

Global _____
Peace Operations

Review



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A monthly newsletter from the Center on International Cooperation

GLOBAL PEACE OPERATIONS REVIEW

The **Global Peace Operations Review** is an interactive web-portal presenting in-depth analysis and detailed data on military **peacekeeping operations** and civilian-led political missions by the United Nations, regional organizations, and ad-hoc coalitions. The web-portal is a product of the **New York University Center on International Cooperation (CIC)** and a continuation of its long-standing print publications the *Annual Review of Global Peace Operations* and the *Review of Political Missions*.

Providing the most comprehensive overview of multilateral contributions to **peacekeeping, conflict prevention, and post-conflict peacebuilding**, the *Review* aims to initiate and inform discussions on the comparative advantages and appropriateness of different missions, and through constructive analysis to further strengthen existing partnerships necessary for them to succeed.

Through the **Country & Regional Profile pages**, the *Review* provides background information and regularly updated key developments on peace operations and the contexts in which they operate. The analysis is further enhanced by the provision of detailed data on each of the UN's peace operations, and headline data on missions fielded by regional organizations and ad hoc missions, which can be accessed in full through the **Data & Trends** section. Data on non-UN peace operations was compiled by the **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)**. For more details, please see our **Data guide**. The **Strategic Summary** provides an overview of main developments in mission settings over the past year and presents analysis on trends and the impact these may have on shaping peace operations of the future. Thematic essays presented in the In Focus section unpack issues critical to peace operations, providing analysis and guidance on possible approaches.

The Library section enables readers to download full text .pdf files of past editions of the *Annual Review of Global Peace Operations* (2006-2012) and the *Review of Political Missions* (2010-2012). For those interested in conducting their own analysis using the data generated for these publications, we have provided spreadsheets of all the **statistics** used to compile these reports.

Scope of the Global Peace Operations Review

The *Review* covers more than one hundred multilateral peace operations active in the previous year including missions fielded by the UN, AU, EU, ECOWAS, OSCE, OAS and coalitions. It uses a **broad definition of peace operations** that includes multilateral and ad hoc military and police missions, as well as civilian led political missions. Neither type of mission has a simple definition. Alongside more straightforward peacekeeping missions, the *Review*, mindful of the need for peace operations to adjust to the changing nature of conflict, also includes peace enforcement operations that employ the use of force and engage in active combat.

Under political missions, we include multilateral civilian-led missions that have political engagement in the form of launching and supporting political processes at their core. This includes, for example, the EU's Special Representatives and the African Union Liaison Offices that support the implementation of peace agreements and accompany political processes. We have excluded missions, such as EU delegations and other liaison offices that may engage in political activities, but as their core function serve more as regular diplomatic or developmental presences. Along the same reasoning, we have also excluded election observer and human rights monitoring missions.

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THEMATIC ESSAYS

January 20, 2016



HURRY UP AND WAIT: EU BATTLEGROUPS AND A UN RAPID REACTION FORCE

Yf Reykers

THE EU KEEPS EXPRESSING A STRONG COMMITMENT TOWARD SUPPORTING THE UN IN MAINTAINING INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY. THIS INCLUDES HABITUALLY RECOMMITTING TO DEPLOYING THE EU BATTLEGROUPS.

Throughout its public discourse, the EU keeps expressing a strong commitment toward supporting the UN in maintaining international peace and security. This includes habitually recommitting to deploying the EU Battlegroups.

There have been many calls for the UN to develop a peacekeeping rapid reaction capacity that would allow blue helmets to fly over the horizon and save the day. In the [Supplement to an Agenda for Peace of 1995](#), then UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali said its “time has come”. [The 2015 Report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations \(HIPPO\)](#) suggested a “small UN ‘vanguard capability’ should be considered”. In his response, the Secretary-General called this “[an intriguing concept](#)”. Why have we been waiting for so long for such a force to arrive?

Recognizing that the UN moves slowly, the HIPPO and the Secretary-General’s reports proposed a burden-sharing solution. Relying on existing regional rapid response mechanisms could deliver this capability in the case of an emergency in the near future. “In situations of major conflict and mass violations of human rights,” Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon noted, “national, multinational and regional responses are often faster to deploy and more capable of combating well-equipped and determined belligerents”. In the response to the HIPPO report, he even welcomed African Union (AU) efforts and “the commitment by the European Union (EU) to engaging European Union Battlegroups”.

The sad track record of the EU’s rapid response capabilities make these promises sound rather hollow. While the EU has been a reliable partner in civilian and security operations, EU members have been far less inclined to offer military capabilities — and certainly not in a rapid fashion. Publicly endorsing commitments to engage EU Battlegroups is more a symbolic expression of hope rather than a credible proposal.

THE EU-UN PARTNERSHIP

Ever since the 1992 [Agenda for Peace](#) called upon regional organizations to assist the UN in maintaining international peace and security, the EU has taken the most prominent position of them all. The EU-UN relationship particularly intensified after Operation Artemis in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in 2003. Authorized by UN Security Council Resolution 1484, the EU rapidly deployed 1,800 troops to Bunia (in the Ituri province) for the period May-September 2003. It also assisted the UN Mission in the DRC (MONUC) in securing the airport and protecting civilians and internally displaced persons in 2006.

The success of Operation Artemis led to two developments that significantly shaped the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and impacted its relationship with the UN. The first was an awareness in the EU and UN that increased cooperation and the institutionalization of the relationship could be mutually beneficial. This was formalized through the [EU-UN Joint Declaration of 2003](#), wherein the EU stressed "its commitment to contribute to the objectives of the United Nations in crisis management", and the [2007 Joint Statement on UN-EU cooperation in Crisis Management](#). In the field this translated to increased EU presence, often in support of UN operations. The EU has since 2003 conducted about 30 peace and security operations, with the large majority of them being deployed in areas where there was also a UN operation underway.

The second development was the creation of the EU Battlegroups, a CSDP rapid response force that strongly reflects the modalities of Operation Artemis. These battlegroups, consisting of a brigade of around 1,500 troops, were [designed](#) to be deployed within fifteen days for a period of maximum 120 days, and could be set up for the full range of crisis management tasks, even including intervention in a sudden crisis. Interestingly, these Battlegroups were [envisioned](#) to be deployed only under the explicit condition of a request by the UNSC. By doing so, the EU reaffirmed the Council's role as the primary organ responsible in maintaining international peace and security, while seemingly indicating EU commitment to support the UN anywhere necessary.

A SEEMINGLY CONTINUOUS COMMITMENT?

Ever since they reached full operational capacity in 2007, the EU Battlegroups have excelled only in their absence. Throughout its public discourse, however, the EU keeps expressing a strong commitment toward supporting the UN in maintaining international peace and security. This includes habitually recommitting to deploying the EU Battlegroups. In the [European Security Strategy](#) of 2003 it was argued that "strengthening the United Nations, equipping it to fulfil its responsibilities and to act effectively, is a European priority". Five years later in 2008, the [Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy](#) stressed "everything the EU has done in the field of security has been linked to UN objectives". At the [European Council of 19/20 December 2013](#), it was even explicitly concluded that there was a "need to improve the EU rapid response capabilities, including through more flexible and deployable Battle groups". At the Peacekeeping Summit of 28 September 2015, the [EU again committed itself](#) to "strengthen cooperation on rapid response".

True commitment of the EU Battlegroups to the UN's crisis management efforts is not only an expectation created by the EU's public discourse. It is also a desire that is to some extent present in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO). A reliable EU Battlegroup mechanism might offer a chance to "reverse the decline in contributions from many high-capability countries", as it was called in the HIPPO report, although they are mainly created for short-termed deployment in sudden crisis situations. In addition, it would also (finally) provide active and material backing to the EU member states' moral support for UN peacekeeping. In that sense, an EU Battlegroup commitment would clearly serve the UN's interests.

A CONTRADICTIO IN TERMINIS

In his response to the HIPPO report, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon emphasized that “[t]he Panel’s call for stronger global-regional partnerships is central to effective international peace and security engagements.” However, he also noted that “Chapter VIII of the Charter provides the foundation, but its operationalization depends on our collective will and ability to put in place predictable and efficient responses from diverse partners.” While the number of EU peace and security operations suggests that the EU is a reliable partner, its rapid response record has been patchy and EU Battlegroup deployment remains a distant dream.

In the period 2003-2008, the EU-UN cooperation in crisis management looked somewhat promising. Not only was the EU a reliable provider for civilian and policing missions, it also deployed a series of military operations in support of the UN — some even rapidly. Examples are the temporary deployments of Artemis in 2003 (authorized by [UNSC Resolution 1484](#)), EUFOR RD Congo in 2006 ([UNSC Resolution 1671](#)) and EUFOR Tchad/RCA in 2008 ([UNSC Resolution 1778](#)).

Since 2008, however, EU military support to the UN has become rather the exception than the rule. This is largely a result of financial constraints and a lacking interest in committing troops to the African continent, where the majority of the crises take place. The most widely cited example is the case of the DR Congo in late 2008. When Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon was confronted with increased violence in eastern Congo, he requested the EU to send military reinforcements to support MONUC. EU member states were unable to reach agreement on any form of military deployment. Commentators repeatedly stressed the thwarting of the EU Battlegroup deployment by the UK and Germany, the two countries leading the Battlegroups that were on standby.

Even in those few occasions where EU member states were able to reach agreement on deploying a military operation, they neither made use of the EU Battlegroups nor were they capable of rapidly deploying these troops. Most recently, this was illustrated in the response to the quickly escalating crisis that broke out in the Central African Republic (CAR) in 2013. Having received UNSC authorization to deploy troops to the CAR through [Resolution 2134](#) at the end of January 2014, the EU Council on 10 February reached agreement on deploying the military operation called EUFOR RCA. But [EUFOR RCA](#) made little use of the EU Battlegroups, nor could it be described as a rapid response: it was deployed in April and it took until June to reach full operational capacity.

The [commitments made by the EU member states](#) during the UN Peacekeeping Summit of 28 September 2015 might at first sight look promising. However, these are at best scattered. Some EU members did pledge to upgrade their commitment toward specific operations, such as the Netherlands and Nordic pledges to reinforce MINUSMA. But overall, EU member states remain at the lower end of supporting UN peacekeeping and are mainly committed to providing personnel for training purposes. The EU’s shifting focus is to niche capabilities such as training missions like the one in Mali (EUTM). The idea of building a rapid response capability by relying on the EU Battlegroups sounds like a *contradictio in terminis*.

LEARNING FROM THE EU BATTLEGROUPS

Does this mean that the suggestions made by the High-Level Panel and the Secretary-General are completely futile? Maybe not. First, they express a hope, indicating that the idea of the EU Battlegroups is still supported by the UN's Secretariat, even if chances for actual deployment are remote. Second, and moving beyond wishful thinking, the patchy history of the EU's rapid response and the absence of EU Battlegroup deployments can also be constructively used in discussions on developing a UN rapid reaction force.

Any analysis of the reasons why these EU Battlegroups have not been deployed identifies three key obstacles. The first is the principle of 'costs lie where they fall', meaning that those countries that equip the EU Battlegroup are also expected to carry the costs. Obviously, this seriously impedes actual deployment. The UN Secretariat should consider if and how such a UN rapid response force could be funded through the UN's existing financial system, as it is exploring doing for the AU's contributions. Keeping troops on standby is a more expensive endeavour than providing peacekeepers on an ad hoc basis. This principle has led to a fear among EU members of creating a precedent, making them resort to ad hoc solutions. A UN rapid reaction force should be wary of creating future obligations that may scare away potential (European) contributors.

Second, EU national interests do not match conflicts where the UN is deploying. The EU Battlegroups are provided through a rotation scheme whereby every six months a new pair of Battlegroups is put on standby. As a result, actual deployment is dependent on whether or not the member state involved at the time sees any benefit in committing military troops (and financial resources) to that particular conflict. National interests seriously impede the chances of actual deployment. While there was enthusiasm over the Chinese pledge at the Peacekeeping Summit to deliver 8000 standby troops to the UN, their deployment could face the same problem. An expression of a commitment does not guarantee that these troops will be made available for any conflict in just any region. Ideally, the creation of a UN rapid reaction force should be accompanied by a serious discussion on how to guarantee that troops put on standby will also actually be deployed when required. A clear analysis is needed regarding which commitments can be used for what purposes, based upon the national stakes that drive these commitments. That starts with an analysis of the China's interests.

Third, discussions of EU military deployments have all too often been bogged down in a disagreement over the use of force. Commentators have in that regard frequently pointed toward the German reluctance to use military force. Germany's position in the Libyan conflict in 2011 is an often-cited illustration. As UN peace operations are increasingly deployed to hazardous environments, discussions on providing an authorization to use force will undoubtedly arise. In order to convince member states to commit troops to this UN rapid reaction force, a clear vision should already be in place on both the extent to which these forces would be allowed to use force, and on the modalities under which such force would be allowed.

CONCLUSION

In the words of the 1995 Supplement to an Agenda for Peace, “the value of this arrangement would of course depend on how far the Security Council could be sure that the force would actually be available in an emergency.” The history of the EU Battlegroups is an indispensable guide to the pitfalls confronting a rapid response force from any region or country. Realism regarding the expectations of EU contributions is equally essential. We have waited more than twenty years for an actual UN rapid response capability. Unless problems are resolved in paying for it, aligning national interests, and agreeing on how much force it will use, we may be waiting another two decades — if not longer — before we see it deployed.

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MEMBERS OF THE INDIAN BATTALION AT UNMISS ASSISTING DISPLACED PERSONS WHO HAVE FLED THEIR HOMES AND ARE SEEKING SAFETY AND HELP FROM THE UN. 16 DECEMBER 2013 | © UN PHOTO

PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS STRATEGY: A GREATER ROLE FOR THE COUNCIL

Ralph Mamiya

THE PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS MANDATE IN PEACEKEEPING WAS A REACTION TO THE CHALLENGES PEACEKEEPERS DIRECTLY FACED IN RWANDA AND THE BALKANS AND MORE GENERALLY A REACTION TO THE 'NEW WARS' OF THE POST-COLD WAR WORLD.

Fifteen years ago, the [Brahimi Report](#) established the importance of the protection of civilians in UN peacekeeping. The recent report of the [High-level Panel on Peace Operations](#) and the Secretary-General's follow-up report on the [Future of UN Peace Operations](#) each highlight the importance of the protection mandate while also recognizing that the mandate is in need of clarity. The moral and legal foundations are clear, but the mandate's political and strategic direction often goes undefined. The protection of civilians has raised unachievable expectations and continuing debates about its interpretation inhibit effective action. It has been claimed by a broad swathe of actors, caught between concepts of the responsibility to protect, humanitarian access, and human rights advocacy. Providing strategic direction for the mandate will require greater dialogue between the Council, the Secretariat, and Troop Contributors. It will also require acknowledging that protecting civilians is not always straightforwardly selfless, an end in itself, but rather should form part of the mission's overall goals for bringing stability and security to the country. This idea is simple to state in general terms but difficult to implement without strong support from the Council and its Members.

BACKGROUND TO THE MANDATE

The protection of civilians mandate in peacekeeping was a reaction to the challenges peacekeepers directly faced in Rwanda and the Balkans and more generally a reaction to the 'new wars' of the post-Cold War world. Some scholars argued that [civilians were killed at astonishing rates in these 'new wars'](#), including that civilians accounted for 90 percent of war-time deaths. These claims that are now disputed, and many researchers argue that [civil wars are actually on the decline](#). Yet it was clear that peacekeepers could not conscientiously operate in the environments to which they were sent without the ability to act to protect civilians. This was not necessarily a new aspect of peacekeeping: The UN Operation in the Congo (ONUC), one of the first peacekeeping mission, took action that today would likely be called 'protection of civilians', despite the absence of an explicit mandate. The Brahimi report similarly implied that the obligation to protect was inherent in the peacekeepers' role regardless of mandate, a position that the High-level Panel now echoes in framing the protection of civilians across the full spectrum of peace operations and which the Secretary-General supported in his follow-up report.

The concept of the protection of civilians is traceable to International Humanitarian Law and the protection dialogue is highly influenced by humanitarian practice. While sometimes treated as an historical footnote, the roots of POC in humanitarian and human rights action continue to be highly influential in discussions of protection: Protection is often considered as an end-in-itself and neutrality is often viewed as a prerequisite for effective protection. These views often do not square well with modern

peacekeeping missions, which retain political aims and are generally considered a means towards sustainable peace and security. The closest that the Secretary-General or the Security Council has come to providing a definition of the protection of civilians is in thematic discussions on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, a broad definition encompassing a range of human rights and humanitarian issues. In a **2001 report**, the Secretary-General wrote: “Protection” is a complex and multi-layered process, involving a diversity of entities and approaches... [including] the delivery of humanitarian assistance; the monitoring and recording of violations of international humanitarian and human rights law, and reporting these violations to those responsible and other decision makers; institution building, governance and development programmes; and, ultimately, the deployment of peacekeeping troops...’ **Also in 2001**, a group of humanitarian and human organisations chaired by the International Committee of the Red Cross agreed upon a similarly broad definition of ‘protection’, where protection encompasses ‘all activities aimed at ensuring full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the letter and the spirit of the relevant bodies of law... [conducted] in an impartial manner’.

The protection of civilians mandate has become a standard element of mandates for armed peacekeeping yet remains subject to different interpretations. A few months after the first thematic resolution on POC in 1999, the Security Council provided the first POC mandate in peacekeeping to the UN Mission in Sierra Leone. This mandate, a Chapter VII authorization to use force, was **described at the time** as ‘a new, fundamental, legal and moral dimension’, ‘an insurance policy’, ‘deterrent’, and a ‘guarantee [of] protection’. No armed UN mission since 1999 has been newly deployed without a POC mandate. Whether peacekeepers were sent into active conflicts, such as the Central African Republic, or stood guard in non-conflict nations, such as Haiti and Liberia, they were directed to protect, with force if necessary.

The specific implications of the mandate were never clear, and different understandings continue to exist. On its face the mandate changed little in the next 10 years, yet a 2009 OCHA-DPKO Study on the protection of civilians in peacekeeping concluded that peacekeepers and civilian staff held widely varying interpretations of the mandate, often within the same mission. The language of Council mandates can be read as supporting these varying interpretations, including viewing POC as a specific set of activities. MINUSMA, for instance, considers POC within of the overarching goal ‘security, stabilization and the protection of civilians’. UNISFA’s POC mandate stands alone but may be read as an element of its overall security and stabilization mandate. Others see it as a general approach to coordination that linked a range of activities MONUSCO, UNMISS, MINUSCA, UNAMID and UNMIL have all been directed to develop comprehensive POC strategies. UNMISS and UNAMID, and MONUSCO in its past configuration, have been directed to reorient their operations around civilian protection. Security Council resolution 1894 has also called on all POC-mandated missions to prioritise the use of resources in implementing those mandates. A further group of missions see their POC mandates as an authorization to use force as a last resort. MINUSTAH and UNIFIL frame their POC mandates in this manner, with POC adding little apparent strategic value to the missions’ orientation.

STRATEGIC CHALLENGES

The mandate has legal, moral, and strategic elements; only the strategic aspect remains ill-defined. The Brahimi report made clear the moral importance of protection in peacekeeping, and the legal aspects of the mandate are well established by the Office of Legal Affairs and international legal scholars. These moral and legal elements do not direct a particular strategy or approach to POC, however, and this strategic element remains undefined.

Security Council mandates on POC have become more prominent over time yet they continue to delegate the most challenging strategic questions to the mission. It has been very willing to identify POC as a priority in many missions. POC has been identified as the priority, or one of a handful of priorities, for UNMISS, UNAMID, MONUSCO, UNMIL, ONUCI, MINUSMA, and MINUSCA. Resolution 1894 also directs all missions with POC mandates to prioritise resources and capabilities to that mandate's implementation.

Some missions have received detailed operational instructions that can only be read as a sign of the Council's interest in more dynamic approaches to protection. The Council's calls for 'robust patrolling' in Sudan with [Resolution 1769](#) in 2007, 'early warning mechanisms' in [Resolution 1996](#) in 2011, encouragement of 'the full use of [the mission's] mandate and capabilities' in [Resolution 1870](#), and regular 'reviews of deployment' in [Resolution 1919](#) as well as encouraging 'coordination between civilian and military components' in the DRC with [Resolution 1906](#).

Despite these small technical and operational changes to mandate language in certain missions, the Council is generally silent on the strategic or political direction for the protection of civilians. In some instances, it has identified groups in particular need of protection, such as internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Darfur and DRC, yet this direction to protect has often been vague and has never been exclusive; missions have come under regular criticism for protection failures beyond these groups, such as criticism of UNAMID for incidents in Darfur involving settled communities rather than IDPs.

The absence of clear direction from the Council and Member States has placed a great deal of the strategic and political burden on the Secretariat and missions. The Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support have developed a policy on the protection of civilians and associated military guidelines, but these remain primarily technical documents. The means, methods and strategies for protecting civilians are highly dependent on context. With mission environments as varied as Lebanon, South Sudan, and Mali, headquarters-level guidance remains necessarily general.

This leaves the peacekeeping mission itself to answer some of the most significant political and strategic questions about its mandate. Missions develop their own context-specific POC strategies, however, these often focus on the operational issues that field staff are accustomed, and well placed, to address. Without clear guidance from the Council, such mission-based strategies may not carry significant weight with the military component or contributed troop contingents. An independent [UN evaluation](#) noted a broken 'chain' regarding the protection of civilians: Where peacekeepers' lives are placed in danger, policy and operational decisions are not easily ceded to the Secretariat or civilian mission leadership.

The absence of strategic direction in protection only compounds the resource, capability, and will problems faced by peacekeepers. The expectation upon peacekeepers to protect — expectations from the media, humanitarians, the Council, or others — is often supremely high regardless of resources, and those expectations are difficult to change when strategic objectives are unclear. The vast disparity in resources between missions further complicates the setting of reasonable expectations. The UN Mission in Abyei has one troop for every 2.5 square kilometers and the Mission in Lebanon has one troop for every 0.1 square kilometer, yet the Mission in Darfur has one troop for every 12 square kilometers and the Mission in South Sudan one troop for every 54 square kilometers.

Successes in protection have been recognized most frequently in situations where the strategic and political imperatives of the POC mandate are clear. The current crisis in South Sudan, the highly robust operations by MONUSCO (whether through the Intervention Brigade or past operations), and the highly focused security mission in Abyei are all examples of missions that have received plaudits for their protection work. These missions have also faced situations or mandates that made clear a particular strategic direction, whether that is defending civilians in their bases or conducting operations against enemies. Most missions, however, are not faced with crises that force such clarity. A variety of categories of strategy exist for peacekeeping, enumeration of which is beyond the scope of this paper but many of which can contribute to better defining expectations and improving the mission's unity of effort.

WAYS FORWARD

The challenge of strategic direction is neither simple nor straightforward. Many aspects of a mission's political strategy can and should be left to the Secretariat, to SRSG's who lead the mission and to headquarters staff who support them. In addition, the role of troop contributors and host government should not be forgotten, particularly where protection of civilians mandates are concerned. Yet the Council has a key The Secretary-General's recent report on the Future of UN Peace Operations highlights the importance of the protection of civilians mandate while also recognizing some of the challenges outlined above. The Secretary-General's proposals are applicable generally to peace operations, but they can be tailored to the protection mandate:

- **The Council and Council Members can play a greater role in providing strategic focus for each mission.** The Secretary-General fully endorsed the High-level Panel's call for the Council to bring the full weight of its authority not only to starting peace operations, but also to help them to navigate politically difficult terrain. In Darfur, for example, thousands of peacekeepers have worked in difficult and often dangerous conditions for nearly a decade despite a political vacuum. This support could include greater strategic guidance in mandate language, potentially including the Council's acknowledgement and approval of mission strategies for protection (including acknowledgement of the mission's stated limitations). This will require greater engagement from the Council and from mandate pen-holders, as well as a willingness amongst the Secretariat to relinquish a degree of its operational prerogatives in mandate implementation.
- **A stronger Council role will require better dialogue and reporting.** Past examinations of the protection of civilians, such as the OCHA-DPKO Study and the OIOS independent evaluation have consistently called for improved reporting to the Council, and better-defined mandates will require dialogue with the mission and the Secretariat. The Secretary-General reaffirmed his commitment to frank reporting on peacekeeping resources, capabilities and escalating situations. DPKO is also exploring ways to provide the Council with reports that focus more on political analysis than operational updates.

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- **Dialogue with troop contributors remains essential.** Triangular cooperation between troop contributors, the Secretariat, and the Security Council has long been recognized as important to effective peacekeeping. The Secretary-General proposed multiple rounds of consultations with troop contributors before missions are established, to ensure that all potential contributors are aware of the capabilities required to address a given situation and what will be expected of them if they deploy their troops.

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COMMENTARY



SYRIAN REFUGEES LAND ON LESBOS ISLAND, GREECE AFTER TAKING A PERILOUS JOURNEY IN AN OVERCROWDED BOAT ACROSS THE MEDITERRANEAN. ©UNCHR/ANDREW MCCONNELL

January 6, 2016

THE UNITED NATIONS IN 2016

Richard Gowan

UN PEACEKEEPING FORCES MAY ALSO BE REQUIRED TO DEPLOY TO ASSIST FRAGILE STATES IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA INCLUDING LIBYA, YEMEN AND POTENTIALLY EVEN SYRIA.

The United Nations faces severe strains on its operational and political credibility. Crises in the Middle East and Africa have placed huge burdens on UN humanitarian agencies, peacekeepers and mediators. Tensions between the West and Russia in the Security Council over Syria and Ukraine have hurt the UN's wider reputation.

2016 is likely to be another difficult year for the UN. Fresh outbreaks of violence will almost certainly occur in some of the weak states where UN peacekeepers are deployed including South Sudan, Mali and the Central African Republic (CAR). There is a particularly notable risk that controversial elections in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) could lead to violence, testing the peacekeepers there.

UN peacekeeping forces may also be required to deploy to assist fragile states in the Middle East and North Africa including Libya, Yemen and potentially even Syria.

The threat level to UN personnel in these places would surely be very high. The U.S. has recently urged European countries to send troops to reinforce UN missions. The Obama administration will maintain pressure on EU members on this issue in 2016.

The humanitarian crisis in the Middle East will continue, and UN agencies may not be able to gather the necessary funds to support more Syrian refugees in particular.

The weakness of the humanitarian system in the Middle East may lead to a further influx of refugees into Europe. Facing domestic pressures, European governments may be forced to boost their financial support to UN humanitarian operations dramatically, perhaps by diverting funds from long-term development aid projects.

The World Humanitarian Summit, scheduled to take place in Istanbul in late May, will focus additional attention on the current strains on the UN's relief agencies.

There will be new calls for the members of the Security Council to cooperate more effectively in the Middle East. The U.S., Britain and France may finally choose to compromise with Russia over the future of Syria to ease the situation. But other conflicts, above all Ukraine, will continue to be sources of tension in UN discussions.

The U.S. will wish to ensure that ongoing differences with Russia do not disrupt the implementation of the Iran deal. There may be questions about Iran's fulfillment of the agreement, and in theory these could come up for review the Security Council.

But all parties will try to avoid this situation. Western powers are likely to look for ways to build on the nuclear deal and engage with Iran on other issues at the UN.

There are also some signs that if Moscow continues to take a confrontational line towards the West at the UN, China may adopt a more conciliatory position. Beijing has recently made major pledges of money and peacekeepers to the UN, and may adopt a greater leadership role inside the organization. However, Chinese officials are unlikely to break off cooperation with their Russian counterparts completely.

Progress on Security Council reform or proposals (backed by France) for the permanent members of the Council to limit their use of the veto is highly unlikely.

The permanent members of the Security Council will encourage the UN to play a greater role in preventing and countering violent extremism, a rare area of great power consensus. But the UN's tools to play a major role in this field remain limited.

The selection of a new Secretary-General to replace Ban Ki-moon at the end of 2016 will suck up political energy in New York. There is a strong argument that its Eastern Europe's turn to fill the top job at the UN, and Moscow will fight hard to ensure that a pro-Russian politician from the region gets the post. This may lead to further clashes with the West. The U.S. has also indicated that it prioritizes selecting a woman for the post. It may prove necessary to search beyond Eastern Europe to find a leader who is acceptable to all permanent members of the Security Council.

The need for compromise means that the next Secretary-General may be a cautious, bureaucratic figure (not unlike Ban Ki-moon) rather than an inspirational leader.

Elsewhere in the UN, debates over development policy and climate change will be less intense than in 2015, following the agreement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Paris climate change agreement. Experts on these areas will focus on the first phase of their implementation, but this will attract less political and media attention. By contrast a special General Assembly session on the world drug problem, in April could be a chance for states to reconsider failing drugs policies.

There is a risk that the UN will become a partisan issue in the U.S. presidential campaign, with Republican candidates attacking the Democrats for their multilateral commitments. The Iran deal will be a particular target of criticism. This may raise fears, especially in Europe that from 2017 onwards the U.S. will take a more negative approach to the UN than the Obama administration has adopted.

This piece was originally published in German by the Austrian Foreign Ministry

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© UN PHOTO/RICK BAJORNAS | SUSAN MALCORRA (LEFT), OUTGOING CHIEF DE CABINET TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, PAYS A FAREWELL CALL ON SECRETARY-GENERAL BAN KI-MOON ON 25 NOVEMBER 2015. OF THE SIX FEMALE USG'S WHO RETIRED THIS YEAR, ALL WERE REPLACED BY MEN.

THE LOST AGENDA: GENDER PARITY IN SENIOR UN APPOINTMENTS

THIS COMMENTARY INCLUDES UPDATED FIGURES AND INFOGRAPHICS

Karin Landgren

CUMULATIVELY, ACROSS THE 59 USG AND ASG APPOINTMENTS, 83 PER CENT WERE MEN. IT IS ESPECIALLY STRIKING THAT OF THE 23 EU NATIONALS APPOINTED TO TOP-LEVEL UN POSTS THIS YEAR, ALL BUT ONE WERE MEN. FIVE WERE BRITISH MEN. AMONG AFRICAN NATIONALS APPOINTED, WOMEN MADE UP OVER ONE-QUARTER.

As the clamour grows for a woman to be chosen as the next Secretary-General, other [high-level staff appointments](#) have been quietly but steadily defying the UN's longstanding goal of gender parity. Seemingly unnoticed, this year's selections for the seniormost level of UN staff have skewed nearly 92 per cent male. Between 1 January and 10 December 2015, 22 men and only two women were appointed as UN undersecretaries-general, [according to public sources](#).

The rhetoric of UN achievements has overshadowed the reality. And the reality can be surprisingly hard to verify. A list of senior officials indicates that the UN designates some [80-plus persons worldwide as undersecretaries-general \(USGs\), and over 100 as assistant secretaries-general \(ASGs\)](#).

Almost twenty years ago, [the UN made a commitment to achieving gender parity in managerial and decision-making roles](#) by the year 2000. This target having been missed, subsequent resolutions aimed for parity in "the very near future", except for the category of Secretary-General's Special Representatives and Special Envoys, [which was to be gender-balanced by 2015](#).

Two recent developments in gender equality are worth noting. In October, the Global Study on UNSC resolution 1325 made the case for the UN to do a better job of including women in its core business, the field of peace and security. And last month, Canada's new Prime Minister Justin Trudeau showed leadership in announcing a cabinet with equal numbers of men and women. "Because it's 2015," said Trudeau.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon often mentions that he has appointed more women to senior UN positions than ever before, saying, ["You need to have political will."](#) Four years ago, he told a gathering that the UN's top humanitarian official, high commissioner for human rights, head of management, top lawyer, and ["even our top cop, are all women."](#) Today, they are all men. At that moment, too, the largest-ever number of women - "five and counting" - were leading UN peacekeeping missions. The same is true today: women head five out of sixteen UN peacekeeping missions.

This year also saw six women undersecretaries-general replaced by men, further undercutting the goal of building female leadership within the UN. The first female USG of the year was appointed only in October.

At the next level down – assistant secretaries-general, or ASGs – male appointments made up 77 per cent. Cumulatively, across the 59 USG and ASG appointments, 83 per cent were men. It is especially striking that of the 23 EU nationals appointed to top-level UN posts this year, all but one were men. Five were British men. Among African nationals appointed, women made up over one-quarter.

Nearly two decades ago, the General Assembly pointed out the importance of the Secretary-General's "visible commitment" to achieving the targets of women's participation in the UN. The dominance of male senior appointments this year calls into question Ban's commitment to gender parity at the top of the UN, so evident earlier in his tenure, and leaves in tatters what was shaping up to be a solid legacy.

Information on senior appointments can be patchy. Often, press releases omit the grade level, and do not distinguish decision-making positions from those that are part-time and largely unremunerated (and which are excluded from this review). Moreover, the UN can give the impression of massaging the data to show the appointment of senior women in a more flattering light, according to Professor Rob Jenkins, who cites a graph on senior managers in UN peace operations showcasing women "**in a managerial bracket specifically devised to include more junior positions and exclude some that are higher up.**"

Several measures are needed. The first step is greater transparency around senior appointments. The UN should promptly set up an open database covering full-time, paid appointments at the most senior levels, making it easier to monitor benchmarks towards gender equality.

Second, governments themselves need to demonstrate stronger commitment to gender equality in the UN. Although UN staff are required to maintain independence from their governments, **some governments lobby hard to have their citizens selected for senior UN posts.** While proposals for good candidates, from any source, can be entertained, the impact on gender parity should be a stronger consideration.

Finally, to insulate the Secretary General more effectively from external pressures, the UN should set up a merit-based appointments mechanism for senior levels, as recommended by the recent **High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations.** More effort also needs to go into head-hunting great female candidates, as Kofi Annan did in naming former Irish President Mary Robinson to serve as the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

The biggest lesson of 2015 is how quickly gains turn to losses, without the dedicated attention of a gender-sensitive UN leadership – and how untroubled the UN and member states appear to be. The level of structural non-compliance facing the gender parity agenda won't be fixed simply by choosing a female Secretary-General. Years of General Assembly resolutions mean that this task is already in the job description of the next office-holder. Ending the gender disparity in top appointments would be a good place to start.

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USG AND ASG APPOINTMENTS BY MONTH, WITH CUMULATIVE NUMBERS:

Appointment #	USG	ASG	Male	Female
January 2015 - 4 male, 0 female. USG 1M, ASG 3M				
1	♂		Atul Khare (India), USG : Department for Field Support	
2		♂	Joakim Reiter (Sweden), ASG UNCTAD	
3		♂	Janos Pasztor (Hungary), ASG Climate Change	
4		♂	Haile Tilahun Gebremarian (Ethiopia), ASG, Head of Mission, UN Interim Security Force Abyei (UNISFA) [military]	
February 2015 - (cumulative numbers) 9 male, 1 female. USG 3M, ASG 6M 1F				
5	♂		Nickolay Mladenov (Bulgaria), USG, Special Coordinator, Middle East Peace Process	
6		♀		Bintou Keita (Guinea), ASG, Ebola Crisis Manager, Sierra Leone
7		♂	David Gressly (USA), ASG, DSRSG MONUSCO	
8		♂	George Okoth-Obbo (Uganda), ASG, Assistant High Commissioner for Operations UNHCR	
9		♂	Volker Türk (Austria), ASG, Assistant High Commissioner for Protection UNHCR	
10	♂		Jan Kubis (Slovakia), USG, SRSG UNAMI	
March 2015: 14 male, 1 female. USG 4M, ASG 10M 1F				
11		♂	Yannick Glemarec (France), ASG UNWomen	
12	♂		Stephen O'Brien (UK), USG for Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)	
13		♂	Miroslav Jenca (Slovakia), ASG for Political Affairs (DPA)	

Appointment #	USG	ASG	Male	Female
14		♂	Petko Draganov (Bulgaria), ASG, SRSG and head of UN Centre for Preventive Diplomacy, Central Asia (UNRCCA)	
15		♂	Michael Lollesgaard (Denmark), ASG, Force Commander MINUSMA [military]	
April 2015: 19 male, 1 female. USG 6M, ASG 13M 1F				
16		♂	Elliott Harris (Trinidad and Tobago), ASG, UNEP	
17		♂	Philippe Lazzarini (Switzerland), ASG, Deputy Special Coordinator, Lebanon	
18	♂		Peter Graaff (Netherlands), USG, Acting Head of UNMEER	
19		♂	Ali Al-Za'atari (Jordan), ASG, Deputy SRSG UNSMIL	
20	♂		Ismael Ould Sheikh Ahmed (Mauritania), USG, Special Envoy for Yemen	
May 2015: 24 male, 2 female. USG 6M, ASG 18M 2F				
21		♂	Robert Piper (Australia), ASG, Deputy Special Coordinator Middle East Peace Process	
22		♂	Mourad Wahba (Egypt), ASG, DSRSG, MINUSTAH	
23		♀		Mbaranga Gasarabwe (Rwanda), ASG, DSRSG, MINUSMA
24		♂	Toby Lanzer (UK), ASG, OCHA Regional Humanitarian Coordinator (Sahel)	
25		♂	Mamadou Diallo (Guinea), ASG, DSRSG, MONUSCO	
26		♂	Eugene Owusu (Ghana), ASG, DSRSG, UNMISS	
June 2015: 28 male, 4 female. USG 9M, ASG 19M 4F				

Appointment #	USG	ASG	Male	Female
27		♀		Kelly T Clements (USA), ASG, Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees
28		♀		Fatoumata Ndiaye (Senegal), ASG, Deputy Executive Director, UNICEF
29		♂	Nikhil Seth (India), ASG, Executive Director UNITAR	
30	♂		Tegegnework Gettu (Ethiopia), USG, Coordinator for Multilingualism	
31	♂		Michael Møller (Denmark), USG, Director-General, UNOG	
32	♂		Kim Won-soo (Republic of Korea), USG, Acting High Representative for Disarmament Affairs	
July 2015: 30 male, 4 female. USG 9M, ASG 21M, 4F				
33		♂	Peter de Clercq (Netherlands), ASG, DSRSG UNISOM	
34		♂	Arthur David Gawn (NZ), ASG, Head of Mission, UNTSO [military]	
August 2015: 35 male, 4 female. USG 13M, ASG 22M, 4F				
35	♂		Farid Zarif (Afghanistan), USG, SRSG UNMIL	
36	♂		Parfait Onanga-Anyanga (Gabon), USG, SRSG CAR	
37	♂		Zahir Tanin (Afghanistan), USG, SRSG UNMIK	
38		♂	Koen Davidse (Netherlands), ASG, Deputy SRSG MINUSMA	
39	♂		Jean Arnault (France), USG, Delegate to Sub-Commission on Colombian End of Conflict Issues	
September 2015: 35 male, 5 female. USG 13M, ASG 22M, 5F				
40		♀		Fadzai Gwaradzimba (Zimbabwe), ASG DSS

Appointment #	USG	ASG	Male	Female
October 2015: 38 male, 8 female. USG 15M, 1F; ASG 23M, 7F				
41	♀			Heidi Mendoza (Philippines), USG, Internal Oversight Services
42	♂		Maman Sambo Sidikou (Niger), USG, SRSR MONUSCO	
43		♀		Laura Londén (Finland), ASG, Deputy Executive Director, UNFPA
44		♂	Waldemar Vrey (South Africa), ASG, DSRSG UNMIL	
45	♂		Martin Ihoeghian Uhomoihi (Nigeria), USG, Joint Special Representative, UNAMID	
46		♀		Bintou Keita (Guinea), ASG, DSRSG UNAMID (second 2015 appointment: see note)
November 2015: 47 male, 9 female. USG 21M, 2F; ASG 26M, 7F				
47	♂		Tegegnetwork Gettu (Ethiopia), USG, Associate Administrator, UNDP (second 2015 appointment: see note)	
48	♂		Martin Kobler (Germany), USG, SRSR UNSMIL	
49	♂		Jamal Benomar (UK), USG, Special Adviser to the SG	
50	♂		Filippo Grandi (Italy), USG, High Commissioner for Refugees	
51		♂	Rashid Khalilov (Russian Federation), ASG for Partnerships, OCHA	
52	♂		Michael Keating (UK), USG, SRSR UNSOM	
53		♂	Robert Glasser (Australia), ASG, Special Representative for Disaster Risk Reduction	
54	♂		Edmond Mulet (Guatemala), USG, Chef de Cabinet	

Appointment #	USG	ASG	Male	Female
55		♂	Patrick Carey (Ireland), ASG, Deputy Chef de Cabinet ad interim	
56	♀			Catherine Pollard (Guyana), USG for GA and Conference Management
December 2015: 53 male, 10 female. [USG 23M, 2F; ASG 30M, 8F]				
57		♀		Kate Gilmore (Australia), ASG, Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights
58		♂	El-Ghassim Wane (Mauritania), ASG, Deputy Head of DPKO	
59	♂		David Nabarro (UK), USG, Special Adviser, Global Goals	
60		♂	Frank Mushyo Kamanzi (Rwanda), ASG, Force Commander UNAMID (military)	
61		♂	Christopher Coleman (USA), ASG, DSRSG UNMIK	
62	♂		Mahamet Salah Annadif (Chad), USG, SRSG MINUSMA	
63		♂	Derrick Mbuyiselo Mgwebi (South Africa), ASG, Force Commander, MONUSCO (military)	

1) Note: the three-month interim appointment of Mark Kroeker (USA), ASG, Deputy SRSG, UNMIL not included in calculation.

2) Note: if the first of two 2015 appointments of Mr T. Gettu and Ms B. Keita are excluded, the figures change marginally, to 92% male USG, 81% male ASG, for 85% overall male appointments.

3) The SG appointed nearly as many senior men in November 2015 - nine - as he did senior women in all of 2015.

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