

# UN Peacekeeping: The Next Five Years

A Report by the New York University Center on International Cooperation  
Commissioned by the Permanent Mission of Denmark to the United Nations

Authors: Richard Gowan and Megan Gleason

Data Analysis: Morgan Ashley Hughes

## Contents

Executive summary	2
The global context	5
Trends in troop contributions	12
Future demand for peacekeepers	16
The future of UN operations and Europe's role	22

## Executive Summary

This paper, commissioned by the Permanent Mission of Denmark to the United Nations, analyzes current trends in United Nations peacekeeping and makes predictions about the development of UN operations over the next five years (to 2017). It covers (i) the changing global context for UN operations and efforts to enhance the organization's performance over the last five years; (ii) trends in troop and police contributions; (iii) projections about potential demand for UN forces in various regions, especially the Middle East and Africa, in the next five years and (iv) suggestions about the types of contributions European countries such as Denmark can make to reinforce UN missions in this period.

### *The Global Context*

The paper notes that peacekeeping has undergone relatively few major changes in the last five years. The number of blue helmets has remained fairly stable. There were 90,464 troops, police officers and military observers under UN command in January 2008 and 98,639 in December 2011. The organization remains primarily concerned with operations in Africa and the Middle East. However, there are concerns that (i) many UN operations have stayed in place far longer than originally expected; and (ii) the organization lacks sufficient numbers of many important specialized military assets, such as helicopters. In this context:

- The UN has overhauled its **field support systems**, making substantial cost savings;
- The UN has emphasized **police units** as an alternative to military personnel in maintaining public order, and the number of UN police grew by 20% in five years;
- The UN has aimed to make its operations more **information-driven**, although it sometimes struggles to turn improved information and analysis into timely action;
- There has been a focus on the role of light-weight civilian **Special Political Missions** (such as that in Libya) as alternatives to larger peacekeeping operations;
- There is a new emphasis on exploring how the UN can use **military technologies** (such as drones) more effectively, although this remains a controversial topic.

The UN has also placed an increasing emphasis on the importance on its **partnerships** with organizations such as the African Union and European Union. Coordination is often complicated, there has been progress in collaborating on challenging cases such as Somalia.

### *Trends in troop contributions*

The UN still relies primarily on African and South Asian forces – together these two regions provide nearly 75% of the troops and police under UN command. Notable trends include:

- Since 2008, **Africa's** troop contribution to UN peacekeeping has increased substantially, growing from 29% to 38% of military personnel. The majority of the

region's contributions consist of infantry. Police contributions from the region have increased slightly, keeping pace with the overall growth of UN police deployments.

- **Central and South America's** troop contributions to peacekeeping between 2008 and 2011 have remained stable, accounting for 9% of total troop contributions (but fewer police) in 2011. The region's contributions are primarily concentrated in Haiti.
- **Central and South Asian** contributions have fallen slightly since 2008, from 41% to 33% of all peacekeeping troops, but countries in the region remain essential to sustaining UN operations. They are the largest contributors of engineers and field hospitals to UN missions and have notably increased their deployment of UN police.
- **East Asian and Pacific countries** have significantly increased their troop contributions to UN peacekeeping since 2008, with the region's contributions representing 9% of all deployments in 2011. This is largely made of infantry units.
- **Middle Eastern** troop contributions have decreased slightly since 2008, with Jordan providing the vast majority of troops from the region in addition to field hospitals.
- The **U.S. and Canada** are not major contributors to UN operations, although the U.S. has shown an increased political interest in UN peacekeeping in the Obama era.

Finally, the paper highlights Europe's role in UN operations. Troop contributions to UN peacekeeping from **Europe** have fallen considerably since 2008, decreasing 33%. In 2011 Europeans represented 8% of all UN troop deployments. The largest deployment of European troops is to the Middle East, with the vast majority deployed in Lebanon. Meanwhile, there were fewer than 100 European peacekeepers deployed in UN missions in Africa by December 2011. European contributions to UN police have fallen off dramatically since the UN handed responsibility for the rule of law in Kosovo to the EU.

#### *Future demand for peacekeepers*

The paper sets out a series of projections for future demand for UN peacekeepers, offering a range of possible scenarios for 2017. These (inherently speculative) projections include:

- In **West Africa**, the UN may shrink its current forces in Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire, but it could also deploy to Mali or other troubled states in the Sahel. If instability re-emerges in Liberia and/or Côte d'Ivoire, or the UN deploys new missions in the region, there could be up to 25,000 peacekeepers deployed in the area in 2017.
- In **Central Africa**, a reduction in the UN's presence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is probable. However, the mission could still have up to 10,000 troops in the DRC in 2017. Further forces may also be needed to patrol neighboring states.
- Trends in **Sudan and South Sudan** – including Darfur – are unpredictable. If there is a gradual trend towards stabilization, there could be fewer than 10,000

peacekeepers in the Sudans in 2017 (perhaps even none at all). If the situation deteriorates, the number of troops spread across the two countries could be 50,000.

- The situation in **Somalia** is also uncertain. If recent improvements continue, the UN could take on peacekeeping duties and might have 6,000-9,000 there in 2017. If there are major reversals, however, the number could go up to 25,000 in five years.
- In **North Africa**, continued instability in Libya could require the deployment of a small stabilization force (up to 5,000 troops) but this is a relatively unlikely scenario.
- An improvement in conditions in the **Middle East** could allow current UN missions to shrink to a combined total of fewer than 8,000 troops by 2017. However, worsening conditions might require a force of 20,000 troops to deploy to Syria – while the forces in Lebanon, etc., would probably still add up to over 10,000. Other deployments, such as a mission to Yemen, are still possible in this timeframe.
- In **Central Asia**, the UN is likely to maintain political missions and possibly military observers in Afghanistan and neighboring states, possibly in high-risk environments.
- In other regions – including the **Americas**, **Europe** and the **Asia-Pacific** – the UN is fairly unlikely to deploy new peace operations of any scale in the next five years. Its existing presences in these regions, including the Haiti mission will likely shrink.

It is probable that the UN will have (i) a major presence in the Middle East in 2017, and (ii) major presences in at least two African regions. UN political missions will also increase.

#### *Europe's future role in UN operations*

If the UN has a major role in the Middle East in the next five years, European countries will probably make a major contribution to forces in the region. Big contributions to UN forces in Africa are unlikely, but European countries may conclude that it is in their strategic interest to send specialized units and assets to UN missions in cases like Mali and Somalia.

These contributions could include **major enabling units** including: (i) helicopters; (ii) drones; (iii) engineers; (iv) gendarmerie and riot police; (v) special forces and protection units (possibly to guard political missions); (vi) field hospitals and (vii) maritime capabilities.

European countries can also offer **highly specialized personnel** including: (i) air planning and movement specialists; (ii) information analysts; (iii) chemical weapons experts; and (iv) security sector and defense reform specialists. European militaries may also make more **discretionary deployments of non-specialist personnel** (such as observers) to increase their knowledge of UN operations and procedures, which has been limited in recent years.

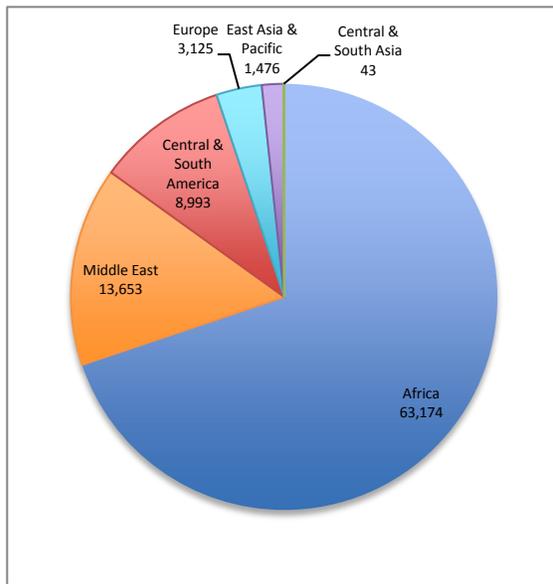
While European contributions will be limited by austerity, they will offer opportunities to operate alongside troops from emerging powers such as China and India – and make a direct contribution to stabilizing Europe's unstable neighborhood in the Middle East and Africa.

# 1. The Global Context

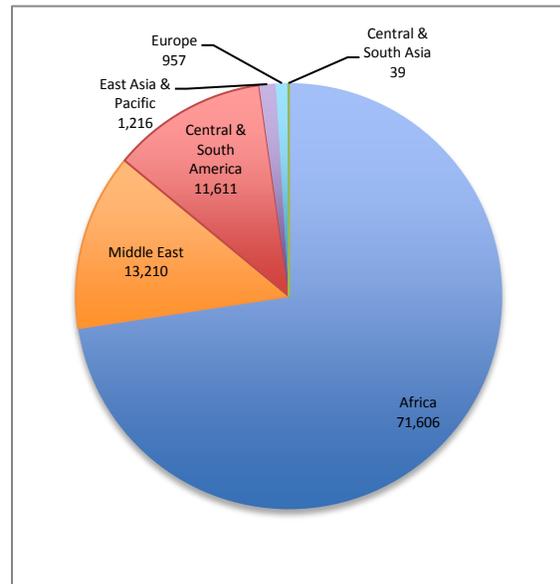
## 1.i Peacekeeping: successful but still under strain?

United Nations (UN) peacekeeping has undergone relatively few major changes in the last five years. The number of blue helmets has remained fairly stable. There were 90,464 troops, police officers and military observers under UN command in January 2008 and 98,639 in December 2011. The UN's primary focus has remained on Africa and the Middle East. Most missions that were underway in early 2008 are still ongoing, although some have been significantly altered and renamed. The Security Council has only mandated three entirely new missions since 2008 – two in the Sudans and, most recently, one in Syria.

**Military and Police Deployments by Region:  
31 January 2008**



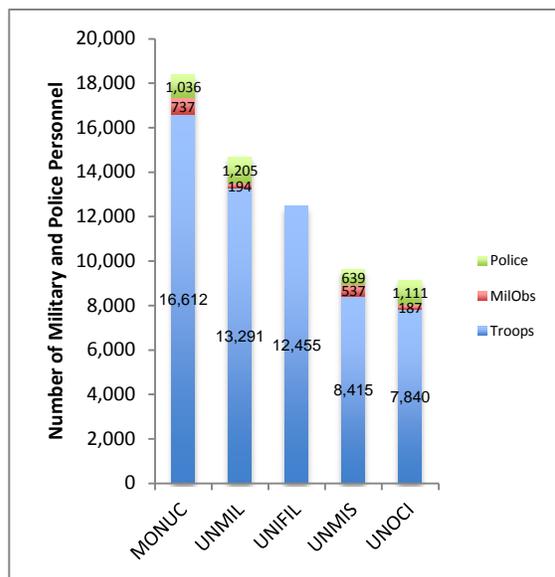
**Military and Police Deployments by Region:  
31 January 2011**



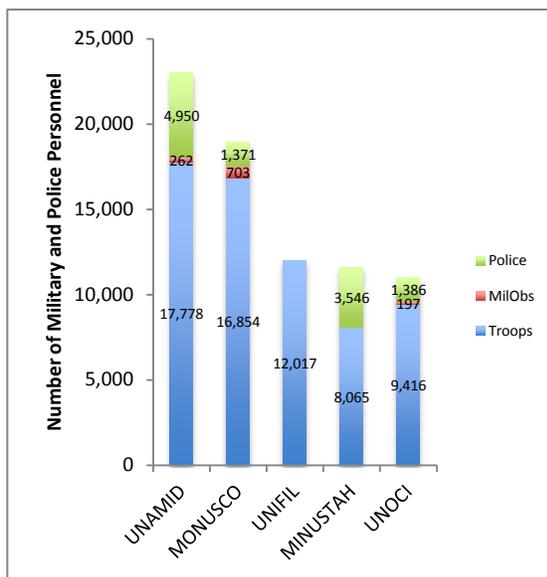
*UN deployments have remained remarkably consistent over the last five years, with a steady focus on African operation*

This degree of stability is in some ways surprising. In 2008, many analysts feared that the UN lacked sufficient military assets and political will to maintain its level of activity. The financial crisis was also expected to put pressure on the peacekeeping budget, resulting in significant cuts to UN forces. While the UN has suffered numerous set-backs in the last five years – including problems in deploying its high-profile force in Darfur and a major crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in 2008 – the organization has still managed to sustain its high level of deployments.

**Five Largest UN Peacekeeping Missions:  
31 January 2008**



**Five Largest UN Peacekeeping Missions:  
31 December 2011**



*Darfur has replaced the DRC as the base for the UN's largest mission. Note that police deployments have increased over the years.*

Moreover, UN peacekeeping has proved its value in a series of high-risk situations, including (i) the stabilization of Haiti after the huge earthquake in January 2010; (ii) the successful conduct of South Sudan's independence referendum in January 2011, which many commentators feared would trigger immediate large-scale violence; and (iii) the resolution of the post-electoral crisis in Côte d'Ivoire in March 2011, which culminated in robust military action by UN and French forces to protect civilians.

None of these successes was easy or total – South Sudan and western Côte d'Ivoire remain extremely unstable, while Haiti's recovery has been patchy at best. But as Bruce Jones has observed “peace operations demonstrated an unexpected degree of resilience in 2011” and called attention to the continued demand for peacekeeping operations as a strategic tool for crisis management.<sup>1</sup>

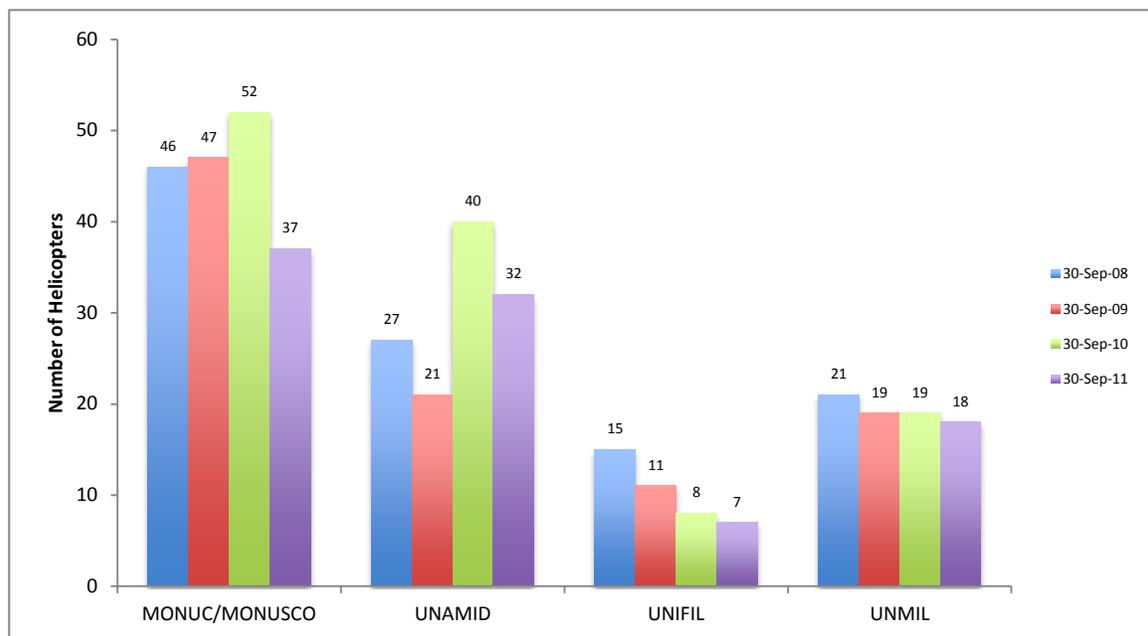
However, there are also reasons for concern about the state of UN peacekeeping. The simple fact that there are still so many UN peacekeepers in the field is *not* a straightforward sign of success. One reason deployment levels remain so high is that the Security Council considers it too dangerous to reduce the numbers of blue helmets in countries such as Liberia and the DRC too fast – the risk of a relapse into violence remains significant. UN officials estimate that the average duration of a mission is 5-7 years, but there have been

<sup>1</sup> Bruce Jones, Director's Comment, *Annual Review of Global Peace Operations*, February 2012.

peacekeepers in DRC, where armed mutinies in the east this year threaten stabilization efforts, for over 12 years.

This has led to fears that some countries are now “dependent” on peacekeepers for stability. Conversely, it has been argued that UN officials and the Security Council are over-reliant on large but static infantry forces, which have proved difficult to reconfigure as operational circumstances change. UN operations often lack enough high-end assets such as helicopters to reduce their reliance on large-scale operations. Indeed, as the table below shows, the UN’s widely-discussed “helicopter gap” has actually worsened since 2008. However, the UN also struggles to identify and deploy other specialized assets such as field hospitals and engineering units.

**Helicopter Assets in Key UN Peacekeeping Missions: 30 September 2008 – 2011**



*In a period in which the UN has consistently called for more helicopters, the numbers of aircraft in its main missions have actually shrunk.*

In a growing number of cases – including Chad, Sudan and the DRC – governments have imposed significant operational and political obstacles to UN peacekeepers on their territory, sometimes threatening to withdraw consent for a mission altogether. The government of Chad carried through this threat in 2010, and extensive efforts by the Security Council failed to persuade it to back down. In 2011, supporters of Laurent Gbagbo in Côte d’Ivoire deliberately targeted UN personnel, putting the mission under severe strain. These episodes have underlined the need to ensure that peacekeeping operations have both (i) the operational resilience and (ii) the political leverage and legitimacy to survive similar challenges to their presence.

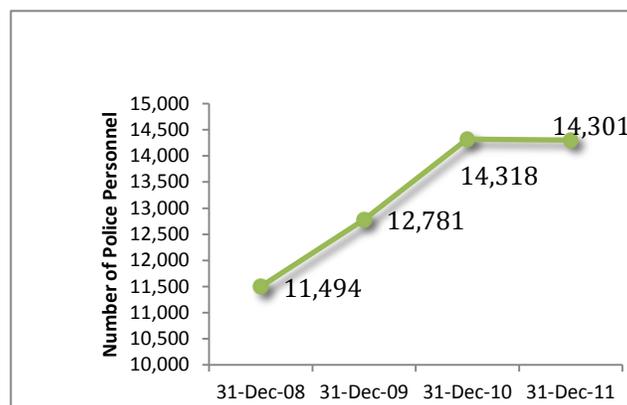
### 1.ii An incomplete reform agenda

In recent years, UN officials have begun to set out an agenda to address the major challenges to peacekeeping and the problems arising from keeping large numbers of troops in the field for long periods. There has not been a comprehensive reform agenda comparable to that based on the Brahimi Report in 2000. Instead, there has been a more *ad hoc* process, by which the UN secretariat and member states have promoted a range of incremental changes affecting specific aspects of peacekeeping.

There has been a focus on improving the quality of logistical support to UN missions. The Department of Field Support (that split off from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in 2007) has developed and started to implement a Global Field Support Strategy aimed at rationalizing the UN's supply chains. This has had a positive effect on the costs and efficiency of the organization's procurement procedures, helping to limit the peacekeeping budget in an era of general austerity. If we exclude the higher costs associated with deploying the two new missions in Sudan and South Sudan in 2011, the budget for 2012-2013 for on-going peace operations represents a ten percent reduction from the previous year's costs.<sup>2</sup>

There have also been efforts to reduce UN missions' reliance on basic infantry forces. There has, for example, been a focus for some years on reducing the UN's reliance on military security provision by increasing the number of police in its missions. As of January 2008, there were 11,239 police in UN operations – 2,010, or 18% were in Kosovo. By December 2011, there were 14,301, despite the fact that the UN handed over policing duties in Kosovo to the European Union in late 2008. The number of Formed Police Units (FPUs) capable of handling public disorder under UN command has risen from 4,145<sup>3</sup> to 7,873 in this period.

#### Police in UN Peacekeeping Missions: 31 December 2008 – 2011



*The number of police in UN missions has grown by 20% in five years – a larger percentage growth than for troops.*

<sup>2</sup> Remarks of Ms. Susana Malcorra, Under-Secretary-General for Field Support, Overview of United Nations Peacekeeping, 9 February 2012. The Under-Secretary-General identified a number of areas where efficiencies had been achieved including rations management, troop and police rotations, ground and air transportation, fuel supply and information technology.

<sup>3</sup> As of 31 October 2007.

Another priority has been to make UN missions more information-driven, increasing force commanders' situational awareness and allowing them to deploy smaller forces more effectively. While the UN does not have (nor is it likely to develop) a robust intelligence capacity, it has made some progress in improving information flow and analysis in recent years. The current UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) is explicitly designed to utilize conflict tracking and early warning mechanisms to direct the deployment of a relatively small military force to handle looming crises, and it is generally agreed to have gathered and assessed information effectively. Unfortunately its military response capacity has, however, been constrained by a lack of air assets. For instance, the deployment of an UNMISS battalion in Jonglei State in late 2011 in response to warnings of violence between ethnic groups was hampered by a lack of helicopters to transport troops.

Improvements in logistics, policy capacity and situational awareness all potentially reduce the tactical burden on military peacekeeping. However, a number of UN officials and member states have also advocated for a *strategic* shift in UN crisis management towards light-weight non-military alternatives to large-scale peacekeeping. There has been a particular emphasis on the potential of UN Special Political Missions (SPMs, primarily made up of civilian staff, sometimes assisted by military observers) to oversee peace processes and state-building projects such as those in Nepal and Libya. The UN is currently operating fourteen field-based SPMs, the greatest number of political missions the organization has simultaneously fielded.<sup>4</sup>

For the time being, there is a general recognition that SPMs cannot substitute for military peacekeeping in all cases. The presence of UN infantry and attack helicopters (in addition to French forces deployed through Operation Licorne) in Côte d'Ivoire, for example, was ultimately crucial to containing the crisis there – a purely civilian presence would not have had the same effect. However, there is also a renewed emphasis in UN policy documents that UN peacekeeping operations must engage in mediation and preventive diplomacy – as well as contributing to peacebuilding – in addition to their basic security function.

There is also an emerging focus on how the UN can use military technologies more effectively to fulfill its mandates. While the UN secretariat has long been searching for additional helicopters for its missions – often in vain – it has recently highlighted the potential utility of drones as monitoring tools, although this is still controversial. Earlier this year Under-Secretary-General Ladsous noted that the use of drones during the 2011 crisis in Jonglei State in South Sudan would have strengthened the peacekeeping mission's ability to protect civilians.<sup>5</sup> DPKO is currently exploring how modern technologies could fill capacity gaps in peacekeeping operations. In addition to drones, geographic imaging systems, satellite imagery, radar, cameras and video networks could all be further utilized in peacekeeping missions to strengthen their monitoring and surveillance capacities and ability to implement their mandates.

---

<sup>4</sup> Since the establishment of UNSMIL in September 2011, there are currently 14 SPMs in the field – the largest number of political missions operating simultaneously, and equal to a short period in 2007, during which there were also fourteen field-based SPMs deployed.

<sup>5</sup> Remarks of Mr. Hervé Ladsous, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, 21 February 2012.

Despite the importance of all these factors to mission design, the strategic future of UN peace operations will be determined by (i) the level of commitment by UN member states to peacekeeping, both in terms of troops and finances; and (ii) the UN's ability to function successfully with partner organizations such as the African and European Unions and NATO, which may take on tasks that the UN cannot handle. In the context, it is important to note the importance of partnerships to the UN before looking at personnel contributions.

### *1.iii The UN's partnerships*

After some earlier hesitation to engage in deep peacekeeping partnership arrangements with other organizations, the UN has increasingly dedicated attention to building relationships with other international peacekeeping actors, particularly regional organizations. In Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Kosovo and Timor-Leste UN peacekeeping missions all work alongside bilateral and regional peacekeeping deployments. In Somalia, a UN SPM, the UN Political Office in Somalia (UNPOS), works alongside African Union troops, an EU training mission and a range of bilateral and regional organizations engaged in counter piracy operations off the Somali coast.

All NATO ground operations have cooperated with the UN, EU or Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. More than two-thirds of EU peace operations have deployed in parallel with a UN mission. These cooperative arrangements are generally not born out of long-term strategic discussions around collaboration, but rather realities – and needs – on the ground. This means that operations are often not fully coordinated, and that the learning curve can be very steep with the addition of a new peace operation in theater.

Yet on the ground cooperation can yield important benefits for peace operations in the field, as can a division of labor. The complex arrangements in Somalia have allowed military forces to gain tactical advantages within Mogadishu, and recently in surrounding areas, while EU naval forces attack pirates at sea and now on land. These operations occur against the backdrop of UNPOS's support for the Somali political process. French forces in Operation Licorne provided the critical military power to end the political crisis in Côte d'Ivoire. Without their support it is unlikely that the UN mission would have been able to quell the violence.

Operational coordination on the ground has not produced the same level of contact at higher political levels between these organizations, and with the exception of the AU, no other regional organizations regularly meet with the Security Council. Yet even where greater strategic level coordination and dialogue has been established, differences between member states in the AU and Security Council over Council decisions and the International Criminal Court have limited the depth of discussion.

With a number of peacekeeping missions expected to draw down in the coming years (as detailed more fully below in section three), UN partnerships will become increasingly important but may leave partner operations more vulnerable to greater risks as missions transition. The most pressing example is the drawdown of the International Stabilization Force in Afghanistan (ISAF), where its departure may have important security implications for the UN political mission on the ground. The expected departure of the UN Mission in

Timor-Leste will leave Australian and New Zealand forces as the first responders should security deteriorate, as was the case in 2006.

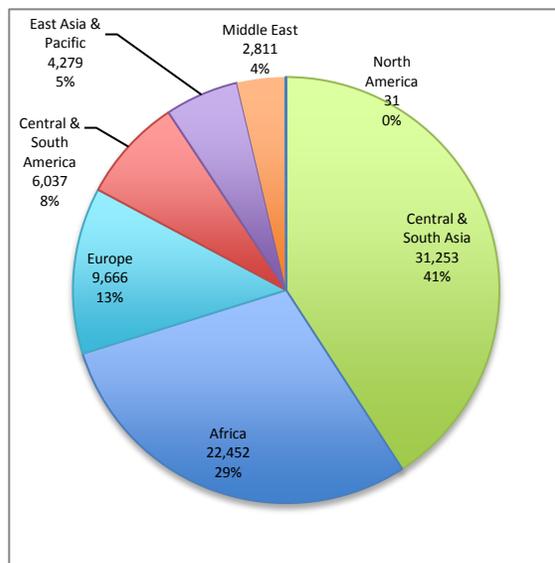
Mission drawdowns may also require additional security guarantees, such as smaller bilateral or multilateral forces in-country or stationed 'over the horizon'. These guarantee forces are another important place for UN partnerships with bilateral and regional forces and may be particularly relevant in West Africa, should peacekeeping missions draw down substantially over the next five years.

## 2. Trends in troop contributions

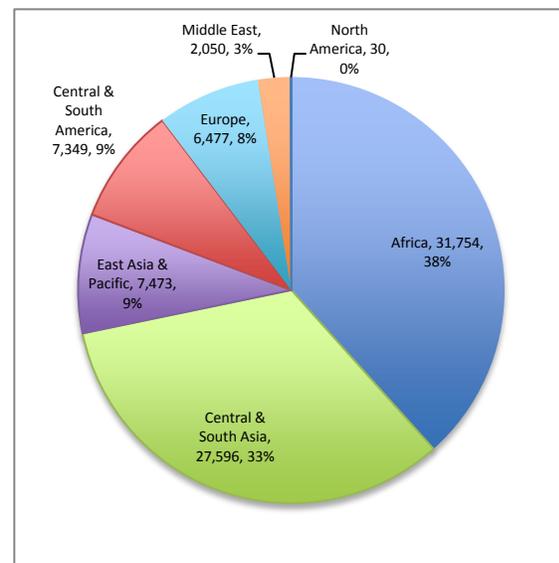
### 2.i Regional contributions

While the consistently high level of peacekeeping troops in the field has posed a challenge for the UN secretariat and for strategic thinking around peacekeeping, it has also posed a significant challenge for member states and raised real questions about maintaining high levels of troop deployment, especially against the background of the global financial crisis and fiscal austerity. Yet, as noted above, aggregate troop deployments since 2008 have remained largely unchanged. Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) have had different reactions to these challenges, which are especially an issue for specialized units. This section reviews the changes in deployment seen since 2008 on a regional basis, both in overall troop levels and specialized units, focusing on engineering units, field hospitals and helicopters.

**Troop Contributions by Region:  
31 January 2008**



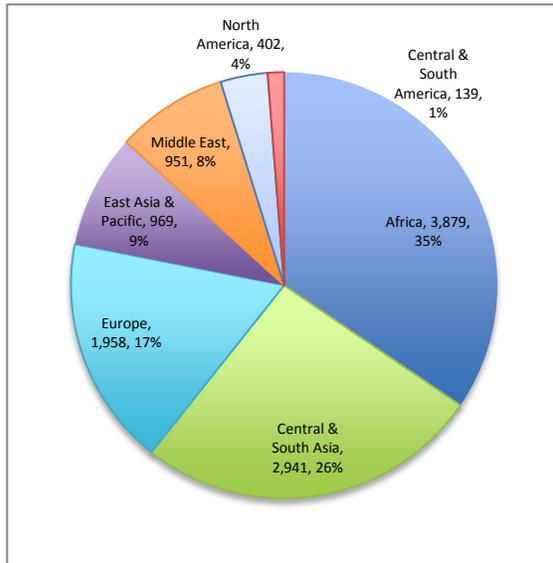
**Troop Contributions by Region:  
31 December 2011**



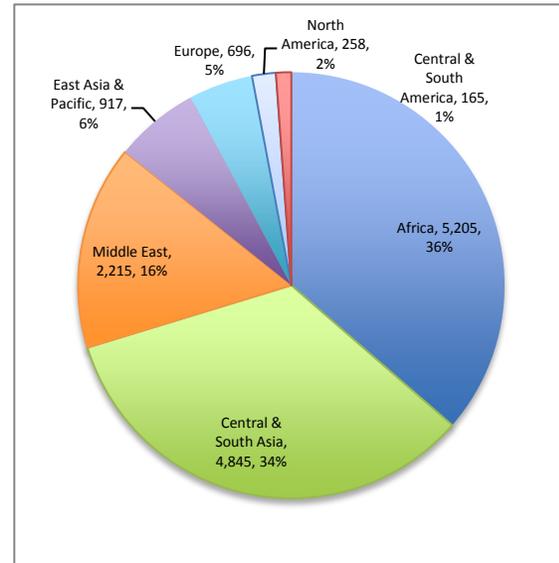
*African countries have taken on an increasingly central role in UN peacekeeping operations.*

Globally, between 2008 and 2011 troop contributions to UN peacekeeping increased 8%, to 82,729 troops. Infantry battalions increased by 55%, while the deployment of engineering units increased by 10% and field hospitals by 40%. The UN's "helicopter gap," as noted above has worsened: since 2008 the number of helicopters deployed to UN missions has fallen nearly 15% to 148 units. During this period Police Contributing Countries (PCCs) increased their deployment of police officers to peacekeeping missions by nearly 30%. However underlying these global figures are a number of important regional shifts.

**Police Contributions by Region:  
31 January 2008**



**Police Contributions by Region:  
31 December 2011**



*European and North American contributions to UN policing have shrunk after the closure of UNMIK's policing component, but other regions have significantly expanded their police contributions.*

Since 2008, **Africa's** troop contribution to UN peacekeeping has increased substantially both in absolute terms and as a percentage of all contributions, growing from 29% to 38%. The growth is largely driven by increases in contributions from Egypt and Ethiopia, notably the latter's deployment to the UN's Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) in 2011. During the same period, police contributions from the region have increased slightly, keeping pace with the overall growth of police contributions to peacekeeping operations. The region's troop contributions come largely in the form of infantry battalions, which have nearly doubled since 2008. At the same time its specialized contributions have remained static with African countries contributing several engineering units and field hospital units, all deployed to missions in Africa. Africa's helicopter contributions have doubled since 2008, an increase fully attributable to Ethiopia, though they still remain a small proportion (7%) of overall helicopter contributions to UN peacekeeping.

**Central and South America's** troop contributions to peacekeeping between 2008 and 2011 have remained stable, accounting for 9% of total troop contributions in 2011, but Brazil's contribution has doubled, making up for smaller decreases by several other countries. The region's contributions of specialized units are nearly all deployed to the UN's Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), with the exception of a Uruguayan engineering unit in the DRC. Half of the region's helicopter contributions are deployed in MINUSTAH. Police deployments have also remained stable, comprising 1% of global police contributions.

**Central and South Asian** peacekeeping contributions have fallen slightly since 2008, from 41% to 33% of all peacekeeping troops, though this change represents a decrease of less

than 4,000 troops. In term of specialized units, the region is the largest contributor of engineering units and field hospitals, though the level of these contributions has remained unchanged since 2008. While overall troop contributions have fallen, the region has increased deployment of police to peacekeeping operations during the same period, with India nearly doubling its contribution.

The region's helicopter contributions however, have decreased considerably from 60 units in 2008, 35% of all helicopter deployments, to 16 units in 2011. India has significantly drawn down its helicopter contribution over the period, an issue highlighted in 2011 when it pulled out four attack and ten transport helicopters from the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO).

**East Asian and Pacific countries** have significantly increased their troop contributions to UN peacekeeping since 2008, with the region's contributions representing 9% of all deployments in 2011. The increase is largely attributable to the increase in infantry battalions – Brunei, Cambodia, China, Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand all added a battalion during the period (joining regional battalions from Australia and Indonesia in place in 2008). The region is also a significant contributor of specialized assets, contributing a quarter of all engineering units and field hospitals to peacekeeping missions. Most of the region's field hospitals are deployed in Africa, and half its engineering units are in MINUSTAH. China is an important actor here, contributing nearly all of the field hospital units and half of the engineering units deployed in 2011 from the region. During the same period, police deployments have remained stable at just under one thousand officers.

**Middle Eastern** troop contributions have decreased slightly since 2008, with Jordan providing the vast majority of troops from the region in addition to two field hospitals, the only specialized assets provided to UN peacekeeping from the region. Most of Jordan's troops are deployed in Africa, as are both of its field hospitals. Jordan also supplies the majority of police contributions from the region. Since 2008 its police contribution has more than doubled, and in 2011 the region accounted for 16% of all police deployments. The vast majority are deployed to African missions.

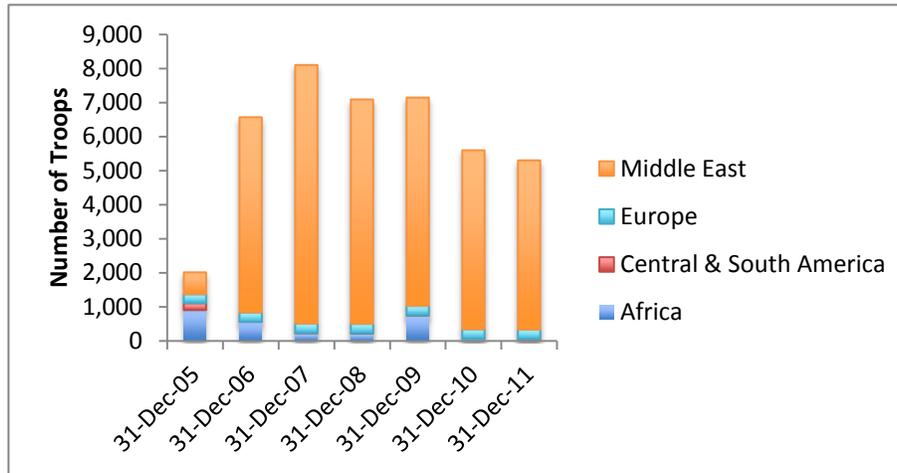
### *2.ii Europe's contribution*

As compared to all other regions, troop contributions to UN peacekeeping from **Europe** have fallen considerably since 2008, decreasing 33%, and in 2011 representing 8% of all UN troop deployments. Interestingly, the region has added six infantry battalions to its contributions during this time, bringing the total to seven battalions deployed in 2011. The largest deployment of European troops is to the Middle East, with the vast majority (nearly 90%) deployed to UNIFIL. The region's contributions of specialized assets have remained stable, with one field hospital and six engineering units deployed as of December 2011. Europe is the largest contributor of helicopters to UN missions, with the vast majority coming from Russia (76 units in 2011) and Ukraine (29 units).

While European deployments to UN peacekeeping have fallen over the past five years, they still compare favorably to **U.S. and Canadian** deployments, which account for less than 1% of global troop deployments. The Canadian military has shifted away from its traditional commitment to peacekeeping. The U.S. still provides very small numbers of personnel,

although the Obama administration has emphasized its interest in UN and AU peace operations, and in 2012 Washington sent a general to serve in a UN mission (UNMIL) in over a decade. This level of American *political* interest in UN operations is noteworthy.

**European Troop Contributions by Region of Deployment: 31 December 2005 – 2011**



*European deployments under UN command are overwhelmingly in the Middle East, primarily in Lebanon.*

Never a large proportion of its UN peacekeeping contributions, European deployments to African missions have fallen since 2008 at a pace far exceeding the decline in European contributions globally, with only 54 troops deployed to the region as of December 2011. The largest contingent was 22 Belgian troops deployed to MONUSCO, with smaller deployments to UN missions in Côte d’Ivoire, Darfur, Liberia and South Sudan. The slight increase in deployments seen in 2009 is attributable to Western European deployments to the short-lived UN Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT). European helicopters made up over three-quarters of 2011 helicopter deployments to African peacekeeping missions; all were provided by Russia and Ukraine.

European support for African peace operations also comes under the aegis of the European Union, with notable support particularly in Somalia. The EU’s counter piracy mission, Operation Atalanta, recently expanded its mandate to allow its forces to pursue pirate bases and assets on the Somali coast. There are 20-25 vessels on rotating deployment off the coast of Somalia, with approximately 4-7 ships and 2-3 aircraft deployed at any given time. The EU also trains Somali security actors through the EU Training Mission (EUTM) in Somalia, based in Uganda.

Europe’s police contribution to UN peacekeeping has been more than halved between 2008 and 2011. Against global increases of nearly 30% during this period, European police contributions now represent 5% of the global total. The largest contingents of European police are in the UN’s Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), MINUSTAH, the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and UNMISS.

### 3. Future demand for peacekeepers

This section attempts to lay out scenarios for UN deployments region by region, based on current trends in peacekeeping. It aims to answer two main questions: (i) where are peacekeepers likely to be needed; and (ii) to what extent can these regions rely on peacekeepers from local states? In some cases, as in Haiti, regional powers are able to provide the majority of peacekeepers. By contrast, a high percentage of UN troops in Africa come from beyond the continent (primarily from South Asia) although African contributions have risen, as the previous section showed. The great majority of UN forces in the Middle East come from elsewhere (primarily Europe) reflecting political obstacles to Arab deployments.

To some extent, the shape of UN peacekeeping will be defined by this interplay of supply and demand: a significant reduction in operations in Africa, for example, would reduce the UN's reliance on South Asian troops. But a significant increase in operations in the Middle East might increase calls for European forces, given their long-standing presence in the area.

However, it is worth recognizing that deployment patterns can change over time: European powers played a much greater peacekeeping role in Africa in the 1990s than today, for example. This could be reversed. Should there be an increasing demand for peacekeepers in North Africa, a region of more direct interest to European powers than sub-Saharan Africa, it is possible that a significant number of European troops might deploy to help.

The following section of this report looks first at demand for peacekeepers in Sub-Saharan Africa, including (i) West Africa; (ii) Central Africa; (iii) the Sudans; (iv) the Horn of Africa; and (v) North Africa. It then turns its attention to the Middle East and Central Asia. Finally it briefly turns to other cases (including the Americas, Europe and the Asia-Pacific) where UN deployments are relatively uncommon and regional powers can supply security forces.

For the African cases and the Middle East, the report makes projections on the likely demand for UN peacekeepers area by area. These projections range from low-end to high-end scenarios. While speculative, they are based on current trends and regional precedents. We have not included detailed numerical projections for UN forces in other regions, as there is not a sufficiently clear basis to do so. It is *possible* that a UN force could be deployed in Europe or the Pacific five years from now, but there will have been a series of significant strategic surprises along the way – making the details of the force impossible to predict.

#### 3.i Africa

Peacekeeping continues to be a critical tool for stabilizing conflict areas in Africa. At the end of 2011 over 61,000 military peacekeepers were deployed to UN missions on the continent, in addition to over 9,000 police. Despite increases in regional capacity for peacekeeping, South Asian troops continue to play a pivotal role in African peacekeeping. In 2011, nearly 50% of UN troops in Africa were of African origin whereas Central and South Asian countries contributed 39%. The growth in African capacity can be seen by comparing these figures to 2007, where African countries contributed 33% of UN troops in Africa and Central and South Asian contributions made up over half (nearly 53%) of troops deployed in

the continent. This occurred during a period where UN deployments to the region increased over 16%.

Regional organizations have also taken a stronger role in crisis response, particularly in Somalia and West Africa, but it remains to be seen whether these capacities are sufficiently robust to manage conflict or crisis. The Africa Standby Force, originally slated to be operational in 2010, has been delayed until 2015. ECOWAS and SADC are so far the furthest along in developing their regional brigades. Should these brigades prove capable of independently launching responses to regional crises, this would significantly impact demand for extra-regional UN peacekeepers in Africa.

### *West Africa*

After a period of gradual improvement in West Africa, troubling political developments and unconstitutional changes in power have raised concerns about stability and regional conflict spillovers. France's Operation Licorne, particularly its attack helicopters, proved decisive in the post-electoral crisis in Côte d'Ivoire. Liberia continues to make progress, but incidents during Côte d'Ivoire's electoral crisis highlight the significant risk of regional instability. In 2012 ECOWAS took the lead in responding to crises in Mali and Guinea Bissau, and in the latter is also deploying peacekeeping troops.

Despite improvements in regional peacekeeping capacity the UN may be expected to further bolster West African missions or deploy one to two medium-to-large peacekeeping operations in the region. The most likely candidate for a UN mission at the time of writing was Mali, and there are concerns about Niger. At the same time, the mission in Liberia is likely to draw down and if events in Côte d'Ivoire allow, UNOCI could also reduce its force size or completely withdraw over the next five years. Any drawdown in the region will require stronger inter-mission asset sharing arrangements, greater access to specialized assets and military units and possible over the horizon forces.

If the UN does not deploy significant new missions, and succeeds in downsizing both UNMIL and UNOCI, there could be between 0 and 5,000 peacekeepers deployed in the region five years from now (even if large-scale operations end, it is possible that small-scale international security forces might remain in cases including Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea-Bissau in an "overwatch" role). But if instability re-emerges in Liberia and/or Côte d'Ivoire, or the UN deploys a mission to Mali, there could be anywhere between 10,000 and 25,000 peacekeepers deployed in the area in 2017 – although these would likely be a mix of UN and ECOWAS troops, rather than solely blue helmet forces.

It should be noted that an operation of any size in Mali (or a neighboring country like Niger) would face logistical challenges comparable to those faced by the UN in the Sudans and previously in Chad, especially if it was required to patrol desert areas – creating a high demand for air assets. Some experts have concluded that the capability challenges involved in deploying to northern Mali would be almost insurmountable for the UN or ECOWAS, ruling out large-scale peace operations.

Sources of peacekeepers in West Africa:
---

- West African peacekeeping missions deployed by the UN still rely on significant external contributions. In both UNOCI and UNMIL African contributions make up less than half of the overall troop contingent.
- ECOWAS' capacity to deploy peacekeepers may significantly impact the need for external UN troop contributions.

### *Central Africa*

In Central Africa, a gradual reduction in the UN's mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, MONUSCO, is probable over the next five years. However, the mission (or a successor force) could still have between 5,000 and 10,000 troops in the DRC in 2017: renewed violence in eastern Congo may make it difficult to significantly reduce MONUSCO's force size in the immediate term, and there will always be an argument for keep some peacekeepers as "insurance." However, it is possible that African Union will take on some military duties from the UN in DRC.

Should the current light AU ad-hoc operation against the Lord's Resistance Army prove incapable of stemming the threat posed by the LRA, a more robust mission may be needed that would draw on a wider base of troop contributions – although this might continue to be under a UN banner.

#### Source of peacekeepers for Central Africa:

- Central Africa still lacks the military resources to stabilize itself. Four of MONUSCO's top five military and police contributors are not African – three are South Asian and one, Uruguay, is Latin American. South Africa, the fifth contributor, currently contributes 1,200 of MONUSCO's 17,000 troops. It is unlikely that regional forces could sustain a peacekeeping mission, even one of smaller order, in the DRC without external peacekeeping support.

### *East Africa (1): the Sudans*

The significant change seen over the past year in Sudan and the Horn makes it difficult to predict the trajectory of peace operations in the region. We see two possible scenarios in 2017 – one where peacekeeping in the region expands dramatically as a final push towards resolving long-festering conflict and one where regional peacekeeping shrinks dramatically driven by gains or in recognition that peacekeeping is unable to meaningfully impact change in the region.

Sudan and South Sudan combined now host nearly one-third of the UN's peacekeepers. Should negotiations between the two states fail, it is possible that a much stronger force could be needed at the border to stem conflict and that UNMISS would need to be substantially strengthened to respond to internal challenges. However, should negotiations prove fruitful, it is possible that UNISFA could close and that UNMISS could draw down partially. It is likely that the AU-UN Hybrid Mission in Darfur will draw down significantly over the next five years, driven by a combination of some improvements on the ground but more significantly, challenges in fulfilling its mandate and command and control difficulties.

Therefore overall, if political progress is made between the two countries and in Darfur, these deployments could drop to 5-10,000 troops.

However, if peacekeeping missions in the two Sudans fail to achieve their objectives and the political process fully breaks down, peacekeeping in the region could take one of two directions: the governments involved and/or the international community may decide that peacekeeping is no longer contributing to conflict resolution, in which case peacekeeping deployments could number between 0-10,000. However, if deterioration prompts significant buy-in from all stakeholders, peacekeeping requirements for the region could rise, with roughly 50,000 personnel in place in 2017.

#### *East Africa (2): Somalia*

2011 saw major gains in peacekeeping in Somalia, with AU troops gaining significant ground against Islamist militants and the UN political mission relocating to Mogadishu. This was facilitated by greater support from African troops and prompted expanded support packages from the UN, for a larger AMISOM mission, and the EU, with an expanded mandate for Operation Atalanta in 2012. If the recently strengthened AMISOM mission is able to make substantial and sustainable progress against Al-Shabaab, by 2017 the troop level of the mission could decrease to one-half or one-third of its current authorized force level of over 17,000 (i.e. 6,000-9,000 troops). It is possible that these forces could transfer from AU to UN command as the situation stabilizes. Somalia would likely require significant capacity building in this case, particularly in developing a capable police force. Somalia may then require a more multidimensional peacekeeping mission and police assistance. By contrast, if the situation in Somalia deteriorates, the number of peacekeepers could rise up to 25,000.

#### *Source of peacekeepers for the Sudans and Somalia:*

- The majority of peacekeepers in UNMISS are South Asian. Per the government's request, the majority of troops in UNAMID are African. It is unlikely that either of these patterns would substantially change. As UNAMID is largely staffed from the region, any reduction in size would likely come from external troops, except in the case of specialized assets, which may be available only outside the region.
- China is a contributor of specialized units to both missions, and its strategic interests suggest it will be a source of continued forces in the future.

#### *North Africa*

In addition to the main African theaters noted above it, it is possible that deterioration in Libya could require a peacekeeping mission to either restore stability or provide longer-term support to state functions. However given existing state capacity it is likely that a mission here would be smaller than other multidimensional peacekeeping missions, possibly on the order of 3-5,000. Any peacekeeping mission in Libya would need sufficient air assets to operate successfully in the south of the country, raising problem similar to those in Darfur.

For the time being, however, it appears probable that international engagement in Libya will remain primarily political in nature. The one existing UN peace operation in the region – that in the Western Sahara – remains small, with just over 230 military observers (from a

wide range of contributors) and 100 civilian staff. In the event of genuine political progress on Western Sahara's status, this number might decrease – but this is a sadly unlikely scenario.

### *3.ii Middle East*

The dramatic change over the past eighteen months in this region pose new challenges for peacekeeping in strategically significant states. The on-going crisis in Syria has exposed deep divisions in the Security Council and to date limited the role of peacekeepers to monitoring a rapidly fraying peace agreement. Should the Council come to agreement on the deployment of peacekeepers in Syria, the mission could involve anywhere from 8,000 to 20,000 troops (at least in its first phase).

The violence has major implications for stability in Lebanon, and the conflict has already crossed the border. If Lebanon managed to avoid succumbing to large-scale violence prompted by Syria, it is possible that the mission could halve by 2017, bringing regional requirements (including troops in UNTSO, UNDOF, and UNFICYP) to 8,000 troops, in addition to what may be needed in Syria.

#### *Source of peacekeepers in the Middle East:*

- Western countries are likely to remain highly engaged in peace operations in the region and could deploy additional troops to Lebanon or in the event of a Syrian mission. Russia and Turkey also have obvious interests in maintaining a role in regional operations in future.
- Should UNIFIL make significant progress, it is possible (as initially projected in our 2008 paper) that the troop contingent of the mission could shift from primarily European to non-European forces. European contingents have shrunk in recent years, but the mission is likely to rely on a backbone of Western forces for some time to come.
- If there is a need to deploy to Syria, Arab forces could be deployed in large numbers – although this would also raise political controversies. However, the recent crises in the region have renewed interest in the Arab League as a potential peacekeeping partner for the UN.

### *3.iii Central Asia*

Troop contributing countries are rapidly scaling down their contributions to the International Stabilization Force in Afghanistan ahead of its planned closure in 2014. With their departure, the UN political mission in Afghanistan will take on the central international role in the country. It is possible that the UN mission will require some sort of international protection force to operate.

There is also possibility that a new generation of political missions and security forces may be required to help stabilize other Central Asian states, such as Tajikistan – especially if there is a risk of spillover from renewed conflict in Afghanistan. While Russia and its regional allies would be likely to provide military forces, possibly under the aegis of the Collective Security Organization, there might be a need for UN civilian experts and military observers

(in the 1990s the UN deployed 120 observers to Tajikistan, while the OSCE sent 50 police officers to Kyrgyzstan in 2010).

### *3.iv Other Regions: Specialized Regional Forces*

Peacekeepers continue to be deployed in less concentrated numbers in Haiti, Kosovo, Cyprus and Timor-Leste. The needs of these peacekeeping missions are largely covered by regional capacities (such as Latin American forces in Haiti led by Brazil, and Australia in Timor-Leste) and they are expected to draw down within the next five years, sooner in the case of Timor-Leste. However it is possible that new crises may emerge or that some apparently fairly stable countries experience a deterioration requiring new deployment of troops, as happened in the past in Haiti and Timor-Leste. Depending on the scale of the crisis, this could require further strengthening by global UN troops. It is also possible that as MINUSTAH draws down, the mission will require an additional police presence to help sustain order.

### *3.v Conclusions*

This section has offered a wide variety of projections for deployments in Africa and the Middle East, in addition to suggesting possible types of deployment elsewhere. On the basis of our projections it is possible to imagine that the UN could have over 125,000 troops deployed worldwide by 2017 (with an emphasis on the Sudans, the Middle East, West Africa and the Horn of Africa). But it is also possible to imagine that there will be fewer than 50,000 blue helmets by 2017 – or as low as 25,000 if the AU and sub-regional organizations take on significant duties from the UN across Africa and a number of potential crises can be averted.

In reality, large deployments in one region may place limits on what the organization can deploy in another – if demand for peacekeepers in West Africa and the Sudans is high, for example, fewer African and South Asian troops will be available to deploy in other missions.

The final section of this report offers three overall scenarios for the future of UN peacekeeping based on the predictions above, and looks at Western options in each case.

## 4. The future of UN operations and Europe's role

Reviewing the projections for the future demand for UN peace operations in Section 3, a number of conclusions appear fairly certain, even if nothing can be guaranteed:

- Current conditions in the Middle East suggest that the overall demand for peacekeepers in the region will be high. If a number of heavy UN operations are required in the Middle East, they could involve a total of 30,000 troops or more. It would, at least, be unwise to bet on more benign conditions.
- While some African regions are likely to make progress and remain stable – reducing their reliance on peacekeepers – it is probable that at least one or two parts of the continent will see deteriorating security sections. Recent events in the Sudans and, West and Central Africa have reinforced this concern. It is likely that in 2017, the UN will still have two or more large-scale missions in Africa as well as smaller operations and political missions.
- It is also probable that at least one of these African operations will be in a country – potentially ranging from Mali to Somalia – that is of strategic significance to Europe. In the past, many UN operations in Africa have been deployed in countries that have been of limited strategic import to Europe (such as Liberia and Burundi) but the growth of Islamist forces in the region, combined with Africa's growing economic significance, change this calculus.
- It should also be underlined that large-scale operations in Africa – including those of strategic importance to Europe – will need a significant number of enablers, as they will be deployed in large theaters with little infrastructure.
- It is also probable that UN operations will continue to increasingly rely on police contingents and information-gathering capacities to supplement military units. It is unclear to what extent the UN will integrate modern military technologies such as drones into its information-gathering but our judgment is that there will be an incremental drift towards employing them.
- In addition to the continued importance of peace operations, it is also likely that the UN will have increased number of political missions in areas including the Middle East, North Africa and Central Asia. There is a good probability that a number of these operations will also be in high-risk environments, and they will only be able to operate under a high level of security.

If we assume that the UN will have major presences in parts of Africa and the Middle East as of 2017, who will provide the bulk of these forces? The evidence is mixed:

- As the data in Sections 1 and 2 of this report suggests, there are signs that African countries are developing growing peacekeeping capacity. This has begun to pay off in cases including Somalia. If this trend continues, which will be contingent on

outside funding, it is possible that African militaries and police forces will be able to take on an increased percentage of operations.

- However, it is probable that most African militaries will still have less access to important military technologies than their counterparts elsewhere. The UN will hope that troop contributors such as Brazil, China and India – all of which are modernizing their militaries – will continue to engage in blue helmet operations. While there are positive signs that Brazil and China are committed to continuing their role, India appears to be losing interest. Keeping these rising militaries involved will be a constant priority for the UN.
- The role of other traditional non-African peacekeepers – such as Bangladesh, Nepal or Fiji – is uncertain. If the UN’s overall demand for basic infantry units is reduced, these contributors may have less of a role to play. However, the importance of peacekeeping to this class of relatively poor countries is such that they will lobby hard to keep their personnel in the field. There will be strong political arguments in New York for ensuring that these traditional friends of peacekeeping are kept on board – especially if India cuts its role.
- One open question is whether an increased demand for peacekeepers in the Middle East will inspire Arab countries to devote more forces to UN missions. The quality of Arab units in UN missions has been variable in recent years. However, if there is a demand for troops in cases such as Syria or Yemen in the years ahead, it is possible that Arab governments will aim to send better forces.

Overall, UN operations are likely to continue to rely primarily on a mix of African and Asian forces with a potential increase in Middle Eastern forces depending on events. While the presence of contributors such as China, Brazil and India will be important to the quality of UN forces, European contributions will also be a significant factor.

#### *4.i European contributions<sup>6</sup>*

European contributions to UN missions are also likely to be affected by their location. If there is a significantly increased demand for peacekeepers in the Middle East, it is probable that European governments will see little choice but to contribute – their ability to contribute will be constrained by military concerns, but may be facilitated by the fact that contingents will be coming back from Afghanistan.

In Middle Eastern missions, European contributions may well include a wide range of forces, including infantry and possibly air and maritime assets, as previously in Lebanon. In some cases, it will be possible or necessary to integrate these units with forces from the region – Arab governments could, for example, provide the bulk of infantry units while European militaries mainly offered higher-end enabling assets.

---

<sup>6</sup> Some of the options in this section are discussed at greater length in Richard Gowan, “The Case for Cooperation in Crisis Management”, European Council on Foreign Relations, June 2012.

By contrast, it is unlikely that European governments will commit large-scale, long-term infantry forces to Africa. However, as noted above, there is a possibility that the UN will be required to deploy peacekeepers to countries and regions of strategic significance to Europe such as Mali and Somalia. In these cases, there will be a European interest in providing a wider range of enabling assets to the UN missions, especially if the U.S. continues to demonstrate that it also has an interest in sustaining UJ and AU peace operations in Africa.

Another factor that may influence deployments is a desire among European militaries to build better ties with their counterparts from rising powers like Brazil, China and India. UN peacekeeping can offer a platform for improving these relationships in a practical manner, avoiding tensions inherent in other parts of defense relationships.

In some cases, European support to the UN will be channeled through NATO and the EU, as previously in Kosovo, Afghanistan, the DRC and Chad. However, discussions with European officials suggest that there is growing interest in making direct (if limited) contributions to UN missions. This reflects factors including *(i)* a degree of “intervention fatigue” in both NATO and the EU; *(ii)* acceptance that NATO in particular has a legitimacy deficit in many regions; and *(iii)* recognition that it is simply inefficient to provide operational support to the UN indirectly in many cases.

What sort of specialized assets can European countries offer the UN (alongside or in the absence of infantry forces)? The types of support can be broken into three types: *(i)* major enabling units; *(ii)* highly-skilled individual specialists and *(iii)* the discretionary deployment of non-specialist personnel to gain knowledge of the UN.

#### *Major enabling units*

As we have noted throughout this paper, the UN often struggles to find sufficient numbers of important enabling units. In this context, European countries can offer:

- *Helicopters:* while the UN’s need for helicopters is well-publicized, NATO militaries with major deployments in Afghanistan have not been able to provide aircraft to fill the gap. As of 2011, Italy and Spain were the only NATO members with any helicopters in UN missions, a situation that could improve once NATO countries have left Afghanistan and rested their fleets.
- *Drones:* while the debate over the role of drones in UN missions is incomplete, European militaries may be able to offer the organization mid-range pilotless aircraft to assist in observation and information-gathering.
- *Engineers:* European militaries could deploy additional engineering units to help UN missions build camps and infrastructure. DPKO has recently put forward plans for relatively short “surge” deployments of engineers to help missions deploy or build new bases, rather than accompanying missions for more prolonged periods. European units could offer such short-term help.

- *Gendarmerie and riot police*: European nations still deploy some of the most effective gendarmerie units in the world, and many have experience of peacekeeping in the Balkans. These units, and riot police from countries that do not have gendarmerie-type forces, play an important role in linking military and civilian security provision. As of late 2011, only one EU member (Portugal) had a Formed Police Unit under UN command. But in 2010, European nations deployed extra police to Haiti after the earthquake, and it is possible that Europeans could provide more FPUs to the UN again.
- *Special forces and protection units*: European countries could enhance UN missions by offering special forces companies to provide high-rapid reaction and/or reconnaissance in dangerous environments. Such forces need not only be deployed in peacekeeping operations: detachments of special forces could be used to provide security for UN political missions or mediation teams in high-risk contexts, especially in Afghanistan or the Middle East.
- *Field hospitals*: while the UN recently created waves by turning down the offer of a Norwegian field hospital, these are assets peacekeepers frequently need. Medical units also have a high public relations value, as they are able to care for civilians as well as soldiers, a selling-point for many contributors.
- *Maritime capabilities*: European navies may also contribute to peace operations by deploying vessels, but these assets mainly fall outside the UN chain of command and fall beyond the purview of this paper. Nonetheless, experiences in the Mediterranean and Gulf of Aden highlight their utility.

#### *Highly-skilled specialized personnel*

Even where European governments are unable to deploy whole units, they may be able to send small numbers of personnel to undertake specific tasks. In the past, European countries have often offered staff officers to missions in which they have no other presence. This has created tensions with troop contributors. But there are functional areas in which Europeans can contribute personnel. Examples include:

- *Air planning and movement specialists*: studies of UN air operations have highlighted that they often suffer from a lack of effective planning as well as aircraft.<sup>7</sup> European countries could offer the fairly small expert teams needed.
- *Information analysts*: as the UN gradually builds up its information-gathering apparatus – and especially if it begins to use military technology as part of the process regularly – it will need personnel experienced in processing increasing quantities of data. European countries have already seconded personnel to UN analysis cells, but this could be a growth area in future.

---

<sup>7</sup> See Jake Sherman, Alischa Kugel and Andrew Sinclair, “Overcoming Helicopter Force Generation Challenges for UN Peacekeeping Operations”, *International Peacekeeping* Vol.19, No.1 (2012), pp82-83.

- *Chemical weapons experts:* in cases such as Libya, the UN has been concerned by the risks associated with loose chemical weapons and other hazardous materials. Some European militaries have experts on these weapons who could be sent to assist the UN secure dangerous stockpiles at short notice.
- *Security sector and defense reform specialists:* European governments, such as Slovakia and the Netherlands, have promoted the UN's role in reforming the security sectors and defense governance in post-conflict states. Although this is not a solely military business, European personnel can certainly assist.

In addition to these military tasks, the UN has identified a number of policing and civilian security fields in which European countries have particular skills, such as border security. The UN's recent Civilian Capacity Review calls for "a more broadly composed workforce in which core United Nations staff are supplemented by additional capacities deployed on a flexible, on-demand basis from Governments, international and regional organizations and non-governmental entities."<sup>8</sup> European governments can find many ways to contribute to this if they wish to.

#### *Discretionary deployments of non-specialist personnel*

In addition to sending specialists on UN missions, European militaries should also consider the value inherent in exposing non-specialist personnel to blue helmeted peacekeeping. In recent years, junior European officers have had a very high chance of being deployed in NATO or EU operations, but far fewer have joined UN missions.

This discrepancy has created a degree of misunderstanding about how the UN works in the field (in some cases fueled by a broad distrust of the UN dating back to the Balkan wars). If European countries were to deploy more junior and mid-ranking officers as military observers, or to play other supporting roles in UN missions, it could promote increased knowledge about how peacekeeping works.

#### *4.ii Conclusions*

Many obstacles remain to European countries significantly expanding their contributions to UN missions, although UN officials have been working hard to address particularly contentious issues such as command and control. Even if political and security threats demanded a major increase of European forces under UN command in the Middle East and parts of Africa, arranging this would require intensive dialogues and pragmatic compromises between European and UN officials.

Nonetheless, this paper has aimed to demonstrate that there is a substantial case that (i) UN peacekeeping will remain an important strategic tool for the maintenance of peace and security in the next five years; (ii) that the UN's systems for managing peace operations are genuinely if gradually improving and (iii) that there are solid strategic reasons for European powers to become more involved. In an era of austerity this cannot be easy, but it may be

---

<sup>8</sup> See the Report of the Secretary-General, "Civilian Capacity in the Aftermath of Conflict", 19 August 2011 (A/66/311 – S/2011/527), p9.

part of Europe's contribution to a stable world – and a stable neighborhood – in a period of political uncertainty.