

# Don't Listen to Republicans, the United Nations is Freaking Awesome



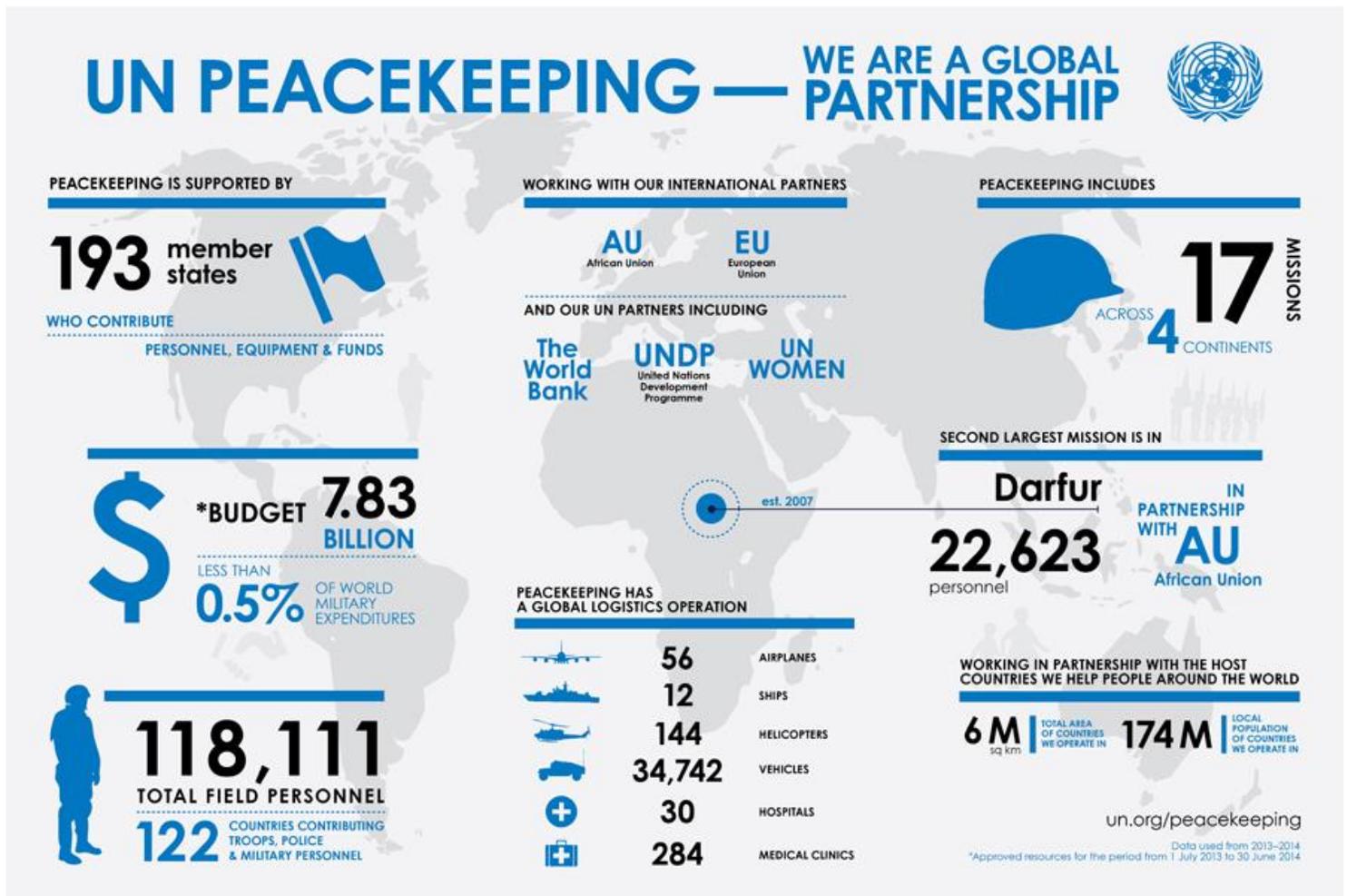
By [Brian Frydenborg](#) October 9, 2013

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If you've been exposed to Republican talking points, chances are you've heard many bad things about the UN, that it's horribly [corrupt and mismanaged](#), very [ineffective](#), even [worthless](#), and, if you're an evangelical Christian, that it's going to [give rise](#) to the [Antichrist](#) and a [UN takeover](#) of America. [Poll](#) after [poll](#) show Republicans have a negative view of the UN, while Democrats and independents do not. Though certainly some legitimate [criticism](#) should be levied [against](#) the UN, [repeated](#) Republican [calls](#) for America to [disengage](#) from and [withdraw funding](#) for the UN are silly. Their negative [characterizations](#) ignore the fact that the UN is [awesome](#) for [many reasons](#).

Below are just some highlights of its work.

# United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UNDPKO/DPKO)



Peacekeeping missions are among the most important activities the UN undertakes and have had a tremendous impact. Currently, there are 15 UN peacekeeping operations and one political mission led by DPKO. These operations occur all over the world and currently deploy nearly 100,000 troops, police, and military observers from 116 nations, plus nearly 17,000 civilians. These operations are helping to stop (or failing that, lessen the effects of) some of the worst, most intractable conflicts in the world, helping to save untold thousands of lives and to rebuild civil society and governance in places where it has been destroyed. Since 1948, through the course of 68 peacekeeping missions, 3,149 people

have given their lives serving in UN peacekeeping missions, including 71 Americans. ([Report](#) on 2012 operations.)

## The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)



[UNHCR](#) is the agency of the UN that deals with people who have fled their country for fear of their lives (refugees), people who have fled their homes but who are still displaced within their countries' borders (internally displaced persons, or IDPs), and stateless people. It has less than [7,700 staff](#) in over 125 countries. They are helping nearly [40 million people](#) (14.7 million IDPs, 10.5 million refugees, 3.1 million returnees, 3.5 million stateless people, more than 837,000 asylum seekers and more than 1.3 other persons of concern) survive, find their way back home, or find a new home. And these numbers don't include some of the [newest](#) displaced coming out of Syria.

Its main activities involve [protecting](#) the displaced, responding to specific major [emergencies](#), finding [long-term](#) solutions ([repatriation](#), local [integration](#), or [resettlement](#)) for the displaced, and [assisting](#) the displaced with [health](#) care, [food](#) and nutrition, [water](#)/sanitation/hygiene, and [education](#). In its nearly 63-year history, UNCHR has helped save, return, and resettle tens of millions of people. ([Report on 2012 activities.](#))

## United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)



[UNRWA](#) was created in 1949 to help [Palestinian refugees](#) from the [1948](#) Arab-Israeli [War](#). Today, it helps [over 5 million](#) Palestinian refugees and their descendant who have grown up in exile. As part of its services, UNRWA currently [educates](#) almost 500,000 Palestinian children (nearly half girls), provides [health care](#) to 3.1 million Palestinians, provides nearly 300,000 Palestinians with a [social safety net](#), has awarded almost 300,000 [microfinance loans](#) worth almost \$340 million,

has [improved infrastructure](#) and refugee camps for 1.5 million Palestinians (including rebuilding over 8,000 homes). They have also helped Palestinian refugees who have been [getting caught up](#) in regional conflicts over the last 60 years, including over 500,000 who are being affected by Syria's war, with about [half of those](#) now displaced. (*Report on [2012 activities](#).*)

## World Health Organization (WHO)



[WHO](#) is the UN's body that deals with health issues. It operates nearly 200 [programs/projects](#) and has a very ambitious formal [agenda](#) that is already underway. It's involved in a large [variety](#) of public health activities and research, and historically, it's been very successful at fighting the spread of the worst diseases known to man, including achieving [major progress](#) on polio, HIV/AIDS, cancer, tuberculosis, malaria, and the [eradication](#) of smallpox, which was killing millions every year) from nature

in 1980. WHO also produces many valuable [reports](#) and statistical [compilations](#) on global health [issues](#). (*Approved [budget](#) for 2014-2015 w/ activity descriptions.*)

## United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)



[UNDP](#) provides massive amounts of [assistance](#) to developing nations, [focusing](#) on poverty [reduction](#) and reaching the UN Millennium [Development Goals](#), democratic [governance](#), crisis [prevention](#) and recovery, and environment and energy for [sustainable development](#). With thousands of [projects](#) in 177 countries, UNDP truly has a global impact. It also releases an important annual [report](#) on human development. (*[Report](#) on 2012 activities.*)

## World Food Programme (WFP)



In 2012 alone, [WFP](#) provided 3.5 million metric tons of food to nearly [100 million](#) hungry people in [80 countries](#), has fed over [1.4 billion people](#) since its founding in 1963, and it also works to [create conditions](#) that help [avoid hunger](#). ([Report on 2012 activities](#).)

## United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)



[UNICEF](#) (you know, the [Halloween](#) thing) has been helping children worldwide since [1946](#). Its [current plan](#) focuses on [child survival](#) and development, basic [education](#) and gender equality, [HIV/AIDS](#) and children, child [protection](#), and policy [advocacy](#) and partnerships, helping millions of children around the world [every year](#). ([Report on 2012 activities](#).)