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Session IV: Challenges and Successes in UN Peacekeeping

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Gillian Sorensen: Once, a long time ago, a critic of the United Nations complained to me about all those foreigners. I said, but that's just the point. We are there, working with all those foreigners, but interestingly enough, this morning, we have had four Americans, including our next speaker. I think it's good for us all to know that America is well-represented here at the highest levels, and of course through the rest of the organization, everywhere from security guards all the way up to Assistant Secretary-General.

And that leads us to our current speaker, Jane Lute, who I like to call both a soldier and a scholar. She is Assistant Secretary-General and Officer-in-Charge of the Department of Field Support. She has a military background; she was a Commander in the Persian Gulf operation. She has had command responsibilities at the highest levels, including teaching political science at West Point. She retired from the military; she served in Washington. She was for a time the Vice President of the UN Foundation, where I am now, and has more recently been here at the United Nations. Her detailed background is in your packet, but she is looking after 20 peacekeeping operations in the field. Jane Lute, the floor is yours.

Jane Holl Lute: Gillian is very generous to me, but I did not command at the highest levels, but I am very proud of my military experience. It's unusual that you have four Americans, but if you did, you've probably spoken to some of my favorite colleagues in the system, because they are among the hardest working. It's extraordinary to see each of them, I've seen the list of those with whom you've spoken, it's extraordinary to see them, whether it's 7:30 in the morning or 9:30 at night, working as hard as they do. And I think they would share the view that I have, which is that it's our privilege to be here working in this environment at the United Nations.

It's one of the most challenging and difficult environments. I've met people who work in multilateral settings, and it's quite a different thing to be in a multilateral setting, and it's quite another thing to operate in a multilateral setting when you're sitting here telling people things and they're filtering through a Nigerian, or a Tanzanian, or a Chinese, or a

Russian, or other mindset, and then get done. And what you discover is, your idea in someone else's hands, or their idea in your hands, it's an extraordinary experience to see. And it's really been a privilege, and given me an insight into the ways of operations in the world and policy, especially in my world of peace and security.

And that's what I do; I'm a peacekeeper. I've been a peacekeeper for five years. And it is also an extraordinary privilege. What I thought I would do is walk you through the challenges that are in peacekeeping these days. What I discovered is that what people don't know about peacekeeping is much more impressive than what they do know. Frankly, people don't know very much. They know that the UN has peacekeepers and they may know that we wear blue helmets. It's sort of like the orange UNICEF box in the United States; that's kind of it. What people don't know is that we are the second largest deployed military presence in the world. With Darfur and Chad, our deployments will be at 140,000 peacekeepers around the world, in 20 missions. In the past five years we have started up or expanded 18 new missions. In the last 18 months alone, we've done 5 new peacekeeping missions around the world, including Darfur and Chad.

This is an extraordinary thing when you think about it. People say, well, the UN does peacekeeping. The UN does peacekeeping with no standing military capability whatsoever; not one. Not one acting soldier in the field does the UN have on call. We don't have a standing civilian cadre. We have no strategic planning capability. We have no regularized training. We have none of the things that anyone would think about, just sort of opening their closet and going to when it comes to putting an operation in the field. So at some level we start every single operation as if we were starting the first operation, because no standing capacity exists.

When I started at the UN in 2003, our operating budget was about $1.8 billion. It will be over $7 billion this year (5 years). We are three times the size of the Secretariat's entire operating budget, is peacekeeping. What day is today, Thursday? The U.S. has already spent more in Iraq this week than on the annual budget for peacekeeping. So when people say that the UN is a bloated bureaucracy and it's expensive – $7 billion is expensive, there's no question about it – but my response is, compared to what? It's only tongue-in-cheek.

I should tell you, in full disclosure, I am married to the President's advisor on Iraq and Afghanistan. We never see each other. (*laughter*) Actually, that's not true. We try to see each other as often as we can, and if any of you see my husband, tell him I love him and I miss him very much. (*laughter*) Our lives are so weird; we actually think we might be able to meet each other in the Frankfurt airport next week. We have one daughter in Oman going to school, learning Arabic. We have another daughter in Leeds, in the U.K. going to school, and I have a three-year-old at home with me. Life is rich and rewarding.

But it's a continual reminder, actually, that there are people at the heart of our business. And people are our most important asset, and nowhere is that more true than in peacekeeping. We're not flush in peacekeeping in any dimension. The people that we have on the ground are one deep in what it is they do. We'll put a mission on the ground

in Darfur which will be 31,000 people when we're done with it, including 5,000 civilians, two-thirds of which are national staff. This is a section of Sudan that is the size of France, where a war is going on among multiple parties, and we will have 5,000 civilians, who will be doing everything from the political facilitation, oversight of the mission, human rights monitoring and reporting, to aviation safety, to petroleum supplies, to engineering and construction, and everything in between.

I don't usually use slides when I talk, because I frankly can't stand it, but if I had them I would show you these pictures on the ground that we go into when we go into a mission, and there is nothing there. If any of you have been to Darfur you know it looks like the moon, without the character. It is flat and brown and desolate and the people are extraordinarily suffering from privation, from the natural environment that they're in and at each other's hands. It is a life-affecting engagement to spend your lives around people who live in fear of their neighbors, and live in fear of each other. Imagine, every single day, if you were going out to get something to eat, and you feared for your life, and your children's lives. And you made deals with people to sell your children, or sell yourself, so that your children could eat, or so that you could eat.

It's just an entirely different environment to be in and to operate in than we are used to here. So we have a new department that's been created in peacekeeping: the Department of Field Support. We used to be part of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. My office was the Office of Mission Support. But the Secretary-General came in and said, this is too big, too complex, this is too difficult for a single department, a single Under-Secretary-General to handle, so he created a second department, and I have the privilege of leading that department at the moment. Our job is all the logistical support, staffing all the personnel, all the financing, all the aviation, all the computers, all the communications, for peacekeeping operations worldwide.

In addition to the 20 peacekeeping missions, I have 15 special political missions, which are the kinds of political facilitations and dialogue that go on. We have, for example, some unique operations like the Hariri investigation going on in Lebanon right now, which is transitioning, and it's my department's responsibility to support that everywhere in the field. Often, when we go in, there are no roads and we build roads. There are no buildings; we build buildings. We dig latrines, we run plumbing, we do electricity, and we build small cities, so that the UN can operate. It takes much longer than anybody would like, it's extremely labor-intensive, and we don't always operate in ways that are sensibilized to the conditions on the ground, because the rules and regulations that were designed for this organization were designed essentially for a headquarters operation; a convening authority that exists in Midtown Manhattan.

I happen to love Manhattan. In fact, I grew up with Manhattan envy. I was born in Newark. And you never tell anybody you're from Newark, you always tell them you're from the New York area. (*laughter*) My parents moved to South Orange; when I was younger, my parents lived in the same house where I grew up. If you're from this part of the country, it's actually pretty standard; people live in the same house forever. Memo to the children: it's going to be your problem. It really is.

You know, there's nothing wrong with being in Midtown Manhattan. But if you take procurement, for example, and you're in a robust, thriving metropolis with multiple vendors for anything you can imagine and more, with robust lines of communication. You can get anything delivered here 24 hours a day. Anybody live here? Am I lying? Absolutely anything in the world you want. And you'll have competitors to bring it to you. If the guy or gal who brings you something fails, you have all this recourse. Let me fast-forward your minds to the eastern Congo. It's a little different. But we operate under these same rules. We end up having to get three competitive bids for a contract. (*laughter*) I'm not lying to you. It's governments, it's 192 governments. Is that wrong? It's not wrong.

Because we don't spend programmatic dollars here at the UN, we spend political dollars. We're a public organization. We're accountable for the monies that are spent. And if you always go to the fastest, best, biggest performer, where are you going to end up going all the time? To the West, invariably. And that's not right. It's not right for this organization to limit itself to one share of the world's resources, and we need to be able to create a system that allows everyone to have a shot at competing. And we have to operate in that environment, and we accept it.

But it makes it a challenge. It's so challenging that 50% of my staff have less than one year of experience in the United Nations. 45% of them are single. The average age is 46. So why are they single? None of the explanations you can give yourself are any good. They're either working too hard or they've never married, or whatever it is. We rotate through our staff one-third every year, and that's not unusual, because for corporations, one-third turnover might not be so unusual, depending on the kind of work that you are in. But when you put a 50% newness rate with a one-third turnover, there's something going on. And what's going on is a chronic 25% vacancy rate for my staff in the field.

And when you combine that with the fact that on your best day – at least in my experience in the civilian world and in government – only 80% of your staff is showing up for work. Really, on your best day, in the world. People are taking their kids to a doctor's appointment, or they're sick, or they're at training, or they're on vacation. When you look at it – and this is not my insight, I think it's Harvard's or somebody's – only 80% of your staff is showing up for work. And if you have a 25% vacancy rate, it's a further detriment. And if you have people that are new, who's left doing the work? Except, that what we also have in the field is what we call Occasional Recuperative Break, ORB. Every six weeks or every eight weeks, people have a week off. So you walk in, and you're talking to the other person who happens to be in your office of 15.

So is it challenging? You bet it's challenging. Our most important resource is our people. We've been working for years on a series of human resources reforms that we have before the member states right now, which we're really hopeful will get passed, but it represents a price tag increase. And what we've said to the member states is, look, you have viewed peacekeeping forever as a temporary activity. And they do. Nobody likes peacekeeping. You shouldn't have a permanent peacekeeping mission; that's kind of

weird. Peacekeepers come in, they do their job, and get out. By the way, what is their job? And that's the right way to view any individual mission. It is the wrong way to look at the capacity of the United Nations to mount and sustain these operations, and member states need to switch from a spending strategy on peacekeeping to an investment strategy. In my view, the investment strategy begins with people.

So what is peacekeeping designed to do? The purpose of peacekeeping is to protect and strengthen fragile peace. Now, that sentence sounds easy to say. It took me a week to think of what it was, a week and a dialogue with a lot of people, after I was working here three years. How do you put what you do in the mission into a single sentence? And the purpose of peacekeeping is to protect and strengthen fragile peace. And that is a sentence that a young private from rural Bangladesh can understand, as well as the most sophisticated politician who might be the Special Representative to the Secretary-General. Why are you here? To protect and strengthen the fragile peace that is here.

And we are peacekeepers; we are not war fighters. And it means first and foremost, there must be a peace to keep. People say, if there's a peace to keep, who needs you? I tell you, peace will not keep itself. And it often requires the engagement of the international community; the symbolic commitment to the time and space on the ground for people to come to an accommodation in less violent ways than they've done in the past. It's enormously challenging; we have a wide variety of missions on the ground; everything from Haiti to Liberia to Congo to Darfur to Kosovo, and our mission in Afghanistan, as you know.

I'm happy to take as many questions as you have on peacekeeping, although I know this was so tightly woven that there are no questions. (*laughter*) Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to meet with you today and thank you Gillian, I should say to you personally, both for your service to the United Nations and your lifelong commitment to the issues that matter so deeply to the world's peace and security. So thank you.

Questions and Answers

Question: (*Melinda Blinken*) I just want to make a comment; I think everybody in this room would like to serve under you. You are really inspiring.

Ms. Lute: I'm told I'm a tough boss. I'm actually a pushover. (*laughter*)

Ms. Sorensen: In that field you have to be a tough boss. Questions? I know there are lots.

Question: Patricia Ellis, President of the Women's Foreign Policy Group. This morning we heard that it was so hard to get helicopters to Darfur. Can you explain why?

Ms. Lute: No I can't. (*laughter*) I don't know why it's so hard. NATO has 4,000 helicopters among them, among the member states of NATO. I can't get 24. I don't know why it's so hard. I can give you all the politically correct answers. The politically correct

answers are, these are extremely expensive, extremely high visibility and politically highly visible resources and when you put them out there, you're putting a stake out there. So this is not just a resource commitment, it's a political commitment by member states. That's number one.

Number two: not everybody has them of the kind and quality and capability we need. If you give me a helicopter squadron of six helicopters, you're actually committing 18 because you have helicopters that are preparing to go, you have helicopters that are operating, and you have helicopters that are recovering. And you have to recycle this commitment again and again. So, it's not trivial. But you know, it's the old excuse. People talk about political will, I think political will is a dysfunctional concept, I mean it doesn't tell us anything. If you want to do something, any excuse will do. If you don't want to do something, any excuse will do. So what is it? When we see member states act, it's because they have political will and when they don't, is it because they lack political will? That's not good enough for me. I don't know the answer to why we don't have them.

Ms. Ellis: Just a follow-up to that, so what do you do in a case like Darfur and in other situations where you really need this equipment and you can't get it.

Ms. Lute: We make do without it. We operate around it. Every single one of us has been at that point in our lives in one way or another: where you have to get something done and you don't have the ideal means. We have a lot of commercial helicopters we could track for but they're not going to substitute for military helicopters to lift and reposition forces and re-supply in very dangerous areas. These are very dangerous areas. We had a guy who was shot and killed in eastern Chad today. Yesterday, a convoy of two trucks, including Chinese equipment, was hijacked. These are very dangerous places. So, commercial assets are not going to substitute. So we'll just have to figure something else out.

If I'm the operator on the ground, what you do is, you reconfigure your deployment so people are more forward so you have less of a need to move them around. You push forward provisioning and you have a supply strategy that allows you to maintain them in multiple, diverse, deployment, in a more diverse deployment scheme than you would like because of the security situation. So, you can compensate, but it's not ideal.

Question: I was wondering about specifications regarding contributions from developing countries verses contributions from developed countries.

Ms. Lute: For a good part of the time I've been at the UN there has been a division of labor actually that kind of informally rose up. First of all, peacekeeping is unique as an activity in the world in that it is an assessed activity. If a mission is determined to be put in place by the Security Council and the budget is passed by the General Assembly, every single member state, all 192, are assessed to pay for it. It's not like NATO – where the costs fall where they lie or lie where they fall or somehow are figured out – or anywhere else, where it's optional. In the UN it's not optional, member states are required to pay –

by the way they don't always. (*laughter*) At one point, during my first couple of years, there was a big division of labor between countries that are operating on the ground and providing troops and those who are paying the largest share of the bills. So the top 10 financial contributors and the top 10 troop contributors didn't overlap at all. So we were kind of like: are we all okay with this? You're writing the checks and you're doing the work? Well, maybe we are. Maybe we're okay with it. But we should at least have that conversation to know that that's what's happening. And that has changed slightly, but only slightly.

Question: Could you describe how or whether your department is engaged in implementation of Resolution 1325?

Ms. Lute: Je suis la! (*laughter*) This is really interesting from my point of view, as a person of gender. We're all people of gender I suppose. Oh, the flash-to-bang time here is . . . (*laughter*). The real challenge to us is *operationalizing* 1325. How do we find the kind of women who are qualified and equipped to go in and do these kinds of jobs? Peacekeeping, in my view, is not an entry-level position. It's not entry-level but it is a young man and woman's kind of sport. You know 46 as the average age of a peacekeeper scares me to death. It says that we're not getting something right at all.

Part of the reason that we engage in – and I've taken this as a personal initiative and I've been working with my staff for four years on it – changing the human resources package we offer people is because I'm convinced, and I've said this publicly a lot, that we won't make progress on 1325 if we don't change the conditions of service that we offer to people in the field. So, for example, 97% of my mission appointees are in non-family duty stations. Non-family – it means you can't bring your family. It means a "hardship" in State Department language. I don't have any Bermudas, I don't have any Parises, or Bonns to rotate people through. So we really need to put together a package where people can have their families with them and that there are other compensations in a way that speak to work-life balance.

I've been working since I was 13 years old. You know, you get those silly Social Security things that say your benefits? And I saw it and I said, now that can't be right, it says, you know whatever it said. (*laughter*) And it's crazy and you look around and you say, you can't have it all. I speak to young classes sometimes and they say, "Can you balance a career and a family?" and the answer is: badly. It's just really hard if you want to do this kind of work: peacekeeping. So, first and foremost, the answer is, we're all onboard with 1325, we're required to be. Even if we weren't required to be, we'd want to be because I can tell you that women bring something to the job of peacekeeping that is qualitatively different than the men and it is to our benefit. So the question is, how do we increase the ranks of women in all walks? Everybody wants to be the horse whisperer on political analysis and advice, sitting at the tables with the negotiators saying, "offer them 51%". (*laughter*) That's great but I need truck drivers. I need fuel specialists. I need aviation operations officers as well. We need chiefs of staff; we need what one of my staff members called today, the "janitorial" work of peacekeeping. (*laughter*)

Question: (*Donna Constantinople*) What's the breakdown now?

Ms. Lute: You know, I should know the answer to that question and I know it in too many discreet little ways. I have the facts and figures for our department. I should easily know the answer to that and I don't. I think because I don't like to know it. And I mean that sort of in a way that forces me to stay after it. The military is chronically between 7% and 9% or less, the police is 14% or less, and we at peacekeeping have similar kinds of numbers. The other thing I don't like about our women numbers is that women are disproportionately in lower ranks. So when you look at aggregate figures – this is why maybe I don't want to learn it and I haven't internalized the overall figure – they are disproportionately lower. Very interesting phenomenon: in the GS ranks here, the support ranks, women outnumber the men significantly; in the support ranks in the field, men outnumber the women significantly because these are jobs of choice in many of the environments where we are and not surprisingly they go to the men first.

So it's a long-winded answer to your question. But if I could say to you, we have a checklist and on that check list we are aiming for 50% – that is the goal, it is on the checklist. How are we going about it? At senior levels, we are going about it one at a time. The SG has insisted on having qualified women on every list for every position D2 and above that he looks at. That has trickled down, we certainly do that in peacekeeping as well. But the competition is tough so we just have to keep at it. And at lower ranks we are trying to reach out to more women. Again, a lot of women have families and they want to know, "Gee, can I come to New York?" Well, you know, I really need you in Juba. And do you speak French? And do you have a driver's license? So, we just have to keep at it.

Question: You said there is no standing capacity. Is there going to be one?

Ms. Lute: I think it's an idea whose time has come. I really support the idea of a standing brigade size capacity for the United Nations that's deployable at the instruction of the Security Council under the direction of the Secretary-General. When Roméo Dallaire was in London in 1994 he made the claim that if he had had a brigade he could have prevented part of the genocide. When I was working at the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict as a director of that project under Cyrus Vance and David Hamburg, we called Dallaire in. We said really? Because I had been a soldier and I said, okay. And we put him in a room in Georgetown University with representatives from every single peacekeeping mission in existence at the time, representatives from the United States military and representatives from NATO. These guys spent a day together looking at his plan. They were all guys, except me; that happen a lot. (*laughter*) And you know what these guys decided? He was right. If he had a brigade he could have made a difference. Now what was the difference? Would it have been half a million people? I don't know. Would it have been a hundred thousand people? That's still a lot. So, I think it's an idea whose time has come.

Ms. Sorensen: How many are in a brigade?

Ms. Lute: 5,000 – approximately.

Question: I am from the World Bank in Washington, DC. I want to really commend you for your great communication skills.

Ms. Lute: Aren't you nice, thank you.

Question: They are very strong, especially because, earlier we talked about getting the word out regarding Resolution 1325 and it is people like you with the way you parse things and put them with the punchy language that we need to get the word out.

Ms. Lute: Could we find something other than punchy? (*laughter*)

Question: I have two questions for you. One of them has to do with peacekeeping. Peacekeeping done by the UN is thought to be most commendable.

Ms. Lute: Not always

Question: Well maybe not in the U.S. but outside the U.S. it is quite commendable. But it is also an Achilles heel in the sense that there's been a lot of abuse by the soldiers.

Ms. Lute: Yeah, that's what I mean.

Question: So what's your take on that? How do you work to balance the good with the bad so that actually the focus is still on the primary work of peacekeeping? And my second question has to do with procurement. You talked about this lack of great opportunities for local bidders in the process. I know in the World Bank we have this system of local content, we agree on local content.

Ms. Lute: Yeah we do too. Let me take your last question first. Yeah, we do too. But what we end up discovering is that the demand that we have, when you're moving in 15,000 forces or 10,000 forces and they're flowing in at a rate and a speed and they have demand and requirements. For the local firms – that's not what they're used to delivering. So they're not always up to – you know, it's always a feature of peacekeeping contracts that we put right into it that there has to be local partnerships, local procurement, local use of materials and labor. UN procurement is about $2.6 billion; peacekeeping is $2.1 billion out of that. About 50% of that is local procurement in the field that the missions have themselves. So we do place a big emphasis on it but we are making demands that systems can't meet. We're also holding a vendor, for example, in Goma to the same standard that a vendor in Midtown Manhattan would have to meet. And I think we just need to take a look at that. I'm not sure it's serving us at all well.

The sexual exploitation and abuse scandal, to me, was one of the most serious setbacks that peacekeepers had. It's appalling to be affiliated with an organization that has this stain on its record. So I don't like it at all and I was put in charge of our effort to fix ourselves. And one of the first things we had to do is to be honest with ourselves on

what's happening here. So we spent a lot of time understanding how this could happen. Part of it goes back to what I said to you about how the member states view this. Because they view peacekeeping as temporary, what do you do when you have a temporary need for something? You go out and hire it. You go out and borrow it for a period of time. And you hope that what you're hiring or borrowing is what you need. The training is done, the leadership exists, and the units are intact. We're borrowing them for a period of time, we want them to work here, and then go back. So this organization placed a lot of its stock, in fact, all of its stock, on the quality and existence of professionalism in the militaries of the people we brought in to do this. We can't do that. You can't do that anywhere. You have to have a way to validate what the standards are. So we have to be much clearer with ourselves about what the standards are. And then we had to promulgate these standards and be sure that the member states agree. They don't always agree.

For example, we had a very interesting conversation about paternity in the context of our victims' assistance policy and if you're proven – you know let's have DNA testing, we have the baby and there's an allegation, let's have DNA testing – no can't do that. And those countries that have Sharia law, if their soldiers are found to have fathered this child, there's only one answer for that: whoops, you know, yeah, execution. So, we can't have that. (*laughter*) So let's start over. It's a small illustration of the kind of thing that can happen. So our standards have to be rationalized and sensibilized in the context of who we are and what we represent.

So we realized several things. We had a structural problem, whenever you get very big, very fast, standards suffer. So, we got very big, very fast – that has happened to us a couple of times. But now we are getting very big, very fast, and it is staying very big. So we need to recognize that when you get very big, very fast, standards suffer. And we need to address that. You can't take it for granted; you have to make them explicit. Second thing we realized is that we have a structural problem. We deploy UN soldiers or UN staff in to these areas where we go. It's by definition, exploitive, because you have money in your pockets relative to the population; you have privilege, position, and power. So you have to have an extra special level of care and standards. And you're all going to say, "Oh, well, welcome to the world, Rip Van Winkle." (*laughter*) But it took us a while to figure this out. So we put in place a three-part program of prevention, enforcement, and remediation. We have initiatives on each of these. You know, we had this big thing about investigations, punishments, and accountability – frankly, you don't run an organization on investigations. You run an organization on purpose and pride. And we have a very clear purpose in peacekeeping and we need to take pride in what we do. You enlist everyone's professional responsibility and personal ability to understand what the issues are. So, we continue to have people who behave badly but we now have a system. When we say zero tolerance, it means zero complacency, and zero impunity. And we just have to stay at it.

Question: In your estimation, how long does it make sense to extend a temporary operation?

Ms. Lute: When I say that peacekeeping is temporary, when I say that the member states

have viewed peacekeeping as temporary, you know, operations are temporary. They come in, they do their job, and they leave. It's the wrong way to view the capacity of the United Nations to do this. Okay, we need a permanent capacity to do temporary interventions, in my view. It comes back to this point about the standing force. And people don't like my answer when I give it to them. But I give them the following answer: the United States for 50 years had 60% of its active duty army in Europe during the Cold War, 60% of its army was in Europe. And it was prepared to continue keeping it there for as long as necessary because that's what they said was necessary to help keep the peace. And maybe that's just the price you pay. We have the cost of peacekeepers, people talk to me about the expense of peacekeepers and my response to them is, "Compared to what?" Compared to what? We are the cheapest, most effective, and you don't have to believe me. There are RAND studies out on this, there are GAO studies out on this. If you don't like the way the UN is doing it, and I a lot of people don't – I have my own problems with it – I tell you, this is as hard as it gets.

So in Cyprus – as Gillian was just saying, we've been there since 1974 – maybe that's the price we pay. And it's not an overwhelming force, it's quite modest. We've been in the Middle East since 1948; we've been in Kashmir since 1949. They are very small, very small. These are numbered in the dozens. The budget in these cases is under $50 million a year. Some of the larger ones are the Congo, $1 billion; Darfur, $2 billion, so those are big missions. But we close them all the time. We've closed four dozen missions. So you don't know. A peacekeeping mission goes into place when the Council has determined a threat exists to international peace and security. You know, at some level the cynics say that really the Council is only trying to address the fact that the levels of violence have become unacceptably high and this is a way to drive them down. But surely we can leave when a problem no longer poses a threat to international peace and security. So what we know is that peacekeeping can't do all that needs doing and all that needs doing can't be done alone by the UN. And that all the resources, the banks, the NGOs, the governments, the regional organizations, there is plenty of work to go around.

Ms. Sorensen: Our time is up I'm afraid, but I do want to take the liberty of the last question. I know you're American, so am I, so I feel able to pose this. My understanding is that the United States contributes a lot or at least offers in logistics, in transport, and other things, but never, or almost never, contributes soldiers for domestic political reasons. Would it help us if American soldiers were part of these UN peacekeeping teams some of the time? And is there anyway to hold the United States to account for peacekeeping operations that it supports but then does not come forward with its voluntary peacekeeping contributions?

Ms. Lute: The peacekeeping contributions are not voluntary.

Ms. Sorensen: Alright. It's mandated.

Ms. Lute: They are mandated. A couple of things Gillian, I guess. There had been, with a couple of exceptions, a traditional, informal, principle that was observed that the permanent five members of the Council did not participate in peacekeeping on the ground

because their interests were viewed as vested by virtue of the fact that they were permanent members of the Security Council and that's how missions are determined. And people didn't want to turn this into a way that the big five mask what would be otherwise expressions of national interest which would legitimate the introduction of forces on the ground through the UN. That was traditionally the case. That has kind of worn down through the nineties and certainly today we have contributors, the Chinese, for example. I was telling somebody that our shipment has come in. You know, we have all these shortfalls in peacekeeping and the Chinese want to get involved in peacekeeping to a greater degree. But it all has to be balanced. The U.S. actually does a lot in contributing to peacekeeping, but not through the UN. In a number of programs it works with the AU and bilaterally with countries that we're able to benefit from.

Do we need peacekeeping troops on the ground in large numbers? I don't think so, frankly. And, I mean, I was a soldier. We have the commitment of soldiers that we need. We need special enabling capabilities and frankly there are countries other than the United States. But it really speaks to a broader question about whether or not peacekeeping can survive without the support of the United States. And the answer is no. No, it can't. It is the largest financial contributor, in terms of 25%, it is one of the major voices on the Security Council and what we know is that in addition to there needing to be a peace to keep, we need a Council that's unified, we need willing troop-contributing countries, we need the cooperation of the member states, the host government on the ground, etc. The political engagement, support and consistency of the United States are essential. You know, and I'll close with this: Abba Eban (God rest his soul) is credited with saying – I have no idea if he did so, it's okay, I'm not going to hesitate to tell you what I'm told he said. (*laughter*) He said, "With the U.S. anything is possible; without the U.S. nothing is possible." The world has certainly benefited from the first part of that statement. And I, and my parents, and my children, and my grandparents are living, breathing, testimonies to the first part of that statement: with the U.S. anything is possible. The world cannot afford to be a place where the second half of that sentence is true. We all have to do our share and only then will we succeed.

Ms. Sorensen: Thank you very much.