

I. Global trends and developments in peace operations

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In 2023 the United Nations, regional organizations and alliances, and ad hoc coalitions of states carried out 63 multilateral peace operations in 37 countries or territories around the world (see figure 3.1).¹ This was one operation less than in 2022.² Over the past decade the number of peace operations has remained relatively stable but, more recently, these operations have increasingly taken place in sub-Saharan Africa (see figure 3.2). Of the 63 operations, 24 were located in sub-Saharan Africa, 19 in Europe, 14 in the Middle East and North Africa, 3 in Asia and 3 in the Americas (see table 3.1). The Central African Republic (CAR), Kosovo and Mali were the countries hosting the largest numbers of peace operations, with four in each.

New multilateral peace operations

Three new multilateral peace operations started in 2023: the European Union (EU) Mission in Armenia (EUMA); the EU Partnership Mission in the Republic of Moldova (EUPM Moldova); and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (SAMIDRC).

Armenia: EUMA

The Council of the EU established EUMA on 23 January 2023. It succeeded the temporary EU Monitoring Capacity to Armenia (EUMCAP), which was deployed from 20 October to 19 December 2022, following renewed hostilities between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Unlike EUMA, EUMCAP was not a separate entity and had its tasks carried out by the EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia (EUMM Georgia).³ Similar to EUMM Georgia, EUMA is an unarmed civilian monitoring mission. Its mandate is to observe and report

¹ The African Union Military Observer Mission to the Central African Republic (MOUACA) is not counted among the peace operations active in 2023. Although the date of MOUACA's formal conclusion is uncertain, its last documented activities are from 2022, suggesting it was not operational in 2023. Therefore, in this chapter it counts as one of the operations that were discontinued in 2023.

² See also table 3.2. 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. 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 fully correspond with data found in previous editions of the SIPRI Yearbook or other SIPRI publications.

³ Council Decision (CFSP) 2023/162 of 23 January 2023 on a European Union mission in Armenia (EUMA), *Official Journal of the European Union*, L22/29, 23 Jan. 2023.

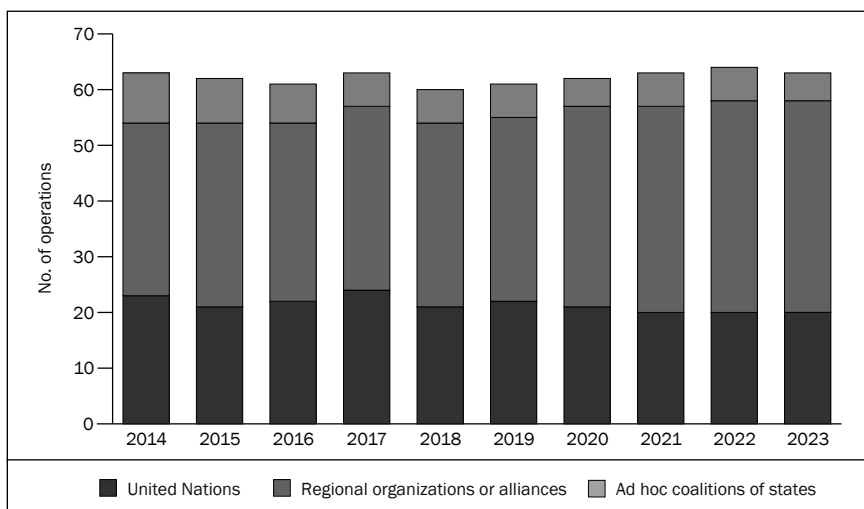


Figure 3.1. Number of multilateral peace operations, by type of conducting organization, 2014–23

on the security situation along the Armenian side of the international border with Azerbaijan. EUMA was not authorized to operate inside Azerbaijan and monitor the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh and its surrounding areas, or along the so-called Lachin corridor that connected the then breakaway region to Armenia. As such, the mission could not prevent the blockade and subsequent military offensive by Azerbaijan against Nagorno-Karabakh in September 2023, which led to the dissolution of the self-proclaimed republic and the displacement of most of the 120 000 ethnic Armenians living there.⁴ EUMA aims to decrease conflict-related incidents and risks for people in affected areas, and foster the normalization of relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan, which remained involved in EU-mediated peace negotiations during 2023.⁵ On 31 December 2023 the mission had 93 international personnel.

Moldova: EUPM Moldova

EUPM Moldova was established on 24 April 2023 at the request of the Moldovan government, as the country had been severely affected by the Russian Federation's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022.⁶ Among other things, Moldova had experienced amplified security threats, an influx of refugees, an

⁴ Broers, L., 'The Nagorno-Karabakh wars are over, but their fallout will be lasting', *World Politics Review*, 25 Oct. 2023. See also chapter 2, section I, in this volume.

⁵ European External Action Service, 'EU Mission in Armenia (EUMA)', 28 Feb. 2023; and Council Decision (CFSP) 2023/162 (note 3).

⁶ Council Decision (CFSP) 2023/855 of 24 April 2023 on a European Union Partnership Mission in Moldova (EUPM Moldova), *Official Journal of the European Union*, L110/30, 25 Apr. 2023.

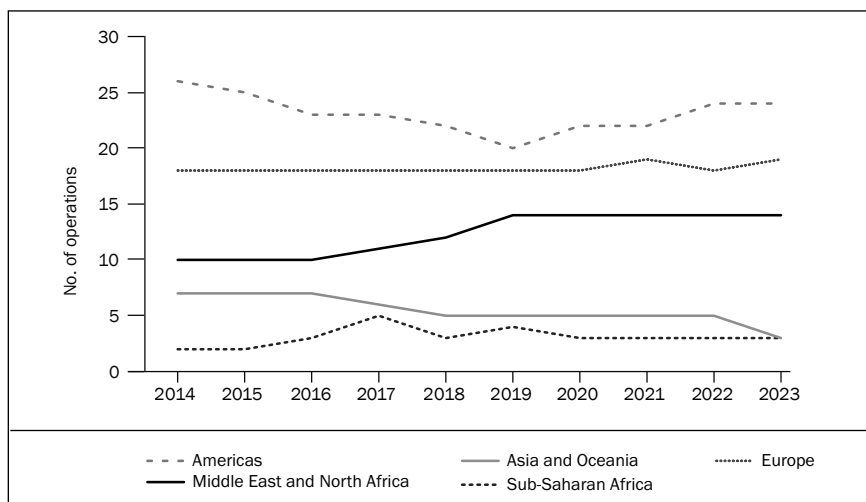


Figure 3.2. Number of multilateral peace operations, by region, 2014–23

Note: Operation numbers are shown annually.

energy crisis and Russian missile violations of its airspace.⁷ EUPM Moldova is a civilian mission that provides strategic level advice and operational support, in order to strengthen the crisis management structures in Moldova’s security sector and enhance its resilience against hybrid threats, including cyber threats and foreign information manipulation and interference. Launched on 22 May, the mission deployed 34 international staff as of December 2023.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo: SAMIDRC

SAMIDRC was established on 8 May 2023 at an extraordinary summit of SADC heads of state and government, and its status of forces agreement was signed on 17 November 2023.⁸ At the request of the Congolese government, the mission aims to support the Congolese Army in fighting armed groups in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).⁹ The peace operation aligns with the principles of collective self-defence and collective action outlined in the 2003 SADC Mutual Defence Pact.¹⁰ SAMIDRC’s mandate includes: (a) supporting the DRC to neutralize negative forces and armed groups in eastern DRC in order to restore and maintain public security; (b) supporting the Congolese armed forces (Forces Armées de la République

⁷ Council of the European Union (EU), ‘Foreign Affairs Council, 20 February 2023’, 22 Feb. 2023. See also Groza, I., ‘One year on: The impact of Russia’s war in Ukraine on Moldova’, Foreign Policy Centre, 24 Feb. 2023.

⁸ Southern African Development Community (SADC), ‘Communiqué of the Extra-Ordinary Summit of SADC Heads of State and Government’, 4 Nov. 2023; and Gras, R., ‘DRC: Will SADC regional force be deployed in September?’, Africa Report, 21 July 2023.

⁹ On the armed conflict in the DRC see also chapter 2, section I, in this volume.

¹⁰ SADC, ‘Deployment of the SADC Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo’, 4 Jan. 2024.

Table 3.1. Number of multilateral peace operations and personnel deployed, by region and type of organization, 2023

Conducting organization	Americas	Asia and Oceania	Europe	Middle East and North Africa	Sub-Saharan Africa	World
Operations	3	3	19	14	24	63
United Nations	2	2	2	7	7	20
Regional organization or alliance	1	–	14	6	17	38
Ad hoc coalition	–	1	3	1	–	5
Personnel	377	321	9 215	14 283	76 372	100 568
United Nations	357	311	1 016	12 433	53 526	67 643
Regional organization or alliance	20	–	7 059	684	22 846	30 609
Ad hoc coalition	–	10	1 140	1 166	–	2 316

– = not applicable.

Notes: Numbers of active operations cover the year 2023, including operations closed during the year. Personnel figures are as of 31 Dec. 2023.

Source: SIPRI Multilateral Peace Operations Database, accessed 5 Apr. 2024.

Démocratique du Congo, FARDC) with logistics and land, air and maritime assistance to enhance its military operational capabilities; (c) supporting the efforts of the DRC government to continue creating a conducive environment for humanitarian assistance and providing humanitarian relief to the population affected by military and paramilitary activities in eastern DRC; (d) protecting critical infrastructure in eastern DRC; and (e) protecting civilians and their property under imminent threat of attack.¹¹

The deployment of SAMIDRC started on 15 December 2023. The mission is envisioned to take over tasks previously handled by the East African Community (EAC) Regional Force in the DRC (EACRF-DRC).¹² SADC is expected to deploy 5000 military personnel from Malawi, South Africa and Tanzania by 15 December 2024.¹³ The mission deployed 700 military personnel in December 2023.¹⁴

A forthcoming peace operation in Haiti

In addition to the above peace operations that were new in 2023, the UN Security Council established a multinational security support mission to address the security crisis in Haiti, but it was not deployed before the end of

¹¹ SADC, 'SADC Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (SAMIDRC), mandate', Unpublished, 8 May 2023.

¹² Wambui, M. and Ilunga, P., 'Eastern DRC exposed as EA regional forces leave', *The EastAfrican*, 11 Dec. 2023.

¹³ Gras (note 8).

¹⁴ The figures related to SAMIDRC are estimates and may not accurately represent the number of military personnel present or planned on the ground.

the year.¹⁵ The decision to establish a new mission in Haiti followed the call in 2022 of the country's Council of Ministers for a specialized international force to support Haitian National Police efforts to address growing gang violence and mass protests caused by fuel increases.¹⁶ Debate on the topic in the UN Security Council extended into mid 2023, primarily due to the absence of a country willing to lead the mission, but also as a result of differing views on the Security Council's response.¹⁷ France, the United Kingdom and the United States supported an international security assistance mission, while China and Russia advocated for a Haitian-led political solution, cautioning against external intervention.¹⁸

In July 2023 Kenya volunteered to lead the multinational operation with a contribution of 1000 police officers.¹⁹ On 2 October 2023 the UN Security Council authorized the Multinational Security Support (MSS) Mission in Haiti, to be deployed as an ad hoc coalition of states rather than a UN peace operation.²⁰ The MSS is mandated to support the Haitian police's efforts to restore security in the country and to create the necessary security conditions for elections by also supporting police operations against gangs and assisting in the protection of critical infrastructure.²¹ After an assessment visit in August 2023, the Kenyan government noted the need for offensive capabilities to protect Haitian infrastructure and meet the expectations of the local population.²² Nevertheless, domestic courts in Kenya challenged the government decision to send police personnel to the MSS Mission in Haiti, arguing that Kenya's constitution does not allow the deployment of police abroad. The Supreme Court of Kenya is anticipated to decide on the issue in January 2024, which is when the mission is expected to start deploying.²³

Multilateral peace operations that closed

Four multilateral peace operations closed in 2023: the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA); the UN Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS); the East African Community Regional Force in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (EACRF-

¹⁵ UN Security Council Resolution 2699, 2 Oct. 2023.

¹⁶ Haiti Libre, 'Haiti—FLASH: vers une intervention armée étrangère en Haïti, pour éliminer les gangs' [Haiti—FLASH: Towards a foreign armed intervention in Haiti to eliminate gangs], 8 Oct. 2022.

¹⁷ Security Council Report, 'Haiti: Briefing and consultations', What's in Blue, 25 Apr. 2023.

¹⁸ United Nations, Security Council, 'The question concerning Haiti', 25 Jan. 2024.

¹⁹ Dr Alfred N. Mutua (@DrAlfredMutua), X, 29 July 2023, <<https://twitter.com/DrAlfredMutua/status/1685314557823037440>>.

²⁰ UN Security Council Resolution 2699 (note 15).

²¹ UN Security Council Resolution 2699 (note 15).

²² International Crisis Group, 'Haiti's gangs: Can a foreign mission break their stranglehold?', Crisis Group Latin America and Caribbean Briefing no. 49, Port-au-Prince, 5 Jan. 2024.

²³ Igunza, E., 'Kenya's high court extends a block on sending police to Haiti even as parliament approves deployment', AP, 16 Nov. 2023.

DRC); and the African Union (AU) Military Observer Mission to the Central African Republic (MOUACA).

Mali: MINUSMA

On 30 June 2023, after a decade of operations in Mali, the UN Security Council approved the full withdrawal of MINUSMA and endorsed the transfer of security responsibility to Mali's transitional government.²⁴ Established on 25 April 2013, in the aftermath of a coup the previous year, MINUSMA began its operations on 1 July 2013 with an initial mandate to support the political process and stabilize the security situation in the country.²⁵

The closure of the mission followed a request from Mali's transitional government, which assumed power after a coup in 2021. On 16 June 2023, amid discussions on a resolution to renew MINUSMA's mandate, Mali's transitional minister of foreign affairs, Abdoulaye Diop, demanded the mission's 'immediate withdrawal'.²⁶ He cited a 'crisis of confidence' between the Malian authorities and MINUSMA as one of the reasons for the decision.²⁷ This request reportedly caught UN Security Council members by surprise, although relations between the host government and MINUSMA had been deteriorating, marked by incidents such as the expulsion of UN personnel and the temporary arrest of newly arrived peacekeepers.²⁸ During negotiations for MINUSMA's 2022 mandate renewal, the transitional government had expressed 'firm opposition' to mandate language that permitted MINUSMA personnel freedom of movement to conduct human rights investigations.²⁹

Tensions were further exacerbated by the activities of the Wagner Group in Mali since December 2021, leading several troop-contributing countries to announce their withdrawals from MINUSMA. The mission's high casualty rate also made contributors increasingly hesitant to deploy (see UN fatalities in section II).³⁰

UN Security Council members expressed concern that MINUSMA's discontinuation might lead to intensified conflict between armed groups and Malian forces, potentially jeopardizing the 2015 Algiers peace agreement, especially given the loss of the mission's monitoring capabilities.³¹ Indeed, in August 2023, after an eight-year ceasefire, hostilities resumed in northern

²⁴ UN Security Council Resolution 2690, 30 June 2023.

²⁵ UN Security Council Resolution 2100, 25 Apr. 2013. On the armed conflict in Mali see chapter 2, section I, in this volume.

²⁶ United Nations, Security Council, 9350th meeting, S/PV.9350, 16 June 2023.

²⁷ United Nations (note 26).

²⁸ Security Council Report, 'Mali: Vote on resolution ending the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali', What's in Blue, 29 June 2023.

²⁹ United Nations, Security Council, 9082nd meeting, S/PV.9083, 29 June 2022.

³⁰ Jezequel, J.-H., Nossiter, F. and Maiga, I., 'MINUSMA at a crossroads', International Crisis Group, 1 Dec. 2022. On the role of the Wagner Group in Mali see chapter 4, section I, in this volume.

³¹ Security Council Report, 'Central African Republic: Briefing and consultations', What's in Blue, 25 Oct. 2023.

Mali between some signatories of the peace agreement and government forces, largely due to the Malian authorities occupying former MINUSMA bases and thus escalating tensions.³² In November 2023, with support from the Wagner Group, Mali's government forces recaptured Kidal, a town held by rebel groups since 2012, and this led to a temporary reduction in conflict intensity.³³ However, experts warned that this victory was unlikely to secure government control over northern Mali and that the fighting could evolve into a protracted conflict.³⁴

Sudan: UNITAMS

UNITAMS was established on 3 June 2020 by UN Security Council Resolution 2524, with the mandate to support the Sudanese democratic transition.³⁵ Following a military coup that took place in Sudan in October 2021, the mission's mandate was called into question.³⁶ After that, UNITAMS faced several challenges, including a lack of trust among the conflicting parties and the perception that it had insufficient leverage over the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF).³⁷

On 15 April 2023 fighting erupted between the SAF, headed by General Abdel Fattah Burhan, Sudan's military leader and chairperson of the Transitional Sovereign Council, and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), a paramilitary group.³⁸ With the deterioration of the security situation, on 25 April most of the UN's international personnel—including from UNITAMS—was evacuated from Khartoum and relocated either to Nairobi or Entebbe.³⁹ Communication disruptions, security risks and access limitations persisted and hampered the activities of UNITAMS.⁴⁰ Nevertheless, on 2 June 2023 the UN Security Council unanimously renewed the mission's mandate, but only for

³² Le Cam, M., 'Dans le nord du Mali, la guerre a repris entre l'armée et les anciens rebelles indépendantistes' [In northern Mali, war has resumed between the army and former independence rebels], 5 Oct. 2023.

³³ International Crisis Group, 'Nord du Mali: revenir au dialogue' [Northern Mali: Return to dialogue], 20 Feb. 2024.

³⁴ International Crisis Group, 'Northern Mali: A conflict with no victors', 13 Oct. 2023.

³⁵ UN Security Council Resolution 2524, 3 June 2020; and Amani Africa, 'Consideration of the special report of the AUC chairperson and the UN secretary-general on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and a follow-on presence', 30 Nov. 2020.

³⁶ United Nations, Security Council, 'Security Council briefing on the UN Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS)', 11 Dec. 2021.

³⁷ Arman, Y., 'UNITAMS initiative and lessons learned from failure of November 21 Agreement', Sudan Tribune, 2021.

³⁸ Copnall, J., 'Sudan crisis: Burhan and Hemedti: The two generals at the heart of the conflict', BBC, 7 Apr. 2023. On the armed conflict in Sudan see also chapter 2, section I, in this volume.

³⁹ United Nations, Security Council, 'Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan', Report of the secretary-general, S/2023/355, 16 May 2023.

⁴⁰ United Nations, Security Council, 'Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan', Report of the secretary-general, S/2023/644, 31 Aug. 2023.

six months.⁴¹ On 8 June 2023 the Sudanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement that the head of UNITAMS, Volker Perthes, was considered *persona non grata* in the country.⁴² Earlier, Perthes had been accused of exacerbating the fighting between the army and the paramilitaries, and the SAF had demanded that he be replaced.⁴³ In September 2023 Perthes resigned and warned of the risk of a full-scale civil war in Sudan.⁴⁴ On 16 November 2023 the Sudanese government requested the discontinuation of UNITAMS with immediate effect, citing a disappointing performance in implementing its objectives.⁴⁵ On 1 December 2023 the Security Council complied with this request, and UNITAMS ceased its mandate delivery on 4 December 2023. Liquidation of the mission is expected to begin on 1 March 2024.⁴⁶ At the time of its discontinuation, UNITAMS had 147 international personnel.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo: EACRF-DRC

The EACRF-DRC was established on 20 June 2022 in the context of the deteriorating security situation in the east of the DRC.⁴⁷ It became officially operational with the deployment of a Kenyan contingent of military personnel in November 2022. Further troop contributions were made by Burundi, South Sudan and Uganda, and the force became fully operational in April 2023.

The EACRF-DRC's mandate was to: (a) jointly plan and conduct operations with the Congolese armed forces (FARDC) in the Joint Operations Area (JOA) to defeat armed group elements in eastern DRC; (b) support the FARDC in establishing and maintaining law and order; (c) support humanitarian efforts, including facilitating the return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) to their homes; and (d) support the Disarmament, Demobilization, Community Recovery and Stabilization Program.⁴⁸

During the Mini-Summit on Peace and Security in the Eastern Region of DRC in February 2023, an EAC-appointed facilitator and an Angolan delegation were able to establish a ceasefire between the FARDC and the March 23 Movement (Mouvement du 23 mars, M23) armed group, which

⁴¹ UN Security Council Resolution 2685, 2 June 2023.

⁴² 'Sudan declares UN envoy Volker Perthes "persona non grata"', *Le Monde*, 9 June 2023.

⁴³ *Le Monde* (note 42).

⁴⁴ Lederer, E. M., 'UN envoy for Sudan resigns and warns that the conflict could be turning into full-scale civil war', AP, 14 Sep. 2023.

⁴⁵ United Nations, Security Council, Letter dated 16 November 2023 from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations addressed to the secretary-general, S/2023/884, 17 Nov. 2023.

⁴⁶ UN Security Council Resolution 2715, 1 Dec. 2023.

⁴⁷ East African Community (EAC), 'Communiqué of the Third Heads of State Conclave on the Democratic Republic of Congo', 20 June 2022.

⁴⁸ EAC, 'East African Community Regional Force (EACRF)', [n.d.]; and Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 'Rwanda and the DRC at risk of war as new M23 rebellion emerges: An explainer', 29 June 2022.

lasted from 7 March 2023 to 6 October 2023.⁴⁹ The EACRF-DRC also managed to create some buffer zones in liberated areas between M23 and the FARDC, to further avert clashes between the two parties.⁵⁰ However, both M23 and the FARDC continuously breached the ceasefire, and sometimes engaged in direct combat.⁵¹

The EACRF-DRC's mandate was extended twice: from 8 June to 8 September 2023, and subsequently to 8 December 2023.⁵² However, on 8 October 2023 the Congolese government announced that it would not seek the operation's renewal, having criticized its effectiveness in combating M23 and other armed groups in eastern DRC.⁵³ Local civil society organizations also perceived the operation as ineffective and several public demonstrations against the operation took place in Goma, similar to those held against the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO).⁵⁴

Even though the EACRF-DRC's leadership expected its discontinuation to coincide with the deployment and handover of the mandate to SAMIDRC, the latter only started deploying on 15 December 2023. In the adoption of the EACRF-DRC's exit plan, heads of defence forces of EAC troop-contributing countries raised concerns about ongoing fighting in the areas where the operation was previously deployed.⁵⁵ Following the departure of the operation's last troops from the country, its commander, Major General Alphaxard Muthuri Kiugu, expressed regret that armed groups had reoccupied areas that they had vacated.⁵⁶ At the time of its discontinuation, the EACRF-DRC had 3250 military personnel.

⁴⁹ 'RDC: le M23 s'engage pour un cessez-le-feu à partir du 7 mars' [DRC: The M23 commits to a ceasefire from 7 March], Radio Okapi, 4 Mar. 2023; and 'Nord-Kivu: poursuite ce mardi des combats malgré le cessez-le-feu annoncé par le M23' [North Kivu: Fighting continues this Tuesday despite the ceasefire announced by the M23], Radio Okapi, 7 Mar. 2023. On the peace process in the DRC see also chapter 2, section I, in this volume.

⁵⁰ Sabala, K. 'The role, progress and challenges of the EAC Regional Force in the Eastern DRC', Accord, 30 Mar. 2023; and Wambui and Ilunga (note 12)

⁵¹ 'Nord-Kivu: reprise des combats entre FARDC et M23' [North Kivu: Resumption of fighting between the FARDC and M23 in Sake and Shasha], Radio Okapi, 30 Mar. 2023; and 'RDC: L'armée congolaise accuse la rébellion du M23 de s'être déployée sur de nouvelles positions' [DRC: The Congolese Army accuses the M23 rebellion of having deployed to new positions], Radio France International, 28 Sep. 2023.

⁵² EAC, 'EACRF Commander and MONUSCO Force Commander meet at MONUSCO headquarters', [n.d.].

⁵³ EAC, 'Communiqué of the Consultative Meeting between the Chairperson of the Summit and the Facilitator of the EAC-led Eastern DRC Peace Process on the Security Situation in Eastern DRC', 5 Nov. 2022; EAC, 'KENCON troops under EACRF commence exit from DRC', [n.d.]; Lizzo, S. 'Mandates and mixed success: The EACRF's enigmatic pursuit of peace in eastern DRC', Wilson Center, 30 Oct. 2023; and Mutambo, A., Ilunga, P. and Kitimo, A., 'EACRF struggles with a belligerent host already seeking Plan B', *The EastAfrican*, 13 May 2023.

⁵⁴ 'Pourquoi la RDC souhaite le départ des troupes d'Afrique de l'Est' [Why does the DRC want East African troops to leave?], BBC News Afrique, 30 Oct. 2023; and Wambui and Ilunga (note 12)

⁵⁵ EAC, 'EAC chiefs of defence forces/staff adopt EACRF's exit plan from eastern DRC', Unpublished, 8 Dec. 2023.

⁵⁶ Wambui, M., 'EACRF completes withdrawal from eastern DR Congo', *The EastAfrican*, 21 Dec. 2023.

The Central African Republic: MOUACA

MOUACA was established on 10 July 2020 by the AU Peace and Security Council.⁵⁷ Its mandate was to support the monitoring of the implementation of the 2019 Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the CAR. It was to have a particular focus on the formation of joint special security units (Unités Spéciales Mixtes de Sécurité, USMS), which were to consist of government forces integrated with members of the armed groups that had signed the agreement.

On 31 October 2022 the Peace and Security Council directed the AU Commission to initiate the gradual withdrawal and eventual closure of MOUACA, transferring its mandate responsibilities to the AU Mission for the CAR and Central Africa (MISAC).⁵⁸ This decision was influenced by the precarious security conditions in CAR and the uncertain financial support for MOUACA.⁵⁹ Additionally, the security environment within the country had restricted MOUACA's operational presence to the capital, Bangui, significantly hampering its capacity to fulfil its mandate.⁶⁰ There has been little information regarding its closure, but it was confirmed that the mission ceased operating in 2023.⁶¹

Multilateral peace operations with significant limitations

In addition to the closure of the missions above, there were three multilateral peace operations that were not formally terminated but became effectively redundant in 2023: the Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office on the Conflict Dealt with by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Conference (PRCIO) in Azerbaijan; the Russian–Turkish Joint Monitoring Centre (RTJMC) in Azerbaijan; and the EU Capacity Building Mission in Niger (EUCAP Sahel Niger).

Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabakh): PRCIO and RTJMC

The PRCIO and the RTJMC were both tasked with contributing to the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The PRCIO was initially appointed in 1995, after the first Nagorno-Karabakh war (1988–94), to represent the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office in all matters related to this conflict and the

⁵⁷ African Union (AU), 'Communiqué of the 936th meeting of the Peace and Security Council, held on 10 July 2020, on the situation in the Central African Republic', 10 July 2020.

⁵⁸ AU, 'Communiqué of the 116th meeting of the PSC, held on 31 October 2022 on the topic: The situation in the Central African Republic (CAR) and the operations of the African Union Military Observer Mission in Central African Republic (MOUACA)', 31 Oct. 2022.

⁵⁹ Amani Africa, 'Update on the situation in CAR and the operations of MOUACA', 31 Oct. 2022.

⁶⁰ Amani Africa (note 59).

⁶¹ Amani Africa, *The African Union Peace and Security Council Handbook 2023: Guiding on the Council's Procedure, Practice and Tradition* (Amani Africa Media and Research Services: Addis Ababa, 2023).

efforts by the OSCE to resolve it peacefully.⁶² The RTJMC was deployed in January 2021 after the second Nagorno-Karabakh war (2020), pursuant to a November 2020 ceasefire agreement mediated by Russia.⁶³ Despite the presence of the RTJMC, Azerbaijan launched a major military operation against Nagorno-Karabakh on 20 September 2023. The one-day offensive ended the decades-long conflict, as well as the self-proclaimed republic of Nagorno-Karabakh, forcing it to surrender its armed forces and sign off on its own dissolution by 1 January 2024.⁶⁴ Most of its ethnic Armenian inhabitants fled Azerbaijan because of these events, reducing the potential for renewed hostilities in Nagorno-Karabakh, at least in the short term. Yet no decisions were taken during 2023 to discontinue either the PRCIO—which has an open-ended mandate and is not subject to periodic renewals by the OSCE Permanent Council—or the RTJMC. Throughout the year, publicly available information about their activities remained very limited and difficult to verify, especially for the RTJMC.

Niger: EUCAP Sahel Niger

EUCAP Sahel Niger was established on 16 July 2012 to assist in the implementation of Niger's security strategy, strengthen the rule of law and support the sustainability of the Nigerien security forces.⁶⁵ Its mandate was modified in July 2016 to include the task of tackling irregular migration and associated criminal activities, stemming from a deterioration in Libya's border management that led to large-scale mixed migratory flows from Africa to Europe.⁶⁶ EUCAP Sahel Niger assisted the Nigerien authorities in formulating legal frameworks and security strategies, including for the National Border Police.⁶⁷

Both EUCAP Sahel Niger and the new EU Military Partnership Mission in Niger (EUMPM Niger, which does not qualify as a multilateral peace operation according to SIPRI's definition) were affected by a military coup in Niger on 26 July 2023 and the subsequent suspension of the EU's development and military cooperation with the country.⁶⁸ Tensions between the EU and Niger's military junta increased further on 23 October 2023, when the

⁶² Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), *Survey of OSCE Field Operations*, SEC.GAL/118/21 (OSCE: Vienna, 13 Sep. 2021), pp. 29–30.

⁶³ 'Russia and Turkey open monitoring centre for Nagorno-Karabakh', Reuters, 30 Jan. 2021.

⁶⁴ Light, F., 'Karabakh Armenians dissolve breakaway government in capitulation to Azerbaijan', Reuters, 28 Sep. 2023.

⁶⁵ Council Decision (CSFP) 2012/392 of 16 July 2012 on the European Union CSDP mission in Niger (EUCAP Sahel Niger), *Official Journal of the European Union*, L187/48, 17 July 2012.

⁶⁶ European External Action Service (EEAS), 'EUCAP Sahel Niger: Mission extended, budget agreed, mandate amended', Press release, 18 July 2016.

⁶⁷ EEAS, 'EUCAP Sahel Niger: European Union capacity-building-civilian mission', 30 Nov. 2020.

⁶⁸ Felix, B., 'What sanctions have been imposed on Niger since coup?', Reuters, 31 July 2023; and Bilquin, B. and Pichon, E., 'The coup in Niger: Consequences for EU policies in the Sahel', European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS) Briefing, Sep. 2023.

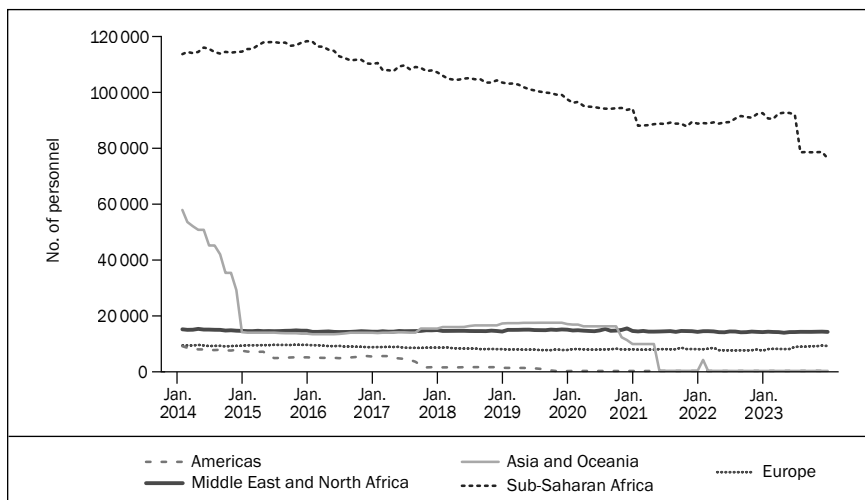


Figure 3.3. Number of personnel in multilateral peace operations, by region, 2014–23

Note: Personnel numbers are based on monthly data, with the last observation from Dec. 2023.

EU adopted a framework to impose sanctions on members of the junta; and on 28 November the junta signed an order repealing the 2015 migration law aimed at curbing migration to Europe.⁶⁹ Finally, on 4 December the junta formally withdrew its consent for EUCAP Sahel Niger by revoking its status of mission agreement, giving it six months' notice to withdraw and terminate its activities.⁷⁰ While the Council of the EU did not immediately decide to end the mission, it has been confirmed that it will formally terminate by June 2024 at the latest.⁷¹

Personnel deployments

Over the past decade there has been a general trend towards fewer personnel being deployed globally in multilateral peace operations.⁷² In line with this trend, the number of personnel in place as of December 2023 was 100 568, 13 per cent lower compared to December 2022 (114 984). This marked the most significant decrease and the lowest figure in the period 2014–23. The overall decrease in personnel numbers can primarily be attributed to

⁶⁹ Meijer, B., 'EU agrees on framework for Niger sanctions', Reuters, 23 Oct. 2023; and 'Niger junta revokes law aimed at curbing migration to Europe', Deutsche Welle, 28 Nov. 2023.

⁷⁰ Peyton, N., 'Niger revokes military accord with European Union—ministry', Reuters, 4 Dec. 2023.

⁷¹ EEAS, 'Informal Foreign Affairs Council (Defence): Press remarks by High Representative Josep Borrell at the press conference', 31 Jan. 2024.

⁷² The number of personnel deployed in multilateral peace operations, unless otherwise specified, refers exclusively to international personnel and does not include national personnel employed in these operations.

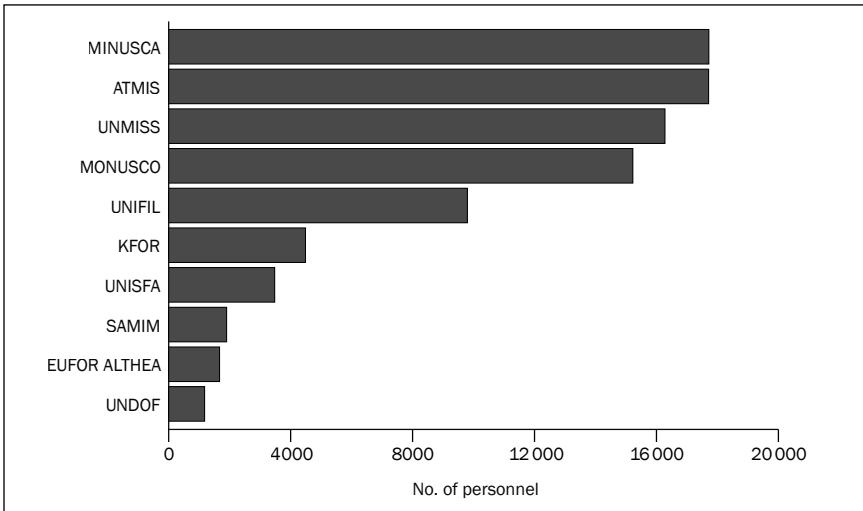


Figure 3.4. Largest multilateral peace operations as of 31 December 2023

ATMIS = African Union Transition Mission in Somalia; EUFOR ALTHEA = European Union Force Bosnia and Herzegovina Operation ALTHEA; KFOR = Kosovo Force; MINUSCA = United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic; MONUSCO = UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; SAMIM = SADC Mission in Mozambique; UNDOF = UN Disengagement Observer Force; UNIFIL = UN Interim Force in Lebanon; UNISFA = UN Interim Security Force for Abyei; UNMISS = UN Mission in South Sudan.

reductions in sub-Saharan Africa, where most peace operation personnel are deployed (see figure 3.3). The number of international personnel in the region fell by 18 per cent, from 92 594 to 76 372, largely because of the closure of MINUSMA, drawdowns in the AU Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) and the termination of the EACRF-DRC. However, an uptick in deployments is anticipated in early 2024, with expectations for further troop contributions under SAMIDRC.⁷³ Conversely, Europe experienced a notable rise, largely due to an increase in troops deployed under the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) Kosovo Force (KFOR).

Despite a reduction in the number of personnel deployed to peace operations in sub-Saharan Africa, the region still hosts most of these deployments, accounting for 76 per cent of all globally deployed personnel as of 31 December 2023. This figure represents a decrease from the 81 per cent recorded in December 2022. Since the establishment of MINUSMA in 2014, there have been no new large-scale peace operations in sub-Saharan Africa or any other region (see figure 3.4). Furthermore, in addition to the closure of MINUSMA in 2023, two other large-scale peace operations, MONUSCO and ATMIS, are

⁷³ Gras (note 8).

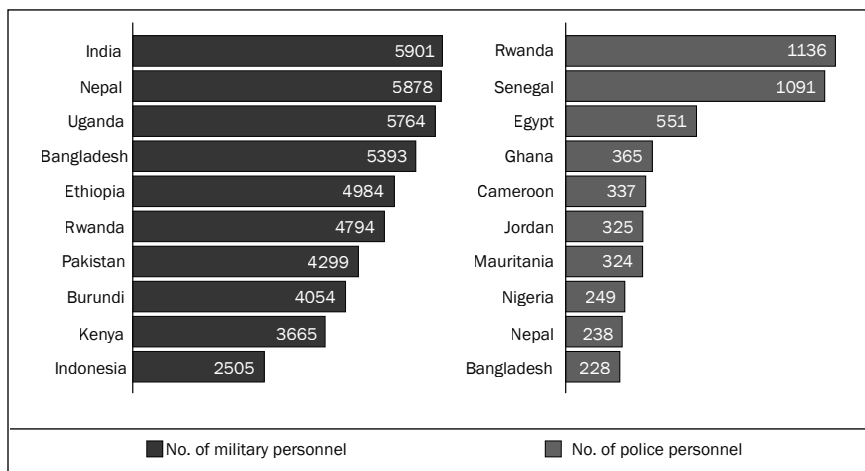


Figure 3.5. Main contributors of military and police personnel to peace operations as of 31 December 2023

anticipated to be discontinued in sub-Saharan Africa in the near future. In the Americas, Asia and Oceania, and the Middle East and North Africa, the numbers of personnel deployed remained relatively stable during 2023.

The main troop- and police-contributing countries

As of 31 December 2023, the 10 largest contributors of military personnel accounted for 57 per cent of all military personnel deployed globally in multilateral peace operations. Despite some changes in the ranking, most of the top 10 contributors in 2023 remained the same as in 2022, except for Ghana, which no longer ranked among the top contributors, and Indonesia, which joined the list in 2023. All of the top 10 contributors were from either Asia or sub-Saharan Africa. Except for Ethiopia, India and Indonesia, all other top troop-contributing countries decreased their troop deployments in 2023 compared to 2022 (see figure 3.5).

India rose from being the fourth largest contributor in 2022 to being the largest in 2023, deploying 5901 military personnel in multilateral peace operations—an increase of 0.4 per cent. Most of India's troops were deployed to the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS; 2377 personnel), although the country also had significant deployments in MONUSCO (1826), the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL; 895) and the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA; 590). Nepal, the second largest contributor of military personnel, also contributed significantly to UNMISS (1765), in addition to substantial contributions to the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA; 1241), MONUSCO (1147) and UNIFIL (873).

Uganda was the third largest contributor of military personnel in 2023, with 5764 military personnel as of 31 December 2023. Unlike India and Nepal, whose military contributions were solely to UN peace operations, the majority of Uganda's military personnel (5133) were assigned to ATMIS—to which it is the largest troop contributor. Uganda also made a significant contribution of military personnel to the UN Guard Unit (UNGU) of the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), providing most of UNGU's personnel (627).

The top 10 contributing countries of police personnel to multilateral peace operations collectively accounted for 67 per cent of all police personnel deployed as of 31 December 2023. Nepal entered the top 10 list, replacing Togo. Togo had been a significant contributor to the police personnel at MINUSMA, contributing 299 police personnel when the mission was discontinued on 30 June 2023. Rwanda became the leading contributor of police personnel in 2023, with 1136 officers—a 0.4 per cent increase from 2022. Rwanda's contributions were primarily to MINUSCA (699) and UNMISS (432). Senegal was the main police contributor to MINUSMA, with 344 police personnel deployed at the time the mission was discontinued.