

II. Regional trends and developments in peace operations

TIMO SMIT

The 60 multilateral peace operations that were active in 2018 were not spread evenly across the different regions of the world (see table 3.1). There were 24 operations in Africa, 18 in Europe, 10 in the Middle East, 5 in Asia and Oceania and 3 in the Americas. Africa was host not only to the largest number of multilateral peace operations, but also to most of the largest ones (see section I). This is reflected in the number of personnel serving in peace operations in each region. It is estimated that 72 per cent of the 144 791 personnel deployed worldwide on 31 December 2018 were part of missions in Africa. In contrast, only 6 per cent were deployed in Europe, even though it hosted the second largest number of peace operations after Africa.

Africa

There were 24 multilateral peace operations active in Africa in 2018, one fewer than in the previous year (see figure 3.8). The number of personnel serving in multilateral peace operations in Africa decreased by 1.9 per cent during 2018, from 106 240 to 104 238. Personnel deployments on the continent fell for the third consecutive year and reached their lowest level in five years (see figure 3.9).

For the first time since 2009, there were no new peace operations in Africa in 2018. The UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) terminated in March 2018 (see below) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Preventive Mission in the Kingdom of Lesotho (SAPMIL) in November 2018. The approximately 250-strong SAPMIL, formally established in December 2017 for an initial period of six months, was given a first and final six-month extension in May 2018.¹ SADC had deployed a contingent force, which later became SAPMIL, to Lesotho in September 2017 at the request of the Lesotho Government, to help stabilize the country and restore the rule of law following the assassination of the Commander of the Lesotho Defence Forces.²

Personnel in multilateral peace operations in Africa, 2009–18

One of the major long-term trends in multilateral peace operations in the first decade and a half of the 21st century was the increasing geographical focus on

¹ Southern African Department of International Relations and Cooperation, 'Communiqué of the Double Troika Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Southern African Development Community (SADC)', 24 Apr. 2018.

² SADC, 'SADC Secretariat briefs African Union Peace and Security Council on the contingent force deployment to Lesotho', 25 Jan. 2018.

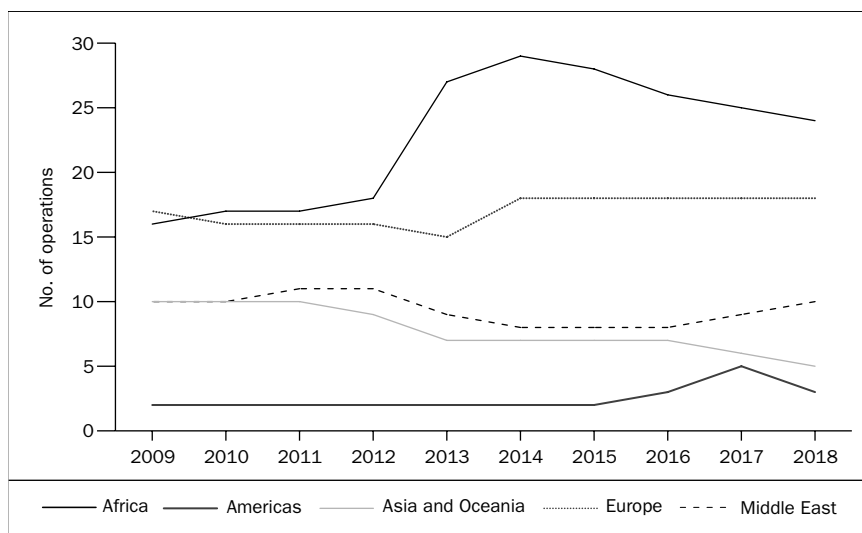


Figure 3.8. Number of multilateral peace operations by region, 2009–18

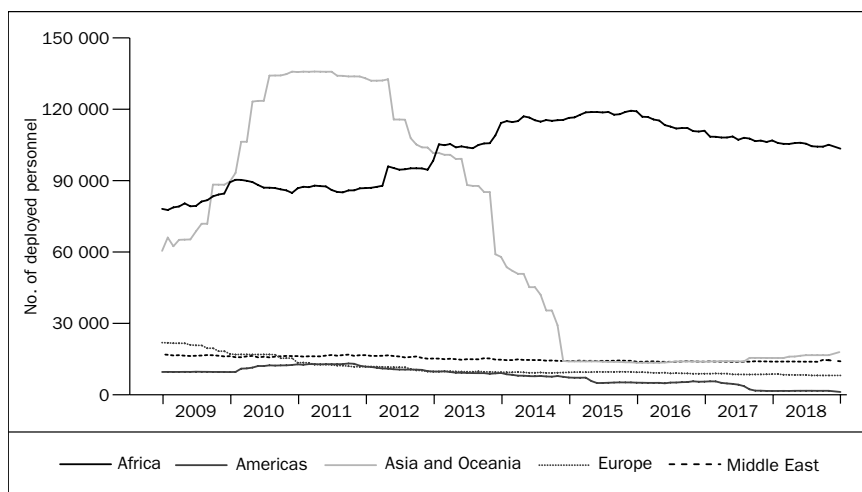


Figure 3.9. Number of personnel in multilateral peace operations by region, 2009–18

Africa. This was particularly reflected in the increasing number of personnel serving in peace operations deployed in African countries. However, this trend was broken in 2016 and successive decreases in 2017 and 2018 in the number of personnel in multilateral peace operations in Africa confirm its reversal.

The number of personnel serving in multilateral peace operations in Africa increased from approximately 80 000 to 120 000 between

Table 3.1. Number of peace operations and personnel deployed, by region and type of organization, 2018

Conducting organization	Africa	Americas	Asia and Oceania	Europe	Middle East	World
Operations	24	3	5	18	10	60
United Nations ^a	11	2	2	2	4	21
Regional organization or alliance	13	1	1	14	4	33
Ad hoc coalition	–	–	2	2	2	6
Personnel^b	104 238	1 433	17 296	8 126	13 698	144 791
United Nations ^a	80 405	1 405	348	1 020	12 310	95 488
Regional organization or alliance	23 833	28	16 910	5 974	97	46 842
Ad hoc coalition	–	–	38	1 132	1 291	2 461

^a United Nations figures include peace operations led by the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the UN Department of Political Affairs and the UN/African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID).

^b Personnel figures are as of 31 Dec. 2018.

Source: SIPRI Multilateral Peace Operations Database, <<http://www.sipri.org/databases/pko/>>.

31 December 2008 and 31 December 2015, and there was a particularly rapid increase between 2012 and 2014. During this period of rapid increase, the African Union (AU) Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) doubled in size, and regional peace operations were deployed to Mali and the Central African Republic (CAR). These regional missions—the African-led International Support Mission to Mali (AFISMA) and the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic (MISCA)—were replaced shortly after by the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) and the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA).

Many of the personnel serving in the multilateral peace operations in Africa at this time were African themselves. The contribution of uniformed personnel by African countries to peace operations in Africa increased from approximately 35 000 to 75 000 between 31 December 2008 and 31 December 2015. The number of personnel from non-African countries serving in the peace operations in Africa remained relatively stable in the same. This means that African countries contributed more or less all of the additional uniformed personnel deployed to multilateral peace operations in Africa between 2009 and 2015, and that their share of the total contribution of uniformed personnel in the region increased from approximately half to two-thirds.

The number of personnel serving in multilateral peace operations in Africa decreased from approximately 120 000 on 31 December 2015 to 104 000 on 31 December 2018. To a large extent, this was due to the withdrawal of

the UN Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) and the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), and the accelerating drawdown of the AU/UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). The personnel strength of AMISOM and the UN Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) also declined, although to a lesser extent and not during 2018. MINUSCA, MINUSMA and UNMISS continued to grow in the period 2016–18.

The UN Mission in Liberia

UNMIL terminated on 30 March 2018. The UN Security Council had decided that the mission would end on this date in December 2016 when it extended UNMIL's mandate for one last time.³ At that time, the mission had already handed over all security responsibilities to the Liberian security services and been reconfigured accordingly.⁴ The final extension allowed UNMIL to remain in place until after elections in Liberia in October 2017. There was a civilian component and a residual force of up to 434 military personnel and 210 police, including two formed police units (FPUs).⁵ The elections took place peacefully and were won (in two rounds) by George Weah, who was sworn in as President on 22 January 2018. In its final months, UNMIL continued to support the transition in Liberia and to prepare for its own withdrawal. It used strategic communications to inform civil society about its own departure and how the UN would remain active post-UNMIL through its country team.⁶

The closure of UNMIL in 2018 marked the end of a period of relatively successful peacekeeping in this part of West Africa. It followed on from the closures of UN peace operations in Côte d'Ivoire in 2017 and Sierra Leone in 2014. All three countries had experienced civil war in the 1990s and/or early 2000s and hosted multiple peace operations after those conflicts had been settled by peace agreements. These peace operations are often hailed as examples of successful contributions to durable peace: there has been no recurrence of civil war, democratic elections have been held and UN peace operations have been able to drawdown and withdraw.⁷

³ United Nations Security Council Resolution 2333, 23 Dec. 2016.

⁴ United Nations, Security Council, Special Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Liberia, S/2016/968, 15 Nov. 2016.

⁵ United Nations Security Council Resolution 2333 (note 3).

⁶ United Nations, Security Council, Final Progress Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Liberia, S/2018/344, 13 Apr. 2018; and Forti, D. and Connolly, L., *The Mission is Gone, but the UN is Staying: Liberia's Peacekeeping Transition* (International Peace Institute: New York, Dec. 2018).

⁷ United Nations, 'Their 15-year mission a success, UN peacekeepers depart a stable and grateful Liberia', UN News, 29 Mar. 2018.

The UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali

MINUSMA continued to operate in Mali alongside multiple other international and regional actors. Mali was host to three other multilateral peace operations in addition to MINUSMA in 2018: the AU Mission for Mali and the Sahel (MISAHEL), the EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) Mission in Mali (EUCAP Sahel Mali), and the EU Training Mission in Mali (EUTM Mali). The 4000-strong French counterterrorism operation, Operation Barkhane, and the 5000-strong (as authorized) Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel (JF-G5S) were also active in Mali, as well as in the other member states of the G5S.⁸ MINUSMA was the largest operation in the region. Its personnel strength increased from 14 086 to 15 315 (including 12 811 military personnel and 1761 police) during 2018. This was still short of its authorized strength of 13 289 military personnel and 1920 police.⁹

Despite the presence of these multiple peace operations, the security situation in Mali continued to deteriorate in 2018.¹⁰ When the UN Security Council extended the mandate of MINUSMA in June 2018, it reaffirmed that its primary task was to support the implementation of the 2015 Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, and asked MINUSMA to reprioritize its political efforts accordingly.¹¹ The Security Council also noted with concern the downward spiral experienced in central Mali in terms of security and state authority. It therefore encouraged but did not authorize adjustments to MINUSMA's posture in northern Mali in order to 'optimize and rebalance' its presence in central Mali, while emphasizing that northern Mali remained the strategic priority of the mission.¹²

MINUSMA provided limited operational and logistical support to JF-G5S operations between May and June 2018.¹³ The UN, the EU and the G5 Sahel had reached a technical agreement on this in February 2018, as requested and within the parameters set by UN Security Council Resolution 2391 of 8 December 2017.¹⁴ The agreement covers support from MINUSMA to the JF-G5S in the areas of medical and casualty evacuation, engineering and logistics. However, the JF-G5S requested support from MINUSMA only nine times and it suspended operations after a terrorist attack on its headquarters

⁸ The JF-G5S did not achieve full operational capability in 2018. United Nations, Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel, S/2018/1006, 12 Nov. 2018.

⁹ United Nations Security Council Resolution 2295, 29 June 2016, para. 15.

¹⁰ On the armed conflict in Mali and the wider Sahel see chapter 2, section VI, in this volume.

¹¹ United Nations Security Council Resolution 2423, 28 June 2018.

¹² United Nations, Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali, S/2018/541, 6 June 2018.

¹³ United Nations, Security Council (note 8).

¹⁴ United Nations, Security Council (note 8); and United Nations Security Council Resolution 2391, 8 Dec. 2017.

in Severe, Mali, on 29 June 2018.¹⁵ In addition to providing operational and logistical support to the JF-G5S, MINUSMA also investigated allegations of serious human rights violations perpetrated by it.¹⁶ An investigation by MINUSMA into an incident in May 2018 in Mopti, Central Mali, concluded that Malian soldiers under the command of the JF-G5S had ‘summarily and/or arbitrarily executed 12 civilians at the Boulkessy cattle market’ in retaliation for the death of a fellow soldier in an earlier attack.¹⁷

The UN Support Mission in Libya

UNSMIL gradually increased its presence and activities in Libya in 2018, while also maintaining its headquarters in Tunis. The deployment of a 200-strong guard unit from Nepal to protect the UNSMIL compound in Tripoli in eastern Libya had been completed in December 2017, and the UN Department of Safety and Security lifted the evacuation status for Libya in February 2018.¹⁸ The number of UNSMIL international personnel in Libya (albeit on a rotational basis) increased quickly in the following months to between 140 and 200, but was scaled down again temporarily after violent clashes between various local armed groups erupted in Tripoli on 27 August 2018. The conflict continued for nearly a month, despite the agreement of a ceasefire on 4 September, which UNSMIL had helped to mediate.¹⁹

The UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara

The UN Security Council gave MINURSO two six-month extensions in 2018, instead of prolonging its mandate for one year as it had previously done. The United States, in particular, expressed its dissatisfaction with the lack of progress on the political process to resolve the conflict over Western Sahara between Morocco and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el Hamra and Río de Oro (Polisario Front). The USA insisted on a six-month extension when the mandate renewal was due in April 2018, stating that there ‘can be no more business as usual’ and implying that it might veto a further extension if credible negotiations on a political solution for Western Sahara were not resumed soon.²⁰ MINURSO received a further six-month extension in October 2018, after Morocco, the Polisario Front, Algeria and Mauritania

¹⁵ United Nations, Security Council (note 8).

¹⁶ United Nations, Security Council (note 8), para. 31.

¹⁷ Felix, B. and Ross, A., ‘UN says Malian forces executed 12 civilians at a market’, Reuters, 26 June 2018.

¹⁸ United Nations, Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, S/2018/140, 12 Feb. 2018, para. 87.

¹⁹ United Nations, Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, S/2019/19, 7 Jan. 2019. On the armed conflict in Libya see chapter 2, section V, in this volume.

²⁰ United Nations, Security Council, 8246th meeting, S/PV.8246, 27 Apr. 2018, p. 2; and, ‘Western Sahara: Mandate Renewal’, What’s in Blue, 27 Apr. 2018.

agreed to resume talks in Geneva, Switzerland, in December under the auspices of the Personal Envoy of the UN Secretary-General for Western Sahara.²¹ The first talks held in Geneva on 5 and 6 December did not result in a political settlement, but the parties agreed to resume their negotiations in the first quarter of 2019.²²

The UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC

MONUSCO retained an authorized strength of 16 875 military personnel and 1441 police when the UN Security Council extended its mandate for another year in March 2018.²³ Unlike in the previous year, therefore, the mission did not reduce in strength. At the end of 2018, MONUSCO comprised 15 851 military personnel, 1362 police and 833 international civilian personnel.

The strategic priorities of MONUSCO in 2018 were to protect civilians and to support the implementation of the comprehensive and inclusive political agreement of 31 December 2016. The latter involved the provision of political and technical support for the holding of legislative and presidential elections, which would constitute the first democratic transfer of power in the DRC. The elections had initially been scheduled to take place by December 2017, but were postponed until 23 December 2018. The elections eventually took place in relative calm on 30 December 2018.²⁴ They had been delayed by an additional week after a fire at the central warehouse of the Independent National Electoral Commission in Kinshasa, which destroyed nearly 8000 voting machines and other equipment.²⁵

Although MONUSCO maintained a similar number of uniformed personnel in 2018, the mission and its Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) underwent significant reconfigurations. MONUSCO repatriated approximately 1500 troops in August 2018, which were later replaced by two additional rapidly deployable battalions.²⁶ The FIB and MONUSCO's rapidly deployable battalions conducted several joint combat deployments in 2018 as part of the newly adopted concept of 'protection through projection'.²⁷ This concept has its origins in the 2017 Cruz Report on the safety and security of UN peacekeepers (see section I) but was used by MONUSCO primarily to protect civilians through preventive and deterrent action.²⁸

²¹ United Nations Security Council Resolution 2440, 31 Oct. 2018; and United Nations, Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on the Situation concerning Western Sahara, S/2018/889, 3 Oct. 2018.

²² Miles, T., 'No breakthrough at rare UN Western Sahara talks', Reuters, 6 Dec. 2018.

²³ United Nations Security Council Resolution 2409, 27 Mar. 2018.

²⁴ On the armed conflict in the DRC see chapter 2, section VI, in this volume.

²⁵ United Nations, Security Council, United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Report of the Secretary-General, S/2019/6, 4 Jan. 2019, para. 8.

²⁶ United Nations, Security Council, United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Report of the Secretary-General, S/2018/882, 1 Oct. 2018, para 60.

²⁷ United Nations, Security Council (note 26).

²⁸ United Nations, Security Council (note 26).

The UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the CAR

MINUSCA almost fully attained its authorized strength in 2018, which had been increased to 11 650 military personnel and 2080 police in the previous year.²⁹ At the end of 2018, MINUSCA comprised 11 628 military personnel, 2049 police and 607 international civilian personnel. The political and security situation in the CAR remained precarious.³⁰ Following an independent strategic review, the UN Secretary-General made several suggestions for adjustments to MINUSCA's mandate, which was up for renewal in November 2018. He recommended that MINUSCA should: (a) strengthen its political role in and capacity for supporting the AU-led peace process in the CAR; (b) provide limited logistical support to the national armed forces and police that had been trained by the EU Training Mission in the CAR (EUTM RCA), or by other bilateral partners and certified by EUTM RCA, so that they could redeploy to and operate alongside MINUSCA in priority areas; and (c) support the electoral process leading up to the next local, legislative and presidential elections, which are scheduled for 2020 and 2021.³¹ The recommendations eventually made it into the new mandate, which was not renewed in November as planned but in December 2018.

The reason for the delay was considerable disagreement between permanent members of the UN Security Council about the terms and text of the resolution to extend MINUSCA's mandate. The main rift was between France and Russia. France had been active politically and militarily in the CAR, its former colony, since the outbreak of the armed conflict in 2012. Among other things, it had deployed Operation Sangaris between 2013 and 2016, and it had been the largest contributor to the EU Military Operation in the CAR (EUFOR RCA), which was active in 2014 and 2015. Russia became an increasingly important political and military player in the CAR in 2018, donating weapons and military equipment to the armed forces, deploying 175 instructors to provide combat training and announcing in October 2018 that it would send 60 more. Russia and Sudan also arranged meetings with CAR armed groups in Khartoum in July and August 2018. Russia was not content with the draft resolution on the extension of MINUSCA's mandate that France put forward in November 2018 because it thought the text made insufficient reference to its role in training the CAR's armed forces. It also believed that it misrepresented the August 2018 meeting in Khartoum by emphasizing the AU-led peace process as the only viable framework for a political solution to the conflict in the CAR and seeking to avoid parallel

²⁹ United Nations Security Council Resolution 2387, 15 Nov. 2017, para. 32.

³⁰ On the armed conflict in the CAR see chapter 2, section VI, in this volume.

³¹ United Nations, Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on the Central African Republic, 15 June–15 Oct., S/2018/922, 15 Oct. 2018.

processes.³² The Security Council eventually passed a slightly adjusted version of the resolution on 13 December 2018, with abstentions by Russia and China.³³

The UN Mission in South Sudan

The UN Security Council extended the mandate of UNMISS on 15 March 2018, maintaining an authorized strength of 17 000 military personnel, including a 4000-strong Regional Protection Force (RPF) and 2101 police.³⁴ However, UNMISS did not achieve this strength in 2018, despite a significant increase in the number of its personnel from 15 389 to 17 577 (14 904 military personnel, 1778 police and 895 international civilian staff).³⁵ An independent strategic review, completed in early 2018, estimated that UNMISS continued to spend at least half of its time and resources on protecting and managing the protection sites that have been home to more than 200 000 internally displaced persons since the outbreak of violence in 2013. This means that the capacity of UNMISS to protect civilians in other areas of South Sudan affected by large-scale displacement remains very limited.³⁶

The main event in South Sudan in 2018 was the signing of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan in Addis Ababa on 12 September.³⁷ This agreement had been mediated by Sudan and was the outcome of a political process led by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) that began in May 2017. The original agreement from 2015 had collapsed in 2016. In his December 2018 quarterly report on South Sudan, the UN Secretary-General expressed cautious optimism about the upholding of the ceasefire following the signing of the Revitalized Agreement, even though the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring and Verification Mechanism (CTSAMVM) had reported limited and localized clashes between some of the signatories.³⁸

The IGAD Heads of State and Government decided at an extraordinary summit on 12 September to ask the Security Council to fully operationalize the UNMISS RPF. Furthermore, they stated that they would request a review

³² 'Renewal of the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA)', What's in Blue, 6 Dec. 2018.

³³ United Nations Security Council Resolution 2448, 13 Dec. 2018.

³⁴ United Nations Security Council Resolution 2406, 15 Mar. 2018.

³⁵ United Nations, Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on South Sudan (covering the period from 2 Sep. to 30 Nov. 2018), S/2018/1103, 10 Dec. 2018, para. 55.

³⁶ United Nations, Security Council, Special Report of the Secretary-General on the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan, S/2018/143, 20 Feb. 2018. On the armed conflict in South Sudan see chapter 2, section VI, in this volume.

³⁷ IGAD, 'Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan', 12 Sep. 2018.

³⁸ United Nations, Security Council (note 35), para. 13. The Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring Mechanism (CTSAMM) was renamed the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring and Verification Mechanism (CTSAMVM) after the entry into force of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan.

of the RPF and its composition to enable the IGAD member states Sudan, Uganda, Djibouti and Somalia to contribute forces to it.³⁹ The Security Council had authorized the RPF in 2016 with a strength of 4000 military personnel, but in 2018 it still consisted of only 2200 military personnel, including an engineering unit from Bangladesh, a company from Nepal and a battalion each from China and Rwanda.⁴⁰ The UN Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Pierre Lacroix, responded to IGAD's request in November 2018 by stating that it would be their prerogative to adjust the RPF's mandate, but that this could not compromise the UNMISS prioritized task of protecting civilians, its unity of command and control or the standards applied to troop-contributing countries (TCCs) when troop contributions are being considered.⁴¹ The IGAD Chiefs of Defence Staff announced their decision to assign 499 troops from Kenya, Uganda and Sudan, and 99 from Djibouti and Somalia to be integrated into the RPF, subject to the authorization of the Security Council.⁴² The AU Peace and Security Council expressed its full support for IGAD's recommendation on 20 December 2018.⁴³

The AU/UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur

UNAMID continued to downsize and narrow its activities in Darfur in 2018. The UN Security Council had adjusted UNAMID's mandate and reduced its authorized strength significantly in the previous year. The mission was to adopt a new strategic 'two-pronged approach', under which it would maintain a military peacekeeping role and presence in the Jebel Marra area, where instability persisted, and focus on stabilization and peacebuilding in the rest of Darfur. This allowed a significant reconfiguration of UNAMID in two phases, during which the mission would close several military sites and repatriate eight of its remaining 16 infantry battalions.⁴⁴

The second phase of UNAMID's reconfiguration lasted from January to June 2018. The authorized strength of the mission decreased further in this phase, from 11 395 to 8735 military personnel and from 2888 to 2500 police. In order to achieve this, UNAMID repatriated three infantry battalions,

³⁹ IGAD, 'Communiqué of the 33rd extra-ordinary summit of IGAD Assembly of Heads of State and Government', 12 Sep. 2018, para. 11.

⁴⁰ United Nations, Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on South Sudan (covering the period from 4 June to 1 Sep. 2018), S/2018/831, 11 Sep. 2018, para. 61.

⁴¹ United Nations, Security Council, 8403th meeting, S/PV.8403, 16 Nov. 2018.

⁴² *Sudan Tribune*, 'IGAD military leaders decide to deploy over 1600 troops in South Sudan', 23 Nov. 2018; and United Nations (note 35), para. 8.

⁴³ African Union, Peace and Security Council, Communiqué, 820th meeting, PSC/PR/COMM. (DCCCXX), 20 Dec. 2018, para. 4.

⁴⁴ United Nations Security Council Resolution 2363, 29 June 2017, paras 1-7; and United Nations, Security Council, Special Report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the strategic review of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, S/2017/437, 18 May 2017, paras 53-54.

closed its sector headquarters in North, East and West Darfur, and withdrew military personnel from seven team sites, leaving police units behind.⁴⁵ The military component was reorganized into the brigade-sized Jebel Mara Task Force, which commenced operations on 31 January 2018, headquartered in Zalingei, and a Security Assistance Force headquartered in Nyala.⁴⁶

A joint AU-UN strategic review in 2018 proposed further cuts to UNAMID, a redefinition of its priorities and area of operations, and a framework for its transition and exit in 2020.⁴⁷ The Security Council took note of these recommendations when it extended UNAMID's mandate until 30 June 2019. It decided to reduce the authorized strength of UNAMID's military component to 4050 military personnel, while maintaining the authorized strength of the police component at 2500 police. However, it added that the drawdown in the coming year should be conditional, gradual and reversible if necessary.⁴⁸ The UN Secretary-General proposed benchmarks and indicators for the transition and closure by 2020 in his 90-day report on UNAMID in October 2018.⁴⁹ UNAMID closed five more team sites and repatriated approximately 3000 military personnel in the second half of 2018. At the end of the year, it comprised 6045 military, 2296 police and 630 international civilian personnel.

The AU Mission in Somalia

AMISOM remained the largest multilateral peace operation in 2018 (see section I). It comprised 20 889 personnel at the end of the year: 20 161 military personnel, 662 police and 66 international civilian staff. This was similar to its size at the end of the previous year, following the first downsizing of the mission since the UN Security Council raised its authorized strength from 17 731 to 22 126 uniformed personnel in November 2013.⁵⁰ AMISOM had achieved this maximum strength in January 2014 by placing a contingent of 4395 Ethiopian military personnel that was already present in Somalia under its command.⁵¹

⁴⁵ United Nations, Security Council, S/2017/437 (note 44), para. 54; and United Nations, Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, S/2018/389, 25 Apr. 2018, para. 45.

⁴⁶ United Nations, Security Council, S/2017/437 (note 44), para. 53.

⁴⁷ United Nations, Security Council, Special Report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the strategic review of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, S/2018/530, 1 June 2018.

⁴⁸ United Nations Security Council Resolution 2429, 13 July 2018.

⁴⁹ United Nations, Security Council, African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, Report of the Secretary-General, S/2018/912, 12 Oct. 2018.

⁵⁰ United Nations Security Council Resolution 2124, 12 Nov. 2013.

⁵¹ Williams, P. D., 'Joining AMISOM: Why six African states contributed troops to the African Union Mission in Somalia', *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, vol. 12, no. 1 (20 Dec. 2017), pp. 172-92; and African Union, African Union Mission in Somalia, 'Ethiopian forces formally integrated into AMISOM', Press release, 22 Jan. 2014. On the armed conflict in Somalia see chapter 2, section VI, in this volume.

From the outset, the Security Council framed the reinforcement of AMISOM as a short-term measure and part of a broader exit strategy, and this was reiterated in all subsequent resolutions on the mission. The initial plan was to maintain the ceiling at 22 126 uniformed personnel for 18–24 months and then consider reducing it.⁵² The first decision to downsize AMISOM eventually came in August 2017, however, when the Security Council adopted Resolution 2372.⁵³ This resolution made the gradual transfer of security responsibilities to the Somali National Security Forces (SNSF) AMISOM's top strategic objective, ahead of reducing the threat posed by al-Shabab and other armed groups. It also called for a reduction of AMISOM's authorized strength in two phases: from 22 126 to 21 126 uniformed personnel by 31 December 2017, and from 21 126 to 20 126 uniformed personnel by 30 October 2018.

In 2018 AMISOM took further steps to prepare for its transition and eventual exit from Somalia. The mission's leadership supported the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) in developing the Somalia Transition Plan in the spring of 2018, together with other international partners such as the UN Support Mission in Somalia (UNSOM). The Transition Plan, among other things, set a timeframe and target dates for the progressive transfer of security responsibility from AMISOM to the SNSF. The Security Council welcomed the development of the Transition Plan on 27 March 2018 and it was formally endorsed by the Peace and Security Council of the AU on 30 April 2018.⁵⁴

Nonetheless, concerns were raised that the timetable for the transition was unrealistic and the downsizing of AMISOM premature, given the capacities and capabilities of the SNSF. In January 2018 the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General in Somalia and Head of UNSOM warned that an overly ambitious withdrawal schedule would jeopardize hard-won gains in Somalia and benefit al-Shabab more than anyone else.⁵⁵ In March 2018 the leaders of AMISOM'S five TCCs expressed similar concerns in a joint communiqué asking the Security Council to reverse its decision to reduce AMISOM's authorized strength.⁵⁶ A joint AU–UN strategic review of AMISOM conducted in the first half of 2018 recommended that the deadline for the repatriation of another 1000 uniformed personnel by 30 October 2018 be postponed.⁵⁷ Meanwhile, al-Shabab demonstrated that it remained a highly capable adversary by conducting a large-scale, complex terrorist

⁵² United Nations Security Council Resolution 2124, 12 Nov. 2013.

⁵³ United Nations Security Council Resolution 2372, 30 Aug. 2017.

⁵⁴ African Union, Peace and Security Council, Communiqué, 769th meeting, PSC/PR/COMM. (DCCLXIX), 30 Apr. 2018, para. 4; and United Nations Security Council Resolution 2408, 27 Mar. 2018.

⁵⁵ United Nations, Security Council, 8165th meeting, S/PV.8165, 24 Jan. 2018, p. 4.

⁵⁶ Ugandan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 'Communiqué of the Summit of the troop contributing countries (TCCS) to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM)', 2 Mar. 2018.

⁵⁷ African Union, Peace and Security Council, Report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission on the African Union–United Nations Joint Review of the African Union Mission in Somalia, 782nd meeting, PSC/MIN/RPT(DCCLXXXII), 27 June 2018.

attack against an AMISOM base in the Lower Shabelle region on 1 April 2018. The attack, which involved two suicide car bombs and a large number of militants, reportedly killed 46 Ugandan AMISOM troops.⁵⁸

The UN Security Council agreed to postpone the reduction of AMISOM's authorized strength from 21 126 to 20 126 uniformed personnel until 28 February 2019. However, it made it clear that it regretted the fact that this was necessary and stressed that it did not want to see any further delay. In the same resolution, the Security Council also welcomed the intention of the AU to revise the Concept of Operations (CONOPS) for AMISOM in line with the Somali Transition Plan.⁵⁹ The AMISOM Military Operations Coordination Committee endorsed the new CONOPS on 30 November 2018. The document was developed in line with the Somali National Transition Plan and constitutes a transitional framework for the gradual handover of security responsibilities to the SNSF and the eventual exit from Somalia in 2018–21.⁶⁰

The Americas

There were three multilateral peace operations active in the Americas in 2018: the UN Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH), the UN Verification Mission in Colombia (UNVMC) and the Organization of American States (OAS) Mission to Support the Peace Process in Colombia (MAPP/OEA). This was two fewer than in the previous year, but only because the UN Mission in Colombia (UNMC) and the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) had terminated during 2017 and been immediately succeeded by the UNVMC and MINUJUSTH, respectively. The number of personnel serving in multilateral peace operations in the Americas fell by 11.4 per cent during 2018, from 1606 to 1433. Personnel deployments fell for the second year in a row.

The UN Mission for Justice Support in Haiti

When MINUJUSTH succeeded MINUSTAH on 16 October 2017 it had an initial mandate of six months and an initial authorized strength of 1275 police, made up of 7 FPU's and 295 individual police officers. Unlike its predecessor, MINUJUSTH does not have a military component. MINUJUSTH was mandated to assist the Government of Haiti with strengthening the rule of law institutions, to support and develop the Haitian National Police (HNP)

⁵⁸ Burke, J. and Mumin, A. A., 'Al-Shabaab attack kills dozens of Ugandan soldiers in Somalia', *The Guardian*, 1 Apr. 2018.

⁵⁹ United Nations Security Council Resolution 2431, 30 July 2018.

⁶⁰ African Union, African Union Mission in Somalia, 'African Union Peace and Security Council Delegation on an Assessment Mission in Somalia', Press Release PR/80/2018, 26 Nov. 2018; and AMISOM, 'Crucial meeting to discuss AMISOM's 2018–2021 Concept of Operations opens in Nairobi', 30 Oct. 2018.

and to monitor human rights. The FPU's that stayed in Haiti following the transition to MINUJUSTH also retained their authorization to protect civilians under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, albeit within their more limited capabilities and area of operations. The UN Security Council asked the Secretary-General to undertake an assessment of MINUJUSTH in 2018 and develop a benchmarked two-year exit strategy for the mission.⁶¹

The Security Council extended MINUJUSTH's mandate in April 2018 until 15 April 2019. It did not change the mandate and maintained the same authorized strength until 15 October 2018, after which the authorized strength of the police component would be reduced from seven to five FPU's.⁶² The Security Council further requested the Secretary-General to report on progress against the 11 benchmarks and 46 indicators in the two-year exit strategy in his 90-day reports on MINUJUSTH.

The UN Verification Mission in Colombia

The UNVMC succeeded the UNMC on 26 September 2017.⁶³ The Government of Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia–People's Army (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia–Ejército del Pueblo, FARC–EP) had agreed, as part of the 24 November 2016 peace agreement, that they would ask the UN to deploy a second political mission (the UNVMC) after the first political mission (the UNMC) had completed its verification of the mutual ceasefire and cessation of hostilities agreed on 23 June 2016.⁶⁴

The mandate of the UNVMC was initially limited to verifying the implementation of certain aspects of the 2016 peace agreement between the Colombian Government and the FARC–EP, specifically chapter 3.2. on the economic, social and political reintegration of FARC–EP members, and chapter 3.4 pertaining to individual and collective security guarantees.⁶⁵ However, on 5 October 2017, the UN Security Council expanded the mandate of the UNVMC to include helping to verify adherence to the temporary ceasefire between the Colombian Government and the National Liberation Army (Ejército de Liberación Nacional, ELN). It had been agreed on 4 September 2017 that the ceasefire would enter into force on 1 October and expire on 9 January 2018.⁶⁶ Although there were no major confrontations during the ceasefire, the ELN resumed its military activities immediately

⁶¹ United Nations Security Council Resolution 2350, 13 Apr. 2017.

⁶² United Nations Security Council Resolution 2410, 10 Apr. 2018.

⁶³ United Nations Security Council Resolution 2366, 10 July 2017.

⁶⁴ Government of Colombia, 'Final Agreement to end the armed conflict and build a stable and lasting peace', 24 Nov. 2016, para 6.3.3, p. 225. On the armed conflict in Colombia see chapter 2, section II, in this volume.

⁶⁵ Government of Colombia (note 64), paras 3.2, 3.4; and United Nations Security Council Resolution 2366, 10 July 2017, para. 2.

⁶⁶ United Nations, Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, S/2018/279, 2 Apr. 2018, para. 62.

after the ceasefire expired.⁶⁷ The UNVMC ended all verification activities following the end of the ceasefire and the additional UN observers that had been deployed to Colombia for this purpose left the mission soon after.⁶⁸ The Security Council extended the mandate of the UNVMC in September 2018 until 25 September 2019, without making any adjustments to its mandate.⁶⁹

Asia and Oceania

There were five multilateral peace operations active in Asia and Oceania in 2018. This was one fewer than in the previous year. The number of personnel serving in peace operations in the region increased by 11.8 per cent during 2018, from 15 467 to 17 296.

Most of these were part of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)-led Resolute Support Mission (RSM) in Afghanistan. The other multilateral peace operations in the region were the International Monitoring Team (IMT) on the Philippine island of Mindanao, the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission (NNSC) on the Korean peninsula, the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP). The NNSC consists of 10 military observers from Sweden and Switzerland

The Resolute Support Mission

The RSM has been the largest multilateral peace operation in Asia and the Pacific since it succeeded the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) on 1 January 2015. The RSM is a NATO-led, non-combat mission that is 'training, advising and assisting' the Afghan National Security and Defence Forces (ANSDF).⁷⁰ Originally intended to last for two years, NATO was meant to leave Afghanistan by 31 December 2016. However, the NATO Heads of State and Government decided at the 2016 Warsaw Summit to extend the RSM 'beyond 2016', and announced their intention at the 2018 Brussels Summit to sustain the deployment of the RSM until conditions on the ground allowed for its withdrawal.

This change from a timeline-based to a conditions-based drawdown reflected a similar shift in the US Strategy on Afghanistan. US President Barack Obama had been determined to end the US military presence in Afghanistan before leaving office, but his administration concluded in 2016 that it was too soon to leave by the end of that year. This conclusion was based on the performance of the ANSDF against a resurgent Taliban and its

⁶⁷ United Nations, Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, S/2017/1117, 27 Dec. 2017, paras 65–67; United Nations (note 66), para. 62.

⁶⁸ United Nations, S/2017/1117 (note 67), para. 79.

⁶⁹ United Nations Security Council Resolution 2435, 13 Sep. 2018.

⁷⁰ NATO, 'NATO–Afghanistan relations', Media backgrounder, Dec. 2018.

continued reliance on NATO and US support, including combat enablers such as close air support. US President Donald J. Trump presented a new US strategy on South Asia in August 2017, which involved sending more US troops to Afghanistan, relaxing their rules of engagement and keeping them there for as long as required.⁷¹

The number of troops in the RSM increased from 15 046 to 16 910 in 2018. Many European NATO member states, in particular Germany and the UK, significantly increased their contributions following the example of the USA, which had deployed additional personnel to the RSM in 2017.⁷² The USA maintained approximately 14 000 troops in Afghanistan in 2018, of which 8475 were serving in the RSM and the rest in the parallel US counterterrorism mission, Operation Freedom's Sentinel (OFS). However, President Trump ordered the withdrawal of approximately half of these troops in December 2018. If implemented, this would not only contradict the 2017 South Asia Strategy, but also cast a shadow of uncertainty over the future configuration and continued existence of the RSM.⁷³

Europe

There were 18 multilateral peace operations active in Europe in 2018, all of which had been active in the previous year. Many of these operations have been active for many years in former Soviet and Yugoslav republics that experienced conflict, often over disputed territory, following the break-up of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia. The only peace operations in Europe established more recently were deployed in response to the outbreak of conflict in Ukraine in 2014. Most of these missions are strictly civilian and relatively small. The number of personnel deployed in peace operations in Europe is therefore relatively small compared to the number of operations deployed and to most other regions. The number of personnel serving in multilateral peace operations in Europe fell by 5.2 per cent during 2018, from 8597 to 8126.

The recurring issue of a UN peace operation in eastern Ukraine

Discussions continued on the possibility of deploying a UN peacekeeping operation in eastern Ukraine. The Government of Ukraine has been pushing for the creation of such a mission since 2015.⁷⁴ The Government of Russia

⁷¹ Hirschfeld Davis, J. and Landler, M., 'Trump outlines new Afghanistan war strategy with few details', *New York Times*, 21 Aug. 2017. On the armed conflict and peace process in Afghanistan see chapter 2, section II, in this volume.

⁷² MacAskill, A., 'Britain to almost double troops in Afghanistan after US request', Reuters, 10 July 2018; and *Deutsche Welle*, 'German defense minister tells troops in Afghanistan to prepare for long haul', 25 Mar. 2018.

⁷³ Gibbons-Neff, T. and Mashal, M., 'US to withdraw about 7000 troops from Afghanistan, officials say', *New York Times*, 20 Dec. 2018.

⁷⁴ Gowan, R., *Can the United Nations Unite Ukraine?* (Hudson Institute: Washington, DC, Feb. 2018).

made a counter proposal in September 2017, which entailed the deployment of UN peacekeepers along the line of contact that separates the Russia-backed separatist Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts from the rest of Ukraine to protect the unarmed monitors of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission (SMM).⁷⁵ The issue gained prominence following the publication of a report by the Hudson Institute in February 2018, which set out in concrete terms what a feasible UN or multinational force in the Donbas region of Ukraine might look like.⁷⁶

Nonetheless the UN Security Council and its permanent members remained divided and made no progress in 2018 on reaching a consensus on what the scope or the mandate of a UN peace operation in Ukraine might be, or on the extent to which it would operate in the separatist-controlled areas of eastern Ukraine bordering Russia.⁷⁷ Indeed, the relationship between Ukraine and Russia deteriorated further during the year, and reached a low point in November 2018 when Ukraine used its capacity as a non-permanent member of the Security Council to call an emergency meeting in response to the seizure by Russia of three Ukrainian naval vessels in the Sea of Azov near Crimea.⁷⁸

The UN Peacekeeping force in Cyprus

One noteworthy development was the appointment of Major General Cheryl Pearce of Australia as the new Force Commander of the UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) in November 2018.⁷⁹ Pearce is the second woman to command a UN peacekeeping operation after Major General Kristen Lund of Norway, who served as Force Commander of UNFICYP in 2014–16.⁸⁰ The Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General in Cyprus, the Head of UNFICYP and the Head of UNFICYP's police component are also women. This means that the mission's entire senior leadership will be female when Major General Pearce assumes her position as Force Commander in January 2019.⁸¹

⁷⁵ 'Ukraine briefing', What's in Blue, 25 May 2018; and Escritt, T., 'Putin's proposed UN Ukraine peacekeepers must have full access: Merkel', Reuters, 16 Sep. 2017.

⁷⁶ Gowan (note 74).

⁷⁷ What's in blue (note 75).

⁷⁸ United Nations, 'Top political official urges restraint from Ukraine, Russian Federation in Emergency Security Council Meeting on seized Ukrainian vessels', SC/13601, 26 Nov. 2018. On the conflict in Ukraine see chapter 2, section IV, in this volume.

⁷⁹ United Nations, Secretary-General, 'Major General Cheryl Pearce of Australia: Force Commander of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP)', 8 Nov. 2018.

⁸⁰ United Nations, Secretary-General, 'Major General Kristin Lund of Norway: Head of Mission and Chief of Staff of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO)', 6 Oct. 2017.

⁸¹ United Nations, Security Council, United Nations operation in Cyprus, Report of the Secretary-General, S/2019/37, para. 36.

The Middle East

There were 10 multilateral peace operations active in the Middle East in 2018, which was one more than in the previous year. The number of personnel serving in the missions decreased by 2.2 per cent during 2018, from 14 001 to 13 698.

The NATO Mission Iraq

The NMI was a new multilateral peace operation in 2018. The NATO Heads of State and Government decided to establish the NMI at the Brussels Summit in July 2018, and the mission formally started on 31 October 2018.⁸² The NMI is based in Baghdad and, once it is fully operational, will comprise approximately 580 personnel. The Prime Minister of Canada, Justin Trudeau, announced at the Brussels Summit that Canada would command the NMI in its first year and contribute up to 250 personnel. NATO predicts that the NMI will achieve full operational capability in early 2019.⁸³ NATO did not disclose any further details on the progress of the deployment of the NMI in the remainder of 2018, and it has not been possible to verify its strength at the end of the year.

The NMI is mandated to provide advice to Iraq's security institutions and training for the Iraqi armed forces. The focus of the advisory component is on civil-military cooperation and security sector reform. The training component applies the 'train-the-trainers' concept in training instructors at Iraqi military schools and academies in countering improvised explosive devices, civil-military planning, the maintenance of armoured vehicles and military medicine.⁸⁴ The NMI replaced the training and advice that NATO had been providing periodically to the Iraqi security forces, institutions and individual officers under the banner of the NATO Training and Capacity Building Activity in Iraq (NCBT-I) in Amman since 2015 and in Baghdad since 2017.⁸⁵ NATO had previously conducted a military training mission in Iraq between 2004 and 2011, the NATO Training Mission-Iraq (NTM-I).

The Stockholm Agreement and the first step towards a UN peace operation in Yemen

The UN Security Council also authorized the deployment of an 'advance team' to Yemen to begin monitoring the implementation of the agreements that the Yemeni Government and the Houthi movement had negotiated in

⁸² NATO, 'NATO continues to strengthen Iraqi security structures through new mission in Iraq', 31 Oct. 2018.

⁸³ NATO (note 82). On the armed conflict in Iraq see chapter 2, section V, in this volume.

⁸⁴ NATO, 'NATO Mission Iraq (NMI)', Fact sheet, Dec. 2018.

⁸⁵ NATO, 'NATO training and capacity building activity in Iraq (NTCB-I)', Media backgrounder, Dec. 2017.

Sweden in December 2018 (collectively referred to as the Stockholm Agreements).⁸⁶ This led to the establishment of the UN Mission to Support the Hodeidah Agreement (UNMHA) in January 2019.⁸⁷

⁸⁶ United Nations Security Council Resolution 2451, 21 Dec. 2018. On the armed conflict and peace process in Yemen see chapter 2, section V, in this volume.

⁸⁷ United Nations Security Council Resolution 2452, 19 Jan. 2019.