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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DIPLOMACY IN ACTION: EXPANDING THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL’S ROLE IN CRISIS AND CONFLICT PREVENTION

Richard Gowan

The UN Security Council has the potential to play a greater direct role in crisis response and mediation not only in New York, but in the field. It has done so sporadically in the past. In its early years, the Council experimented with intergovernmental missions to investigate potential conflicts and undertake mediation in cases including the Balkans and Indonesia. In the post-Cold War period, Council missions engaged directly in crisis diplomacy in multiple conflicts, playing an important peacemaking role in East Timor in 1999. States outside the Council contributed to these efforts through Groups of Friends. Yet the Council has frequently handed off conflict prevention and resolution to the Secretary-General and other UN officials, or allowed other organizations or states to take the lead in responding to looming conflicts.

Despite current political frictions, Council members would like to engage more directly in some situations on its agenda. These have had limited impact due to strategy and procedural differences among participants, in addition to weak follow-up. The Secretary-General should not view increased Council activism as a challenge to his own work, but look for ways to support and harness efforts by Council members to address looming crises. The Council should streamline its working methods and operational approaches to engaging in conflict prevention through:

- Adopting a new range of discussion formats for (i) informal discussions of long-term risks and mega-trends affecting international security; and (ii) how members of the Council can individually or collectively use their good offices alongside existing UN diplomacy to prevent conflicts.

- Strengthening the Council’s conflict prevention capacities by (i) streamlining Council missions, relying on smaller numbers of ambassadors to represent the organization; (ii) learning lessons from the early days of Council diplomacy by employing intergovernmental committees and commissions to investigate crises and mediate; and (iii) working with the UN secretariat to “mix and match” UN officials and Council diplomats in peacemaking processes to maximize their shared leverage.

- Boosting the Council’s ability to conduct direct crisis diplomacy by (i) launching a new Council working group on conflict prevention globally; (ii) mandating the Military Staff Committee to look at ways in which it could use defense diplomacy to avert or mitigate conflicts; and (iii) encouraging states outside the Council to participate in Groups of Friends focusing on specific country issues.

DOWNLOAD THE FULL PAPER DIPLOMACY IN ACTION: EXPANDING THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL’S ROLE IN CRISIS AND CONFLICT PREVENTION
May 9, 2017

CAN WE MAKE UN PEACEKEEPING GREAT AGAIN?

Alexandra Novosseloff

If UN peacekeeping operations are “at a crossroads” as the Secretary-General told the Security Council on 6 April, then it is a policy and linguistic roundabout. This is the same phrase that a senior official used to describe the Brahimi report in 2000 and others used to characterize the work of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) in 2015. Does this mean that the policy debate that surrounds UN peacekeeping has just been going around in circles for the past twenty years?

The recent declarations made by the US administration on possible cuts of its share of the peacekeeping budget and its push to cut individual missions at the time of mandate renewal (as observed in the case of MONUSCO already) has created uneasiness and has given new life to the old debate about the relevance of UN peacekeeping. But this in itself is not a new position. The HIPPO report has also argued for such a review of existing operations.

Whether peacekeeping missions are “fit for purpose”, and what this actually means in practice, are questions numerous governments, delegations in New York, departments of the UN Secretariat, experts on the matter, non-governmental organizations and at times, international public opinion, have kept asking for years and even decades. The question was put on the table of the Security Council again by the new US administration during its presidency in April 2017. The goal, as outlined in its concept paper, was to review every single peacekeeping operation to “identify areas where mandates no longer match political realities.” The objective was to “propose alternatives or paths towards restructuring to bring missions more in line with achievable outcomes.”

HIPPO had already identified and advocated for “more effective and implementable mandates tailored to missions.” But those that deplore the inabilities or inconsistencies of UN peacekeeping operations often forget that they are part of this complex endeavor as a decision-maker, as a financial contributor, as an implementer or as a contributor in uniformed personnel. Failures of the UN are, in a way, failures of us all.

The UN has been constantly adapting to evolving security environments. Since its creation, the Organization has undertaken numerous reforms, restructuring, and rationalization. Stretching the Organization's peace and security efforts even thinner could reverse all the Sisyphus work of professionalization undertaken on peace operations in recent years. Equally, giving it tasks that go beyond its remit undermines it. UN peacekeeping is already a rather cheap instrument that allows it to keep many crises at a low level of insecurity. As President Donald Trump himself recognized during his recent lunch with Security Council ambassadors, it’s “peanuts”, it’s “pennies”. The current sixteen missions only cost $7.87 billion. If such a debate should be welcomed by the UN Secretariat, which should seize the moment to transform it into an “opportunity to propose changes on its own terms”, the debate should also be broadened to include a discussion about the limits of peacekeeping that could prepare the ground for a renewed consensus around a clearer peacekeeping doctrine that would reset the limits and help operationalize the concept of the “primacy of politics” put forward by the HIPPO report.
PEACEKEEPING, A LIMITED INSTRUMENT IN ESSENCE

The creation of a clearer peacekeeping doctrine should begin by recalling the origins of peacekeeping and the principles invented by Dag Hammarskjöld and Lester B. Pearson in 1956. From the outset, peacekeeping operations were conceived as a means to solve conflicts by being neither purely diplomatic nor resorting to a full-scale war. In a bipolar world, they were led by an impartial “third party”, the United Nations, which could play the role of an arbiter as the Organization was an actor with no stake in the conflict or the crisis. Peacekeeping operations were conceived as “a political in-between” with limited means and originally without the involvement of any permanent member of the Security Council, in order to stay away from the “politicization” in the Council.

Some of these peacekeeping operations are still in place today in Jerusalem (UNTSO), Kashmir (UNMOGIP), Cyprus (UNFICYP), the Golan Heights (UNDOF, although now suffering from a spillover effect of the war in Syria), South Lebanon (UNIFIL), Western Sahara (MINURSO) and Abyei (UNISFA). They have indeed frozen those situations on the ground but are helpful in keeping former belligerents apart. They have lingered not because the UN wishes to prolong indefinitely its presence, but because the parties (and their regional/international protectors) have not been able to find a solution to the original dispute. Even with UNIFIL, the biggest mission in this category (a budget of $488 millions and a mission which downsizing had been favored by some members of the Council but resisted by the main parties to the conflict), those missions do not take a great share of the UN budget on peacekeeping (one million out of almost eight).

WE NEED TO STOP JUST QUOTING BRAHIMI OR HIPPO AND START IMPLEMENTING SOME OF THEIR KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

What was relatively easy to do when implementing a solid peace agreement between two States that had an interest in keeping their word, has become much more difficult to achieve with a multitude of non-state parties to a conflict. UN peacekeeping has always been a complicated endeavor when it went beyond its limited “borders” whether in the Congo in the 1960s, in Bosnia and Somalia in the 1990s or today with the deployment of multidimensional peacekeeping operations in Central Africa, Darfur, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali, and South Sudan. It is not the intervention in internal affairs per se that creates difficulties as the UN has been successful doing this in countries like Namibia, Mozambique, Cambodia, Guatemala, East Timor, Côte d’Ivoire and to a certain extent in Haiti and Liberia (missions that are set to close in the course of 2017 and 2018, respectively). A lot remains to be done to sustain peace in all these countries but their relapse into conflict is less likely after the work done by the UN. Several studies have indeed pointed out the “pretty good track record” of UN peacekeeping in terminating conflicts, insuring against their reoccurrence, and reducing the length of local conflict.

It becomes more difficult for the UN when its missions are sent into an on-going civil war, when the peace process is either inexistent or shaky. This leaves too much room for the instrumentalization of the UN presence by the parties, especially when the UN is left with a passive humanitarian role such as providing safe areas in Bosnia or protection of civilian sites in South Sudan. When a mandate becomes too large and too vague, it creates expectations that will never be met and ambitions that are unachievable. The World Bank’s World Development Report of 2011 told us that re-building a state takes at least two to three generations. These open-ended multidimensional missions, often deployed in asymmetric threat environments, also led the UN to militarize its operations. There is a tendency towards giving these operations increasingly offensive mandate, such as through the creation of the Force Intervention Brigade to “neutralize” armed groups in Eastern Congo. Or they have been deployed to
operate in counter-terrorism environments, such as in Mali, putting huge stress on the guiding principles of peacekeeping and the capabilities of those missions.

This increases further the divisions among the various troop-contributors, especially between European/Western countries who support the militarily robust missions but only represent 5 per cent of all contributions, and larger Troop-Contributing Countries (TCCs) who are reluctant to take on such tasks. The divide is replicated between the large TCCs and the mandating organ, the Security Council. This invariably exposes these operations to several dangers. The military tasks take on disproportionate importance in the absence of political objective or strategy. In such absence, the use of force is always doomed to fail whether it is engaged in a multilateral, a multinational or a national framework. All this only widens the division between the various internal and international stakeholders. In short, UN peacekeeping is being progressively left in a doctrine vacuum in which principles are not respected, stabilization not defined, and credibility undermined.

WHY HAS IT BECOME DIFFICULT FOR THE UN TO OPERATE IN SUCH CONDITIONS?

First, the UN has never been given the adequate financial and military means to make a difference in such challenging environments. Member States’ contributions to UN peacekeeping are small as it rarely comes out of their defense budgets. This severely limits the number of troops and the amount of equipment that can be sent to UN peacekeeping operations. In a recent press conference, the outgoing Under Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hervé Ladsous, told reporters the current total budget of peacekeeping operations is equivalent to 0.4 per cent of world’s military expenditures. A blue helmet annually costs $20,000, whereas a US soldier is $800,000. Such limited budget always requires the leadership of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and of the various missions on the ground to make hard choices and set priorities in terms of operations to launch as well as protection equipment for the personnel and technological assets to procure.

Second, once deployed on the ground, UN peacekeeping operations are “weak actors”, for several reasons:

- Units lack interoperability because all these contributors, which have only basic English as a common language, work together on only this one operation, and rotate every six months or so; some countries have only begun training their troops on the UN procedures and standards; they come to the operation with their own ways of operating. And often, the most capable countries in deploying military force think that being able to deal with the high end of conflicts makes them fit for the lower end, which is not the case. All countries need training on the specific methods of peacekeeping.

- Soldiers and police units are deployed in areas that are often very far from their home country’s strategic interests, which is not conducive to taking any risk. Contingents respond to this risk by putting forward caveats or, worse, disobeying orders. This is exacerbated by mandates that are elaborated without them, even if the Council is increasingly informing them on the objectives of the negotiations of the resolution. Overall, the gap between the contributors and the decision-makers is not helping the cohesion of peacekeeping operations.

- Operations are deployed in vast countries and remote areas in relatively small numbers. NATO sent 50,000 troops to Kosovo, which is half the size of New York State, whereas the UN sent 11,000 blue helmets to the north of Mali, which is twice the size of Afghanistan, 12,000 troops to South Sudan, which is the size of France, and that is in a state of war. In DRC, there are 16,000 UN personnel deployed in a country that is of the size of continental Europe. In those circumstances, there is always a limit to the protection UN peacekeepers can provide to populations in disarray.
- Peace operations often lack support from their political creators, in particular the powerful states of the Security Council that are the ones that can have leverage on the parties to the conflict. In 2000, the Brahimi report wrote “Member States must summon the political will to support the United Nations politically, financially and operationally — once they have decided to act as the United Nations — if the Organization is to be credible as a force for peace.” But when a UN mission fails, nobody is there to defend it or even to defend its personnel that are being attacked or kidnapped. And host governments can denigrate them without impunity.

Third, for a long time blue helmets have relied on their impartiality to be respected by the parties to the conflict. This is one of the reasons why all rules and regulations of the UN are antithetical to any inclination to become a party to the conflict and the mission cannot have an “enemy”. The UN has to be able to talk to all actors and stakeholders on the ground, even the most extremist ones. This is often a unique characteristic of a UN peacekeeping operation and one that adds value. Furthermore, if a minimum of impartiality is not respected, the UN will become irrelevant if needed as an honest broker when the parties finally decide to lay down their weapons. This is the main reason why all SRSGs have also been reluctant to use force on the ground, fearful of the consequences they know they did not have the means to deal with.

At the outset of the Security Council debate of 6 April, the Secretary-General pointed out the obvious: “Our ambitions do not correspond to our capacities, and our aims do not correspond to the resources available to achieve them.” The question for the Security Council, the Secretariat, and Member States is how to work better with those inherent limitations of UN peacekeeping and not stretch them to the point where the Organization will lose its soul as well as its ability to add value and maintain its legitimacy.

**A RENEWED DOCTRINE FOR A MORE ADAPTED INSTRUMENT FOR KEEPING THE PEACE**

The global political and economic environment is such that the UN cannot ask for more money to solve its problems. What the system can do is renew its peacekeeping doctrine in a way to operationalize “the primacy of politics”. It should build a new consensus among all peacekeeping stakeholders on how to conduct its operations. Peacekeeping needs a more realistic approach on what UN peacekeeping can achieve and what it will never be able to.

An updated doctrine should keep at its center the basic principles that have guided UN peacekeeping for more than 50 years: use of force in self-defense and in the defense of the mandate; impartiality; and consent of the host nation. These principles are enshrined in the 2008 Capstone Doctrine but they should not be considered as a given in any situation. They are a starting point that should empower the Secretariat to say “no” to some operations that would be better led by other sub-regional, regional or international groupings. They also imply the capacity to politically engage with the parties for them to understand that they, at a moment, have a greater interest in peace than in the continuation of war. Engaging the parties also means threatening them, pressuring them with tools by which the “international community” can have some leverage, including individual sanctions, arms embargos, and putting conditionality to the delivery of development aid. No peacekeeping operations should be mandated in the absence of an arms embargo, as the free circulation of weapons is an important means to allow the continuation of war.

These principles must be worked out in a better way before the deployment of an operation. Recently, the Security Council has mandated deployments in South Sudan (the Regional Protection Force in Juba) and Burundi (deployment of 228 police officers) that could not be deployed as the host nation opposed them. This was indicative of a lack of prior political pressures from their powerful neighbors and patrons. The Council is deciding to deploy operations before getting the politics right and looking at the practical modalities of deployment. Such missteps are ultimately undermining its authority.
When missions are to be deployed and host nations are delaying the implementation of the mandate, the Security Council needs to collectively talk with their representatives behind closed doors and not just listen to them deliver a speech as part of an open session. The constant and consistent support of the Security Council is key to the success of any peacekeeping operation. A more formal compact in the form of a roadmap could also be signed at the outset of an operation between the Council, the host nation and the Secretariat on the steps taken to implement the mandate, on benchmarks to measure progress. This agreement would also provide the necessary guidance on the ground to elaborate its mission implementation plan and set out its priorities. The ownership of the UN operation by the host nation, the host population, by the main parties to the conflict is ultimately essential to its success. Strategies have to be developed to secure that buy-in for the long term for each mission in a realistic and achievable roadmap.

The credibility and the deterrence of the UN comes not only from the threat of using force (although show of force is necessary at times), but also from the potential diplomatic harm, from sanctions and embargoes, that could be caused if the Security Council is united. The UN cannot project force or engage on military actions like NATO, as it has neither the means nor the organization to do so. In the words of the Brahimi report, “the United Nations does not wage war”. The then Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, clearly stated for his part that such action should be undertaken by regional organizations or other international organizations. This does not mean that the UN cannot use force, on the contrary; a renewed consensus on the limits of peacekeeping should aim at making TCCs more at ease in being more robust when needed.

**TO MAKE PEACEKEEPING WORK FOR PEACE AGAIN**

As long as Member States continue to deploy peacekeepers without a clear strategy on what needs to be achieved or what is achievable on the ground to solve a crisis, UN peacekeeping will face dire challenges and criticism. Blue helmets cannot be efficient without clear end states and exit strategies. If this approach continues, more reports will be written in the coming decades making the same recommendations as Brahimi and HIPPO. So, how can we break this vicious cycle and make peacekeeping great again?

*First, we need to stop just quoting Brahimi or HIPPO and start implementing some of their key recommendations.* Brahimi told us fifteen years ago that “the key conditions for the success of future complex operations are political support, rapid deployment with a robust force posture and a sound peacebuilding strategy.” The Security Council needs to not just write mandates but become actively involved in applying political pressure to give its decisions sharp teeth. A divided Council weakens UN peacekeeping operations.

*Second, rapid deployment and robust posture will come by setting the limits to peacekeeping that all troop contributors agree with.* There is also a need to bridge the gap between the wishes of some countries and the abilities/possibilities of others, and between the somehow militaristic answers given by the Council and the need for stronger political strategies. Differences among TCCs and Council members on how mandates are interpreted, and specifically, over attitudes to the use of force remain and have to be discussed if peacekeeping operations wish to be more efficient.

*Third, Sustaining Peace will depend on the willingness of Member States to understand that UN peacekeeping is only one part of a continuum, a spectrum of actions in favor of peace and security to help a country rebuild, in a process that lasts decades.* As such, the separation between special political missions and peacekeeping operations of all sorts has become irrelevant. Peacekeeping is only one building block of wider peacebuilding and developments processes. Its efficiency will also depend on the ability of all stakeholders to engage in a continuous dialogue with the host government and the local populations...
on the root causes of the crisis or the conflict. Ultimately, the exit goals must aim at consolidating the peacekeeping gains, and have connections with the UN country team and the UN system at large. As one entity leads or follows, the UN system needs to improve its ability to transition and handover by understanding the strengths of each part of the system, sharing information, and conducting more joint planning.

One could argue that this reflection on the nature and the limits of peacekeeping should have taken place before the reform processes initiated by the new Secretary-General (in particular the one related to the restructuring of the Secretariat), as the framework should precede the contents. Other would also argue that it should have happened after the release of the HIPPO report two years ago. The point is that no reform process will be really achieved if it avoids that issue and misses the opportunity to rebuild a consensus around a revamped doctrine of UN peacekeeping.

Peacekeeping is a complex endeavor. If it were simple, those missions that have been on duty for decades would have ended up in the “past missions” folder of the UN Secretariat a long time ago. But as a political endeavor, it needs as much guidance and direction from Member States as it ever did. For this reason, the current debate in New York should be seen as an opportunity and not as a threat; a time to breakdown a few silos, get off the roundabout of reporting writing, and to start implementing change.

Peacekeeping is a global responsibility that each Member States should feel part of. But for that there needs to be an overall shift of priority, from securitization of answers and building arsenals to investing in peace and in sustaining it. The problem is that these long-term solutions rarely appeal to politicians and international public opinion, which are accustomed to quick fixes; something that UN peacekeeping will never be able to be.

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May 30, 2017

PROTECTING PROTECTION: HOW ANTÓNIO GUTERRES SHOULD USE FUNDING CUTS TO REFORM PEACEKEEPING

Lauren Spink and Adam Day

In Secretary-General António Guterres’ report on Protection of Civilians released on 25 May, he called on peacekeepers to “recognize their responsibility to act, to the full extent of their mandates and capabilities, to prevent and respond to threats against civilians” and if they fail to do so they, “must be held accountable for under performance or non-performance.”

The Secretary-General’s comments come at a time when UN peacekeeping is under increasingly close scrutiny. The US Ambassador to the UN, Nikki Haley, has called for a review of all peacekeeping operations and last month the UN Security Council cut 3,600 troops from the UN peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, only days after 40 Congolese police officers were beheaded by militias. With reviews of UN missions in war-torn South Sudan, Darfur and Mali coming up next month, and a proposal to reduce US funding to peacekeeping by $1 billion, the cuts are likely to continue in countries where security situations are only deteriorating.

The biggest risk of the cuts is that rapid reductions in the number of peacekeepers could mean more people die. Protecting civilians under threat is a core task of UN peacekeeping, but one where the UN has struggled to show results. Rather than waiting for almost certain downsizing, the Secretary-General should follow-through on his statements and leverage looming funding cuts to push through much-needed reforms geared at holding the UN and its personnel more accountable for the protection of civilians. And he should clearly say that those who fail to protect civilians will be sent home. A more serious approach to accountability would not only improve protection of civilians across the board, but it would also create an evidentiary basis to decide where (and what) to cut when the inevitable knife comes.

WHAT IS THE UN’S TRACK RECORD ON PROTECTING CIVILIANS?

Of the 16 UN peacekeeping missions deployed throughout the world, 10 have mandates focused on protection of civilians. That translates into 97 per cent of all peacekeepers deployed. In conflict-affected countries where governments are unable to protect civilians—or where they are targeting their own people—UN peacekeepers may be the only thing standing between killers and victims.

There are clear instances where peacekeepers have intervened to protect civilians and save lives. There is also some evidence that deploying peacekeepers to conflict areas reduces civilian killings more generally. Many of these peacekeeping successes go unreported because they aren’t considered newsworthy and because it is extremely difficult to prove when armed groups are deterred by the UN’s presence, or where an operation prevents a much more brutal attack.
There are also many examples when UN peacekeepers have failed to protect innocent people, even when doing so was well within their mandate and capacities. These failures do capture headlines. Painful examples over the last year include civilian massacres only a few kilometers from peacekeeping bases in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, unenforced weapons-free zones that created a false sense of security for civilians in the Central African Republic, and South Sudanese women and girls being raped just outside of UN protection sites. In fact, an internal UN audit of protection of civilians found that “force is almost never used to protect civilians under attack.”

If the UN is going to make a persuasive case for its protection of civilians role, it needs to be more serious about measuring how well peacekeepers perform their protection of civilians duties, and real incentives and penalties need to be in place. Accountability is the key.

PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS CAN (AND SHOULD) BE MEASURED

The UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) has developed protection indicators to measure whether a situation in a region or country is improving or deteriorating. These include recording rates of violence against civilians, inter-communal fighting, and mass casualties. This is good: although increases in violence against civilians do not necessarily mean that a Mission’s presence has had no positive impact, declining rates of violence against civilians should be a key metric for understanding whether the UN is on the right track. However, the UN’s indicators typically aren’t linked to a how peacekeepers are contributing to success.
Instead, the UN primarily measures peacekeepers' activities—the numbers of patrols, hours spent in the air, fuel consumed. Focusing on the number of activities performed ignores critical questions about how well the patrols were conducted, whether they averted attacks, or the broader question of whether and how peacekeeping is contributing to a decline in risk to civilians. This is the equivalent of measuring a professional athlete's skills by asking whether she put on a jersey and played in the game, ignoring whether she scored any points.

**THE BIGGEST RISK OF THE CUTS IS THAT RAPID REDUCTIONS IN THE NUMBER OF PEACEKEEPERS COULD MEAN MORE PEOPLE DIE.**

Focusing on the performance of those mandated to improve protection for civilians is not new to conflict settings. In fact, major donors in the humanitarian and development sectors more often require clear metrics for how activities contribute to protection of civilians. And in other key areas, such as sexual violence in conflict, the Secretary-General publishes an annual report that details allegations of abuse and progress towards accountability. Protection of civilians needs the same level of attention and public reporting, including a focused, detailed accounting of the UN's successes, failures, and steps taken to address its shortcomings.

Much of the needed information already exists. DPKO recently instituted a new policy that requires the military leadership in peacekeeping missions to regularly evaluate troop performance in the field and relay this information back to UN and Force headquarters as well as to troop contributing countries (TCCs). The UN mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has taken the innovative step of documenting and reviewing peacekeeper responses to threat alerts from the field, which is a partial but important step towards accountability. And in some cases, the Security Council has requested briefings on troop performance, though to date this reporting has tended to gloss over specific shortfalls in favor of a generic recommitment to reporting on non-performance. Lacking in all of this is a systematic way to measure the performance of civilian and military UN personnel; a framework to connect the pieces of performance information that do exist; and a meaningful use of protection indicators to hold mission personnel accountable. The UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations is conducting a review of accountability practices that may be able to serve as a framework for accountability. This document would be most useful if written as a roadmap for the future of peacekeeping accountability that proposes a structure to integrate different sources of performance reporting—rather than as an account of current practices.

**TOUGH LOVE: SENDING UNDERPERFORMERS HOME**

What happens when UN peacekeepers fail to respond to an attack on a nearby community? What are the consequences when local UN commanders disobey the chain of command or wait for their own capital to tell them what to do? In a typical national military, failing to follow orders could result in immediate dismissal, or even a court-martial. In the UN, with very few exceptions, such willful underperformance has essentially no repercussions. This is in part because UN peacekeeping is hostage to its fairly limited number of big troop contributors. If a key country is publicly embarrassed, or made to act against its wishes, the threat to withdraw can put the UN in the awkward position of being short on troops when the next crisis erupts. As Ban Ki-moon’s contortions over the cholera epidemic in Haiti demonstrated, even where a troop contributor is holding a smoking gun, the UN will take the softest public line possible. The case of Congolese soldiers being sent home from Central African Republic last year could be touted as a counterexample, but they were fired for sexual exploitation (not failure to protect) and as a relatively minor troop contributor with an increasingly isolated president, Kinshasa
was not in a position to push back. Most of the time, failure to protect is swept under the carpet as part of the complicated business of peacekeeping.

The UN’s opaque approach to accountability undermines any kind of incentive system for troops to take the proactive stance necessary for effective protection of civilians. In fact, the lack of transparent accountability mechanisms can contribute to a perception that decisions to send troops home are politically motivated. Instituting a trustworthy, well-documented system of accountability can assure troop contributing countries that staffing decisions are not made arbitrarily.

The Secretary-General and DPKO chief should take a clear line: The UN will measure and report on performance, and is willing to send underperformers home, even if it means facing troop shortfalls. The UN also needs to find a meaningful way to evaluate civilian staff efforts at implementing their protection mandates and fulfilling the broader promise of human rights realization. This stance, combined with a renewed effort to improve training of UN personnel responsible for protecting civilians in the field, would send the right message, just when US pressure to chop peacekeeping budgets lends weight to the threat to send ineffective troops home.

**MAKING THE CASE FOR PROTECTION**

Assuming the US steamrolls ahead with its push for greater cuts, the UN needs to be ready to defend the parts of the system that work. As it stands now, there is little evidence to show where the UN is good at protecting civilians, or how it is planning to use success stories from one setting to improve other missions. A serious approach to measuring performance would build such a basis, and would force DPKO to think systematically about what parts of its field missions are a good value for the money. Given that the threat of cuts is imminent, it is important that the Secretary-General makes his intentions clear now: peacekeeper accountability is not just for sexual exploitation and abuse, peacekeepers will be held responsible for failing to protect of civilians when it is within their means to do so. This would be an important step in building confidence now, and a catalyst for the changes that need to happen at the policy level.

Ultimately, the goal of accountability for performance is not to punish, it is to get the most out of mission staff. Accountability will require that underperformers either step up or move out, eventually leading to more efficient use of resources, which could allow the UN to absorb the upcoming cuts to peacekeeping without human cost on the ground. Urgency for peacekeeping reform may be driven by the US knife, but it should be tied to performance and the risk of the possible loss to civilian lives and livelihoods if peacekeepers draw down. If budget cuts are disconnected from effective and expedited reform, civilians will likely suffer the negative consequences as peacekeepers are withdrawn from increasingly dangerous conflicts like Congo and South Sudan. With cuts all but inevitable, the UN needs to get out in front of the US review and quickly build a strong case for protecting protection.

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FEATURED DATA

FEMALE UNIFORMED PERSONNEL BY MISSION, MARCH 2017

This dataset contains descriptive and demographic data on all current United Nations Under Secretary-General (USG) positions, including the names of the current appointees in each position, their nationalities, gender, year of birth, and more. The Global Peace Operations Review has assembled and published this data for the first time in spreadsheet format to improve the accessibility and transparency of data regarding senior UN officials. This dataset will be updated on a regular basis as new appointees are selected and confirmed by the UN.

Download the complete dataset as an Excel spreadsheet

Data Source: Data Source: United Nations. Data covers all UN Under Secretary-General (USG) appointees in office as of May 2017. This graphic will be updated regularly as new USG appointments are made and confirmed by the UN. Last updated 24 May 2017. Prepared by the Center on International Cooperation.
UN UNDER SECRETARIES-GENERAL (USGS) BY NATIONALITY, AS OF MAY 2017

Data Source: United Nations. Data covers all UN Under Secretary-General (USG) appointees in office as of May 2017. This map will be updated regularly as new USG appointments are made and confirmed by the UN. Last updated 24 May 2017. Prepared by the Center on International Cooperation.
UNIFORMED PERSONNEL CONTRIBUTIONS TO MINUSCA, 2014-PRESENT

MINUSTAH has been operating in Haiti since June 2004, shortly after the 2004 Haitian coup d'état. Troop and police presence peaked after the devastating 2010 earthquake, and has been declining since. In April 2017, the UN Security Council mandated the mission’s final drawdown, with a new peacekeeping operation set to take over in October 2017. This graph shows the evolution of authorized and actual personnel levels on MINUSTAH from 2004 to present.

Data Source: United Nations. Prepared by the Center on International Cooperation
The pie chart on the left shows the number of uniformed personnel contributed to the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) by Ethiopia and by all other contributing countries, with the smaller pie on the right breaking down the five largest contributors besides Ethiopia. As of March 2017, Ethiopia was contributing 98.1% of all military personnel to UNISFA.

**Data Source:** United Nations. Prepared by the Center on International Cooperation
This line chart shows the growth in the number of UN uniformed personnel deployed (red line) and authorized to be deployed (blue line) on the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) from its inception in August 2011 to present. Uniformed personnel include troops, police, and military experts.

Data Source: United Nations. Prepared by the Center on International Cooperation
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