

I. Global trends and developments in peace operations

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Multilateral peace operations in 2017

Sixty-three multilateral peace operations were active during 2017 (see figure 3.1).¹ This was one more than in 2016 and the second-highest number of operations conducted in the period 2008–17.

Among the 63 operations were 5 new missions and 4 that terminated during the year. The remaining 54 missions were active for the entire year. The new missions were, in chronological order, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Mission in the Gambia (ECOMIG), the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia (UNVMC), the UN Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH), the European Union (EU) Advisory Mission in support of Security Sector Reform in Iraq (EUAM Iraq) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Preventive Mission in the Kingdom of Lesotho (SAPMIL). The missions that terminated during 2017 were, in chronological order, the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI), the UN Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), the UN Mission in Colombia (UNMC) and the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH).² The closure of these 4 missions meant that there were 59 ongoing multilateral peace operations at the end of the year.

Multilateral peace operations were deployed to 42 countries and territories in 2017.³ This included two countries—Gambia and Lesotho—that did not host peace operations in the preceding year. The Solomon Islands and Côte d'Ivoire no longer hosted any peace operations following the closure of RAMSI and UNOCI in mid-2017. Nineteen countries hosted more than one peace operation. Mali hosted 4 peace operations in 2017—more than any other country.

¹ The quantitative analysis draws on data collected by SIPRI to examine trends in peace operations. According to SIPRI's definition, a multilateral peace operation must have the stated intention of: (a) serving as an instrument to facilitate the implementation of peace agreements already in place; (b) supporting a peace process; or (c) assisting conflict prevention or peacebuilding efforts. Good offices, fact-finding or electoral assistance missions, and missions comprising non-resident individuals or teams of negotiators are not included (see section IV). Since all SIPRI data is reviewed on a continual basis and adjusted when more accurate information becomes available, the statistics in this chapter may not always fully correspond with data found in previous editions of the SIPRI Yearbook or other SIPRI publications.

² For a description of the missions that opened and terminated in 2017 see section II.

³ Including Abyei (Sudan), Western Sahara and the Palestinian Territories.

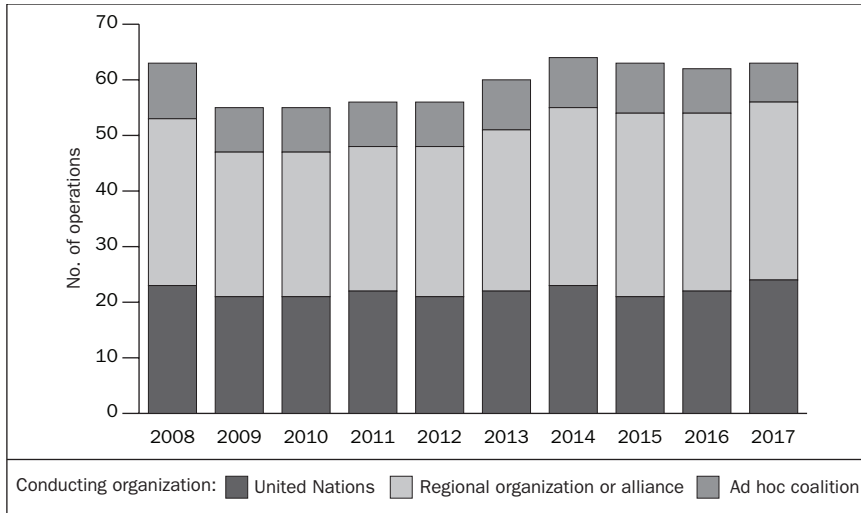


Figure 3.1. Number of multilateral peace operations by type of conducting organization, 2008–17

Trends in personnel deployments

The total number of personnel deployed in all multilateral peace operations decreased by 4.5 per cent over the course of 2017—from 152 822 to 145 911—and fell below 150 000 for the first time in the 2008–17 period (see figure 3.2).⁴ This was a continuation of a steady decline that began in 2016, after overall personnel deployments had remained relatively stable during 2015 at around 162 000. Of those deployed in 2017, 94 per cent were uniformed personnel (125 803 military and 11 846 police) while 8262 were international civilian personnel.

Personnel deployments in multilateral peace operations were much higher in the period 2008–14, but this was primarily due to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. ISAF inflated the figures to such an extent—it reached its maximum strength of over 130 000 personnel in 2010—that this disguised underlying trends. The number of personnel deployed in all multilateral peace operations fell sharply as NATO reduced its footprint in Afghanistan to approximately 13 000 between 2012 and the end of 2014,

⁴ The analyses of personnel levels in this chapter are based on estimates of the number of international personnel (i.e. military, police and international civilian staff) deployed at the end of each month in each of the multilateral peace operations that were active in the period Jan. 2008 to Dec. 2017. In previous editions of the SIPRI Yearbook, similar analyses used annual snapshot data on the number of international personnel in multilateral peace operations at the end of each year or, in the case of an operation terminated during a calendar year, on the number at their closure. Consequently, the data in this chapter does not exactly match data used in previous editions of the SIPRI Yearbook.

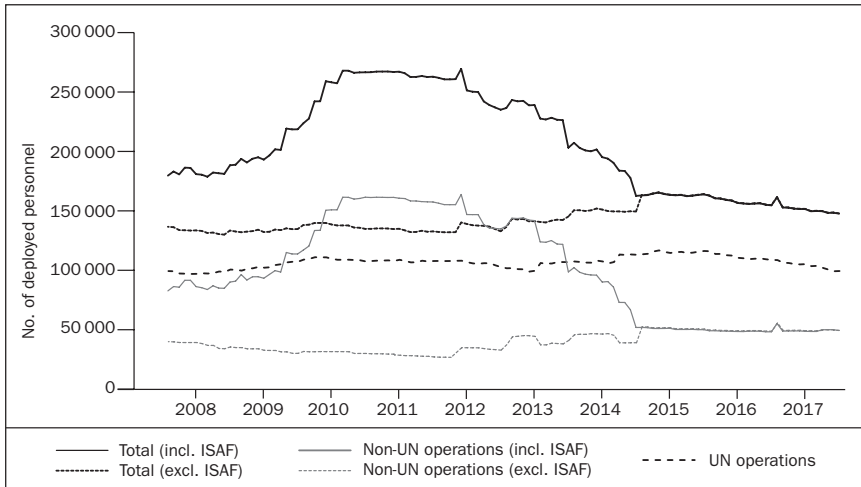


Figure 3.2. Number of personnel deployed in multilateral peace operations, 2008–17

ISAF = International Security Assistance Force.

Note: Year marker indicates monthly data at the mid-year point (June).

when ISAF terminated. However, in the same period the total number of personnel in all other multilateral peace operations increased by 13 per cent, from approximately 130 000 to more than 147 000.

The decrease in the total number of personnel deployed in multilateral peace operations after 2015 was caused primarily by a steady decline in personnel deployments by the UN. The number of personnel in UN peace operations increased quite significantly between 2012 and 2015, from less than 100 000 to nearly 115 000, but subsequently fell to 98 354 by December 2017—approximately the same level as before it began to rise five years earlier. The decrease in the number of personnel in UN peace operations in 2016–17 resulted primarily from reductions in the strength of the UN/African Union (AU) Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), the UN Multidimensional Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), as well as the gradual departure of peacekeepers from Côte d’Ivoire and Haiti prior to the closure of UNOCI and MINUSTAH. Although some of these reductions in mission strength were justified by the conditions on the ground, financial constraints also played a role as significant cuts to the UN peacekeeping budget compelled the UN Secretariat to reduce the number of peacekeepers in the field.

The number of personnel in non-UN peace operations—that is multilateral peace operations conducted by regional organizations and alliances or by ad hoc coalitions of states—remained within the range of

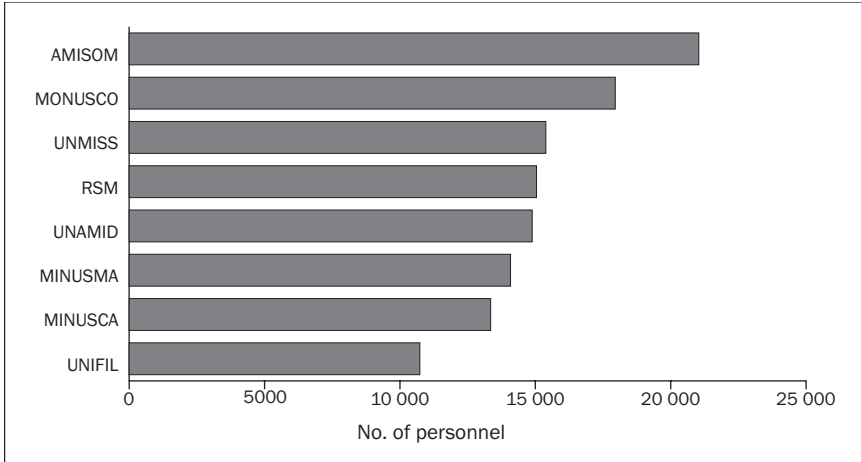


Figure 3.3. Multilateral peace operations with more than 10 000 personnel on 31 December 2017

AMISOM = AU Mission in Somalia; MONUSCO = UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; UNMISS = UN Mission in South Sudan; RSM = Resolute Support Mission; UNAMID = AU/UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur; MINUSMA = UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali; MINUSCA = UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic; UNIFIL = UN Interim Force in Lebanon.

45 000–50 000 in 2014–17. Deployments in these operations first decreased somewhat in 2014–15, but increased by 2.3 per cent in 2017 from 46 432 to 47 557. This included a noticeable, albeit brief, peak in January 2017 as a result of the deployment of ECOMIG, which had an initial strength of 7000 before it quickly reconfigured into a much smaller mission of 500 after the post-electoral crisis regarding the succession of the Gambian presidency was resolved.

The AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) remained the largest multilateral peace operation throughout 2017. At the end of the year it had a total strength of 21 039 personnel. Besides AMISOM, seven operations fielded more than 10 000 personnel (see figure 3.3). These were, in decreasing order of size, the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), the NATO-led Resolute Support Mission (RSM), the AU/UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), and the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). During the year, UNMISS and the RSM surpassed UNAMID to become the third- and fourth-largest operations, respectively, while MINUSMA surpassed MINUSCA to become the sixth-largest mission. At the end of 2017, these eight missions alone

accounted for 84 per cent of all personnel deployed in multilateral peace operations worldwide.

Organizations conducting peace operations

As in previous years, the UN was the organization that conducted the most multilateral peace operations and deployed the largest number of personnel in 2017. The UN led 24 of the 63 multilateral peace operations active in 2017, which is two more than in 2016. Three of these missions—UNOCI, MINUSTAH and the UNMC—terminated during the year. MINUSTAH and the UNMC were immediately succeeded by the new UN missions, MINUJUSTH and the UNVMC (see section II). Although the number of personnel deployed in UN peace operations fell by 7.6 per cent to 98 354, the UN accounted for two-thirds of all personnel in multilateral peace operations at the end of 2017 (compared to 70 per cent at the end of 2016).

Regional organizations and alliances were responsible for 32 of the 63 multilateral peace operations active in 2017. At the end of 2017, these actors deployed 44 902 personnel in multilateral peace operations, which accounted for 31 per cent of the total number of personnel deployed. The number of personnel in peace operations led by regional organizations and alliances increased by 2.7 per cent during 2017.

African regional organizations conducted seven multilateral peace operations. The AU conducted four and remained the regional organization that deployed the most personnel in its missions. The number of personnel in AU missions decreased by 4.1 per cent during 2017, from 22 004 to 21 104, as a result of the withdrawal of 1000 troops from AMISOM, which continued to account for nearly all the personnel deployed in AU-led peace operations. ECOWAS conducted two peace operations, one more than in 2016. The number of personnel in ECOWAS operations increased during 2017 as a result of the deployment of ECOMIG, from 543 to 977. SADC conducted one peace operation, SAPMIL, which it deployed to Lesotho in December 2017.

The EU, NATO and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) led 23 missions and operations that qualified as multilateral peace operations. The number of personnel deployed in the two NATO-led operations, the RSM and the Kosovo Force (KFOR), increased by 8.3 per cent in 2017, from 17 621 to 19 077. The EU conducted 12 peace operations in the framework of its Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). EUAM Iraq was launched in November 2017. The number of personnel in EU peace operations increased by 2.7 per cent in 2017, from 2395 to 2460. The OSCE conducted nine peace operations. At the end of the year it deployed 1000 personnel in these missions, which was almost exactly the same number as one year earlier.

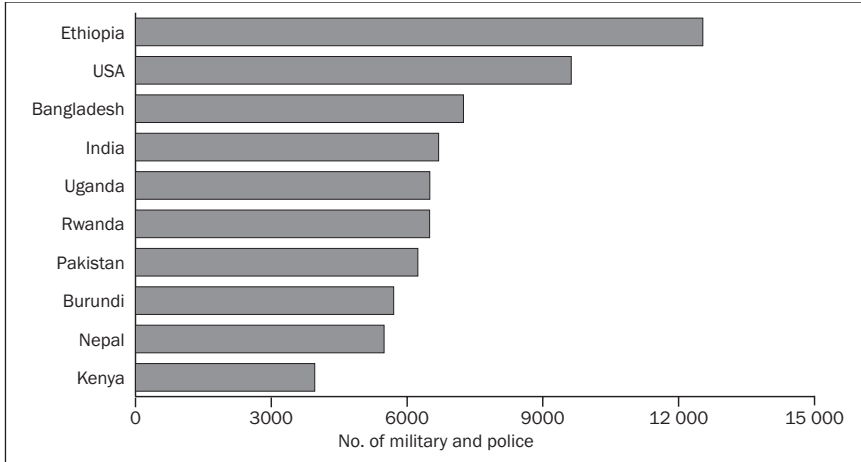


Figure 3.4. Largest contributors to multilateral peace operations on 31 December 2017

The Pacific Islands Forum and the Organization of American States conducted one peace operation each in 2017. These were RAMSI and the Mission to Assist the Peace Process in Colombia (MAPP/OEA), respectively. RAMSI terminated in mid-2017. There were no notable changes in the composition of MAPP/OEA.

Finally, seven multilateral peace operations were conducted by ad hoc coalitions of states—one fewer than in 2016. The number of personnel deployed in peace operations by such non-standing coalitions decreased by 2.5 per cent during 2017, from 2722 to 2655. This decrease resulted primarily from the completion of the reconfiguration of the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) in the Sinai Peninsula, which was the largest ad hoc peace operation in 2017, even though its force was reduced from 1383 to 1300.

Troop and police contributions

Ethiopia, the United States and Bangladesh were the three largest contributors of uniformed personnel (both military and police) to multilateral peace operations in 2017 (see figure 3.4). The ten largest contributors accounted for approximately half of all uniformed personnel in multilateral peace operations as of 31 December. The same ten countries were also the largest contributors in 2016.

Ethiopia has been the largest contributor of uniformed personnel to multilateral peace operations since it joined AMISOM in 2014. Ethiopia was also the largest contributor of uniformed personnel to UN peace operations. In December 2017, Ethiopia contributed 12 534 uniformed personnel to peace operations: 8420 to UN peace operations and 4114 to AMISOM. It was a

major contributor to AMISOM, UNAMID, the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) and UNMISS, all of which are active in neighbouring countries. Except for one staff officer in MINUSMA, all the Ethiopian troops and police were deployed in these four operations.

As the second-largest contributor of uniformed personnel to multilateral peace operations in 2017, the USA was the only Western country to rank among the 10 largest contributors. The USA deployed 9627 uniformed personnel, an increase of around 1500 on the year before. The increase in US contributions to peace operations resulted from a decision by the US Government to deploy more troops to Afghanistan, among other things to reinforce the NATO-led RSM (see section II). In addition to the RSM, the USA was a major contributor to the NATO-led KFOR and the MFO in the Sinai Peninsula. It contributed only 55 military and police personnel to UN peace operations.

Bangladesh ended 2017 as the third-largest contributor of uniformed personnel to multilateral peace operations. During the year it surpassed India and Pakistan—the third- and fourth-largest contributors in December 2016—by increasing its contribution from 6862 to 7246 uniformed personnel. In the same period, India's contribution decreased from 7710 to 6697 and Pakistan's decreased from 7156 to 6238, which made them the fourth- and seventh-largest contributors of uniformed personnel, respectively. Nepal—the other South Asian country in the top ten—maintained its position as the ninth-largest contributor. Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan only contributed to UN peace operations.

The other countries in the top ten were Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda. Rwanda was the sixth-largest contributor to multilateral peace operations in 2017 and the fourth-largest contributor to UN peace operations. Although Burundi, Kenya and Uganda contributed uniformed personnel to UN missions, their rankings are predominantly the result of their large contingents in AMISOM. The fact that five African countries were ranked among the ten largest contributors to multilateral peace operations illustrates how significant their role has become.⁵

Fatalities among peace operations personnel

Several of the multilateral peace operations active in 2017 were deployed amid ongoing or deteriorating situations of armed conflict in areas where viable peace agreements and state authority were either absent or highly fragile and contested. A number of missions that operated in these

⁵ Avezov, X., Van der Lijn, J. and Smit, T., *African Directions: Towards an Equitable Partnership in Peace Operations* (SIPRI: Stockholm, Feb. 2017).

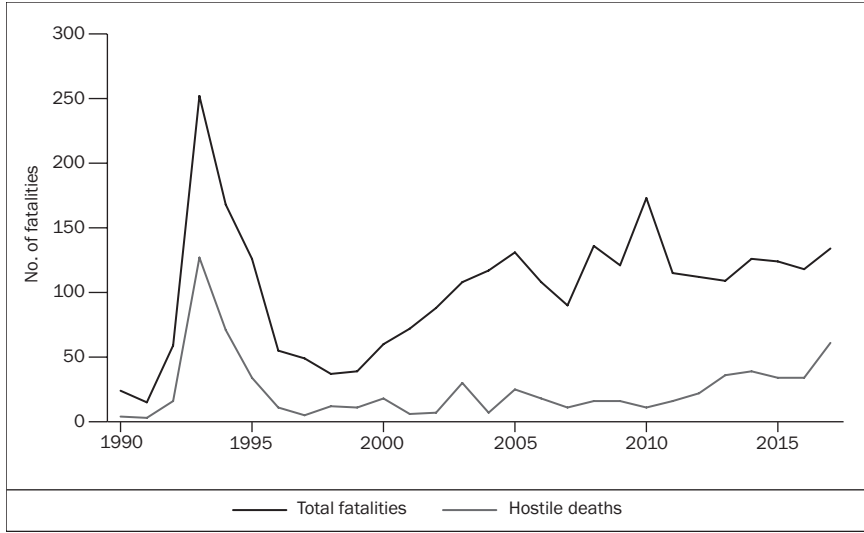


Figure 3.5. Fatalities in UN peace operations, 1990–2017

environments faced sustained threats and deliberate attacks from non-state armed groups and other spoilers (see section II).

It continues to be challenging for UN peace operations to adapt to these new realities on the ground. This has been reflected in the increase in the number of hostile deaths—that is, fatalities resulting from malicious acts—among personnel in UN peace operations in recent years. The number of hostile deaths was significantly higher in the period 2013–17 than in any other period since 1993–95, when the UN suffered exceptional losses in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia and Somalia (see figure 3.5). The ratio of hostile deaths per 1000 personnel was also markedly higher in 2013–17 than in earlier periods, albeit that similar or even higher ratios were regularly reported in the 1990s and occasionally in the 2000s (see figure 3.6). One caveat is that half of all the UN peacekeepers killed as a result of violent acts in the period 2013–16 were serving in MINUSMA, which since it was established in mid-2013 has suffered more hostile deaths than any other contemporary UN mission. In fact, the ratio of hostile deaths in all UN peace operations excluding MINUSMA in 2013–16 was not unusually high compared to other years—and in 2016 it was even the lowest in the entire 1990–2017 period.

This was clearly not the case in 2017, however, as UN peace operations witnessed a fairly dramatic increase in hostile deaths in both absolute and relative terms. UN peace operations suffered 61 hostile deaths in 2017, of which 58 were of uniformed personnel. The ratio of hostile deaths among uniformed personnel—0.61 per 1000—was twice as high in 2017 as it was in 2016. Both the number and the ratio of hostile deaths were significantly higher in 2017 than in any year since 1994. Excluding MINUSMA, the ratio

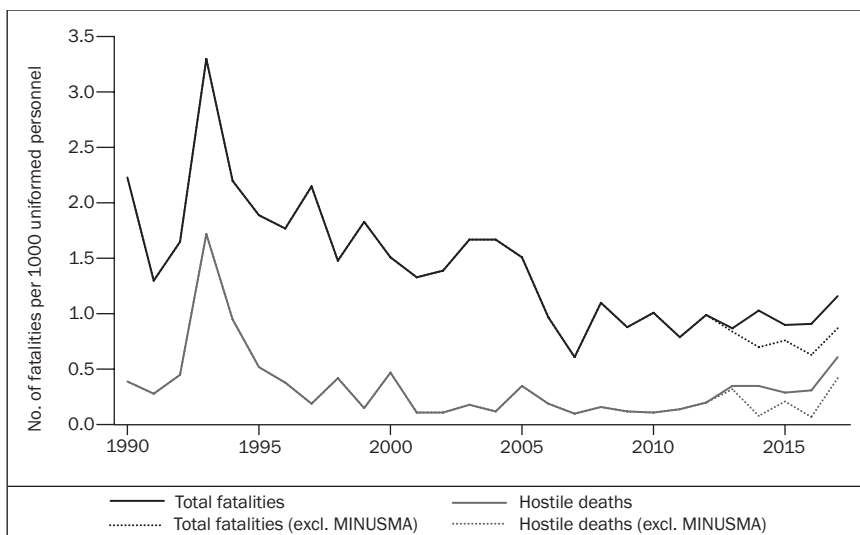


Figure 3.6. Fatality ratios for uniformed personnel in UN peace operations, 1990–2017

MINUSMA = UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali

of hostile deaths rose from 0.07 per 1000 to 0.42 per 1000—the highest since 2000. In addition, for the first time since 1993, hostile deaths made up more than half of all fatalities (52 per cent). All the hostile deaths among personnel in UN peace operations occurred in Africa, and the vast majority of the peacekeepers killed by violent acts were themselves from African countries.⁶ All but one of the 61 victims of hostile deaths in 2017 were deployed in MINUSCA, MINUSMA or MONUSCO.

These worrying developments further aggravated concerns about the safety and security of UN peacekeepers and their ability to deliver their mandates in complex security environments. The UN Secretary-General therefore appointed retired Lt General Carlos Alberto dos Santos Cruz of Brazil, in November 2017, to lead an independent review of the hostile deaths and injuries of UN peacekeepers, and suggest measures to reduce them. The review concluded that the increase in hostile deaths in recent years ‘is not a spike but rather a rise to a continuing plateau’.⁷ The Cruz Report urged the UN and contributors to UN peacekeeping operations to accept and adapt to the changed nature of mission environments in which challenges are multifaceted, complex and fluid, and in which blue helmets can no longer count on their status as an impartial force for protection against the security

⁶ Dos Santos Cruz, C. A., Phillips, W. R. and Cusimano, S., *Improving Security of United Nations Peacekeepers: We Need to Change the Way we are Doing Business* (United Nations Independent Report: New York, 19 Dec. 2017), p. 5.

⁷ Dos Santos Cruz, Phillips and Cusimano (note 6), p. 5.

threats that emanate from this. To face up to these challenges, the report emphasized, among other things, that stronger leadership, less risk-averse strategies and tactics, and a more flexible interpretation of the guiding principles of peacekeeping should allow proactive and pre-emptive use of force by missions against combatants that might otherwise threaten them.⁸

The UN peacekeeping budget

In addition to developments in the field, the year also saw a number of discussions and developments regarding UN peace operations in the Security Council and the General Assembly in New York. These were held under the shadow of the Trump administration's intention to cut its spending on UN peacekeeping by as much as 40 per cent.⁹ This was to be achieved by reducing the US share of assessed contributions to the UN peacekeeping budget from 28 per cent to 25 per cent, and by dramatically reducing this budget overall.¹⁰ With this goal, the US Ambassador to the UN, Nikki Haley, called for a review of the 16 UN peacekeeping missions, arguing that some might no longer be useful, while others might need to be reconfigured, shrunk or closed down.¹¹

A US concept note argued that: 'The United Nations becomes trapped in these frozen conflicts, and peacekeeping missions that were initially conceived to provide temporary security to allow space for political solutions to take hold instead deploy for years without clear mandates or exit plans'.¹² Haley's call resonated with a number of finance-contributing countries and the Secretary-General, as they perceived it as an opportunity to make UN peacekeeping operations fit for purpose. While they may not favour sudden cuts in the peacekeeping budget, they would like to see the UN focus more on conflict prevention and supporting political processes.¹³

The outcome of the negotiations in 2017 was that the UN peacekeeping budget was reduced from nearly \$7.9 billion for the period 2016–17 to around \$6.8 billion for the period 2017–18. The share of US assessed contributions determined in 2015 for the period up to 2018 decreased from slightly over to slightly under 28.5 per cent. As a consequence, the US assessed contribution

⁸ Dos Santos Cruz, Phillips and Cusimano (note 6), section III, pp. 9–17.

⁹ Lynch, C., '\$1 billion in cuts to UN Peacekeeping', *Foreign Policy*, 23 Mar. 2017.

¹⁰ US Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Hearing Transcript, Hearing on the nomination of Gov. Haley to be US Ambassador to the United Nations, 18 Jan. 2017.

¹¹ United Nations, Security Council, Seventy-second year, 7918th meeting, United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, S/PV.7918, 6 Apr. 2017.

¹² United Nations, Security Council, Annex to the letter dated 4 April 2017 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, 'Concept paper: Thematic debate, Peacekeeping operations review', S/2017/287, 5 Apr. 2017.

¹³ Gowan, R., 'Why Trump could speed up—and complicate—inevitable UN Peacekeeping reforms', *World Politics Review*, 27 Mar. 2017.

for the budget period 2017–18 decreased by some \$300 million, or 14 per cent, compared to the previous budget period.¹⁴ While the Trump administration continues to seek a further reduction in the US contribution to the peacekeeping budget, in practice the result will depend on diplomatic outcomes and it is likely to push less hard for cuts to operational costs than in 2017.¹⁵

UN peacekeeping reform

The term ‘peacekeeping reform’ has been used to describe discussions on a variety of adjustments both within the UN Secretariat and in the field, following the 2015 report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) and that of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the HIPPO report’s recommendations.¹⁶ It encompasses fundamental questions similar to those raised by the US administration, such as how to continue to operate where there is no political process to support, how to guard against mission creep, and how to act when the strategic consent of the host government is absent or weak. In addition there are questions about how to ensure that there is an exit strategy, particularly if the political process breaks down, and whether there are any alternatives to peacekeeping operations in such cases.¹⁷ Peacekeeping reform also includes more operational areas, such as those suggested by the Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the UN: (a) assessing the impact of reforms implemented over the past two years on the performance of missions; (b) enhancing the role of the Security Council in ensuring implementation and follow-up; (c) the Secretary-General’s efforts to reform the UN peace and security architecture; (d) the status of member state commitments in terms of force generation and the deployment of critical capabilities, and remaining gaps; (e) the new strategic partnership between the UN and the AU; and (f) support for AU-led peace support operations.¹⁸ Discussions on all these topics are likely

¹⁴ United Nations, General Assembly, Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of United Nations peacekeeping operations: Implementation of General Assembly resolutions 55/235 and 55/236, Report of the Secretary-General, A/70/331/Add.1, 28 Dec. 2015; United Nations, General Assembly, Fifth Committee, Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations: Approved resources for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017, A/C.5/70/24, 22 June 2016; and United Nations, General Assembly, Fifth Committee, Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations: Approved resources for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018, A/C.5/71/24, 30 June 2017.

¹⁵ US Department of State, Congressional Budget Justification: Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, fiscal year 2019.

¹⁶ See Van der Lijn, J., ‘A year of reviews’, *SIPRI Yearbook 2016*, pp. 294–304.

¹⁷ United Nations, Security Council, ‘Letter dated 4 April 2017 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General’, S/2017/287, 5 Apr. 2017.

¹⁸ United Nations, Security Council, ‘Letter dated 22 August 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General’, S/2017/766, 12 Sep.

to continue in the coming years but, given the current momentum, some progress may be expected in 2018.

One of the main items on this agenda, where progress was made in 2017, was the Secretary-General's intention to reform the UN Secretariat to reinforce the peace and security architecture. The internal review team he established on taking office, to study existing proposals and present options for further improvement of structures and working methods, made five core proposals: (a) a restructuring of the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and the Peacebuilding Support Office, to create a Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and a Department of Peace Operations; (b) the creation of a single political-operational structure under Assistant Secretaries-General with regional responsibilities, reporting to the Under-Secretaries-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and for Peace Operations; (c) the establishment of a Standing Principals' Group of the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations; (d) enhanced coherence and coordination across the peace and security pillar; and (e) the introduction of non-structural changes to the way the peace and security pillar works on a daily basis.¹⁹ The General Assembly supported the Secretary-General's vision of reform and asked him to formulate a comprehensive proposal for its implementation.²⁰

Sustaining peace and peace operations

The concept of 'sustaining peace' has its origins in the 2015 report by the Advisory Group of Experts on its review of the UN peacebuilding architecture.²¹ It was also used by HIPPO.²² In 2017, the Security Council gave special attention to the relationship between peace operations and sustaining peace in a presidential statement. The Council broadly understood the concept as 'a goal and a process to build a common vision of a society, ensuring that the needs of all segments of the population are taken into account, which encompasses activities aimed at preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict, addressing root causes, assisting parties

2017; and UN Security Council Resolution 2378, 20 Sep. 2017.

¹⁹ United Nations, General Assembly, Strengthening of the United Nations system, 'United Nations reform: Measures and proposals', Restructuring of the United Nations peace and security pillar, Report of the Secretary-General, A/72/525, 13 Oct. 2017.

²⁰ United Nations, General Assembly Resolution 72/199, 19 Jan. 2018.

²¹ On sustaining peace see Caparini, M. and Milante, G., 'Sustaining peace: The new overarching United Nations framework', *SIPRI Yearbook 2017*, pp. 220–32.

²² Advisory Group of Experts, The challenge of sustaining peace: Report of the Advisory Group of Experts for the 2015 review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture, 29 June 2015; and United Nations, General Assembly and Security Council, 'Identical letters dated 17 June 2015 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council', A/70/95-S/2015/446, 17 June 2015.

to conflict to end hostilities, ensuring national reconciliation, and moving towards recovery, reconstruction and development'.²³

The Security Council stressed that sustaining peace requires all three pillars of the UN to be involved and that peacekeeping should grasp the challenges of peacebuilding and sustaining peace at the start of a mission through integrated assessment and planning. It expressed its intention to consider the following elements when mandating peace operations: (a) an assessment of mandate implementation in all its dimensions, including when relevant peacebuilding and sustaining peace; (b) support for a consultation process within the mission to support national ownership; (c) the existence of clear goals and objectives for peacebuilding and sustaining peace; (d) periodic strategic integrated analyses of opportunities and challenges for national and local authorities to build and sustain peace; (e) progress in the political and operational delivery of mandates in a coherent manner; (f) clarity regarding the roles and responsibilities of peace operations and other actors to ensure effective integration of effort and maximum contribution to addressing the root causes of conflict; and (g) the existence of an exit strategy that lays the foundations for a long-term and sustainable peace.²⁴ Similar efforts in the past, however, have shown that many of these elements are difficult to achieve and progress can only be made slowly.

Ecological footprint, cultural heritage and gender mainstreaming

In 2017, the Security Council paid increased attention to three topics in relation to peace operations: (a) managing their environmental impact, (b) their role in protecting cultural heritage, and (c) their contribution to improving gender relations and gender mainstreaming.

With 98 354 UN peace operations personnel in the field, the Security Council has increasingly emphasized the importance of managing the environmental impact of peace operations. The topic was first mentioned in 2013, in the mandates of MINUSMA and UNAMID, and again in 2015 in relation to UN support to AMISOM. In 2017, the topic was stressed in the mandate renewals of the missions in the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the Security Council addressed it in a separate press release.²⁵ At the same time, however, the USA objected to the inclusion of the term 'climate change' in a resolution on the Lake Chad Basin.²⁶

²³ United Nations, Security Council, Statement by the President of the Security Council, S/PRST/2017/27, 21 Dec. 2017.

²⁴ United Nations (note 23).

²⁵ UN Security Council Resolution 2387, 15 Nov. 2017; UN Security Council Resolution 2348, 31 Mar. 2017; and United Nations, Security Council, Press statement on environmental management of peacekeeping operations, Press Release SC/13134-ENV/DEV/1830-PKO/700, 21 Dec. 2017.

²⁶ 'Resolution on the Lake Chad Basin', What's in Blue, 31 Mar. 2017.

The first, and so far only, time that the Security Council included the protection of cultural heritage in the mandate of a peace operation was in that of MINUSMA.²⁷ In a special resolution on the topic in 2017, however, the Council affirmed that UN peace operations can be mandated to assist governments to protect cultural heritage from destruction, illicit excavation, looting and smuggling, and that operations should operate with care in the vicinity of such sites.²⁸

Finally gender received greater attention in peace operations' mandates in 2017. The UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) and the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) were asked to incorporate a gender perspective into their efforts.²⁹ The Council also reaffirmed the importance of gender mainstreaming when it established MINUJUSTH.³⁰ However, China and Russia in particular have often resisted such insertions, as they see them as an expansion of the women, peace and security agenda, as a challenge to national sovereignty or as the responsibility of other parts of the UN system.³¹

Moreover, sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) perpetrated by UN peacekeepers remained high on the agenda. There were 62 allegations of SEA in UN peacekeeping operations and special political missions recorded in 2017, compared to 103 in 2016 and 69 in 2015. Of the 62 allegations in 2017, 41 involved military personnel and implicated 101 alleged perpetrators. The remaining allegations all pertained to single-perpetrator incidents, of which 11 involved civilian personnel and 10 involved police personnel. The allegations in 2017 involved a total of 130 victims, of which 21 were girls and 109 were women. The percentage of allegations of SEA that concerned sexual abuse—as opposed to sexual exploitation—was 32 per cent in 2017, compared to 55 per cent in 2016. This lower percentage is more in line with previous years. The decrease in the number of allegations of SEA in 2017 compared to 2016 is largely linked to a decrease in the number of allegations in MINUSCA. There were 19 reported allegations of SEA by members of MINUSCA in 2017, compared to 52 in 2016. The share of allegations of SEA that involved members of MINUSCA fell accordingly, from about half in 2016 to less than one-third in 2017.³²

²⁷ UN Security Council Resolution 2100, 25 Apr. 2013.

²⁸ UN Security Council Resolution 2347, 24 Mar. 2017.

²⁹ UN Security Council Resolution 2343, 23 Feb. 2017; and UN Security Council Resolution 2376, 14 Sep. 2017.

³⁰ UN Security Council Resolution 2350, 13 Apr. 2017.

³¹ 'Presidential statement on the Liberia Peacebuilding Plan and elections preparation', What's in Blue, 21 July 2017.

³² United Nations, General Assembly, Report of the Secretary-General, Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, A/72/751, 15 Feb. 2018.