian President’s meeting with African leaders in July 2023, V.V. Putin quoted an African proverb, “If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together.”<sup>31</sup> This is fully in line with the Ubuntu philosophy. The collective approach to human rights is reflected in the 1986 African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights, as the title of the document itself suggests.

At present, the universal concept has exhausted its potential not only because of the emergence of a multipolar world and the growing contradictions with regional approaches, but also because the Western countries themselves are unable to comply with the “universal” values they preach. This has become especially evident in recent years, when the rights to private property, non-discrimination on the basis of nationality, and others have been massively violated. After the launch of the Special military operation in Ukraine, the property of many Russians in the countries of the “Collective West” was seized or confiscated on national grounds<sup>32</sup> under the

<sup>27</sup> The European Convention on Human Rights and Its Protocols // Council of Europe. 1950. (In Russian). URL: <https://www.coe.int/ru/web/compass/the-european-convention-on-human-rights-and-its-protocols> (accessed: 26.05.2023).

<sup>28</sup> African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights // African Union. 1986. URL: [https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/36390-treaty-0011\\_-\\_african\\_charter\\_on\\_human\\_and\\_peoples\\_rights\\_e.pdf](https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/36390-treaty-0011_-_african_charter_on_human_and_peoples_rights_e.pdf) (accessed: 26.05.2023).

<sup>29</sup> ASEAN Human Rights Declaration // ASEAN. November 19, 2012. URL: <https://asean.org/asean-human-rights-declaration/> (accessed: 26.05.2023).

<sup>30</sup> The Cairo Declaration of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation on Human Rights // Organization of Islamic Cooperation. 1990. URL: [https://www.oic-oci.org/upload/pages/conventions/en/CDHRI\\_2021\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.oic-oci.org/upload/pages/conventions/en/CDHRI_2021_ENG.pdf) (accessed: 26.05.2023).

<sup>31</sup> Putin Characterized His Vision of Developing Relations with Africa with an African Proverb // TASS. July 27, 2023. (In Russian). URL: <https://tass.ru/politika/18386701?ysclid=llsb2ur0cv430400808> (accessed: 28.07.2023).

<sup>32</sup> Fossum S. US and Its Allies Have Frozen More Than \$58 Billion from Russian Oligarchs // CNN. March 9, 2023. URL: <https://edition.cnn.com/2023/03/09/politics/>

pretext of “illegal acquisition of property or enrichment.”<sup>33</sup> This also contradicts basic universal human rights norms. The confiscation of Non-Western citizens’ property or state property violates existing international legal norms, including the immunity of state property.<sup>34</sup> In doing so, the Western countries not only discredit themselves in terms of the rules they have established, but also demonstrate that they are not reliable partners to deal with, as they interpret human rights in a way that benefits them.

At the same time, there are practical difficulties in the progressive development of regional human rights systems. This is due to

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russian-oligarchs-frozen-repo/index.html (accessed: 27.08.2023).

<sup>33</sup> La France Rend Opérationnel Son Mécanisme de Restitution des “Biens Mal Acquis” // France Diplomatie. Juin 2023. URL: <https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/politique-etrangere-de-la-france/developpement/la-france-rend-operationnel-son-mecanisme-de-restitution-des-biens-mal-acquis/> (accessed: 27.07.2023).

<sup>34</sup> United Nations Convention on Jurisdictional Immunities of States and Their Property // United Nations. December 2, 2004. URL: [https://legal.un.org/ilc/texts/instruments/english/conventions/4\\_1\\_2004.pdf](https://legal.un.org/ilc/texts/instruments/english/conventions/4_1_2004.pdf) (accessed: 27.08.2023). See also: (Stewart, 2005).

the fact that it requires serious financial and intellectual resources, which all these years have been directed mainly (including through the system of grants and academic scholarships) to promote an exclusively Western-centric human rights system, despite its erosion.

## Conclusion

At the stage of “power transit” (the transition of world political and economic influence from the West to the Non-West), there is a crisis of the Western-centric model of international peacekeeping, despite the fact that the countries of the “Collective West” still possess a whole arsenal of instruments of influence in the UN system, as well as discursive hegemony. In this context, it is increasingly important to conceptualize Non-Western approaches to peacekeeping and peacebuilding in the context of building a multipolar world. Based on the cultural, political, and linguistic differences between states and regions, it is necessary to further elaborate the terminology of peacekeeping, based on international principles and norms enshrined in the UN Charter.

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