By November, there was growing recognition of the need for better-developed interinstitutional arrangements. The UN was advocating and the AU approved a three-phase process leading to a hybrid force, the leadership of which would be jointly appointed by the UN and AU.

In the case of Lebanon, no formal hybrid structures were involved. But the rapid mobilization of the first wave of European troops for UNIFIL was negotiated through the European Council in Brussels, and those deployed relied on their own logistical arrangements rather than on those of the UN. Their lines of communication between the field and New York ran through a special cell designed to supplement UN procedures. In its earliest phase, the upgraded UNIFIL looked like an EU-led multinational force operating under a UN logo—this began to change as China and South Asian forces deployed to the mission through standard UN structures.

That Europe skirted the UN’s mechanisms irritated many, raising concerns about “privileged” missions. Yet many UN officials were simultaneously concerned about their own overstretched capacity. Nonetheless, the UN has found itself at the nexus of new institutional arrangements with both the AU and the EU, suggesting that it may be more adaptable.