

Road to a Better UN? Peace Operations and the Reform Agenda

ARTHUR BOUTELLIS AND ALEXANDRA NOVOSSELOFF



Cover Photo: Secretary-General António Guterres meets with heads of department and senior UN officials, including Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed, July 12, 2017. UN Photo/Manuel Elias.

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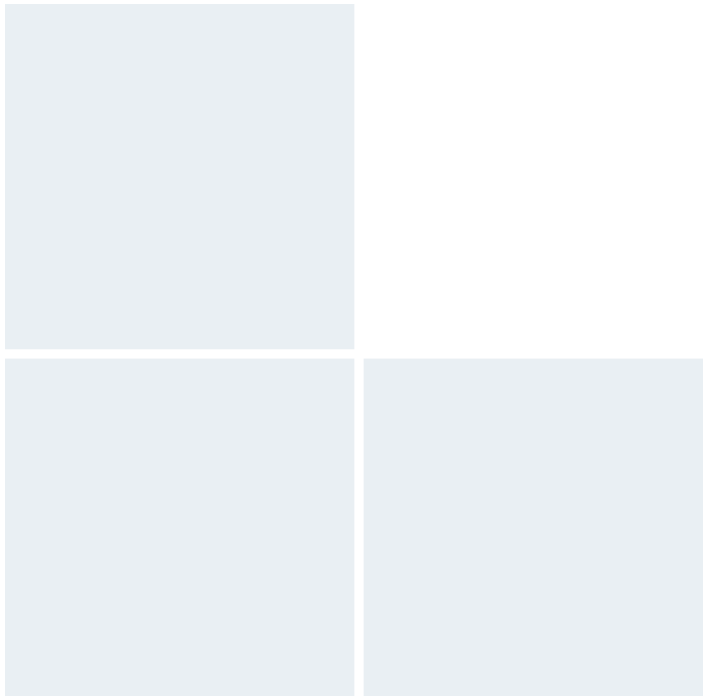
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Abbreviations

| | |
|---------|--|
| ACABQ | Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions |
| ASG | Assistant secretary-general |
| AU | African Union |
| DFS | Department of Field Support |
| DM | Department of Management |
| DMSPC | Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance |
| DOS | Department of Operational Support |
| DPA | Department of Political Affairs |
| DPPA | Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs |
| DPET | Division of Policy Evaluation and Training (DPKO) |
| DPKO | Department of Peacekeeping Operations |
| DPO | Department of Peace Operations |
| HIPPO | High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations |
| MINUSCA | UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic |
| MINUSMA | UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali |
| MONUSCO | UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo |
| OCT | Office of Counter-Terrorism |
| OROLSI | Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions (DPKO) |
| PBSO | Peacebuilding Support Office |
| PCRS | Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System |
| UNAMID | AU-UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur |
| UNDP | UN Development Programme |
| UNESCO | UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |
| UNMISS | UN Mission in the Republic of South Sudan |
| USG | Under-secretary-general |

Executive Summary

Late in his second term, former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon appointed a High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) to carry out the first major review of UN peace operations since the 2000 Brahimi Report. The review was carried out in the context of growing challenges facing large new stabilization missions in Mali and the Central African Republic and renewed conflict in South Sudan that more than 10,000 peacekeepers on the ground could not prevent. It also took place in parallel with two other major reviews—the review of the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace, and security and of the UN peacebuilding architecture more broadly, and the review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.¹ It led to the release of the “HIPPO report” in June 2015, followed by a follow-on report from the secretary-general in September 2015, both of which put forward a number of recommendations.

Two years after the release of the HIPPO report, implementation has been slow and haphazard, and no formal progress report has been produced to date. Unlike the review leading to the Brahimi Report, HIPPO was not supported by any formal intergovernmental process in the Security Council or General Assembly, and member states have not formally requested the secretary-general to report on progress in implementing the recommendations from the HIPPO report or from his own follow-on report. Nonetheless, and even though there is not yet evidence of the four major strategic shifts it calls for—recognizing the primacy of politics, viewing peace operations as a continuum, strengthening partnerships, and focusing on the field and on people—the HIPPO report continues to serve as a frame of reference for peace operations reform.

The present report reviews the state of peace operations reform in the context of the arrival of a new UN secretary-general, financial cuts led by the new US administration, and persisting mistrust among UN member states. It looks at how some of

the reforms initiated by the UN Secretariat under Ban, the informal member state “group of friends of HIPPO,” the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C-34), and a flurry of major Security Council debates have contributed to keeping the spirit of HIPPO alive and to carrying over some of its key recommendations to the new secretary-general. It also addresses how the review of current operations conducted by the Fifth Committee (the General Assembly’s administrative and budgetary committee) has been at odds with some recommendations put forward by HIPPO.

Secretary-General António Guterres, who took office in January 2017, has inherited unfinished reforms, recommendations for reforms from HIPPO and from his predecessor, and an exceptionally difficult international context that has seen the relevance of the multilateral system and its instruments—including peace operations—called into question. Guterres, who initially prioritized prevention and whole-of-UN approaches upon entering into office, may have increasingly realized the importance of peace operations. At the occasion of the UN Security Council High-Level Open Debate on Peacekeeping, which took place in September 2017, he stated that the HIPPO recommendations remain at the heart of his efforts to advance collective security, and that his reform efforts aim in part to bring about the four critical shifts called for in the HIPPO report.²

This report asks whether the reform agenda put forward by Guterres would—or would not—indeed help realize the four strategic shifts called for by HIPPO and under what circumstances, providing preliminary analysis of the five parallel streams of reform presented to date: (1) the renewed focus on prevention and sustaining peace; (2) the creation of a new UN Office of Counter-Terrorism; (3) the reform of the UN development system; (4) the restructuring of the peace and security architecture; and (5) organization-wide management reform. The report also analyzes related initiatives of the secretary-general aimed at improving capabilities, as well as performance and accountability, including those aimed at stamping out sexual exploitation and abuse. Further, it

¹ See Arthur Boutellis and Andrea Ó Súilleabháin, “Working Together for Peace: Synergies and Connectors for Implementing the 2015 UN Reviews,” New York: International Peace Institute, May 2016, available at www.ipinst.org/2016/05/synergies-2015-un-reviews.

² UN Secretary-General, remarks at Security Council High-Level Open Debate on Peacekeeping Operations Regarding the Reform of UN Peacekeeping: Implementation and Follow Up, September 20, 2017, available at www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/speeches/2017-09-20/sgs-reform-un-peacekeeping-remarks.

examines the secretary-general's ambitious commitment to achieving organizational gender parity and to advancing the women, peace, and security agenda in UN peace operations.

The report concludes that the challenge for the secretary-general will be to translate these parallel tracks of reform into a concrete and coherent approach that is not only true to his global vision but that will have a real impact in headquarters and, most importantly, in the field. Such an approach must focus on increasing the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the organization's activities and on demonstrating the continued relevance of the UN and its peace operations. While presenting a very ambitious timeline, the secretary-general called for member states to formally endorse his reform agenda by the end of 2018.

Guterres also positioned himself for the long term (his first five-year term at least), keeping in mind the time needed to create lasting institutional change. While the temptation inevitably will be to focus on short-term structural reorganization and how such change might impact power relations within the bureaucracy, on multiple occasions the secretary-general has insisted that change must also come from improvements in working culture, methods, and processes over time. This will require a new generation of UN leaders who are less risk-averse and who, rather than simply adhering to processes and rules, are more accountable for results and more geared toward creating long-term change. The UN must empower and support this generation.

If carried out effectively, the reforms proposed by the secretary-general could not only help realize some of the four strategic shifts called for by HIPPO, but could also help rebuild trust between the UN Secretariat and member states, as well as among member states themselves. Achieving this requires active support from a broad spectrum of member states, a committed Security Council, a consistent Fifth Committee, and commitment from UN staff. Formal and comprehensive annual briefings by the secretary-general to the Security

Council followed by a debate on peacekeeping reform—as validated by Resolution 2378 (2017)—should also be welcomed, as these could maintain pressure on member states to stay committed to, and accountable for, reform efforts. Rather than serving as a pretext for discussing the technicalities of UN peacekeeping, these briefings could also serve as an opportunity for the secretary-general to continue advocating for HIPPO's recommended strategic shifts.

Introduction

“Reform is necessary for the protection of the UN,” stated Secretary-General António Guterres when presenting his reform agenda in late July 2017.³ Reform is a perennial issue at the United Nations. Peacekeeping, which has become the most visible activity of the UN, has followed the same path. The increasing operationalization of special political missions under Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has also rendered the landscape of peace operations—a term encompassing both peacekeeping operations and special political missions—ever more complex. The release of the report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) in June 2015 marked the beginning of a new phase for peace operations reform, following a previous phase initiated by the 2000 Brahimi Report, which had followed the major peacekeeping failures of the 1990s in Rwanda, Somalia, and the Balkans.⁴

As an ad hoc mechanism for managing crises and conflicts, UN peace operations have constantly had to evolve to adapt to limited means and ever more complex environments. They have evolved through crises that have often revealed the de facto limits UN member states have placed on them, whether in terms of budget, capacities, or leadership. This present reform agenda has been shaped by divisions over the very nature of peace operations among UN stakeholders (the Security Council, troop- and police-contributing countries, and financial contributors), by a “peacekeeping fatigue” aggravated by scandals (cholera in Haiti and sexual exploitation and abuse in the Central African

3 UN Secretary-General, remarks at global town hall meeting with UN staff, July 26, 2017, available at www.ccisua.org/2017/08/14/un-secretary-generals-town-hall-meeting-notes-from-the-un-staff-union/.

4 UN General Assembly and UN Security Council, *Uniting Our Strengths for Peace—Politics, Partnership and People: Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations*, UN Doc. A/70/95-S/2015/446, June 17, 2015.

Republic, in particular), and by a push from the new US administration to cut the peacekeeping budget.

For the second year in a row, the General Assembly's Fifth Committee reduced the peacekeeping budget, lowering it to \$7.3 billion for fifteen peacekeeping missions for the year starting July 1, 2017, from \$7.87 billion the previous year and the all-time high of \$8.27 billion in 2015/2016. This reduction is due to the closing or downsizing of some missions (Côte d'Ivoire, Haiti, and Darfur), but also to pressure from the top financial contributors: the United States (the largest contributor, paying approximately 28.6 percent of the budget), China (10.3 percent), Japan (9.7 percent), and the European Union (whose twenty-eight members contribute a total of 33.17 percent of the budget, with Germany, France, and the exiting United Kingdom providing about 6 percent each).

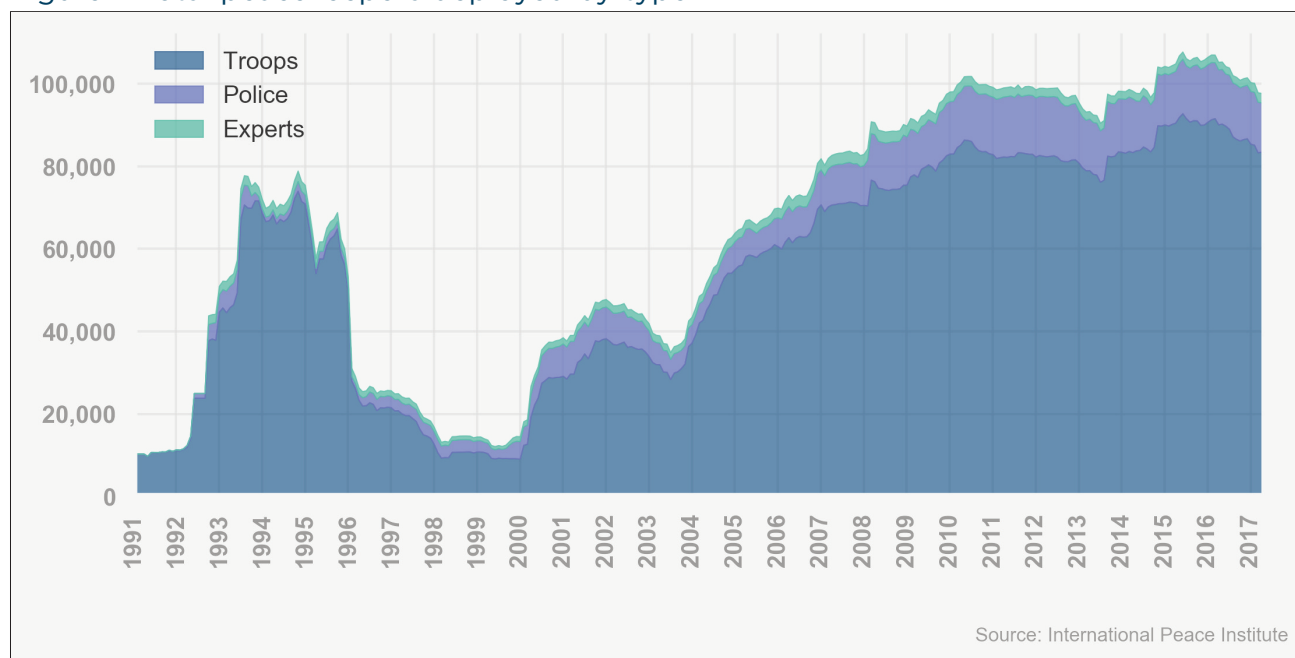
Uniformed contributions to peacekeeping (troops and police) have also evolved over time (see Figure 1). After a short-lived spike in European contributions in the early 1990s, the second peacekeeping boom in the 2000s, which continues to this day, has been largely led by countries from Asia and Africa, although some high-capability Western countries have recently returned to the UN in missions such as the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). The growing proportion of African

troops in UN peacekeeping missions not only reflects that the large majority of UN missions are deployed on the African continent, but also that troops from African Union (AU) "bridging missions" have been re-hatted into large UN operations, as was the case in both Mali and the Central African Republic in 2013.

With the growth of peace operations and changes to the threat level in environments in which they operate have come many challenges. Many question whether peace operations are "fit for purpose" to respond to the growing complexity of some local and regional conflicts. The fluctuating consent of host-country governments, assertive regional organizations wanting to play a greater role in maintaining peace in their respective regions, and the spread of terrorism, violent extremism, sexual violence in conflict, and transnational organized crime all contribute to this complexity.

The age of large, unwieldy multidimensional missions might be gone. Member states may increasingly prefer to support smaller, cheaper, and less intrusive endeavors such as the new mission in Colombia (even if launched in a very specific context with a narrow mandate, at the request of Colombians themselves). At the same time, regional and subregional organizations may increasingly shoulder the burden of stabilization and peace-enforcement missions, with or without UN support.

Figure 1. Total peacekeepers deployed by type



However, peacekeeping history tells us that trends can easily be reversed, for instance if Security Council members agreed to deploy a mission to Eastern Ukraine,⁵ Yemen, or Syria at some point in the future. Many elements of the HIPPO report could facilitate discussion on such potential developments. These and other aspects of the report are yet to be fully explored following the initial follow-on report that former Secretary-General Ban issued in September 2015, which some have jokingly called “decaffeinated HIPPO.”⁶

These are some of the reasons why, two years after the release of the report, progress has been slow. No formal progress report on the implementation of peace operations reform (apart from Ban’s report on implementation) has been produced so far. Moreover, member states have not passed a formal resolution endorsing HIPPO or formally requesting the secretary-general to report on progress in implementing the HIPPO recommendations or the recommendations from the follow-on report. In fact, the team in the secretary-general’s office entrusted with following up on implementation of the recommendations of HIPPO and of the secretary-general was dissolved in the spring of 2016, and this responsibility was transferred primarily to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), Department of Political Affairs (DPA), and Department of Field Support (DFS). Nonetheless, two years on, HIPPO continues to frame discussions on peace operations reform.

The high-level open debate on the reform of UN peacekeeping, initiated and organized by Ethiopia during its presidency of the Security Council in September 2017, was an opportunity to consider the spirit of HIPPO by looking at the state of the implementation of the four strategic shifts it

suggested rather than at each of its 166 recommendations (see Box 3). Moreover, it allowed the council to request—by adopting Resolution 2378 (2017) unanimously—that the secretary-general provide a comprehensive annual briefing on reform of UN peacekeeping every twelve months followed by a debate.⁷

This report builds on the earlier IPI report “The State of UN Peace Operations Reform: An Implementation Scorecard,” published in November 2016.⁸ Both intend to contribute to a “frank discussion on the reform of UN Peacekeeping and push forward the implementation and follow up of peacekeeping reforms which form an important basis for strengthening UN peacekeeping to make it fit for purpose in the 21st century.”⁹

New Leadership and New Challenges

A HAPHAZARD FOLLOW-UP ON THE HIPPO REPORT

Two years after the release of the HIPPO report, peace operations are at another crossroad.¹⁰ Secretary-General Guterres has prioritized prevention and whole-of-UN approaches over “fixing peacekeeping.”¹¹ The leadership of DPKO is almost entirely new. The peacekeeping budget is being cut and may face further cuts under pressure from the new US administration. And distrust among member states is high, particularly between permanent members of the Security Council—including some top “payers”—and troop-contributing countries and others around the use and misuse of peacekeeping as a tool.

In such an environment, HIPPO’s implementation has taken a strange path, very different from

5 Ian Bateson, “Ukraine Desperately Needs Peace. Can Peacekeepers Help?,” *Washington Post*, September 19, 2017, available at www.washingtonpost.com/news/democracy-post/wp/2017/09/19/ukraine-desperately-needs-peace-can-peacekeepers-help/?utm_term=.6700fe9d7cb4.

6 UN General Assembly and UN Security Council, *The Future of United Nations Peace Operations: Implementation of the Recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations—Report of the Secretary-General*, UN Doc. A/70/357–S/2015/682, September 2, 2015.

7 United Nations, “Security Council Reaffirms Primary Role of States in Preventing Conflict, Unanimously Adopting Resolution 2378 (2017) on Peacekeeping Reform,” UN Doc. SC/12996, September 20, 2017, available at www.un.org/press/en/2017/sc12996.doc.htm.

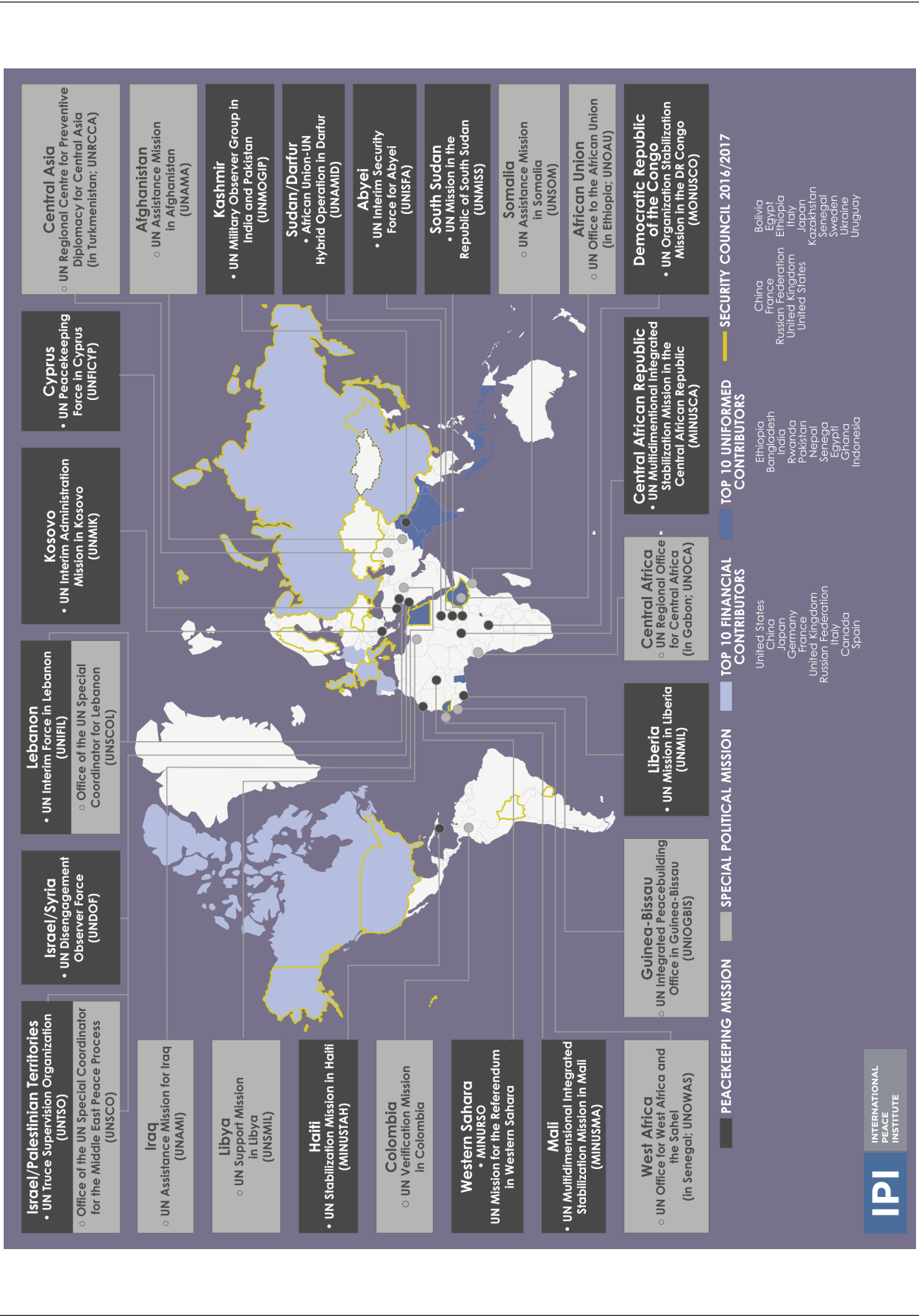
8 Arthur Boutellis and Lesley Connolly, “The State of UN Peace Operations Reform: An Implementation Scorecard,” International Peace Institute, November 2016, available at www.ipinst.org/2016/11/un-peace-ops-implementation-scorecard.

9 UN Security Council, *Letter Dated 22 August 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the United Nations Addressed to the Secretary-General*, UN Doc. S/2017/766, September 12, 2017.

10 Alexandra Novosseloff, “Can We Make UN Peacekeeping Great Again?,” *Global Peace Operations Review*, May 9, 2017, available at <http://peaceoperationsreview.org/thematic-essays/can-we-make-un-peacekeeping-great-again/>.

11 Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon only became interested in peacekeeping late in his second term, and his legacy for peace operations will mainly have been the operationalization of special political missions. See Richard Gowan, “‘Less Bound to the Desk’: Ban Ki-moon, the UN, and Preventive Diplomacy,” *Global Governance* 18, no. 4 (2012).

Figure 2. UN peace operations, top contributors, and Security Council members (2017)



that of the Brahimi Report (see Box 1). Indeed, the HIPPO report was not examined through any formal intergovernmental process in the Security Council or General Assembly, as was the case with the 2000 Brahimi Report and, more recently, the 2015 review of the UN's peacebuilding architecture, which culminated in the adoption of a dual Security Council/General Assembly resolution.¹² The Security Council did not provide any formal or substantial support as it had for the Brahimi Report in the form of Resolution 1327. Moreover, council members never agreed on whether to focus on implementing the recommendations of HIPPO or of the secretary-general. Security Council Presidential Statement 22 on November 25, 2015, only took note of the recommendations of these two reports.

In a way, informal processes have replaced formal intergovernmental ones. The informal

group of friends of HIPPO (since renamed the "Group of Friends of Peace Operations"), co-chaired by Ethiopia, the Republic of Korea, and Norway, helped keep the momentum of peace operations reform, including by engaging with both Secretary-General Guterres's transition team and his present-day team, in place since January 1, 2017. The group last met on June 16, 2017, together with Guterres, to discuss his peace and security reform agenda. According to some interlocutors, this more informal follow-up has also allowed the UN Secretariat to implement a series of measures that came from HIPPO recommendations or were inspired by their spirit. In other words, the HIPPO report gave a certain leeway to the Secretariat to initiate a number of operational reforms it had already thought were necessary for some time (e.g., strategic analysis and planning, force generation).¹³

This, however, has led to a piecemeal approach

Box 1. Brahimi Report follow-up and implementation process

- General Assembly Resolution 55/2 (September 18, 2000): *United Nations Millennium Declaration*, which takes note of the Brahimi Report
- UN Doc. A/55/502 (October 20, 2000): *Report of the Secretary-General on the Implementation of the Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations* (the "Fréchette Report")
- UN Doc. A/55/507 (October 27, 2000): *Report of the Secretary-General on Resource Requirements for Implementation of the Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations*
- UN Doc. S/2000/1084 (November 10, 2000): *Letter Dated 10 November 2000 from the Chairman of the Security Council Working Group on the Brahimi Report Addressed to the President of the Security Council*
- Security Council Resolution 1327 (November 13, 2000): Implementation of the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations
- UN Doc. A/C.4/55/6 (December 4, 2000): Special committee's response to the panel's report and the implementation plan contained in its report
- UN Doc. A/55/676 (December 8, 2000): *Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the Implementation of the report of the Panel on UN Peace Operations*
- UN Doc. A/55/977 (June 1, 2001): *Report of the Secretary-General on the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations*
- UN Doc. A/55/1024 (July 31, 2001): *Report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations: Comprehensive Review of the Whole Question of Peacekeeping Operations in All Their Aspects*
- UN Doc. A/56/732 (December 21, 2001): *Report of the Secretary-General on the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations*

12 Arthur Boutellis and Andrea Ó Súilleabháin, "Working Together for Peace: Synergies and Connectors for Implementing the 2015 UN Reviews," International Peace Institute, May 2016, available at www.ipinst.org/2016/05/synergies-2015-un-reviews.

13 Ibid.

by the Secretariat, mainly based on recommendations from the secretary-general's follow-on report rather than HIPPO itself. This approach has at times divided member states between those supporting a proactive UN Secretariat and those wary of the bureaucracy overstepping its authority and wanting greater oversight over policy reforms (the 2017 UN Policy on Peacekeeping Intelligence has been a particular bone of contention).¹⁴ This partly explains why Resolution 2378 (2017) only “welcomes the intention of the Secretary-General to introduce peacekeeping reform” and does not acknowledge reforms already underway since the release of the HIPPO and “encourages the Secretary-General to continue to engage with the Security Council and the General Assembly and relevant Committees on his initiatives.”¹⁵

Member states, for their part, have tended (as they usually do) to pick and choose among the HIPPO recommendations, failing to realize the initial intent of HIPPO to make them a “package deal” that would help realize the four strategic shifts it called for. This may have been inevitable, and optimists have noted that, despite the absence

of comprehensive peace operations reform, the spirit of HIPPO has been kept alive and has guided a number of policies within the Security Council and the Secretariat alike.

A number of major meetings were nonetheless convened on the issue of “international peace and security,” which allowed member states to reiterate their support for the spirit of HIPPO and some of its key recommendations (see Box 2). The latest to date was the Security Council high-level open debate on “Reform of UN Peacekeeping: Implementation and Follow-up,” organized by the Ethiopian presidency on September 20, 2017, during which Resolution 2378 (2017) was unanimously adopted. This resolution requests the secretary-general to provide a comprehensive annual briefing on reform of UN peacekeeping to be followed by a debate.¹⁶

It may seem late to create a mechanism to follow up on peacekeeping reform two years after the release of the HIPPO report (and narrow to focus only on peacekeeping when the secretary-general already adopted the HIPPO terminology “peace operations,” as reflected in his reform proposals).

Box 2. A flurry of Security Council meetings on peace operations in 2017

- January 10th thematic meeting on “Conflict Prevention and Sustaining Peace” (under Swedish presidency)
- April 6th thematic meeting on “Peacekeeping Operations Review” (under US presidency)
- April 18th thematic meeting on “Human Rights and Prevention of Armed Conflict” (under US presidency)
- May 25th thematic meeting on “Protection of Civilians and Medical Care in Armed Conflict” (under Uruguayan presidency)
- June 15th meeting on “Cooperation between the United Nations and Regional and Subregional Organizations in Maintaining International Peace and Security,” looking at the *Report of the Secretary-General on Options for Authorization and Support for African Union Peace Support Operations* (under Bolivian presidency)
- July 19th open debate on “Enhancing African Capacities in the Area of Peace and Security” (under Chinese presidency)
- August 29th thematic meeting on “UN Peacekeeping Operations: Their Potential Contribution to the Overarching Goal of Sustaining Peace” (under Egyptian presidency)
- September 20th open debate on “Reform of UN Peacekeeping: Implementation and Follow-up” (under Ethiopian presidency)

14 UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Field Support, *Policy on Peacekeeping Intelligence*, May 2, 2017, available at <http://dag.un.org/bitstream/handle/11176/400647/2017.07%20Peacekeeping%20Intelligence%20Policy%20%28Final%29.pdf?sequence=4&isAllowed=y>. See also Olga Abilova and Alexandra Novosseloff, “Demystifying Intelligence in UN Peace Operations: Toward an Organizational Doctrine,” International Peace Institute, July 2016, available at <https://www.ipinst.org/2016/07/demystifying-intelligence-in-un-peace-ops>.

15 UN Security Council Resolution 2378 (September 20, 2017), UN Doc. S/RES/2378, paras. 7–8.

16 United Nations, “Security Council Reaffirms Primary Role of States in Preventing Conflict.”

However, formal reporting by the secretary-general (in the form of a comprehensive briefing rather than a report) and discussion by the Security Council on implementation of peacekeeping reform is something many have been calling for. More formal mechanisms could help keep the momentum of reform and give political support to the reform agenda of the secretary-general, including on the issue of UN support to AU peace support operations. Given the mistrust among member states, such mechanisms could also benefit from discussions among a larger group of member states, including key troop-contributing countries and financial contributors (particularly those serving on the General Assembly's Fifth Committee). They could also be an opportunity for the Secretariat and the secretary-general himself to demonstrate the concrete impact of reforms on the ground.

A NEW SECRETARY-GENERAL

Secretary-General António Guterres, who took office in January 2017, has inherited unfinished reforms, recommendations for reforms from HIPPO and from his predecessor,¹⁷ and an exceptionally difficult international context that has seen the relevance of the multilateral system and its instruments called into question. The selection of Guterres in October 2016 created high expectations. Many in the UN Secretariat were hoping for a renewed vision for the place of the United Nations on the world stage and for stronger governance within the UN system to better prevent and manage the world's challenges and crises. Indeed, Guterres campaigned on reforming and modernizing the organization.

During his first week in office, on January 3rd, the new secretary-general issued four internal notes looking at “transitional measures”: (1) the “establishment of an Executive Committee”¹⁸; (2)

“enhancing performance in the peace and security pillar”; (3) “strengthened information management, coordination and crisis management arrangements”; and (4) “terms of reference for the new/revised [Executive Office of the Secretary-General] posts and units.”¹⁹ These measures aimed to centralize decision making on a variety of issues—from country-specific situations to thematic issues—in order to give greater coherence to the UN system as a whole and “integrate all pillars of the United Nations under a common vision for action.”²⁰

Under Guterres, the small, centralized unit for analysis and planning, established at the end of Ban's term within the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, has expanded to serve as a tool for strategic coordination, integrated analysis and planning, and monitoring. Guterres has also co-located the regional divisions of DPA and DPKO, as well as other relevant capacities of DPA, DPKO, and DFS, and established an internal review team to “develop options for further improvements in the functioning of the peace and security work of the Secretariat” (i.e., further restructuring of the peace and security architecture, directly addressing a HIPPO recommendation left to him by his predecessor).²¹

Guterres appointed a new under-secretary-general for peacekeeping, French diplomat Jean-Pierre Lacroix, on April 1, 2017, at the same time as the tenure of some senior DPKO leaders came to an end. The military adviser, police adviser, assistant secretary-general for rule of law and security institutions, and chief of staff for DPKO/DFS are therefore all new.²² The appointment of another Frenchman at the head of DPKO (and of a Russian at the head of the new counterterrorism office) also solidified the grip of the five permanent members of the Security Council on key positions in the

17 See Boutellis and Connolly, “The State of UN Peace Operations Reform.”

18 The Executive Committee is chaired by the secretary-general, and its membership includes the deputy secretary-general, chef de cabinet, senior adviser on policy, under-secretaries-general for management, political affairs, peacekeeping, field support, and economic and social affairs, assistant secretary-general for peacebuilding, emergency relief coordinator, high commissioner for human rights, executive director of UN Women, and chair of the UN Development Group.

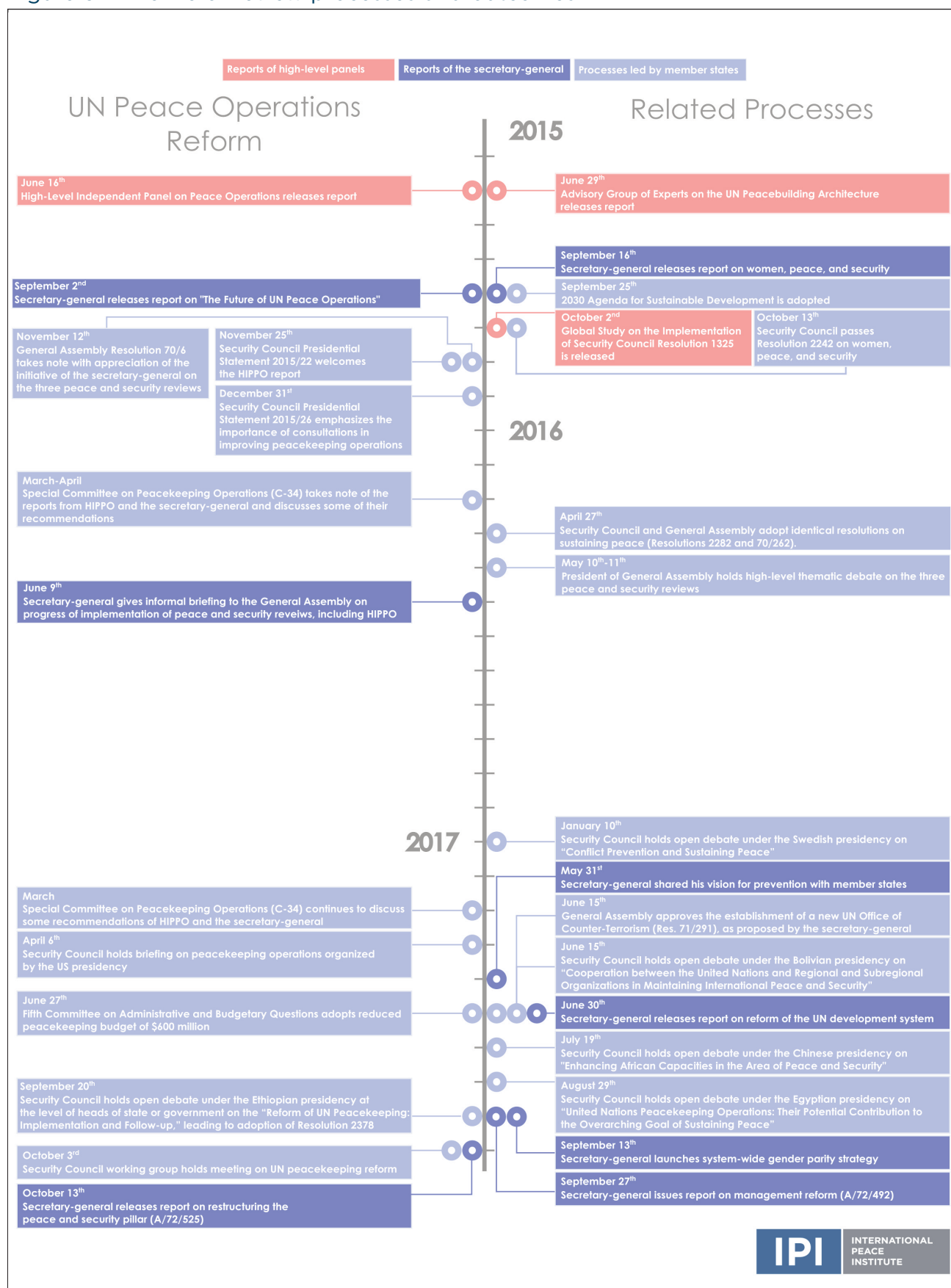
19 António Guterres, message to member states, January 4, 2017, available at www.un.int/news/message-secretary-general-ant%C3%B3nio-guterres.

20 António Guterres, remarks to the Security Council open debate on “Maintenance of International Peace and Security: Conflict Prevention and Sustaining Peace,” January 10, 2017, available at www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2017-01-10/secretary-generals-remarks-security-council-open-debate-maintenance.

21 UN Secretary-General, interoffice memorandum on “Enhancing Performance in the Peace and Security Pillar,” January 3, 2017, available at http://peaceoperationsreview.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/enhancing_performance_in_the_peace_and_security_pillar.pdf.

22 Beyond peace operations, some members of the UN Senior Management Group have also changed: the under-secretary-general for management, the high representative for disarmament affairs, the administrator of the UN Development Programme, the under-secretary-general for economic and social affairs, the special representative for children and armed conflict, the executive director of the World Food Programme, and the under-secretary-general for humanitarian affairs.

Figure 3. Timeline of review processes and outcomes



Secretariat, initiated under Secretary-General Kofi Annan in the late 1990s.²³

Another main feature of the first six months of Guterres's tenure has been his emphasis on "building a collective commitment to make prevention work," as HIPPO called for, and on operationalizing HIPPO's first recommended shift: "the primacy of politics." His first speech in front of the Security Council, on January 10, 2017, was dedicated to "conflict prevention and sustaining peace" and a new balanced approach to peace and security: "For decades, [our approach to peace and security] has been dominated by responding to conflict. For the future, we need to do far more to prevent war and sustain peace."²⁴ As Richard Gowan wrote, "Guterres and his advisers have signaled that they would like to spend more time on relatively small-scale but high-impact preventive diplomacy and mediation rather than the large but often creaky peacekeeping missions."²⁵

It was only on April 6, 2017, prompted by the briefing on peacekeeping operations during the Security Council debate organized by the US presidency, that Guterres spoke of peacekeeping and presented his nine priorities for its reform. In his speech, he made a reference to HIPPO's statement that "our ambitions do not match our capabilities, and our goals are not commensurate with the resources available for them."²⁶ Even if he did not clearly commit himself to the strict implementation of a report commissioned by his predecessor, Guterres reflected the spirit of it. He acknowledged that "there is no one-size-fits-all peace operation" and that, despite their various mandates, shapes, and forms, all peace operations "play a vital role in building and sustaining peace."²⁷ He also pointed out that "the success of every mission depends on an active political process, with the commitment of all stakeholders,

particularly Governments," whether they are troop- or police-contributing countries, host countries, regional powers, members of the Security Council, or financial contributors.²⁸

The nine priority areas Guterres put forward correspond to ongoing efforts by the Secretariat but did not present any grand vision. After spending the past ten years traveling the world's conflict zones at the head of the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and witnessing the limits of peacekeeping, Guterres may not see great value in spending too much capital on reforming and perfecting this tool. As he later underlined, ultimately "the Organization must significantly reduce the need to intervene through large-scale peace operations and large-scale humanitarian responses."²⁹ These priorities were also put forward at a time of leadership transition at DPKO. Under-Secretary-General Lacroix has since highlighted internal steps that should be taken by the end of 2018 to implement the secretary-general's vision for peace operations, including decentralizing decision making and improving working methods in DPKO, focusing on assessment, performance, compliance, and accountability, and improving leadership and strategic communications.³⁰

At the UN Security Council High-Level Open Debate on Peacekeeping on September 20, 2017, the secretary-general more directly embraced the legacy of HIPPO by stating that its recommendations remain at the heart of his efforts to advance collective security, and that his reform efforts aim in part to bring about the four critical shifts called for by HIPPO. He also outlined four priorities/principles guiding his approach to peace operations reform, including the "primacy of politics" and "partnerships" (as advocated by HIPPO), but also adding improving capabilities, stamping out sexual exploitation and abuse, and

23 See "General Assembly Approves Creation of New UN Counter-Terrorism Office," UN News Centre, June 15, 2017, available at www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=56984#.WckEqLKGOM8.

24 UN Security Council, 7857th meeting on "Maintenance of International Peace and Security: Conflict Prevention and Sustaining Peace," UN Doc. S/PV.7857, January 10, 2017.

25 Richard Gowan, "Lonely at the Top," European Council on Foreign Relations, July 25, 2017, available at www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_lonely_at_the_top_7218.

26 UN Security Council, 7918th meeting on "United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Peacekeeping Operations Review," UN Doc. S/PV.7918, April 6, 2017.

27 Ibid.

28 Ibid.

29 UN General Assembly, *Restructuring of the United Nations peace and Security Pillar—Report of the Secretary-General*, UN Doc. A/72/525, October 13, 2017, para. 15.

30 UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, internal communication by Under-Secretary-General Jean-Pierre Lacroix, July 19, 2017.

achieving gender parity in each of these areas.³¹ While initially prioritizing prevention and whole-of-UN approaches, Guterres may indeed increasingly realize the importance of peace operations as member states continue to underscore “the importance of peacekeeping as [one of] the most effective tools available to the United Nations in the promotion and maintenance of international peace and security,” even when prevention is preferable.³²

A NEW US ADMINISTRATION AND BATTLES OVER FINANCING

In October 2016, when Guterres was elected to the position of secretary-general, there was still great uncertainty about the future incumbent of the White House. When Guterres took office in January 2017, the dynamic of the relationship between the United Nations and one of its main founders, the United States, was about to change. The release that month of a draft US presidential executive order—never signed into action—titled “Auditing and Reducing U.S. Funding of International Organizations,” which aimed to “identify and eliminate wasteful and counterproductive giving,” generated some panic in the UN community.³³

This panic culminated in March 2017 with the release of the US president’s federal budget blueprint for 2018, which proposed cutting 40 percent of the State Department’s \$2.2 billion annual contribution to the UN’s \$8 billion peacekeeping budget (the US contributes approximately 28 percent of the total). According to US officials, the goal was to create “the expectation that these organizations rein in costs and that the funding burden be shared more fairly among members” (even if the budget is assessed on the basis of each member state’s gross domestic product).³⁴ However, the real financing battle will

take place at the end of 2018 when the scale used to determine the assessment will be revised. The recent US decision to withdraw from UNESCO, effective December 31, 2018, (which resulted in part out of concern for the UN agency’s mounting arrears), has caused further concern, despite the fact that the Obama administration had already cut off funding to UNESCO back in 2011.³⁵

Since Guterres stepped into office, he has invested much time and energy into maintaining US interest in and support for the UN—with some level of success.³⁶ The US has indeed taken a less radical case-by-case approach to defunding the world organization, including its peacekeeping operations. While the government has, on more than one occasion, launched a second battle in the Fifth Committee to try to get cuts it did not get in the Security Council during the mandate renewal process, it has generally agreed to compromise solutions (MONUSCO cut by 9 percent, MINUSCA by 4 percent, etc.). The impact of these cuts on specific areas of the missions’ work has been less clear, with reports that gender expertise, for example, is suffering more than other areas.³⁷ As the concept note for the April 6th Security Council briefing suggested, the US has rhetorically supported reform, suggesting to “consider whether current peacekeeping operations continue to be the best-suited mechanisms for meeting the needs of those on the ground and achieving the Council’s political objectives, or if changes are needed.”³⁸

After lengthy and painful negotiations, member states agreed in June 2017 to a compromise of \$7.3 billion for the annual peacekeeping budget—a cut of \$600 million, but less than the \$1 billion cut the US had sought. The AU-UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) bore the brunt of these cuts, though pending a review of the operation before

31 UN Secretary-General, remarks at Security Council High-Level Open Debate on Peacekeeping Operations Regarding the Reform of UN Peacekeeping: Implementation and Follow Up, September 20, 2017.

32 Ibid., introductory paragraphs.

33 Available at <https://assets.documentcloud.org/documents/3423336/Executive-Order.pdf>.

34 Colum Lynch, “Trump Administration Eyes \$1 Billion in Cuts to U.N. Peacekeeping,” *Foreign Policy*, March 23, 2017.

35 US Department of State, “The United States Withdraws from UNESCO,” press statement, October 12, 2017, available at www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2017/10/274748.htm.

36 “UN Chief Guterres, US President Trump Commit to Work Together to Address Common Challenges,” UN News Centre, October 21, 2017, available at www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=57936#.We1RF63MzsE.

37 For instance, gender posts in the missions in Haiti, the Central African Republic, Darfur, and Liberia have been downgraded (from P5 to P3); however, the UN Secretariat also seems to have had issues filling some of the senior gender posts, such as in Mali and Darfur. See Louise Allen, “Gender Mainstreaming Loses Out under UN Peacekeeping Budget Cuts,” NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, August 31, 2017, available at www.womenpeacesecurity.org/blog-gender-mainstreaming-loses-out-under-un-peacekeeping-budget-cuts-august-2017/.

38 UN Security Council, 7918th meeting on “United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Peacekeeping Operations Review,” UN Doc. S/PV.7918, April 6, 2017.

the end of 2017. The new rule of law mission in Haiti was not included in the budget. This decrease also benefited from the end of the UN Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (ONUCI) in June 2017 and of the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) in October 2017.

Two consequences of this push to reduce the peacekeeping budget can be highlighted. First, viewed positively, it could “help peacekeeping help itself”³⁹ by looking at ways to eliminate duplication (in the field and at headquarters), streamline and decentralize processes, and review missions more thoroughly—all objectives to which Guterres has committed. It will force the Secretariat to be more entrepreneurial and look for more innovative approaches, such as triangular partnerships for equipping or training troops (between the UN, bilateral donors, and troop-contributing countries). It also might support the secretary-general's vision for regional and subregional organizations shouldering a greater share of the burden of peace operations, with or without UN logistical and financial support.

Second, and viewed less positively, UN peace operations, which are already run cheaply (in comparison to any other multinational military intervention),⁴⁰ will be further constrained. For instance, MINUSMA started reducing the number of flights it is operating in Mali as a direct consequence of the small cut that was imposed on the mission, even though roads are unsafe, and planned reinforcement of security for camps under constant attack may have to be dropped. Likewise, budget shortfalls resulted in the temporary suspension of UNAMID's work on reconciliation initiatives and local dialogue projects following attacks on internally displaced persons, reducing access to the local population.⁴¹

Generally, significant cuts can only be made by reducing the troop ceiling (i.e., cutting the number of peacekeepers) and reducing logistics costs, which can impact the ability of a mission to perform effectively. Indeed, “in the long run, the UN's problem is that there aren't many places where huge savings can be made. Cuts to the UN's smaller missions do not save much money, while cuts to larger missions bring even larger risks.”⁴² Attempts at defunding therefore risk widening the gap between mission mandates (adopted by the Security Council) and resources (decided by the General Assembly's Fifth Committee), a longstanding issue that both the Brahimi and HIPPO reports emphasized. The review of current operations conducted by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) and the Fifth Committee (the committee of the General Assembly with responsibilities for administrative and budgetary matters) has in many cases been at odds with some HIPPO recommendations, including those calling for unarmed strategies for the protection of civilians to be supported by key civilian staff positions, some of which have been threatened by current budget cuts.

Defunding might also further widen the gap between the Security Council and those member states who provide financial support, on the one side, and troop-contributing countries, on the other. Some of the major troop-contributing countries created an informal group of friends (co-led by Pakistan and Morocco) in July 2017, largely out of concern that the US cuts will mean being asked to do more with less.⁴³ Although the US managed to convince some 129 member states to rally behind a Declaration of Support to UN Reform it had prepared, the text of the declaration is very general and some key member states, including Russia and China, declined to sign it.⁴⁴

39 Arthur Boutellis, “The Threat of US Cuts: Helping Peacekeeping Help Itself?,” *IPI Global Observatory*, March 30, 2017, available at <https://theglobalobservatory.org/2017/03/peacekeeping-funding-united-states-trump-security-council>.

40 As pointed out by the permanent representative of India to the UN in preparation for a Security Council debate, “For purposes of comparison, it is interesting to note that while the number of United Nations peacekeepers is roughly the same as the number of soldiers in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) deployed in Afghanistan, the total expenditure for United Nations peacekeeping in the last two decades (under \$50 billion) is reportedly less than the annual expenditure on ISAF.” UN Security Council, *Letter Dated 5 August 2011 from the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations Addressed to the Secretary-General*, UN Doc. S/2011/496, August 8, 2011.

41 Emily Helms, “Cutting the UN's Peacekeeping Budget Will Cost the World Dear,” *The Conversation*, August 30, 2017, available at https://theconversation.com/cutting-the-uns-peacekeeping-budget-will-cost-the-world-dear-80334?utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=twitterbutton.

42 Fred Carver, “UN Peacekeeping: Big Budget Cuts but at What Cost?,” *PassBlue*, August 17, 2017, available at www.passblue.com/2017/08/17/un-peacekeeping-big-budget-cuts-but-at-what-cost/.

43 “Pakistan Launches Troop-Contributing Countries Group at the UN,” *The Nation*, July 9, 2017, available at <http://nation.com.pk/national/09-Jul-2017/pakistan-launches-troop-contributing-countries-group-at-un>.

44 See <https://usun.state.gov/remarks/7980>. The co-hosts of the High-Level Event on UN Reform were the governments of the United States, Canada, Germany, Indonesia, Japan, Jordan, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Slovakia, Thailand, the United Kingdom, and Uruguay, in conjunction with 129 other UN member states.

Continued Progress on HIPPO Recommendations

MORE POLITICAL AND STRATEGIC PEACE OPERATIONS

The first essential shift that HIPPO called for—that “politics must drive the design and implementation of peace operations”—requires both the Security Council and the Secretariat to take a more strategic approach to peacekeeping (see Box 3). The briefing organized by the US presidency of the Security Council on April 6th was an attempt to move in this direction and to put forward five peacekeeping principles in the spirit of HIPPO: (1) missions must support political solutions; (2) host-country cooperation is needed; (3) peacekeeping mandates must be realistic and achievable; (4) exit strategies are needed; and (5) mandates should be adjusted both when situations improve and when they fail to improve.⁴⁵ These principles are not new and are inspired by the recommendations of all reports on peacekeeping reform since the Brahimi Report. Security Council Resolution 2378 (2017) also recalled that “the primacy of politics should be the hallmark of the approach of the United Nations to the resolution of conflict, including through

mediation, the monitoring of ceasefires, [and] assistance to the implementation of peace accords.”⁴⁶

The US administration also pushed for the systematic review of every single peacekeeping operation to “identify areas where mandates no longer match political realities,” with the objective of proposing “alternatives or paths towards restructuring to bring missions more in line with achievable outcomes.”⁴⁷ That push for reviewing peacekeeping operations triggered a useful debate within the Secretariat that led the secretary-general to ask DPKO, DFS, and DPA to look at a more strategic and creative way to launch such review processes (e.g., inclusion of external reviewers, creation of “red teams” that would challenge the UN’s assumptions and planning).⁴⁸ In October 2017 the UN approved a new methodology for the review of peacekeeping operations, which makes it mandatory to include external-led reviews as part of the process. These could be led by former special representatives of the secretary-general (or deputy special representatives) or other “external” figures.

An initial external strategic assessment was conducted by Jean-Marie Guéhenno (former head of DPKO and president of the International Crisis

Box 3. Four essential shifts called for by the HIPPO report⁴⁹

1. “Politics must drive the design and implementation of peace operations,” with a focus on political solutions rather than military or technical ones. Member states should also help mobilize renewed political effort to keep peace processes on track when the momentum behind them falters.
2. “The full spectrum of UN peace operations must be used more flexibly to respond to changing needs on the ground.” Missions should be well-tailored to the context, with smoother transitions between phases rather than conforming to rigid “peacekeeping operation” versus “special political mission” templates. The UN should also strengthen analysis, strategy, and planning, and the Security Council should adopt “sequenced and prioritized mandates” to allow missions to develop over time.
3. “A stronger, more inclusive peace and security partnership is needed for the future” to respond to crises. Such a partnership should be based on enhanced collaboration and consultation, as well as mutual respect and mutual responsibilities.
4. “The UN Secretariat must become more field-focused and UN peace operations must be more people-centered.”

⁴⁵ UN Security Council, 7918th meeting on “United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Peacekeeping Operations Review,” UN Doc. S/PV.7918, April 6, 2017, p. 25.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, para. 1.

⁴⁷ UN 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*, UN Doc. S/2017/287, April 5, 2017.

⁴⁸ Calin Trenkov-Wermuth, “The UN Needs a ‘Red Team’: Breaking the Bureaucratic Mindset to Jumpstart Reform,” *Foreign Affairs Snapshot*, July 3, 2017, available at www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2017-07-03/un-needs-red-team.

⁴⁹ UN General Assembly and UN Security Council, *Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations*, p. 10.

Group), but it concerned a special political mission for Libya (currently operating out of Tunisia), and the subsequent report produced by DPA did not necessarily factor in its conclusions. The strategic review of the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) at the end of July 2017 also led to a presentation of strategic options based on various scenarios of the evolution of the political and security situation on the ground and looked at how to strengthen interaction between the mission and the UN country team. However, this was not an external review as such. Another external review is apparently being carried out by former DFS Assistant Secretary-General Tony Banbury for Iraq (UNAMI), but this was commissioned by a member of the Security Council rather than by the UN Secretariat. The first formal strategic reviews to be carried out by the UN Secretariat will begin in the fall of 2017 for the UN missions in Cyprus (UNFICYP), South Sudan (UNMISS), and Abyei (UNISFA).

This push toward more strategic approaches to peace operations, however, has yet to translate into HIPPO's recommended shift toward the primacy of politics. This shift requires that the UN Secretariat propose better political strategies and options to support its ongoing operations, but also that the Security Council bring its collective leverage to bear in support of such political solutions. The council was not able to do so in 2016 to support sending a regional protection force to Juba in South Sudan and a police component to Burundi, in part due to the resistance of host states.⁵⁰

In 2017 there have been attempts to look at "the political foundations necessary for the success of peacekeeping missions, including whether the mandated tasks and overall concept of the mission are consistent with political realities on the ground."⁵¹ For example, during the renewal of MONUSCO's mandate the council tried to better shape the politics and define the priorities for the

mission (e.g., political process, elections, human rights). Similarly, in the case of the UN Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS), the council's membership requested Egypt, which held the presidency in July 2017, to solicit the South Sudanese permanent representative to convey a number of messages to the authorities in his country.⁵²

TOWARD A FULLER SPECTRUM OF UN PEACE OPERATIONS?

The second shift HIPPO advocated for was the more flexible use of the full spectrum of UN peace operations (see Box 3). While the absence of new peacekeeping missions made it difficult to test the UN's ability to "rapidly deploy missions that are well-tailored to the context," transitions in Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, and Haiti offer opportunities to test the HIPPO recommendation to use this full spectrum of operations to "more flexibly...respond to changing needs on the ground."

The record, however, is mixed. The decade-long peacekeeping mission in Côte d'Ivoire closed down without any successor presence (at the request of the host government). The peacekeeping mission in Liberia, extended for a final time last December—with a modest reduction of 434 military and 310 police personnel—will transition into a smaller follow-on mission after March 30, 2018, as a result of the October 2017 general elections. The issue divided the council; Resolution 2333 (2016) was adopted with twelve affirmative votes and three abstentions by France, Russia, and the UK, which were not in favor of the follow-on mission.⁵³ The military component of the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) has withdrawn and been replaced with the UN's first "justice support" mission (MINUJUSTH). It will be composed of up to seven formed police units (980 personnel) and 295 individual police officers for an initial period of six months from October 16, 2017, to April 15, 2018, and is envisioned to draw down after two years.⁵⁴

The only new mission is the UN Mission in

50 Security Council Report, "April 2017 Monthly Forecast: Reviewing Peacekeeping Operations," March 31, 2017, available at www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2017-04/reviewing_peacekeeping_operations.php.

51 UN Security Council, 7918th meeting on "United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Peacekeeping Operations Review," UN Doc. S/PV.7918, April 6, 2017.

52 Interviews with diplomats, August 2017.

53 Security Council Report, "Liberia: Vote on the Future of the UN Mission," December 22, 2016, available at www.whatsinblue.org/2016/12/vote-on-a-council-resolution-on-future-of-the-un-mission-in-liberia.php.

54 Security Council Report, "July 2017 Monthly Forecast: Haiti," June 30, 2017, available at www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2017-07/haiti_12.php.

Colombia, a special political mission composed of 450 unarmed, non-uniformed international military observers and around 150 civilians to monitor and verify the laying down of arms. This mission is part of the tripartite mechanism that is monitoring and verifying the definitive bilateral cease-fire and cessation of hostilities that followed the signing of a peace agreement in 2016.⁵⁵ The unique nature of this mission, which was deployed at the request of Colombia and draws on multiple tools, forced the UN Secretariat to break from its “silos” mentality and work across departments (DPA, DPKO’s Office of Military Affairs, DPKO’s Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions, and DFS).

The planning of the successive UN missions in Colombia was also a good illustration of how “sequenced and prioritized mandates will allow missions to develop over time rather than trying to do everything at once, and failing” (see Box 4). The UN missions in Colombia could prefigure HIPPO’s call for a spectrum of tools and operations rather than “sharp distinctions between peacekeeping operations and special political missions.” The proposed restructuring of the peace and security architecture (see below) could help further institutionalize such an approach and better ensure a continuum of responses and smoother transitions between different phases of missions.

However, while some member states have embraced the term “peace operations” to denote this full spectrum of responses, many (in particular troop- and police-contributing countries) have been reluctant to use it, seeing it as connoting or implying an element of peace enforcement.⁵⁶ Some other states have been reluctant to use it out of budgetary concerns; they are wary that the possible creation of a single peace operations account (a HIPPO recommendation that has not yet been discussed), which would merge the peacekeeping account and part of the regular budget dedicated to special political missions, would increase their share of the budget or diminish their oversight.

This was reflected in the Security Council debate on September 20, 2017, and Resolution 2378 (2017), which maintained focus on “peacekeeping operations” and ran contrary to the reform proposal put forward by the secretary-general for restructuring the peace and security architecture, which called for the creation of a new Department for Peace Operations (see below).

A recurring issue has been the need to improve triangular cooperation between the Security Council, troop- and police-contributing countries, and the UN Secretariat, which could help reduce the gap between these stakeholders in terms of understanding, interpreting, and implementing mandates of peace operations. HIPPO had emphasized the importance of early and sustained triangular consultations and that the lack of these “has generated frustration on all sides, and has impacted mandate implementation.”⁵⁷ Over the past year the Security Council has made progress in informal dialogue sessions with major contributors in advance of mandate renewals, leading to the prioritization and sequencing of mandates in some existing missions (MINUSCA, MINUSMA, MONUSCO, and the UN Mission in Colombia). It has also reaffirmed its determination to continue doing so in Resolution 2378 (para. 12, 2017). Nonetheless, much remains to be done to institutionalize such consultations.⁵⁸

In this regard, the October 3rd meeting of the Security Council working group on UN peacekeeping reform, at the initiative of the US, was welcomed by many as a positive step forward. It also served as an opportunity for some member states to lament the recent cuts to budgets and troop ceilings in some missions without consulting troop-contributing countries. Some member states also called for increased and structured triangular consultations on substantive, doctrine, and policy issues, not solely on mandate renewals. The UK and Pakistan are expected to present initial ideas to strengthen triangular cooperation at the final meeting of the working group in November.

⁵⁵ The mission’s annual cost is less than \$100 million. See https://colombia.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/version_web_en.pdf.

⁵⁶ “Peace operations” was considered too close to the NATO concept of “peace support operations.”

⁵⁷ See UN General Assembly and UN Security Council, *Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations*, paras. 179-182; and Alexandra Novosseloff, “Triangular Cooperation: Key to All,” *Global Peace Operations Review*, November 10, 2015, available at <http://peaceoperationsreview.org/thematic-essays/triangular-cooperation-key-to-all/>.

⁵⁸ See proposals made by Novosseloff, “Triangular Cooperation.”

Box 4. Planning the UN missions in Colombia

Excerpt from: Renata Segura and Delphine Mechoulam, "Made in Havana: How Colombia and the FARC Decided to End the War," International Peace Institute, February 2017, pp. 21–23.

"On January 19, 2016, the government of Colombia and the [Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia—People's Army (FARC-EP)] issued a joint communiqué, and Colombia's permanent representative to the UN sent identical letters to the UN secretary-general and president of the Security Council, asking the Security Council to establish a political mission composed of unarmed international observers from the region. Just six days later, the Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2261 establishing the UN Mission in Colombia for a period of twelve months.... The political mission was mandated with two main tasks: (1) monitoring and verifying the laying down of arms; and (2) monitoring and verifying the definitive bilateral cease-fire and cessation of hostilities as the international component of the tripartite monitoring and verification mechanism....

"The final agreement between the Colombian government and the FARC-EP also stated that the parties will ask the UN, through the General Assembly, to establish a second political mission [the UN Verification Mission in Colombia] to verify the reintegration of ex-combatants and ensure their protection, [which was established by Security Council Resolution 2366 in July 2017].

"Conversations on the possibility of deploying a UN mission and the type of assistance the UN could provide had already started in the second half of 2013 when [Colombia's] high commissioner for peace, Sergio Jaramillo, initiated exploratory contacts through the Office of the Resident Coordinator in Bogotá and at UN headquarters. In the course of 2014, meetings continued discreetly....

"Throughout the process there were extensive interactions between UN headquarters and the Colombian government, including: a retreat in Bogotá attended by members of the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) and Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO); a high-level briefing for President Santos and his team in the margins of the UN General Assembly debate; and a presentation [by the UN Secretariat] of possible mission designs in Bogotá.

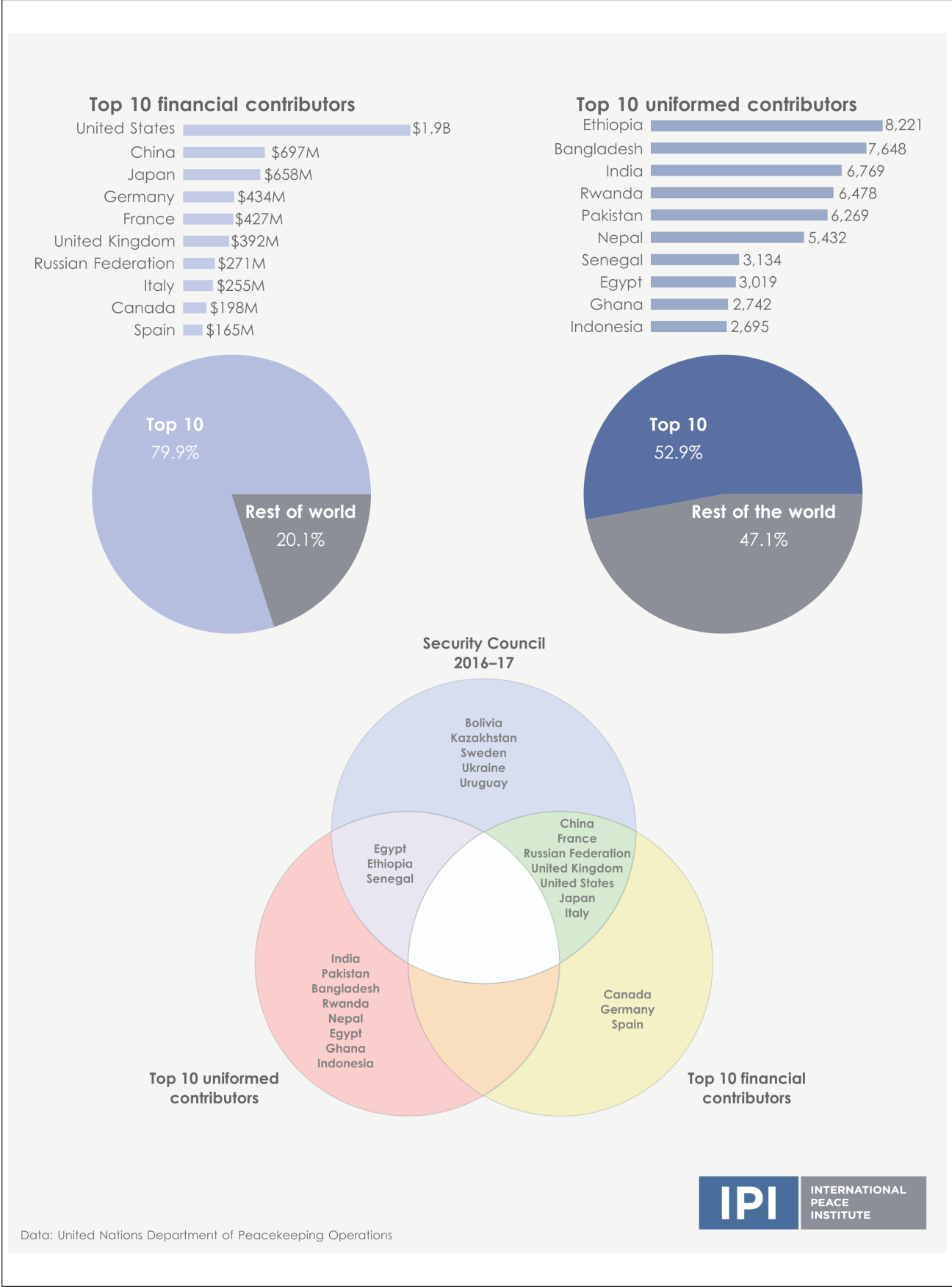
"The UN and the Colombian government assessed possible models of support, ranging from a small special political mission to a larger peacekeeping operation or a hybrid mission.... It rapidly became clear that a large peacekeeping mission would be a deal breaker for the government....

"Once it was clear that a special political mission was preferred, the parties explored the possibilities of having a civilian mission, an unarmed military mission, or a mixed civilian-military mission.... There were also discussions on whether the mission should be integrated.... [Moreover, the] government of Colombia was torn between going to the General Assembly or to the Security Council for the mission's mandate....

"The fact that the Security Council resolution gave a mandate to the Secretariat to plan a [political] mission while waiting for the final agreement to be signed was...generally viewed as a positive step, particularly in terms of staffing and funding. This helped DPA access funds under the authority of the secretary-general despite having limited funds in general [under the UN regular budget, from which special political missions are currently funded, versus peacekeeping missions, which are funded under the assessed budget]. Because of this availability of start-up funds, the Secretariat was able to establish a dedicated team to the mission and carry out essential planning functions.... The understanding that the special representative of the secretary-general would report on the way forward after initial planning, as well as after the agreement had been finalized, was also important in allowing for better-phased planning, as recommended by the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO)....

"The UN Mission in Colombia, therefore, is an excellent illustration of the need for flexible peace operations responses based on needs in the field. It also illustrates the need for a single "peace operations account" to provide predictable funding for this flexible response, as HIPPO suggested."

Figure 4. UN peace operations in numbers (2017)



THE SECRETARY-GENERAL'S CHAMPIONING OF THE AU-UN PARTNERSHIP

The third essential shift recommended by HIPPO is “a stronger, more inclusive peace and security partnership” (see Box 3). HIPPO recommended that the “United Nations should deepen its strategic partnership with the African Union and on a case-by-case basis provide enabling support—including through more predictable financing—to the African Union peace support operations when authorized by the Security Council.” This recommendation was acknowledged by the Security Council in Resolution 2320 (2016). The resolution also stressed that the AU-UN partnership should be underpinned by mutual consultations between the UN Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council “based on respective comparative advantage, burden sharing, consultative decision making, joint analysis and planning missions and assessment visits by the UN and AU, monitoring and evaluation, transparency and accountability.”⁵⁹

Guterres, after participating in the AU summit in Addis Ababa during his first month on the job, released on May 26, 2017, his report on *Options for Authorization and Support for African Union Peace Support Operations* (see Box 5).⁶⁰ This report was examined in a public meeting of the Security Council on June 15, 2017. As the chef de cabinet underlined during the meeting, the report is “the result of six months of coordination and cooperation between the Secretariat and the AU Commission” and advocates for “predictable approaches” in dealing with this partnership.⁶¹

In April 2017 Guterres and AU Chairperson Moussa Faki Mahamat convened the first UN-AU Annual Conference in New York. At this summit, they signed the Joint United Nations–African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in

Peace and Security, “further underscoring the commitment to working closely together based on mutual respect, recognition of complementarity, interdependence and solidarity.”⁶² The framework provides a blueprint for early and continuous engagement between the two organizations before, during, and after conflict. It also aims at institutionalizing the strategic partnership between the AU and the UN and at providing the basis for practical cooperation on peace operations.

The African Union took concrete steps toward fulfilling its part of the bargain by implementing the 2015 AU summit decision that it should finance 25 percent of its peace support operations, with international partners financing the remaining 75 percent, possibly through UN assessed contributions for AU operations authorized by the UN Security Council. At the AU’s Kigali Summit in July 2016, the recommendations of the Kaberuka Report on Securing Predictable and Sustainable Financing for Peace in Africa to implement a 0.2 percent levy on eligible exports was endorsed by the AU Assembly of Heads of States despite some reluctance on the part of some member states.⁶³

The problem, however, is that this deal had been largely driven by the former US administration as part of President Obama’s legacy to the African continent, and other permanent members of the UN Security Council were only reluctantly in support of it. With the new US administration wanting to cut its contribution to the UN and preferring bilateral commitments and partnerships over multilateral ones, the financing of the UN-AU partnership has been left without a champion on the council. At the eleventh joint consultative meeting with the AU Peace and Security Council in Addis Ababa in September 2017, “the US made clear its opposition to financing AU operations, with the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) being cited as an exception.”⁶⁴

59 UN Security Council Resolution 2320 (November 18, 2016), UN Doc. S/RES/2320.

60 UN Security Council, *Options for Authorization and Support for African Union Peace Support Operations—Report of the Secretary-General on*, UN Doc. S/2017/454, May 26, 2017.

61 UN Security Council, 7971st meeting on “Cooperation between the United Nations and Regional and Subregional Organizations in Maintaining International Peace and Security: The African Union,” UN Doc. S/PV.7971, June 15, 2017.

62 UN Secretary-General, “Communiqué of United Nations–African Union Annual Conference in New York,” press release, UN Doc. SG/2239, April 19, 2017.

63 African Union, *Securing Predictable and Sustainable Financing for Peace in Africa*, August 2016, available at www.peaceau.org/uploads/auhr-progress-report-final-020916-with-annexes.pdf; African Union, *Decision on the Outcome of the Retreat of the Assembly of the African Union*, AU Doc. Assembly/AU/Dec.605 (XXVII), July 17–18, 2016.

64 Security Council Report, “Dispatches from the Field: Informal Meeting with the AU and Meetings with the Ethiopian Prime Minister and AU Commission,” September 7, 2017, available at www.whatsinblue.org/2017/09/dispatches-from-the-field-informal-meeting-with-the-au-and-meetings-with-the-ethiopian-prime-minister.php.

Box 5. Options for UN financial support to the AU**Secretary-general's proposed joint assessment and planning process:⁶⁵**

“A standardized joint planning and mandating process alone, however, is not sufficient to ensure an effective joint decision-making framework; such a framework must be underpinned by enhanced cooperation between the two organizations. The earlier the United Nations and the African Union engage, the likelier it is for the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council to develop a common understanding of a situation which would form the basis for decision-making. Informal and active consultations would also help to address issues related to resources and mandate definition thereby avoiding any delay in responding to the crisis.”

“An effective joint planning process, followed by an ongoing joint review process, should apply throughout the duration of a peace support operation, to ensure that staffs of both the African Union and the United Nations have a commonly agreed and shared understanding of steps, tools and expected outcomes of the process. The organizations should ensure the development of technical expertise and promote knowledge exchange in key areas, which would serve as a basis for the joint planning and coordinated follow-up process. In parallel, a commonly agreed costing methodology for African Union peace support operations should be developed to ensure that credible estimates of financial implications can accompany options presented for consideration by the Security Council.”

Possible financing models:⁶⁶

- **Voluntary contributions through a UN-managed trust fund:** “However, past experience has demonstrated that trust funds do not provide an adequate, predictable or sustainable source of funding. A trust fund should therefore not be the primary source of financing...but would supplement funding from the African Union Peace Fund and other sources of funding.”
- **A subvention by the UN:** “A subvention, which is sought in exceptional or emergency circumstances, can provide resources only for a single budget period.... All subventions require the approval of the General Assembly.”
- **Joint financing of a jointly developed budget:** This would require “agreement on a joint budget estimation process with agreed planning assumptions and methodologies for defining costs for [the secretary-general's] budgetary submission, expenditure monitoring and budget performance reporting, oversight and audit arrangements and financial reporting requirements.”
- **Establishment of a UN support office (e.g., the UN Support Office for Somalia):** “This model has the benefit of clear accountability for the management of United Nations resources but requires strong coordination at all levels to ensure the overall coherence of the combined operations.”
- **Joint financing of a UN-AU hybrid mission:** This mission would be managed by the United Nations, but the African Union would “[bear] a portion of the costs in line with its commitment to meet some of the financial requirements of its own peace support operations.... Costs for hybrid missions could be apportioned between the two organizations.”

Assumptions:⁶⁷

- “Peace support operations will receive funding from the African Union Peace Fund in addition to any financial support from the United Nations.”
- “The types of costs covered by the financial resources of the United Nations through assessed contributions on Member States for peace support operations would generally be in line with those usually incurred by United Nations peacekeeping operations.”

65 UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on Options for Authorization and Support for the African Union Peace Support Operations*, UN Doc. S/2017/454, May 26, 2017.

66 Ibid.

67 Ibid.

- “Some form of mandated United Nations presence would be necessary to undertake tasks in areas such as planning, reporting and accountability, including those required for implementation of the human rights due diligence policy.”
- “Different models could be applied at different phases of an operation.”

Compliance and oversight:⁶⁸

- Compliance with international humanitarian and human rights standards
- A framework of accountability for conduct and discipline and mechanisms to ensure the provision of victim assistance, where required

Despite these challenges, in Resolution 2378 (2017), the Security Council expresses its “intention to give further consideration to practical steps that can be taken, and the conditions necessary, to establish the mechanism through which African Union led peace support operations authorized by the Security Council and under the Security Council’s authority under Chapter VIII of the Charter could be partly financed through United Nations assessed contributions, on a case by case basis, in compliance with relevant agreed standards and mechanisms to ensure strategic and financial oversight and accountability.” Further, it “requests the Secretary-General, in coordination with the African Union, to present in his next Report on Strengthening the Partnership between the United Nations and the African Union on Issues of Peace and Security in Africa...a reporting framework which would establish clear, consistent and predictable reporting channels, including fiduciary and mandate delivery, between the Secretariat, the Commission and the two Councils, as well as standardized reporting requirements.”⁶⁹

The latest battleground for discussions over the UN supporting and financing regional peace operations has been the joint force of the Group of Five for the Sahel (G5 Sahel). The Security Council has been divided over the issue, with the US and other major financial contributors opposing a

formal authorization of the subregional force—they instead only “welcomed” it—in part because it is perceived as possibly implying a financial obligation. The US promised up to \$60 million in bilateral support to the G5 Sahel force, instead of supporting the regional force through the UN as Guterres and France had suggested.⁷⁰ France and the African members of the UN Security Council supported the position of the G5 Sahel countries and the AU that the UN should consider providing funding from assessed contributions.⁷¹ The deadly ambush in Niger on October 4, 2017—in which four US special forces and five Nigerien troops were killed—and the late October 2017 Security Council visiting mission to Mali, Mauritania, and Burkina Faso do not seem to have changed the position of the US, which just appointed Donald Yamamoto as the acting assistant secretary of state for Africa for one year.⁷²

While much of the focus has been on partnerships with regional organizations, and the African Union in particular, other partnerships are also being explored. In April, the UN and the World Bank signed a partnership framework, and the two organizations have begun to conduct their first study on prevention of violent conflict titled “Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict.”⁷³

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ UN Security Council Resolution 2378, paras. 18, 20.

⁷⁰ Rodrigo Campos and Aaron Ross, “U.S. Pledges up to \$60 million for security in Sahel region,” Reuters, October 30, 2017, available at <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-africa-security-usa/u-s-pledges-up-to-60-million-for-security-in-sahel-region-idUSKBN1CZ1OX>; International Crisis Group, “Niger Clash Kills U.S. and Nigerien Troops,” October 5, 2017, available at www.crisisgroup.org/africa/west-africa/niger/niger-clash-kills-us-and-nigerien-troops.

⁷¹ http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2017-09/in_hindsight_mandating_peace_operations.php.

⁷² Security Council Report, “September 2017 Monthly Forecast: Mandating Peace Operations,” September 1, 2017, available at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201708290974.html>.

⁷³ UN Secretary-General, “Joint Statement on Signing of new UN–World Bank Framework to Build Resilience and Sustain Peace in Conflict Areas,” April 22, 2017, available at www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/note-correspondents/2017-04-22/joint-statement-signing-new-un-world-bank-framework-build; World Bank Group, “Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict,” 2017, available at <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/28337>.

TOWARD MORE FIELD-FOCUSED AND PEOPLE-CENTERED PEACE OPERATIONS?

The fourth shift called for by the HIPPO report was that “the UN Secretariat must become more field-focused and UN peace operations must be more people-centered” (see Box 3). HIPPO stressed the need for “more agile field support” and recognized that DFS does not have the delegated authority to meet the demands of the field, particularly for more field-focused, tailor-made, and people-centered field missions. It pointed to the fact that mission requirements are still treated as exceptions to headquarters-focused policies, even though field missions account for over 80 percent of the UN Secretariat’s spending, 55 percent of its staff, and 90 percent of its procurement.⁷⁴ HIPPO also brought to the fore the tension between the Department of Management in its role of setting policies and standards and DFS. Both the 2016 and 2017 reports from the General Assembly’s Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C-34) also called for both short-term and longer-term administrative and institutional reforms to empower DFS. The common message from a 2017 IPI seminar on field support was also that this support needs to be accountable for outcomes rather than exclusively for compliance with rules.⁷⁵

The Department of Field Support (DFS), created in 2007—and separate from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO)—has become a major service provider to both UN missions and the AU, and it even led a field mission to stop Ebola.⁷⁶ DFS is now primarily responsible for mobilizing all human, material, and other support services necessary to ensure that uniformed and civilian personnel have what they need when they need it in order to effectively implement their mandates on the ground. DFS was also designed to strengthen the management and oversight of resources provided by member states. But despite various efforts to improve the UN system as a

whole and field support in particular, including the 2010 Global Field Support Strategy, the rolling out of the information and communication technology strategy (including the “Umoja” computer system and adoption of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards), and human resources reforms, there is a widespread perception that the bureaucracy is failing the UN.⁷⁷

Even before taking over as secretary-general, Guterres highlighted field support as one of the key areas for management reform:

Looking at United Nations staff and budgetary rules and regulations, one might think that some of them were designed to prevent, rather than enable, the effective delivery of our mandates.... We need to create a consensus around simplification, decentralization and flexibility. It benefits no one if it takes nine months to deploy a staff member to the field. The United Nations needs to be nimble, efficient and effective. It must focus more on delivery and less on process; more on people and less on bureaucracy.⁷⁸

The secretary-general appointed a review team for management reform, whose initial recommendations are discussed in the third part of this report.

While all of the UN’s work should be people-centered, in practice this remains challenging to operationalize. At present, many interlocutors consider reform efforts to have centered on structures and processes in New York. However, building on work initiated by DPKO’s Division of Policy Evaluation and Training (DPET) in 2016, some field missions have started developing community engagement approaches and strategies to support local-level reconciliation and dialogue.⁷⁹ DPET is also conducting some work aimed at strengthening threat analysis and early-warning mechanisms, supporting local conflict analysis and mapping, and addressing issues relating to the prevention of violent extremism—an issue that DPKO’s Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions (OROLSI) and the UN Development Programme (UNDP) have also led on. DPA’s

74 UN General Assembly and UN Security Council, *Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations*, para. 239.

75 See “UN Field Support for Peace Operations: Fit for What Purposes?,” International Peace Institute, February 16, 2017, available at www.ipinst.org/2017/02/un-field-support-for-peace-operations#14.

76 Adam Lupel and Michael Snyder, “The Mission to Stop Ebola: Lessons for UN Crisis Response,” International Peace Institute, February 2017, available at <https://www.ipinst.org/2017/02/un-crisis-response-ebola>.

77 Anthony Banbury, “I Love the U.N., but It Is Failing,” *New York Times*, March 18, 2016.

78 António Guterres, remarks to the General Assembly on taking the oath of office, New York, December 12, 2016, available at www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/speeches/2016-12-12/secretary-general-designate-ant%C3%B3nio-guterres-oath-office-speech.

79 DPET’s work included the development of an internal practice note on community engagement.

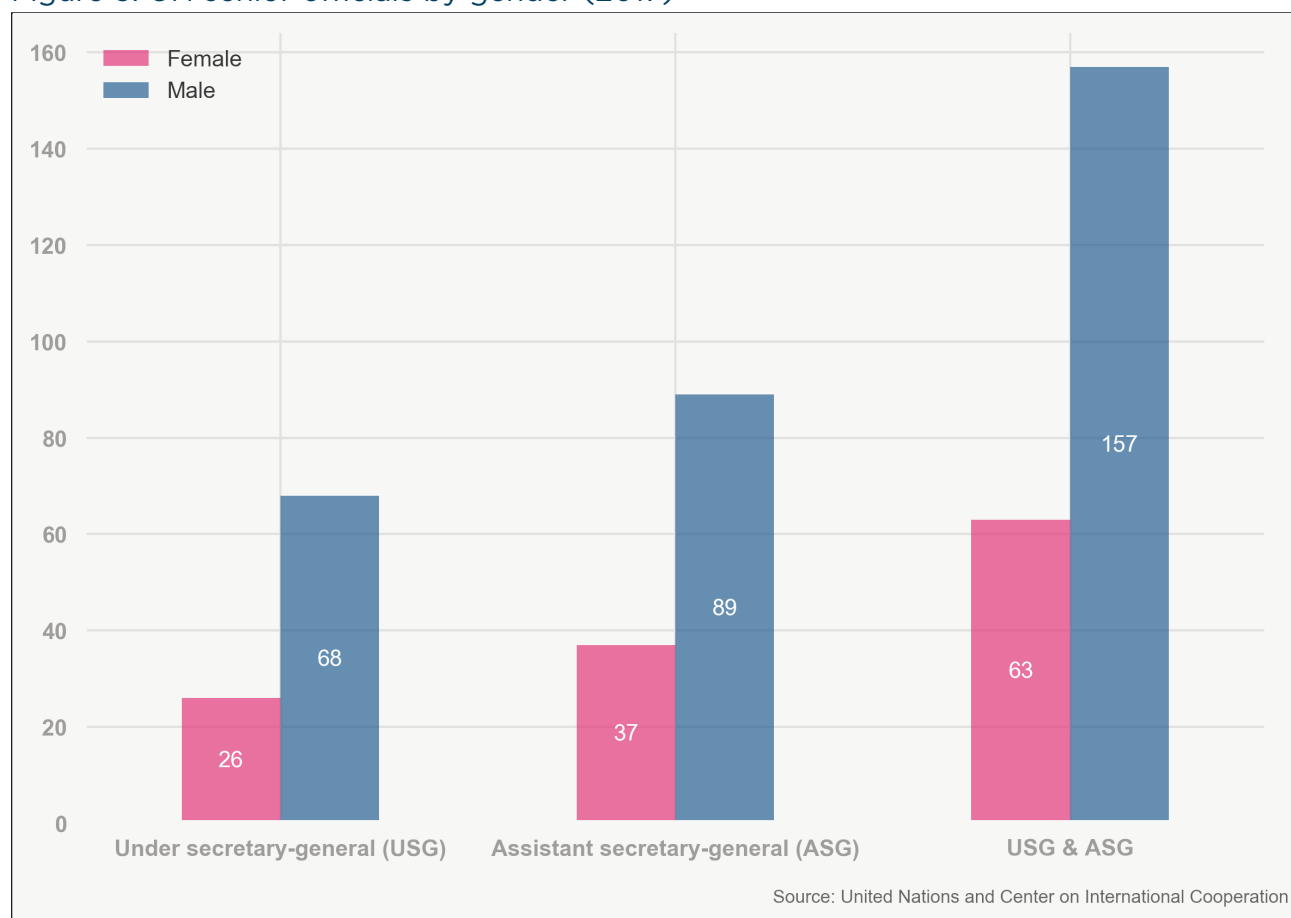
Mediation Support Unit has also been collaborating with civil affairs components of peace operations in developing guidance for local mediation. In addition, the UN Secretariat has been working on improving the coherence and delivery of programmatic funding for its missions. As urged by HIPPO, such “modest amounts of programmatic support could help develop capacity and yield better results in mandate implementation.”⁸⁰

WOMEN, PEACE, AND SECURITY

Advancing the women, peace, and security agenda in peace operations featured prominently in the HIPPO recommendations, and while it is not one of the four strategic shifts highlighted for reform, progress toward implementation is already underway at UN headquarters (see Figure 5). To begin with, the secretary-general has appointed a

senior gender adviser to his own office, modeling the HIPPO recommendation that a mission’s “senior gender adviser should be located in the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, reporting directly to the [special representative],” to ensure that mission leadership has senior gender expertise. In an effort to increase the proportion of women in the United Nations itself, the secretary-general has continued to promote his System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity, which provides a roadmap to parity at the senior levels of leadership by 2021 and across the board by 2028.⁸¹ As of October 2017, Guterres has appointed twenty-six women and twenty-eight men to senior posts, although these initial appointments have not yet been sufficient to move senior UN leadership toward gender parity (see Figure 6).⁸²

Figure 5. UN senior officials by gender (2017)



80 UN General Assembly and UN Security Council, *Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations*, paras. 147, 302.

81 “Interview: UN Should be Flagbearer when It Comes to Gender Parity, Stresses Top Official,” UN News Centre, September 15, 2017, available at www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=57527#.WeS4NltSyM8.

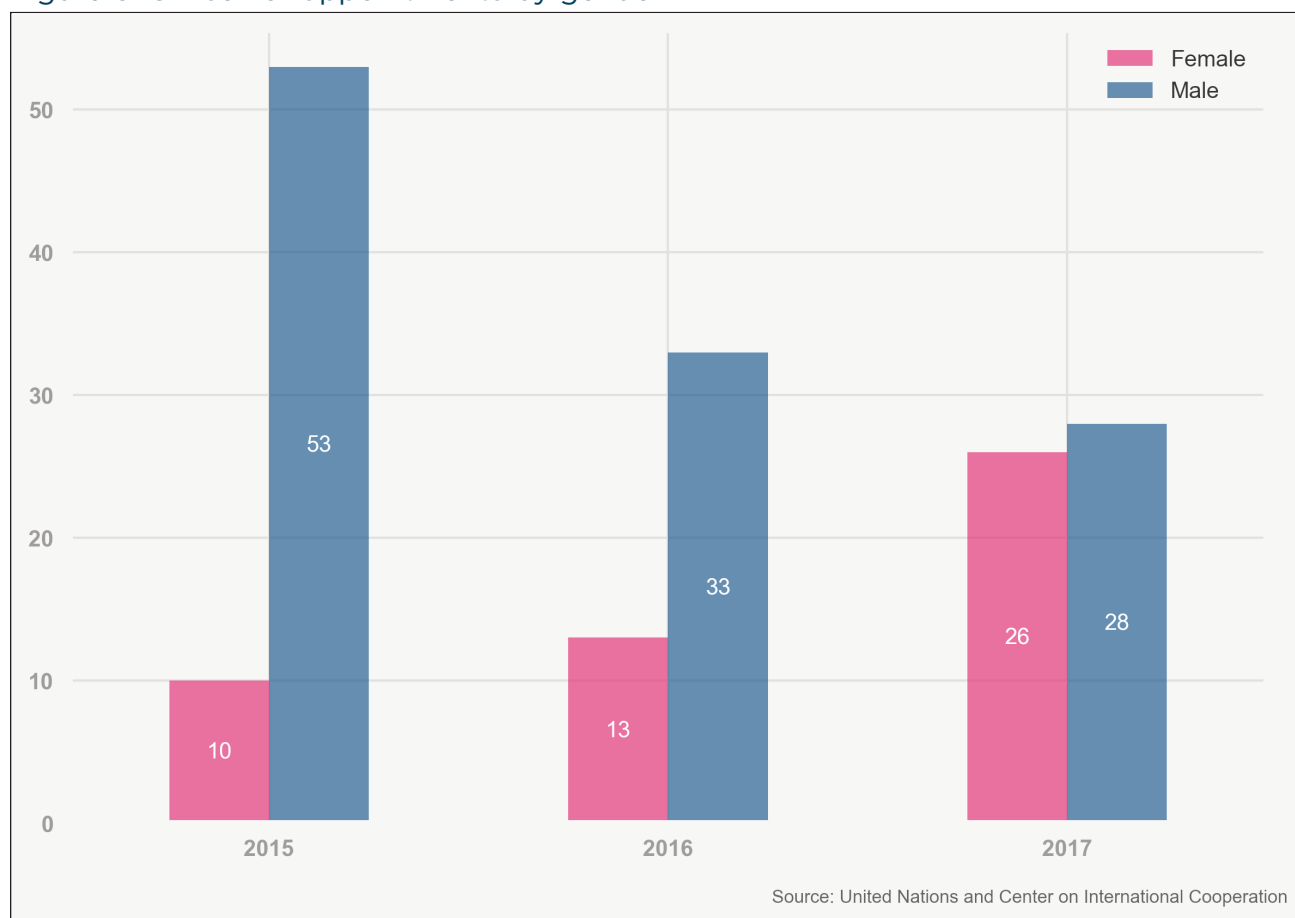
82 Global Peace Operations Review, “2015–2017: Comparative Data on UN Senior Appointments, by Gender,” available at <http://peaceoperationsreview.org/featured-data#gender>.

In the field, implementation of the HIPPO recommendations is not keeping pace. In peacekeeping missions, the ratio of women to men continues to lag behind that in headquarters. The data from DPKO as of September 2017 shows that women constitute less than 4 percent of military personnel and around 9 percent of police in current missions, which is consistent with the data from the last several years and does not show a notable increase in women's participation.⁸³ However, meeting the targets of 20 percent female police officers and 15 percent female military officers set by the London ministerial meeting of 2016 will take time, as the structure of armies and police forces within member states continues to limit women's access.⁸⁴

A key HIPPO recommendation highlights the

need for gender analysis of conflict and leadership by special representatives of the secretary-general. This analysis requires sufficient expertise in the missions themselves, and as such the HIPPO report recommended that gender experts have a direct path to mission leadership. Numerous UN Security Council resolutions on women, peace, and security have recognized the need for gender advisers, including Resolutions 2122 (2013) and 2242 (2015), both of which “call for senior gender advisers and other gender officer posts to be budgeted for and speedily recruited where appointed in special political missions and multidimensional peacekeeping operations.”⁸⁵ However, in the current context of budget shortfalls, gender advisers are being downgraded and, in some cases, cut from missions altogether.⁸⁶ In 2017 the senior

Figure 6. UN senior appointments by gender



83 Global Peace Operations Review, “Women in UN Peacekeeping, 2006–Present,” available at http://peaceoperationsreview.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/data_UN_women_peacekeeping_902x576.png.

84 British concept paper for side event during the opening of the 72nd session of the General Assembly on “Enabling Implementation of Women, Peace and Security Mandates in Peacekeeping Operations.”

85 Security Council Resolution 2242 (2015), October 13, 2015, UN Doc. S/RES/2242.

86 Allen, “Gender Mainstreaming Loses Out under UN Peacekeeping Budget Cuts.”

gender adviser post in the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) changed from P5 to P3 due to a decision by the Fifth Committee; senior gender advisers at the P5 level were either cut or downgraded in the missions in Darfur, Mali, Liberia, and Haiti; and UNAMID lost 50 percent of its gender capacity.

SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE

The prevention of and accountability for sexual exploitation and abuse is an area that has also received a lot of attention from the secretary-general. This is in line with the HIPPO recommendations aimed at addressing abuse and enhancing accountability, including through effective and adequately resourced victim-assistance programs. Guterres has maintained the momentum initiated by former Secretary-General Ban and reiterated during the Security Council debate on September 20, 2017, that “peace operations must embody UN values, including by stamping out sexual exploitation and abuse and achieving gender parity.”

Guterres issued a report to the General Assembly on *Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse: A New Approach* focused on “four main areas of action: putting victims first; ending impunity; engaging civil society and external partners; and improving strategic communications for education and transparency.”⁸⁷ The report was a centerpiece of the high-level meeting on combating sexual exploitation and abuse on September 18, 2017, with the aim to “demonstrate the resolve of the international community at the highest political level to combat this scourge, putting the rights and dignity of victims at the forefront of our collective efforts.”⁸⁸ The secretary-general asked all governments to sign a “voluntary compact” pledging to prevent and stop these violations through support and assistance to victims, efforts to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse, and accountability measures. Within two weeks, more than ninety

member states had signed on to the compact.⁸⁹

A key step forward will be for the secretary-general to fully avail himself of the tools the Security Council has given him in Resolution 2272 (2017), including to repatriate troops when there is “credible evidence” they committed sexual exploitation and abuse or when troop- and police-contributing countries fail to hold their own personnel to account for these crimes through domestic judicial institutions. Missions will require dedicated capacity to ensure outreach and support to local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to provide support and services to survivors of these crimes and to ensure investigations are conducted in a manner responsive to survivors, as requested by the Security Council in Resolution 2272 (2016).

As highlighted in a recent IPI report, further measures need to be undertaken, such as improving the trauma-sensitivity of investigations, streamlining the UN’s cumbersome reporting and response processes to ensure more timely action, establishing partnerships with local and international civil society organizations, increasing support and services to survivors, and substantially strengthening whistle-blower protections.⁹⁰ On August 23, 2017, the secretary-general appointed Jane Connors, an Australian legal professional and long-time human rights advocate, as the first UN advocate for the rights of victims of sexual exploitation and abuse. This is meant to be accompanied by the appointment of victims’ rights advocates in missions, initially in those that have struggled the most with allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse.

A CONTINUED FOCUS ON CAPABILITIES

Beyond the specific strategic shifts, HIPPO also emphasized the need to improve “speed, capability and performance for uniformed personnel,” and both the UN Secretariat and member states have kept their focus on peacekeeping capabilities. This

87 UN General Assembly, *Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse: A New Approach—Report of the Secretary-General*, UN Doc. A/71/818, February 28, 2017.

88 Executive Office of the UN Secretary-General, letter on the High-Level Meeting on the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, July 5, 2017, available at www.passblue.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/17-328nve.pdf; Barbara Crossette, “UN Chief Asks All Nations to Sign New Pact Protecting Women,” *PassBlue*, August 21, 2017, available at www.passblue.com/2017/08/21/un-chief-asks-all-nations-to-sign-new-pact-protecting-women/.

89 See <http://www.passblue.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/17-377-Voluntary-Compact-English.pdf>. “In Less than Two Weeks, 72 States Sign UN Voluntary Compact on Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse,” UN News Centre, September 29, 2017, available at www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=57780#.WdkI863Mzv0.

90 Jeni Whalan, “Dealing with Disgrace: Addressing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in UN Peacekeeping,” New York: International Peace Institute, August 2017, available at www.ipinst.org/2017/08/addressing-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse-in-un-peacekeeping.

has included work on speed of deployment, niche capabilities, and performance, with a particular focus on military performance and accountability measures. At the Security Council debate on September 20, 2017, Guterres stated as one of four priorities that “peace operations should be properly equipped.... It is time to fill critical gaps in technology, transportation and situational awareness.”

On the member-state side, a third capability conference will be held from November 14 to 15, 2017, in Vancouver, Canada, at the ministerial level, following on from the 2016 UN Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial in London and the 2015 Leaders’ Summit on Peacekeeping convened by US President Barack Obama in New York. The ministerial will cover four themes: (1) “smart” pledges (i.e., pledges of key enabling capacities, including how to rotate these capacities); (2) innovative training and capacity building; (3) protection for those at risk; and (4) early warning and rapid deployment. Canada has committed to make gender a “crosscutting” issue across these themes.⁹¹

Although some member states consider these capability conferences to be outside the framework of the UN, Resolution 2378 (2017) recognizes the pledges made by a number of member states through these meetings. It also “requests the Secretary-General to provide updates to the Security Council, as part of his comprehensive briefing, on the continuous efforts made in filling the existing gaps in terms of force generation and capabilities...and further requests the Secretary-General to provide recommendations to the Security Council within 90 days of the adoption of this resolution on a mechanism to fill these gaps including through more effective and efficient

training and capacity-building.”⁹² Soon after, on October 5th, the Security Council held a debate dedicated to the issue of strategic force generation at the initiative of France and the United Kingdom.⁹³ Also, although there has been comparatively little focus on the role of police in peace operations, the HIPPO recommendation to review “the organizational structure, staffing and capacity of the Police Division...to better meet new approaches to support national police”⁹⁴ was carried out, with its associated report published in May 2016.⁹⁵

The annual ministerial meetings “on uniformed capability needs of UN peacekeeping operations among key decision-makers in Member State governments” have become a way to generate momentum and concrete pledges to fill peacekeeping’s evolving operational needs. They have particularly done so through the Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System (PCRS), supported by DPKO’s Strategic Force Generation and Capability Planning Cell, created in 2015.⁹⁶ DPKO has continued “assessment and advisory visits to progress pledges through the PCRS.” These aim to provide “an earlier opportunity to ensure that Member States pledges adequately meet operational gaps and evolving needs in UN Peacekeeping, as well as meet UN capability and readiness standards.”⁹⁷ The PCRS is now working on creating “a reserve capacity” to make funding for UN missions more predictable and to allow for more leeway in choosing troop-contributing countries, but to which deployment would still ultimately depend on the political decision of those member states.

Moreover, the 2017 working group on contingent-owned equipment has agreed to a recommendation that would provide troop- and police-contributing countries a 25 percent reimbursement

91 Preparatory meetings were held on “Training and Capacity Building” in Tokyo, Japan, from August 23rd to 25th; and on “Protecting Those at Risk and Early Warning and Rapid Deployment” in Kigali, Rwanda, from August 29th to 30th. Meetings will be held on “Smart Pledges” in Dhaka, Bangladesh, from October 1st to 2nd. See Canada’s website on preparations for the Vancouver ministerial meeting at www.canada.ca/en/departement-national-defence/campaigns/peacekeeping-defence-ministerial.html.

92 UN Security Council Resolution 2378, para. 10.

93 See Security Council Report, “October 2017 Monthly Forecast: Strategic Force Generation,” September 28, 2017, available at www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2017-10/peacekeeping_operations_strategic_force_generation.php; and “UN Peacekeeping Chief Seeks Security Council Support for Speedy Deployment of Uniformed Personnel,” UN News Centre, October 5, 2017, available at www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=57824#.WdkJ963Mzv0.

94 UN General Assembly and UN Security Council, *Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations*, para. 161.

95 See United Nations, *External Review of the Functions, Structure and Capacity of the UN Police Division*, May 31, 2016, available at www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/documents/police-review2016.pdf.

96 UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Field Support, “Current and Emerging Uniformed Capability Requirements for United Nations Peacekeeping,” August 2017, available at https://cc.unlib.org/Lists/Announcements/Attachments/39/Uniformed%20Capability%20Requirements%20for%20UN%20Peacekeeping_July%202017.pdf.

97 Ibid.

for maintenance of major equipment in order to keep units at the PCRS “rapid-deployment level” (i.e., willing and able to be deployed in under sixty days). Such mechanisms are key for the Secretariat to prepare for future crises and deployments but remain untested, as Burundi and South Sudan opposed deployment, and no new peacekeeping missions have been authorized since 2013.⁹⁸ On May 22 and 23, 2017, the UN also held its first “force generation conference” in New York dedicated to filling gaps in MINUSMA, a labor-intensive experiment that, if successful, could be used for other missions in the future.

Will Guterres’s Reforms Help Realize HIPPO’s Four Strategic Shifts?

Since taking office in January 2017, Secretary-General Guterres has presented the broad strokes of his reform plan along five parallel streams: (1) renewed focus on prevention and sustaining peace; (2) a new UN Office of Counter-Terrorism; (3) reform of the UN development system; (4) restructuring of the peace and security architecture; and (5) management reform. While the first three streams are much broader than peace operations and focus both on mission and non-mission settings, they do have potential implications for peace operations. The last two streams will have more direct and far-reaching consequences for the design and conduct of UN peace operations. All, however, aim at reducing “the fragmentation of the United Nations system,” seen as “a critical limiting factor in the Organization’s ability to engage early, flexibly and effectively across the spectrum of conflict, drawing on the full set of available tools.”⁹⁹

This section of the report looks at these five streams of reform and asks how initial proposals would—or would not—help realize the four strategic shifts called for in the HIPPO report and under what conditions. Since all the details of the secretary-general’s reforms are not yet known and

could still evolve, this section should be read as a preliminary analysis.

PREVENTION AND SUSTAINING PEACE

Upon his arrival, Guterres announced that prevention would be his priority and appointed a senior adviser on policy, whose main task has been to map the prevention capacities of the UN system and bring them together into an integrated platform for early detection and action. On May 31, 2017, the secretary-general shared with member states his vision for prevention. It consists of four streams:

1. A surge in preventive diplomacy, including by strengthening mediation capacities;
2. Affirmation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and “sustaining peace” not only as complementary to but also as mutually reinforcing of and essential to long-term prevention;
3. Stronger partnerships, particularly through the Joint UN-AU Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security of April 19, 2017; and
4. Reforms to consolidate capacities for prevention by “joining-up all pillars of the UN’s work—peace and security, development, human rights—as well as vertical integration in each from prevention to conflict resolution, from peacekeeping to peacebuilding and sustainable development.”¹⁰⁰

Early in his term, Guterres tried to put into practice his “surge in diplomacy” concept but faced an initial setback in Cyprus where he had invested significant political capital.¹⁰¹ The readiness of the secretary-general to assist with crises in Venezuela, North Korea, and Qatar, among others, seemed to have been overshadowed by big-power politics. The slow response of the UN to the recent Rohingya crisis in Myanmar has led some to suggest that the “secretary-general and [the] secretariat lacks the political networks and expertise to navigate the resulting mess,”

98 For further discussion of UN rapid-reaction mechanisms, see Joachim Koops and Alexandra Novosseloff, “UN Rapid Reaction Mechanisms: Toward a Global Force on Standby?,” *Contemporary Security Policy*, August 2, 2017.

99 UN General Assembly and UN Security Council, *Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations*, para. 4.

100 António Guterres, “A UN of the Future to Effectively Serve All Member States,” *Inter Press Service*, May 31, 2017, available at www.ipsnews.net/2017/05/a-un-of-the-future-to-effectively-serve-all-member-states-2/.

101 Helena Smith, “Cyprus Reunification Talks Collapse amid Angry Scene,” *The Guardian*, July 7, 2017, available at www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jul/07/cyprus-reunification-talks-collapse-amid-angry-scenes.

something some former UN officials consider the organization has lost over time.¹⁰² Guterres has since sought assistance from the High-Level Advisory Board on Mediation, established on September 13, 2017, which provides advice on mediation initiatives and backs specific mediation efforts around the world. The board is composed of eighteen current and former global leaders, senior officials, and renowned experts—half of whom are women, upholding the secretary-general's commitment to gender parity.¹⁰³

One persisting challenge is that UN capacities to undertake prevention and mediation remain largely dependent on voluntary (extra-budgetary) funding, and it remains unclear how this new High-Level Advisory Board on Mediation will be financially supported. It also remains unclear whether the secretary-general's development system reform and restructuring proposals would ultimately lead to more resources dedicated to prevention at the Secretariat, even though these were presented as having been developed with the overarching goal of prioritizing prevention and sustaining peace in mind. In the proposed Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA, to replace DPA—a name ultimately preferred to earlier suggestions that may have included “prevention” in the title), the assistant secretary-general for peacebuilding support would assume a central role and function as a “hinge” between the peace and security pillar and the development system (see section on restructuring).

The secretary-general's vision on prevention and sustaining peace brings together his various reform proposals while promoting a “peace continuum.” This is very much in the spirit of HIPPO, which had been closely coordinated with the 2015 review of the UN peacebuilding architecture and ultimately culminated in the Security Council and General Assembly adopting identical resolutions

on April 27, 2016 (Resolutions 2282 and 70/262, respectively).¹⁰⁴ HIPPO devoted ten pages of its report to sustaining peace and noted that one of the reasons that approaches to conflict prevention and sustaining peace remain ineffective is that “the United Nations has not invested enough on addressing root causes of conflict. It must do that in partnership with others, while strengthening its own capacities to undertake prevention work, including through inclusive and equitable development.”¹⁰⁵

One of the HIPPO report's first recommendations on how to encourage and institutionalize prevention was that the Security Council should “engage earlier to address emerging threats, including in partnership with regional and subregional organizations, and be open to early analysis and frank advice from the Secretary-General on situations that may threaten international peace and security.”¹⁰⁶ In a February 2017 report, the NGO Security Council Report addressed the factors that continue to inhibit the council's ability to prevent conflict. It suggested that the Security Council should “spend more time on addressing country situations in a preventive mode, rather than debating conflict prevention mainly at the thematic level.” It also suggested that the council “could make better use of the tools at its disposal, giving political backing to the good offices of the Secretary-General or other mediators, making more strategic use of visiting missions and encouraging increased involvement of the elected members in proposing initiatives.”¹⁰⁷

There is also still a long way to go for the organization and its member states to embrace the “culture of prevention” called for by HIPPO. The August 29, 2017, thematic meeting on “UN Peacekeeping Operations: Their Potential Contribution to the Overarching Goal of Sustaining Peace” under the Egyptian presidency

102 Richard Gowan, “Is the U.N. Ready for the ‘Asian Century’? The Rohingya Crisis Suggests Not,” *World Politics Review*, October 2, 2017, available at www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/23277/is-the-u-n-ready-for-the-asian-century-the-rohingya-crisis-suggests-not; “Peacekeepers in name only,” *The Economist*, October 28, 2017, available at <https://www.economist.com/news/international/21730636-persecution-rohingya-latest-atrocity-un-has-failed>.

103 UN Secretary-General, “Secretary-General's High-Level Advisory Board on Mediation,” September 13, 2017, available at www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/personnel-appointments/2017-09-13/secretary-general%E2%80%99s-high-level-advisory-board-mediation.

104 The resolutions included a definition of sustaining peace, describing it as “a goal and a process to build a common vision of society...which encompasses activities aimed at preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict.” According to the resolutions, sustaining peace “should flow through all three pillars of the UN's engagement at all stages of conflict.” Security Council Resolution 2282 (April 27, 2016), UN Doc. S/RES/2282; General Assembly Resolution 70/262 (April 27, 2016), UN Doc. A/RES/70/262.

105 UN General Assembly and UN Security Council, *Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations*, p. 9.

106 *Ibid.*, para. 73.

107 Security Council Report, “Can the Security Council Prevent Conflict?,” February 9, 2017, available at www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/research_report_conflict_prevention_2017.pdf.

allowed council members to further engage on the connection between peace operations and sustaining peace, building on the council's open debate on conflict prevention and sustaining peace organized by Sweden on January 10th. Issues discussed included how to bear the goal of sustaining peace more in mind when designing peacekeeping operations' mandates and how to manage and ensure smooth transitions from traditional peacekeeping operations to either special political missions or UN country teams in light of current transitions in Côte d'Ivoire, Haiti, and Liberia. The role of the Peacebuilding Commission to provide the council with "specific, strategic and targeted advice...including to assist with the longer-term perspective required for sustaining peace being reflected in the formation, review and drawdown of peacekeeping operations and special political missions" was also discussed.¹⁰⁸ A briefing by former HIPPO member Youssef Mahmoud drew clear links between sustaining peace and some HIPPO recommendations, including the need for legitimate political solutions and relevant analysis, the potential of strategic compacts with the host country, and the need for inclusive, people-centric approaches.¹⁰⁹

However, the debate also exposed the skepticism of certain member states that deem the concept of sustaining peace to be too broad or to encroach on their sovereignty.¹¹⁰ The secretary-general's upcoming report on the implementation of the sustaining peace agenda (to be published in early 2018) is expected to reflect on a number of reform ideas, including options for financing.

NEW UN OFFICE OF COUNTER-TERRORISM

On June 15, 2017, the General Assembly approved the establishment of a new UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (OCT), as proposed by Guterres.¹¹¹ This effectively upgraded the status of the entity entrusted with coordinating support to member states in implementing the global counterterrorism strategy to ensure greater coherence across the UN system. As a result, the UN Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) and the UN Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT), until now within DPA, have been transferred to this new office, together with their existing staff and all associated regular and extra-budgetary resources. The new OCT now reports to the General Assembly through the secretary-general. It is led by Under-Secretary-General Vladimir Voronkov, the first Russian national to serve at the under-secretary-general level in New York (having previously served as the head of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime in Vienna).¹¹² The Security Council-mandated secretariat bodies, however, remain separate. These include the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), which is headed by new Assistant Secretary General Michèle Coninsx (from Belgium), replacing Jean-Paul Laborde (from France).¹¹³

Those wary of a securitization of the peace, development, and prevention agendas may see this reform as an opportunity to strengthen the firewall between such areas and counterterrorism.¹¹⁴ That said, the elevation of counterterrorism officials to

108 Ibid.

109 Youssef Mahmoud, briefing at the Security Council's open debate on peacekeeping and sustaining peace, New York, August 29, 2017, available at www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/YM-BRIEFING.pdf. See also Youssef Mahmoud and Delphine Mechoulan, rapporteurs, "Peace Operations and Prevention for Sustaining Peace: The Restoration and Extension of State Authority," March 2017, available at www.ipinst.org/2017/03/peace-ops-for-sustaining-peace-state-authority.

110 Gert Rosenthal, "Reflections on the Meaning of 'Sustaining Peace,'" *IPI Global Observatory*, July 17, 2017, available at <https://theglobalobservatory.org/2017/07/sustaining-peace-peacebuilding-architecture-united-nations/>.

111 UN General Assembly Resolution 71/291 (June 15, 2017), UN Doc. A/RES/71/291. See also "General Assembly Approves Creation of New UN Counter-Terrorism Office," UN News Centre, June 15, 2017, available at www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=56984#.WckEqLKGOM8.

112 <https://www.un.org/press/en/2017/sga1741.doc.htm>.

113 United Nations, "Secretary-General Appoints Vladimir Ivanovich Voronkov of Russian Federation Under-Secretary-General, United Nations Counter-Terrorism Office," UN Doc. SG/A/1741-BIO/4976, June 21, 2017, available at www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/personnel-appointments/2017-08-11/ms-michèle-coninsx-belgium-executive-director-counter.

114 In 2016, members of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) agreed on reforming their official development assistance rules on eligible peace and security activities, expanding the definition to include additional activities such as preventing violent extremism, migration management, and military costs for the delivery of humanitarian relief. In addition, committee members can now report 15 percent of what they contribute to UN peacekeeping in their official development assistance figures (up from 7 percent). See Anna Möller-Loswick, "Is UN Goal 16 on Peace Being Misused to Justify Securitization," *IPI Global Observatory*, October 11, 2017, available at <https://theglobalobservatory.org/2017/10/is-un-goal-16-on-peace-being-misused-to-justify-securitization/>.

the role of providing strategic advice could, in the medium term, have the opposite effect. The new USG at the OCT will indeed participate in the decision-making process at the UN—most importantly as a member of the secretary-general's Executive Committee—and will also ensure that the crosscutting origins and impact of terrorism are reflected in the work of the United Nations. A disproportionate focus on counterterrorism would indeed risk narrowing the space the world organization has to operate on the ground, including by limiting its ability to carry out important political, development, and humanitarian work by indiscriminately engaging with some labeled as “terrorists” or “violent extremists.” Given the limited capacities of the OCT (under the regular budget), some also worry that several donor countries may try to shape its agenda through voluntary extra-budgetary contributions.

Both the 2015 HIPPO report and the follow-on report of the secretary-general concluded that UN peace operations, “due to their composition and character, are not suited to engage in military counter-terrorism operations.”¹¹⁵ Most of the discussions at the UN have since focused on how peace operations should adapt to operating in asymmetric threat environments (DPKO-DPET are leading a project on “Adapting Peace Operations to Complex Conflict Environments”). This has led to some confusion or mixed messages on the role of peacekeepers in counterterrorism activities.¹¹⁶ The Security Council organized a ministerial open debate on November 7, 2016, on “peace operations facing asymmetrical threats,” during which troop-contributing countries expressed concerns over the safety and security of peacekeeping personnel.¹¹⁷ Other streams of work are looking at the capabilities of uniformed components; the level of field support needed to operate effectively in these new environments (DPKO/DFS); the role of peace operations in contributing to preventing violent extremism

(DPKO-OROLSI), and UN engagement with “proscribed” armed groups (DPKO/DPA). DPKO-OROLSI and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) have also recently signed a strategic partnership framework on terrorism and violent extremism.

It is too early to tell what impact the new UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (OCT) could and will have on peace operations. Nonetheless, it may bring some welcome coordination and coherence to the UN's currently disjointed approach to dealing with the challenges of peace operations in asymmetric-threat environments, supporting counterterrorism forces (in the case of AMISOM and in discussions on the G5 Sahel force), and supporting host countries in building both their counterterrorism and preventive capacities. A “whole-of-UN approach” to these issues is needed, including in the proposed new DPPA and Department of Peace Operations (DPO), as well as in the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, UN Office for Drugs and Crime, Office of Legal Affairs, Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, and others). DPKO has already started cooperating with OCT on some of these work streams. That said, peace operations may not be the priority of OCT, whose focus may be more on working with member states on militants returning from hotspots and terrorist propaganda and financing.¹¹⁸

REFORM OF THE UN DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

An ambitious UN development reform was presented by the secretary-general in a report released on June 30, 2017. A second iteration will be released in December.¹¹⁹ This reform stream is probably that which, at first sight, has the least to do with HIPPO and peace operations in general.

The report suggests empowering and building the capacity of resident coordinators—the most senior UN representatives in “non-mission

115 UN General Assembly and UN Security Council, Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, para. 116.

116 See Arthur Boutellis and Naureen Chowdhury Fink, “Waging Peace: UN Peace Operations Confronting Terrorism and Violent Extremism,” International Peace Institute, October 18, 2016, available at www.ipinst.org/2016/10/un-peaceops-confronting-terrorism-extremism.

117 United Nations, “Speakers in Security Council Sound Alarm over Rapidly Growing ‘Asymmetrical Threats’ to United Nations Peace Operations,” UN Doc. SC/12577, November 7, 2016, available at www.un.org/press/en/2016/sc12577.doc.htm.

118 “Diplomat Outlines Key Areas of Work at UN Counter-Terrorism Office,” TASS Russian News Agency, October 2, 2017, available at <http://tass.com/world/968397>.

119 UN General Assembly and Economic and Social Council, Repositioning the UN Development System to Deliver on the 2030 Agenda: Ensuring a Better Future for All—Report of the Secretary-General, UN Doc. A/72/124-E/2018/3, July 11, 2017.

settings”—to deliver on the 2030 Agenda and sustaining peace. It also suggests making resident coordinators directly accountable to the deputy secretary-general (who would take over the chairmanship of the UN Development Group). It further recommends that the functions of resident coordinators be decoupled from those of UNDP resident representatives in an effort “to guarantee a level of impartiality that would generate the confidence within and outside the system to ensure resident coordinators can effectively lead.”¹²⁰ UNDP has indeed often been viewed as being too close to the host governments with which it works. But it has been reported that “the effort has faced internal resistance from U.N. agencies, including UNDP and the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, which fret it could weaken their standing in the field.”¹²¹

The report also proposes decreasing the number of small, separate UN offices at the country level in a welcome attempt to rationalize the UN’s presence in non-mission settings. The recommendations to create a “funding compact” for development with member states and to “merg[e] the governing boards of New York-based funds and programs” may be seen by certain member states as threatening their control over specific agencies, funds, and programs, even though the report argues they would strengthen member-state oversight.¹²² However, without this new funding arrangement and without a direct link to UNDP—usually the agency with the most funding and largest presence in-country—resident coordinators risk having little authority and leverage in practice. Moreover, the current funding structure promotes collaboration rather than competition among agencies.

The obvious links between peace operations and the development system reform are the 2030 Agenda (including the crosscutting targets related to peace and the stand-alone Goal 16) and sustaining peace, as discussed in the previous

sections. But the development reform also presents an opportunity to revive policy discussions on UN integration in contexts where there is a peace operation as well as a country team. This would be in the spirit of the secretary-general’s vision for overcoming the silos not only in the development pillar but especially in the peace and security pillar. It could help bring back a “field focus” to some of the current discussions by building on the 2006 “delivering as one” initiative in the development arena¹²³ and the June 2008 UN Policy Committee decision on integration, which affirmed “form follows function” as a guiding principle.¹²⁴ This focus on the field could address some of the persisting structural and financial impediments to providing incentives and rewards.¹²⁵

The suggested “new generation” of UN country teams and empowered resident coordinators should also be discussed in the context of mission settings where “triple-hatted” deputy special representatives of the secretary-general/resident coordinators/humanitarian coordinators (DSRSG/RC/HC) have the responsibility to ensure coordination between the peace operation and the UN’s longer-term development work (carried out by the country team). Effective integration often comes down to leadership and personalities, and the secretary-general therefore holds great responsibility in selecting leaders who will foster such integration. In addition, in countries and regions where (empowered) resident coordinators will be working side by side special envoys or special representatives, clear division of labor, communication, and guidance will be needed to avoid unnecessary confusion or turf battles and instead encourage collaboration with the goal that peace and sustainable development policies are created and implemented in a holistic manner.

On the funding side specifically, the HIPPO report recommended that mission budgets should include programmatic resources necessary for

120 UN General Assembly and Economic and Social Council, *Repositioning the UN Development System to Deliver on the 2030 Agenda*, para. 70.

121 Colum Lynch, “For Years, U.N. Was Warned of Threat to Rohingya in Myanmar,” *Foreign Policy*, October 16, 2017, available at <http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/10/16/for-years-u-n-was-warned-of-threat-to-rohingya-in-myanmar/>.

122 For a fuller analysis, see Sarah Cliffe, “The SG’s Report on UN Development System Reform: 5 Key Ideas and 5 Questions,” Center on International Cooperation, July 10, 2017, available at <http://cic.nyu.edu/publications/sg-report-un-development-system-reform-5-key-ideas-5-questions>.

123 UN General Assembly, *Delivering as One—Report of the High-Level Panel on United Nations System-Wide Coherence in the Areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance and the Environment*, UN Doc. A/61/583, November 20, 2006.

124 United Nations, *Decisions of the Secretary-General: 25 June Meeting of the Policy Committee*, Decision No. 2008/24—Integration, June 25, 2008.

125 For a detailed study of UN Integration, see Arthur Boutellis, “Driving the System Apart? A Study of United Nations Integration and Integrated Strategic Planning,” International Peace Institute, August 2013, available at www.ipinst.org/2013/08/driving-the-system-apart-a-study-of-united-nations-integration-and-integrated-strategic-planning.

mandated tasks to support sustaining peace and the transition to the UN development system's non-mission presence. This recommendation echoes an earlier study of civilian capacities calling for more flexibility in the use of a mission's budget in order to respond to crises and changing circumstances and for the channeling of budgets to short-term programmatic activities.¹²⁶ The General Assembly's Fifth Committee recently approved a small but significant portion of the assessed budget to be used as programmatic funding, but this is still relatively limited given that it includes programmatic funding that was already dedicated to disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) programs, for instance. A strong monitoring-and-evaluation mechanism should be developed to ensure adequate accountability in the use of these funds.

Better financing arrangements such as funding compacts could help overcome UN fragmentation (particularly in times of transition and drawdown), contribute to sustaining peace and more people-centered approaches early on, overcome the "financial cliff" the UN development system often faces following the departure of a UN mission, and effectively empower the "new" resident coordinators.¹²⁷ The HIPPO recommendation for a single "peace operations account" to finance all peace operations (whether peacekeeping operations or special political missions) and their related activities could also be revisited as part of this discussion on financing to ensure a continuum of tailored responses, going beyond just peace operations. Partnerships and enlarged funding platforms with the World Bank—as encouraged by the 2015 reviews of the UN peace and security architecture—could also help share and mitigate risk and maximize impact.¹²⁸

RESTRUCTURING OF THE PEACE AND SECURITY ARCHITECTURE

On September 12, 2017, the secretary-general shared his proposal for the "Restructuring of the Peace and Security Pillar" in an informal note to UN staff and member states. This was followed on October 13th by a formal report entitled *Restructuring of the United Nations Peace and Security Pillar* outlining his proposal in more detail.¹²⁹ This proposal is based on the recommendations made by the Internal Review Team on Restructuring of the Peace and Security Architecture appointed in February 2017. Although presented as having been inspired by the three 2015 reviews, the proposal is not fully consistent with some of the HIPPO recommendations on the restructuring (e.g., for a second deputy secretary-general for peace and security and a single "peace operations account" to finance all peace operations and their related backstopping activities).

Nonetheless, many interlocutors expect this reform to instill some of the most radical changes to the UN peace and security architecture since Boutros Boutros-Ghali's creation of the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) as separate departments in 1992, the creation of the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) and Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) under Kofi Annan in 2005, and Ban Ki-moon's creation of the Department of Field Support (DFS) as separate from DPKO.¹³⁰ But while the internal review team considered a range of restructuring options (including a possible merger between DPA and DPKO), and while member states encouraged the secretary-general to make bold and meaningful reforms of the peace and security pillar, the

126 UN General Assembly and UN Security Council, *Civilian Capacity in the Aftermath of Conflict—Independent Report of the Senior Advisory Group*, UN Doc. A/65/747-S/2011/85, February 22, 2011.

127 United Nations, *The Challenge of Sustaining Peace: Report of the Advisory Group of Experts for the 2015 Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture*, June 29, 2015, para. 26. "Peacebuilding"—or "sustaining peace," the term used in this report—needs to be liberated from its strict association with post-conflict contexts. Many of the priorities and tools for preventing lapse or relapse into conflict are similar, and it makes little sense to divide limited energies and resources artificially. It is a paradox that the Security Council, which in 2001 proposed an all-encompassing approach, continues to call its agenda-item on the matter "post-conflict peacebuilding."

128 UN General Assembly and UN Security Council, *Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations*, para. 338; United Nations, *Report of the Advisory Group of Experts*, para. 20. In a number of contexts, even the notion and function of the nation-state are put into question: consider the recent experiences, each with its singular characteristics, of Somalia, Libya, the Central African Republic, and Iraq (South Sudan shares some similar features). In such cases, the collapse or absence of a dominant central authority led to the state's fracturing, often along ethnic or sectarian lines, and to the emergence—through great violence, or even mass atrocities—of ethnically or religiously more uniform regions.

129 UN General Assembly, *Restructuring of the United Nations Peace and Security Pillar—Report of the Secretary-General*, UN Doc. A/72/525, October 13, 2017.

130 See Sarah Cliffe and Alexandra Novosseloff, "Restructuring the UN Secretariat to Strengthen Preventative Diplomacy and Peace Operations," Center on International Cooperation, February 14, 2017, available at <http://cic.nyu.edu/publications/restructuring-un-secretariat-strengthen-preventative-diplomacy-and-peace-operations>.

proposal Guterres ultimately put forward is, in the end, relatively modest (see Box 6 and Figure 7).

The proposal is a compromise between what was deemed politically feasible—as it does not challenge the control of the five permanent members of the Security Council over key departments and positions—and what was desirable from

a management point of view. It therefore keeps a certain balance between slightly rearranged departments headed by the two under-secretaries-general. The Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA), combining DPA's political responsibilities and the PBSO's peacebuilding responsibilities, would provide

Box 6: Key proposals for the restructuring of the United Nations peace and security pillar

Goals:¹³¹

- (a) “Prioritize prevention and sustaining peace;
- (b) “Enhance the effectiveness and coherence of peacekeeping operations and special political missions, ensuring the primacy of politics and flexibility of approach;
- (c) “Make the peace and security pillar more coherent, nimble and effective through a “whole-of-pillar” approach to address fragmentation; and
- (d) “Align the peace and security pillar more closely with the development and human rights pillars.”

Proposals:¹³²

- (a) “A Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, which would combine the strategic, political and operational responsibilities of the Department of Political Affairs and the peacebuilding responsibilities of the Peacebuilding Support Office. The Department would prioritize and direct capacities and resources to the prevention of conflict, mediation, conflict resolution and peacebuilding, as well as to enhanced cross-pillar cooperation and a variety of specialized capacities. It would provide direction, management and support for regional offices, my special and personal envoys and advisers and offices in support of political processes;
- (b) “A Department of Peace Operations, which would combine the strategic, political and operational responsibilities of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Political Affairs to provide direction, management and support for peacekeeping and field-based special political missions outside the purview of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, as well as a variety of specialized capacities;
- (c) “A single political-operational structure under Assistant Secretaries-General with regional responsibilities, with dual reporting lines to the Under-Secretaries-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and for Peace Operations, which would belong to and link the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Department of Peace Operations and would be responsible for the day-to-day management of all political and operational peace and security activities. This regional approach would enhance understanding of specific contexts and facilitate engagement and cooperation with regional and other partners;
- (d) “A Standing Principals’ Group of the Under-Secretaries-General of the two proposed departments, under my chairmanship, which would provide unified leadership for strategic, political and operational responsibilities to ensure a coherent “whole-of-pillar” approach at Headquarters and in the field.”

The priorities:¹³³

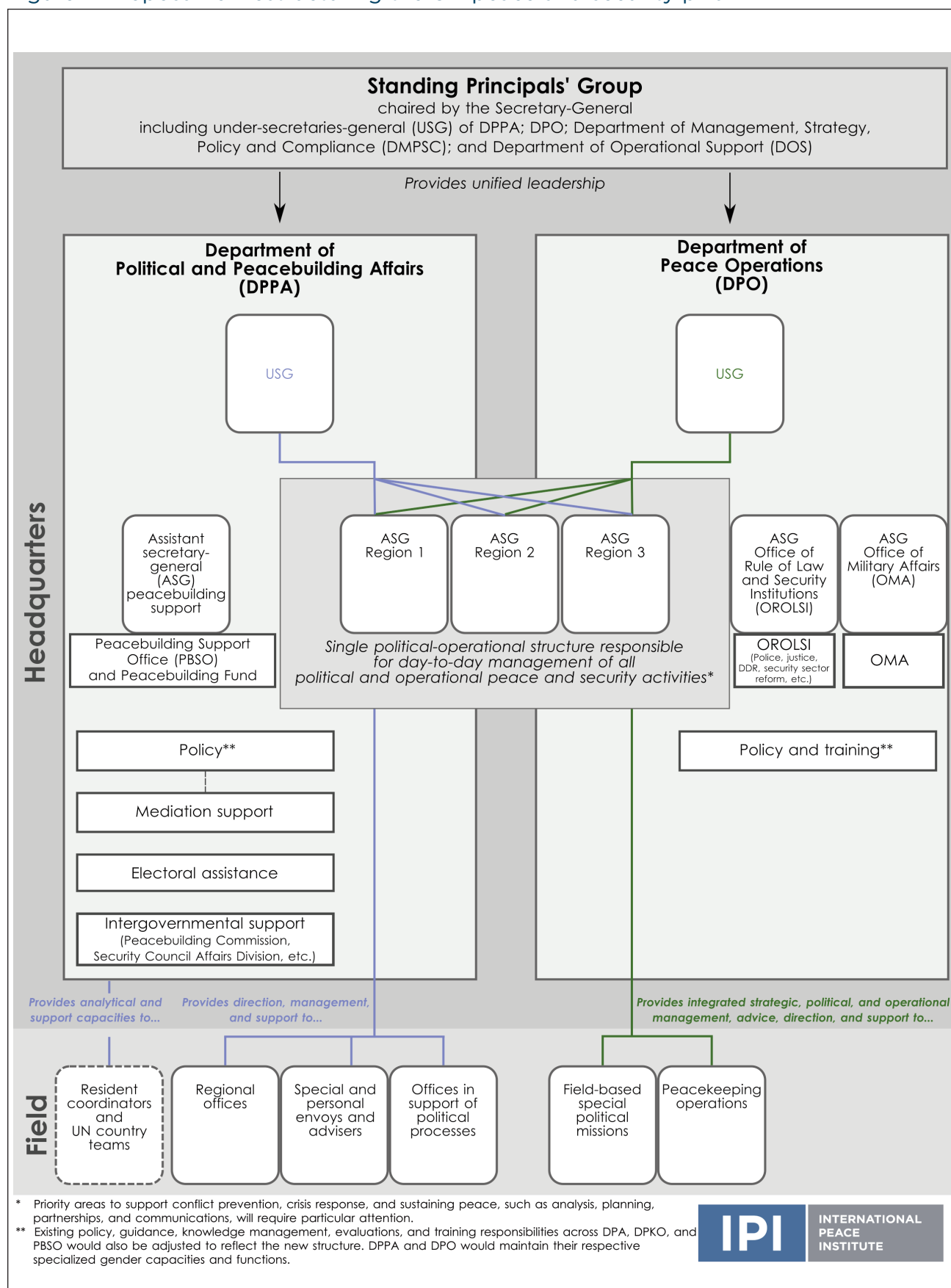
“A number of priority areas to support conflict prevention, crisis response and sustaining peace will require particular attention, such as analysis, planning, partnerships and communications.”

131 UN General Assembly, *Restructuring of the United Nations Peace and Security Pillar*.

132 Ibid.

133 Ibid.

Figure 7. Proposal for restructuring the UN peace and security pillar



direction, management, and support for regional offices, special and personal envoys and advisers, and offices in support of political processes. The Department of Peace Operations (DPO), combining the strategic, political, and operational responsibilities of DPKO and DPA, would provide direction, management, and support for peacekeeping and field-based special political missions outside the purview of the DPPA, as well as a variety of specialized capacities.¹³⁴

This proposal is presented as creating a “single political-operational structure” under assistant secretaries-general with regional responsibilities that “would be responsible for the day-to-day management of all political and operational peace and security activities.” This structure would also constitute for field presences “one point of entry for political and operational requirements from Headquarters.” It would further institutionalize the collocation of DPA and DPKO regional groupings, which the secretary-general had initiated earlier in the year through three (or possibly four) empowered assistant secretaries-general with regional responsibilities who “would report to the [under-secretary-general]/DPPA on non-mission issues and to the [under-secretary-general]/DPO on countries where there are field-based peace operations while keeping the other [under-secretary-general] informed.”¹³⁵

Because it would be responsible for both peacekeeping and field-based special political missions, the new Department of Peace Operations should help move the UN toward a continuum and full spectrum of peace operations and could smooth transitions between various field presences. However, “the distinct nature of peacekeeping operations and special political missions, as well as their different financing mechanisms” are “fully recognized.”¹³⁶ This comes as a contradiction to the objective of a continuum, and past challenges may remain. Regional assistant secretaries-general reporting to either of the two under-secretaries-general also risks creating confusion and perpetuating some of the earlier DPA-DPKO turf battles

when dealing with an emerging crisis or conflict. This is all the more so as the future DPO will also have responsibilities related to preventing and sustaining peace in countries where a UN mission is deployed, running the risk of perpetuating the current distinction between DPA and DPKO and of overstretching the new DPO.

Given that the vast majority of active UN peace operations are in Africa, there is a risk that a single assistant secretary-general for Africa could become more powerful than the two under-secretaries-general he or she would be reporting to (unless there are two assistant secretaries-general for Africa out of four, instead of three, total). There is also a risk that he or she would be absorbed by immediate operational problems in large field missions and have little time to focus on the prevention and mediation work done by regional offices and envoys in that same region. But this will also largely depend on how the assistant secretaries-general are connected to the rest of the two departments and the quality of the support they receive. Conversely, given the hierarchical culture of the UN Secretariat, it is possible that special representatives and special envoys—often at the under-secretary-general level—will simply bypass the regional assistant secretaries-general to report directly to either of the two under-secretaries-general.

The secretary-general’s proposal is intended to be “cost-neutral” (no additional resources or reduction of costs are foreseen). However, by virtue of addressing past duplications between DPKO and DPA it could ultimately lead to some staffing cuts up to the level of directors (some senior staff in DPA and DPKO have similar regional areas of responsibilities), which may actually appeal to donor countries.¹³⁷ These cuts, however, might seriously overstretch the assistant secretaries-general from the beginning of their appointment, as they are meant to keep reporting to both under-secretaries-general and to maintain a clear division of labor to dedicate more time to the core functions of prevention.¹³⁸

134 UN General Assembly, Restructuring of the United Nations Peace and Security Pillar, para. 20.

135 UN Secretary-General, “Note from Secretary-General to Member States on Restructuring of the Peace and Security Pillar,” September 12, 2017.

136 UN General Assembly, Restructuring of the United Nations Peace and Security Pillar, para. 28.

137 UN Secretary-General, “Note from Secretary-General to Member States on Restructuring of the Peace and Security Pillar,” September 12, 2017.

138 UN General Assembly, Restructuring of the United Nations Peace and Security Pillar, para. 38.

On the gender front, although the informal note shared with member states on September 12th had suggested the addition of a “gender bubble” that floats between DPPA and DPO, reform in this space is expected to be less than sweeping. This is evidenced by the language used in the secretary-general’s report on gender expertise, which suggests that both departments “maintain their respective specialized gender capacities and functions with a view to ensuring the mainstreaming of gender at all levels and in all areas of the Organization’s work.” It also emphasizes the need for partnership between both departments and with UN Women. In addition, “mechanisms will be put in place to ensure the coordination of efforts, the participation of gender expertise and capacity in all mission assessments and their rapid deployment to mission and non-mission contexts at critical periods, including during transitions.”¹³⁹

The role envisaged for the assistant secretary-general for peacebuilding support (and the small staff he will bring with him from PBSO), under the overall leadership of the under-secretary-general for political and peacebuilding affairs, was clarified by the secretary-general in person during an informal meeting of the Peacebuilding Commission on September 28, 2017. He called for PBSO—under the new DPPA—to assume a central role and function, serving as a “hinge” between the peace and security pillar and the development system, with the Peacebuilding Fund acting as the “lubricant.” He noted that such a bridging role would also be enhanced by the assistant secretary-general for peacebuilding participating in the coordination mechanisms of the UN Development Group, the Joint Steering Committee for Development and Humanitarian Coordination, and the secretary-general’s Executive Committee. And while PBSO currently represents fewer than twenty regular posts and the Peacebuilding Fund is relatively modest, the secretary-general seems to want to “revitalize” PBSO and reinforce the capacities of both. One added challenge will be the separation of peacebuilding support functions in

DPPA from those of OROLSI in DPO, which may run contradictory to the fact that “effective peacebuilding is highly dependent on effective institution building, in particular on security and justice.”¹⁴⁰

Some of the possible pitfalls of the restructuring are meant to be mitigated by the Standing Principals’ Group (the under-secretaries-general for political and peacebuilding affairs and for peace operations), under the chairmanship of the secretary-general himself. The group “would ensure coordination, communication and coherence in the implementation of peace and security priorities, support managerial and leadership coherence, both at Headquarters and in the field, and support senior leadership appointments in missions.” It would also somehow be a “high-level entry point for the development and human rights pillars and other entities.”¹⁴¹

It was always clear that the Executive Office of the Secretary-General was going to be greatly involved in the restructuring to “enhance coherence in the peace and security pillar,” as “dedicated capacities would continue to be placed in [this office] to guide planning and evaluation of operations, as well as the enhancement of integrated analysis.”¹⁴² Still, the direct involvement of the secretary-general is a significant development. And while the “whole-of-pillar” approach is a priori a good thing, it will no doubt be perceived as micromanagement by some in the departments, which have already started feeling sidelined by the thirty-eight floor. This could also create interesting dynamics between the Standing Principals’ Group, which is focused on peace and security, and the Executive Committee, which represents the UN as a whole and includes other under-secretaries-general from across the UN pillars.

Under these conditions, the key to the success of the proposed restructuring will ultimately reside in the personalities and leadership skills of the two under-secretaries-general and six assistant secretaries-general, all of whom will be entrusted with implementing the vision of the secretary-

139 Ibid., para. 44.

140 Sarah Cliffe, “UN Peace and Security Reform: Cautious Steps in the Right Direction,” Center on International Cooperation, September 15, 2017, available at <http://cic.nyu.edu/publications/un-peace-and-security-reform-cautious-steps-right-direction>.

141 UN General Assembly, *Restructuring of the United Nations Peace and Security Pillar*, para. 42.

142 UN Secretary-General, “Note from Secretary-General to Member States on Restructuring of the Peace and Security Pillar,” September 12, 2017.

general, including a change in the way the UN does business. The secretary-general's report on restructuring the UN peace and security pillar also reflects this, stating that "it will require significant leadership and management investment and highly collaborative working relationships, embodied in a new, more synergetic working culture."¹⁴³ This is indeed a tall order, and one could have wished that restructuring would not have had to rely so heavily on individuals and personalities.

Importantly, the issue of field support was moved out of the scope of the internal review team on restructuring (which included a senior DFS representative and initially included field support in some of its initial proposals for creating a Department of Field Management and Support, later abandoned). Instead, there is a separate internal review team on management (therefore limiting the above restructuring proposal to DPKO, DPA, and PBSO). And while the review of management has been officially presented as complementing the work and proposals of the internal review team on restructuring, some close to the reviews have privately expressed concerns over the coherence between the two work streams.

MANAGEMENT REFORM

Management reform largely grew from the peace and security reform, as well as from past (incomplete or failed) reform efforts. The vision for the management reform was first presented by the secretary-general at the end of July 2017 during a retreat with member states and during a meeting with UN Secretariat staff. During this meeting, the secretary-general called for "a faster and more agile UN" that would build trust with member states and the populations the organization aims to serve. On September 27, 2017, the secretary-general released his formal report on management reform entitled *Shifting the Management Paradigm in the United Nations: Ensuring a Better Future for All*. In this report, he further emphasized the principles guiding this reform and suggested a new management paradigm:

[This] new management paradigm...will empower managers to determine how best to use their resources to support programme delivery and mandate implementation. This will also mean transferring greater responsibility to managers and holding them accountable for the programme and financial performance of their programmes. It will not be a blanket delegation, but based on a careful consideration of the capacities of managers to receive greater delegation of authority and their abilities to properly execute it.¹⁴⁴

The first two sets of proposals put forward by the secretary-general as part of the management reform (proposals 1 and 2 in Box 7) aim to improve outdated budgetary processes and human resources practices; the UN has evolved from an organization initially dedicated to conference services into a complex machine deploying multidimensional peace operations, and its largely archaic processes need to be updated. HIPPO called for "a greater focus by the General Assembly, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) and the Secretariat on results rather than the incremental costs of mission budgets, [as] the basis for a new partnership in the resourcing of missions."¹⁴⁵ The proposed budget simplification through an annual budget within a three-year budget cycle, additional authority to redeploy resources within sections of the budget, and more flexible use of "unforeseen and extraordinary expenses" would all help empower managers.

Similarly, proposals to streamline and simplify human resources rules, processes, and procedures to ensure timely recruitment, deployment, and staff development, with clear delegation of authority to managers—including a set of issues that will be addressed in 2018—can be welcomed in principle. But as analyzed in detail in a recent IPI report on human resources for UN peace operations, despite multiple attempts at organizational reform, human resources processes remain opaque, lengthy, and largely inefficient.¹⁴⁶

The third and last set of proposals concerns the

143 UN General Assembly, *Restructuring of the United Nations Peace and Security Pillar*, para. 36.

144 UN General Assembly, *Shifting the Management Paradigm in the United Nations: Ensuring a Better Future for All—Report of the Secretary-General*, UN Doc. A/72/492, September 27, 2017.

145 Ibid., para. 297.

146 Namie Di Razza, "People before Processes: Humanizing the HR System for UN Peace Operations," International Peace Institute, October 2017, available at www.ipinst.org/2017/10/humanizing-hr-system-for-un-peace-operations.

Box 7. Key proposals of management reform¹⁴⁷**Proposals:**

1. “Streamline and improve the planning and budgeting processes. Budgets should support better decision-making and better reflect the link between resource use and programme delivery,” including by:
 - “Simplify[ing] and streamlin[ing] the planning and budget cycle and reports, including by moving from a biennial to an annual budget and shortening the planning and budgetary cycle from five to three years”;
 - “Provid[ing] additional authority to redeploy resources within the budget parts”; and
 - Broadening “the scope of the commitment authority for ‘unforeseen and extraordinary expenses’...to respond rapidly to unforeseen events in the areas of development and human rights.”
2. “Delegat[e] managerial authority to programme managers and demand...greater accountability from them for mandate delivery,” including by:
 - “Streamlin[ing] and simplify[ing] human resources rules, processes and procedures to ensure timely recruitment, deployment and staff development, with clear delegation of authority to managers, together with clear rules of accountability.”
3. Changing “the management and support structures to better support delivery of programmes and providing managers with quality assurance and strategic policy guidance,” including by:
 - “Eliminat[ing] duplicative internal controls by establishing a Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance with a clear policy, strategy and compliance role and a Department of Operational Support focused on operations, services, transactions and surge support to entities in weak environments”; and
 - Consolidating functions such as procurement and payment systems, staff contracting, engineering, and logistics management into two or three centers.

Overarching objectives:

- Decentralize by bringing decision making closer to the point of delivery
- Trust and empower managers
- Ensure greater accountability and transparency
- Reduce duplicative structures and overlapping mandates
- Increase support for the field and reform the planning and budgetary processes

management and support structures, with the most significant being the creation of a Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance (DMSPC) and a Department of Operational Support (DOS). These, respectively, would replace the existing Department of Management (DM) and Department of Field Support (DFS), thereby separating policy from operations even further. The proposed reorganization may help improve the inner workings of headquarters structures and reduce existing duplication of efforts and overlap-

ping mandates—particularly when it comes to the division of labor between DFS and DM (an issue raised by HIPPO). It does not, however, move forward on the HIPPO recommendations to develop specific “field-focused” policies and procedures for field missions. Instead, reform proposals seem to have been largely centered on structures and processes in New York rather than in the field, despite the secretary-general’s own deliberate bias toward the field from a decade heading the UN Refugee Agency.

¹⁴⁷ UN General Assembly, *Shifting the Management Paradigm in the United Nations: Ensuring a Better Future for All—Report of the Secretary-General*, UN Doc. A/72/492, September 27, 2017.

The proposed DMSPC would provide scaled-back policy guidance and oversight, strategy, planning, and independent quality assurance on behalf of the entire Secretariat. It would also oversee Secretariat-wide financial planning, budgeting, and production of financial statements. The proposed DOS would become the primary operational arm of the Secretariat, assuming the operational and transactional functions for and support to staff at headquarters, offices away from headquarters, regional commissions, and field-based missions. The management reform also proposes consolidating functions such as procurement and payment systems, staff contracting, and engineering and logistics management into two or three centers for global service delivery, building on DFS's existing regional service centers in Entebbe, Brindisi, and Valencia.

The creation of such a large DOS that will support the delivery of mandates across the three pillars of the organization may make sense in terms of scale and rationalization (by reducing duplication with DM). However, this new division of labor between policy (DMSPC) and operations (DOS) is a source of concern for field operations, as they would have to share the new DOS with other clients as it becomes less field-focused. These concerns have already been expressed by some through criticism of the current DFS.

There are also some questions about the link between the two new departments, and there is little confidence within the system that DM will truly be able to reinvent itself (or its rules and procedures) under its new name and configuration. For instance, the controller from DM will now directly defend mission budgets to the ACABQ when, until now, DFS's Field Budget and Finance Division was playing the role of a mediator between field missions and the controller. This risks increasing the disconnect between field operations and budgets, especially when the new DPO will have no budget expertise and will therefore be heavily dependent on DOS.

While the creation of DFS as a support entity separate from DPKO in 2007 created some challenges, an even more powerful and

independent DOS could, in practice, dictate the conduct of operations to the substantive/political departments, DPPA and DPO. On paper, the restructuring proposal calls for "close cooperation" between DPPA, DPO, and the two new departments proposed within the management reform stream (DMSPC and DOS). It states that this cooperation will be achieved through representation of the peace and security pillar on the Management Client Board, as well as through dedicated support capacities.¹⁴⁸ This board would be chaired jointly by the heads of DMSPC and DOS, with rotating representatives from their "clients"—"each of the different types of entity across the global Secretariat, such as departments and offices at Headquarters, offices away from Headquarters and regional commissions, peace operations and field-based offices of special advisers and envoys." It remains unclear, however, how this will function in practice.¹⁴⁹

While delegation of authority to special representatives of the secretary-general in field missions is, in theory, a good thing, in practice it is likely that special representatives will continue to focus on political and mediation issues rather than management, which they will delegate to mission support staff. A main concern is that this reform will empower only those in management roles (who already have large delegated authorities under the current system) rather than special representatives. Further, such a shift in the delegation of authority will require gradually building the capacity of field missions to ensure that it is adequately exercised.

Ultimately, and as highlighted multiple times by the secretary-general:

non-structural factors, including working methods and the overall work culture of the organization, are key to realizing [his] vision of a United Nations that is ready and able to change. Structures can serve as enablers of these essential elements, but cannot, in and of themselves, deliver them. Above all, staff and management must commit to and be appraised on their delivery of a whole-of-pillar and cross-pillar approach.¹⁵⁰

Indeed, although they captivate much attention, structures may not be the most important aspect of the reform proposals. Rather, some of the key ideas

148 UN General Assembly, *Shifting the Management Paradigm in the United Nations*, para. 43.

149 Ibid., para. 83.

150 Ibid., para. 52.

behind the management reform will be key to its success, including “strengthen[ing] [the organization’s] ability to deliver effective, nimble and accountable operational support to peace operations..., decentralizing decision-making and delegating authority, including to the field..., and empowering managers.”¹⁵¹ Successful reform will require mission leaders to leave behind the UN’s notoriously risk-averse culture and take full advantage of a new system in which they are not only more empowered and better backed by the organization, but also more accountable for results rather than adherence to processes and compliance with rules.

The implementation of those reforms will largely depend on how they are carried out by the UN Secretariat and how they are supported by member states. As seen in the past, decentralized models such as the Global Field Support Strategy have not always been welcomed by field missions, and strengthening a department in UN headquarters does not necessarily translate into greater focus on the field. Although the initial reactions of member states to the management reform proposals have been largely positive,¹⁵² some member states have already expressed strong reservations to some aspects of it.¹⁵³ It remains to be seen whether they will support the more detailed cost-estimated proposals that will be presented to them throughout 2018. DFS Under-Secretary-General Atul Khare, who co-led the internal review team on management reform and previously led the change management team in 2011, is acutely aware of the need to properly consult member states on those recommendations that will require their approval through both the regular processes of the General Assembly and the Fifth Committee (in charge of administrative and budgetary affairs). The report of the secretary-general on management reform actually concludes with specific requests to the

General Assembly to endorse the vision for management reform of the Secretariat and to support the creation of the new departments, DMSPC and DOS.¹⁵⁴ The initial reception of the management reform proposal by the ACABQ, which was quite skeptical (over 100 written questions were submitted) suggests that the road to implementation may be long.

Conclusion: Translating the Vision into Coherent Reforms

Secretary-General Guterres’s flurry of reform proposals in the summer of 2017 was long-awaited. While their reception was lukewarm during a global town hall meeting by some UN bureaucrats wary of pay cuts and layoffs, member states largely welcomed hearing more from the secretary-general on how he will reform the organization during a retreat he held with ambassadors at the UN Secretariat in New York. A number of member states had already expressed their support for the secretary-general’s reform package in writing, responding to a letter he had sent to them in June 2017 outlining his proposals. Some 129 member states also signed a Declaration of Support to UN Reform at a high-level event organized by the US on September 18th, declaring their commitment to and support for the secretary-general in his reform efforts to make the UN fit for purpose.¹⁵⁵ It remains to be seen whether the enthusiasm of member states for the secretary-general’s vision will be matched by effective support for more detailed reform proposals down the road.

The challenge for the secretary-general will be to translate the parallel tracks of reform described in this report into a concrete and coherent whole that not only stays true to his global vision but will also

151 UN Secretary-General, “Note from Secretary-General to Member States on Restructuring of the Peace and Security Pillar,” September 12, 2017.

152 A letter signed by some member states welcomed proposals to align authority with responsibility, eliminate redundancy and overlap, and enhance collaboration across the UN system. These reflect a ten-point UN Reform Political Declaration signed by several countries (Canada, China, Germany, India, Indonesia, Japan, Jordan, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Slovakia, Thailand, the UK, and Uruguay) on the invitation of the US. See Kacie Candela, “Trump to Force UN Reform Agenda at General Assembly Session in September,” *PassBlue*, August 30, 2017, available at www.passblue.com/2017/08/30/trump-to-force-un-reform-agenda-at-general-assembly-session-in-september/.

153 See, for instance, the statement from the permanent mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations at the plenary meeting of the General Assembly on “United Nations Reform: Measures and Proposals” on October 12, 2017, in which its representative cautioned against “weakening the identity and specialization of the different parts of the United Nations”; called the treatment of “sustaining peace” as a specific concept or a new direction in United Nations activities “inappropriate”; and insisted on the need to “understand what has been done in the past” before considering new management reform initiatives.

154 UN General Assembly, *Shifting the Management Paradigm in the United Nations*, para. 108.

155 Michelle Nichols, “Trump to Host Sept. 18 Meeting of World Leaders on U.N. Reform,” Reuters, September 1, 2017, available at www.reuters.com/article/us-un-reform-trump/trump-to-host-sept-18-meeting-of-world-leaders-on-u-n-reform-idUSKCN1BC5SP.

have real impact in headquarters and in the field. To be successful, this will require reforms not only to increase efficiency and effectiveness, but also to demonstrate the continued relevance of the organization and its peace operations at a time when both are under question. Guterres proposed a “master plan” combining structural and management reforms with a very ambitious timeline for moving forward his reform agenda. This plan involves getting the “proof of consent” of member states this year, their formal approval throughout 2018 (based on a detailed cost breakdown presented to the General Assembly committees, particularly the Fifth Committee), and having a new system in place by January 2019. Implementation of the reforms requiring the approval of member states would therefore, if approved, only start in 2019 and could take years, as seen with past reforms.

In a way, Guterres positioned himself for the medium term by showing that change cannot happen overnight and that culture and processes matter. But in doing so, he might at the same time lose momentum and miss out on the “honeymoon” period during which a reform package might encounter less opposition—often seen as the first six months of the term. It was during this period that Boutros Boutros-Ghali created DPKO and DPA and halved the number of under-secretaries-general, Kofi Annan presented his “program of reform,” and Ban Ki-moon created DFS. As pointed out by an external observer, “Aside from a slow start, Guterres can also expect growing opposition from member states that have gotten used to micro-managing internal UN affairs, and helping to produce the current bureaucratic labyrinth. UN budgetary authority is zealously guarded by member states, even if they don’t put up the money themselves.”¹⁵⁶ The secretary-general has also faced increasing criticism from civil society for his lack of transparency, a charge that will make it more difficult for him to garner sufficient external support for his proposed changes to the UN system.

Contrary to some of his predecessors, Guterres decided he has five years and intends to use his

entire first mandate to reform the machinery and the bureaucracy of the UN in an integrated manner. Change does not happen easily at the UN; process matters, and expectations should be managed.¹⁵⁷ While the temptation will inevitably be to focus on short-term structural reorganizations and what they mean for power relations within the bureaucracy, the secretary-general has insisted on multiple occasions already that change will need to come from improvements in working culture, methods, and processes over time as well.

The secretary-general’s vision for the organization—the reason for which he was selected in October 2016—has been a unifying factor. He has called for a renewed focus on prevention, integrating the organization horizontally to overcome fragmentation between the pillars, as well as vertically. He lost no time in showing his determination to change the way the bureaucracy functions but will now need to rely on senior officials and heads of new departments to faithfully implement the spirit and the letter of these reforms on his behalf. He still benefits from broad support from member states but will need to nurture these relationships through regular communications and reassurance, as they expect him to remain personally involved but also to avoid new turf wars between departments around the implementation of reforms.

If effectively carried out with active support from a broad spectrum of member states, including from a committed Security Council and a consistent Fifth Committee, and from UN staff, the reforms proposed by the secretary-general could not only help realize some of the four strategic shifts called for by HIPPO but also improve the integration of the UN system as a whole. They could also contribute to rebuilding trust between the UN Secretariat and member states, as well as among member states. They would need to do so in a context where there is no financial room to maneuver, with downward budgetary pressure on peace operations in particular exacerbating tensions, especially among Security Council members and troop-contributing countries. This


156 George Russell, “UN Launches Blitz Reform Campaign as ‘Absolutely Essential’ Protection against Trump Administration,” Fox News, August 8, 2017, available at www.foxnews.com/world/2017/08/08/un-launches-blitz-reform-campaign-as-absolutely-essential-protection-against-trump-administration.html.

157 See Francesco Mancini, “Managing Change at the United Nations: Lessons from Recent Initiatives,” International Peace Institute, October 2015, available at www.ipinst.org/2015/10/managing-change-at-the-united-nations-lessons-from-recent-initiatives.

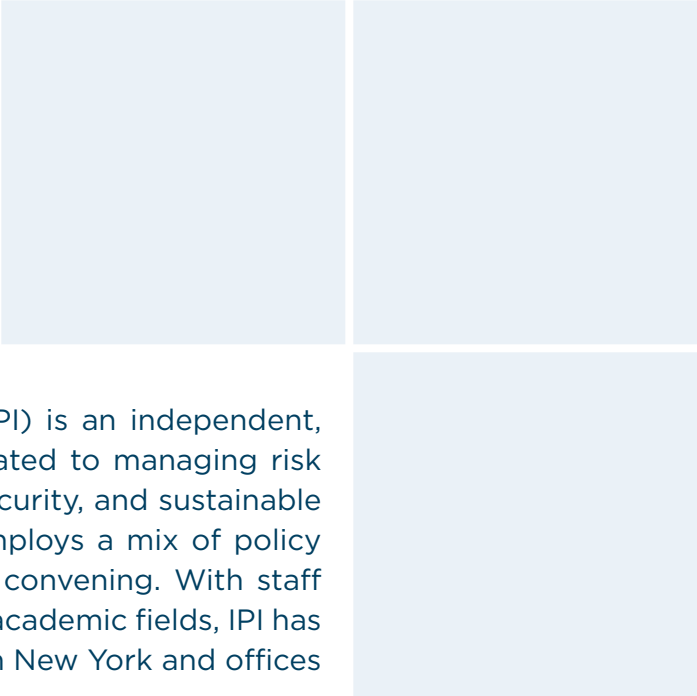
financial pressure will also have direct implications in the field, including in terms of safety and security, mobility, and use of technologies, which will require significant decision making but may also encourage the long-awaited shift toward lighter, nimbler, and better-tailored peace operations.

In this context, formal and comprehensive annual briefings by the secretary-general to the Security Council followed by a debate on peacekeeping reform—as validated by Resolution 2378 (2017)—should be welcomed. First, this would help dissipate the notion that this secretary-general is not interested in peace operations. Second, it could help the UN Secretariat demonstrate the impact of such reforms, including

in the field. Third, it could help keep the attention of member states on the issue (as the secretary-general's report would be discussed by council members and hopefully involve other member states as well, including key troop-contributing countries) and hold them accountable for their own commitments to peace operations. And fourth, these annual debates should be an opportunity for the secretary-general to continue advocating for the strategic shifts called for by HIPPO—recognizing the primacy of politics, viewing peace operations as a continuum, strengthening partnerships, and focusing on the field and on people—rather than to narrow the discussions to some of the technicalities of UN peacekeeping.

| United Nations Peace Operations Reform Scorecard 2017: Taking Stock of the Implementation of the Recommendations of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) | | | |  | |
|--|------------------------|---|--|---|--|
| Four strategic shifts recommended by HIPPO | | Progress in 2017 | | Challenges/Observations on Reform Proposals | |
| 1. Politics must drive the design and implementation of peace operations | Secretary-general (SG) | <p>The secretary-general shared his vision for prevention and sustaining peace, and prevention is a key task of his senior adviser on policy.</p> <p>The Executive Committee is attempting to bring more political focus and coherence to UN engagement in specific contexts.</p> <p>The secretary-general established a High-Level Advisory Board on mediation to provide him with advice and back specific efforts.</p> <p>The UN adopted a new methodology for strategic reviews of peace operations with scenarios ahead of mandate renewals.</p> | | <p>Core UN capacities to undertake prevention and mediation remain largely dependent on voluntary funding (extra-budgetary).</p> <p>The UN Secretariat could propose better political strategies/options for ongoing peace operations for the Security Council to support.</p> <p>The secretary-general's surge for diplomacy faced a setback in Cyprus and has sometimes been constrained by big-power politics.</p> <p>Reform proposals including for a Standing Principals' Group (SPG) could help ensure coherence of peace and security priorities.</p> | |
| | Member states (MS) | <p>Security Council members rhetorically supported the primacy of politics through a series of open debates and briefings throughout 2017 and passed Res. 2378 (2017), which states that "the primacy of politics should be the hallmark of the approach of the UN to the resolution of conflict."</p> | | <p>Operationalizing the primacy of politics and prevention platform has been difficult, as considerations related to stabilization, security, and protection of civilians often take precedent.</p> <p>In practice, the Security Council has lacked unity on political strategies to support peace operations or has instead focused on technical solutions and deployments of uniformed personnel (or reduction of troop ceilings) and sanctions, as illustrated in South Sudan, Burundi, and Darfur, for instance.</p> | |
| | | <p>The secretary-general's new Executive Office is emphasizing strategic analysis, planning, and monitoring.</p> <p>There has been continued progress on strategic force generation, including on the Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System (PCRS).</p> | | <p>It is too early to say whether the prioritized and sequenced activities in the mandates of MINUSMA and MINUSCA have been implemented effectively.</p> <p>Reforms of the development system could lead to better transition and exit strategies through, inter alia, enhanced UN country teams and empowered resident coordinators.</p> | |
| 2. The full spectrum of UN peace operations must be used more flexibly to respond to changing needs on the ground | SG | <p>The Security Council prioritized mandates in some existing missions (MINUSCA, MINUSMA, and MONUSCO) and sequenced and phased the mandates of the two consecutive UN missions in Colombia and reaffirmed its "determination to pursue more prioritization when valuating, mandating and reviewing...operations" (Res. 2378).</p> | | <p>The proposal for the restructuring of the peace and security pillar creating a new Department of Peace Operations (DPO) responsible for both peacekeeping and field-based special political missions should help move the UN toward a continuum and full spectrum of peace operations.</p> | |
| | | <p>The Security Council prioritized mandates in some existing missions (MINUSCA, MINUSMA, and MONUSCO) and sequenced and phased the mandates of the two consecutive UN missions in Colombia and reaffirmed its "determination to pursue more prioritization when valuating, mandating and reviewing...operations" (Res. 2378).</p> | | <p>Lack of new peace operations (other than in Colombia) has not given opportunities to test prioritized and sequenced mandates.</p> | |
| | MS | <p>Security Council members, troop-contributing countries, and the UN Secretariat are attempting to improve triangular cooperation.</p> <p>Member states expressed initial support for reforms proposed by the secretary-general, including in a September 18th declaration endorsed by 129 member states so far.</p> | | <p>Despite its adoption by the secretary-general, not all member states have embraced the continuum of responses under the umbrella of peace operations, continuing to use "peacekeeping."</p> <p>The HIPPO recommendation to create a single peace operations account to support the full spectrum of UN peace operations and make transitions smoother has not yet been discussed.</p> <p>The ACABQ and Fifth Committee's review of current operations (including discussions of budget and staffing cuts) has been at odds with some of the HIPPO recommendations.</p> | |

| Four strategic shifts recommended by HIPPO | | Progress in 2017 | Challenges/Observations on Reform Proposals |
|--|----|---|---|
| 3. A stronger, more inclusive peace and security partnership is needed for the future | SG | <p>The secretary-general championed the UN-AU strategic partnership, submitting a report in May 2017, pursuant to Res. 2320 (2016), on options for authorization and support for AU peace support operations, including the financing model, joint planning, consultative decision making, and oversight.</p> <p>The Joint UN-AU Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security, signed in April 2017, addresses challenges of peace and security across the full spectrum of the conflict cycle.</p> <p>The UN and World Bank conducted their first study on prevention of violent conflict.</p> | <p>The change in the US administration led to a loss of momentum around the 25-75 percent proposal for predictable and sustainable financing and support to AU operations authorized by the UN Security Council.</p> |
| | MS | <p>The AU has made progress toward finding innovative financing solutions since the January 2015 commitment by the Assembly of the AU to fund 25 percent of the cost of its peace and security efforts, including peace support operations, over a five-year period.</p> <p>The Security Council expressed its intention to give further consideration to practical steps that can be taken to partly finance AU peace support operations through UN assessed contributions on a case-by-case basis (Res. 2378).</p> | <p>The Security Council "welcomed" the deployment of the G5 Sahel force but has been divided over the issue of financing and supporting it through the UN (vs. through bilateral support).</p> |
| 4. The UN Secretariat must become more field-focused and UN peace operations must be more people-centered | SG | <p>Continuing to focus on Res. 2272 (2017), the secretary-general submitted a report on preventing sexual exploitation and abuse in February 2017 and appointed a UN advocate for victims' rights. More than 90 member states have signed a "voluntary compact."</p> <p>The secretary-general has demonstrated commitment to gender parity, including through a system-wide strategy that provides a roadmap to parity at the senior levels of leadership by 2021, and across the board by 2028.</p> <p>The Department of Peacekeeping Operations is conducting work on community engagement strategies and local conflict analysis and mapping, as well as on the prevention of violent extremism.</p> <p>The UN Secretariat is working on improving the coherence and rapid delivery of programmatic funding.</p> | <p>In the context of budget shortfalls, gender advisers are being downgraded and, in some cases, cut from field missions altogether.</p> <p>The restructuring of the peace and security pillar proposal suggests little change in gender functions, as DPPA and DPO "would maintain their respective specialized gender capacities and functions with a view to ensuring the mainstreaming of gender at all levels and in all areas of the Organization's work."</p> <p>The management reform proposal objectives to decentralize decision making, empower managers, and reduce duplicative structures and overlapping mandates are all critical. However, they have been largely centered on structures and processes in New York and do not go in the direction proposed by HIPPO to develop specific "field-focused" policies and procedures for field missions.</p> |
| | MS | | |



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