

# Neighborhood Dynamics in UN Peacekeeping Operations, 1990–2017

PROVIDING FOR PEACEKEEPING NO. 16

PAUL D. WILLIAMS AND THONG NGUYEN



**Cover Photo:** Members of the Chadian contingent of the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) serving in the town of Kidal, Mali, December 19, 2016. UN Photo/Sylvain Liechti.

**Disclaimer:** The views expressed in this paper represent those of the authors and not necessarily those of the International Peace Institute. IPI welcomes consideration of a wide range of perspectives in the pursuit of a well-informed debate on critical policies and issues in international affairs.

**IPI Publications**

Adam Lupel, *Vice President*

Albert Trithart, *Editor*

Madeline Brennan, *Associate Editor*

**Suggested Citation:**

Paul D. Williams and Thong Nguyen,  
“Neighborhood Dynamics in UN  
Peacekeeping Operations, 1990–2017,”  
New York: International Peace Institute,  
April 2018.

© by International Peace Institute, 2018  
All Rights Reserved

[www.ipinst.org](http://www.ipinst.org)

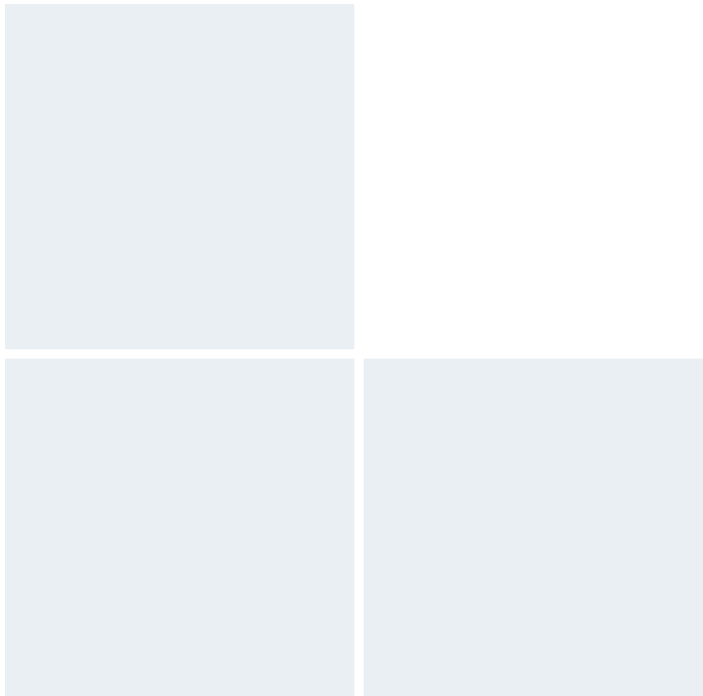
## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

PAUL D. WILLIAMS is Associate Professor of International Affairs at the George Washington University and a Non-resident Senior Adviser at the International Peace Institute.

THONG NGUYEN is Data Lab Program Administrator at the International Peace Institute.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks go to Alexandra Novosseloff and Jake Sherman for their comments on an earlier draft of this report, and to Richard Gowan and Norrie MacQueen for conversations that stimulated it in the first place.



# CONTENTS

---

Abbreviations .....	iii
Executive Summary .....	1
Introduction .....	1
The Policy Puzzle .....	2
Theorizing Peacekeeping Contributions from the Neighborhood .....	4
The Data .....	5
Observations .....	7
Conclusion .....	15





---

## Abbreviations

AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
AU	African Union
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
MINUGUA	UN Verification Mission in Guatemala
MINURCA	UN Mission in the Central African Republic
MINURCAT	UN Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad
MINURSO	UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara
MINUSCA	UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic
MINUSMA	UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
MONUA	UN Observer Mission in Angola
MONUC	UN Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
MONUSCO	UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
ONUB	UN Operation in Burundi
ONUCA	UN Observer Group in Central America
ONUMOZ	UN Operation in Mozambique
ONUSAL	UN Observer Mission in El Salvador
PCC	Police-contributing country
TCC	Troop-contributing country
UN	United Nations
UNAMIC	UN Advance Mission in Cambodia
UNAMID	AU/UN Mission in Darfur
UNAMIR	UN Assistance Mission for Rwanda
UNAMSIL	UN Mission in Sierra Leone
UNAVEM I	UN Angola Verification Mission I
UNAVEM II	UN Angola Verification Mission II
UNCRO	UN Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia
UNDOF	UN Disengagement Observer Force

UNFICYP	UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus
UNIFIL	UN Interim Force in Lebanon
UNIIMOG	UN Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group
UNIKOM	UN Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission
UNISFA	UN Interim Security Force for Abyei
UNMEE	UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea
UNMIBH	UN Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina
UNMIK	UN Mission in Kosovo
UNMIL	UN Mission in Liberia
UNMIS	UN Mission in Sudan
UNMISET	UN Mission of Support in East Timor
UNMISS	UN Mission in South Sudan
UNMOGIP	UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan
UNOCI	UN Operation in Côte d'Ivoire
UNOMIG	UN Observer Mission in Georgia
UNOMIL	UN Observer Mission in Liberia
UNPREDEP	UN Preventive Deployment Force
UNPROFOR	UN Protection Force
UNTAC	UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia
UNTAES	UN Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium
UNTAET	UN Transitional Administration in East Timor
UNTSO	UN Truce Supervision Organization

## Executive Summary

The last decade has seen more UN peacekeepers than ever before coming from countries neighboring the host state. This report uses the IPI Peacekeeping Database to summarize trends in neighborhood contributions to UN peacekeeping operations between 1990 and 2017. It does so by distinguishing between peacekeeping contributions that come from “next-door neighbors”—states that share a land border with the host state; “neighbors’ neighbors”—states that share a land border with the next-door neighbors; and the “neighborhood”—the sum of next-door neighbors and neighbors’ neighbors.

It shows that there has been significant growth in the number of UN peacekeepers drawn from next-door neighbors and the neighborhood, especially since mid-2008. In the early 1990s, less than 3 percent of all UN peacekeeping troops deployed came from next-door neighbors, but after 2008, the percentage has grown steadily to about 20 percent by 2017. For the neighborhood as a whole, the number of UN peacekeeping troops was rarely more than 10 percent until January 2008, but contributions have since grown to nearly 34 percent by 2017.

The trends for military and police contributions are remarkably similar for the entire period 1990–2017. For troop contributions, 61 percent of the fifty-four UN peacekeeping operations deployed between 1990 and 2017 had some troop-contributing countries (TCCs) from the neighborhood, and 39 percent had next-door neighbors as TCCs. For police contributions (individual officers and formed police units), 59 percent of these missions had some police-contributing countries (PCCs) from the neighborhood, and 37 percent had next-door neighbors as PCCs.

This trend runs counter to a longstanding, if unwritten, principle that UN peacekeeping missions should seek to avoid deployment of troops or police from “neighbors” in order to

mitigate the risks associated with these countries’ national interests in the host countries. It also means there would be significant implications if policymakers wished to reverse this trend. Perhaps most notably, ending it would put major additional pressure on the UN’s force generation process.

## Introduction

According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, nearly eighty peace operations were deployed worldwide as of May 2017.<sup>1</sup> As the largest source of international troop deployments across the globe, a central policy challenge is how to make these operations effective instruments of conflict management. One ingredient of their success is the ability to deploy peacekeepers who are well-suited to implement the tasks identified in the mission’s mandate.

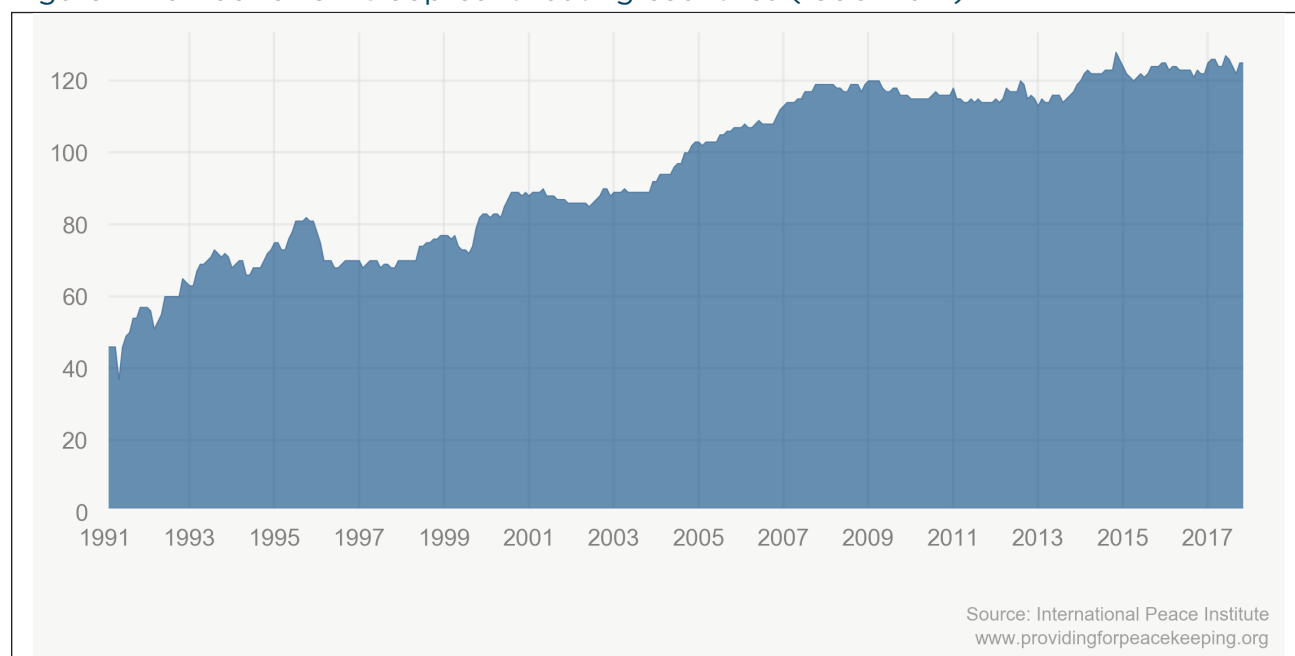
To that end, the United Nations has recently tried to increase the number of countries that provide peacekeepers for its missions and revamped its force generation system to make peacekeepers more effective on the ground.<sup>2</sup> In large part, this project was intended to enable the UN Secretariat to be more selective about which contributing countries were deployed to peacekeeping operations. Rather than accepting whoever volunteered, the UN would instead be able to choose the contributing countries with the capabilities best suited to the mission at hand. To that end, since 1990, the UN has roughly tripled the number of its member states that contribute uniformed personnel (troops and police) to its peacekeeping operations, from 46 to 125 (see Figure 1).

However, debate persists over one dimension of the force generation process: Should the UN increase the number of peacekeepers drawn from countries neighboring the host state? As of December 2017, there was considerable variation across UN peacekeeping operations on this issue. Seven missions had no troops from neighboring countries, while four had over half their troops provided by countries from the neighborhood: the

1 Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, “SIPRI Map of Multilateral Peace Operations, 2017,” available at [www.sipri.org/publications/2017/sipri-map-multilateral-peace-operations-2017](http://www.sipri.org/publications/2017/sipri-map-multilateral-peace-operations-2017).

2 See, for example, Alex J. Bellamy and Paul D. Williams, eds., *Providing Peacekeepers: The Politics, Challenges, and Future of United Nations Peacekeeping Contributions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Adam C. Smith and Arthur Boutellis, “Rethinking Force Generation: Filling Capability Gaps in UN Peacekeeping,” International Peace Institute, *Providing for Peacekeeping* no. 2, May 2013, available at [www.ipinst.org/2013/05/rethinking-force-generation-filling-capability-gaps-in-un-peacekeeping](http://www.ipinst.org/2013/05/rethinking-force-generation-filling-capability-gaps-in-un-peacekeeping); and UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support, *Current and Emerging Uniformed Capability Requirements for United Nations Peacekeeping*, August 2017.

Figure 1. Number of UN troop-contributing countries (1990–2017)



UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA); the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA); the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK); and the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA). As we illustrate below, the trend for UN peacekeeping operations to use a growing number of troops from the neighborhood has emerged over the last decade. The issue for policy-makers is whether they should be encouraging or reversing it.

## The Policy Puzzle

At issue is the question of what makes a good neighbor in terms of UN peacekeeping. The presence of neighbors as peacekeepers can raise both opportunities and challenges for peace operations.

In generic terms, there are several potential opportunities afforded by having neighbors as contributing countries. They should have better local knowledge of the host state and its conflict dynamics, their geographic proximity should facilitate rapid deployment, and, because they stand to be impacted by spillover effects, they have a vested interest in reaching a solution to the crisis and hence should be willing to endure risky and lengthy

missions. On the other hand, neighborhood contributions might also bring challenges for UN peacekeeping operations. Arguably the most important is that their geographic proximity might render them primary or secondary parties to the conflict, in which case they would be likely to push partisan, vested interests both by omission and commission that undermine the UN's principle of impartiality.

Historically, senior decision makers at the UN had some aversion to encouraging neighboring states to become peacekeepers. In the context of the early Cold War, this was partly stimulated by a concern with preventing the superpowers and their allies from interfering in the domestic politics of UN member states. This sentiment was reflected, for example, in the United States' "good neighbor" policy toward Latin America before World War II, under which it promised not to interfere or intervene in the domestic affairs of the region's states. The United States subsequently became a "bad" neighbor when it began interfering and intervening in the region as part of its Cold War policy of containing the Soviet Union.

At the UN, a similar logic was articulated by the UN's second secretary-general, Dag Hammarskjöld. In 1958, Hammarskjöld had warned about the dangers of deploying

peacekeepers from states with direct interests in the conflict:

In order to limit the scope of possible difference of opinion, the United Nations in recent operations has followed two principles: not to include units from any of the permanent members of the Security Council; and not to include units from any country which, because of its geographical position or for other reasons, might be considered as possibly having a special interest in the situation which has called for the operation.<sup>3</sup>

This formulation did not strictly bar all neighbors from being troop-contributing countries in UN peacekeeping operations, but it emphasized the importance of avoiding political partisanship in the Cold War geopolitical context and noted that geographic proximity might be a concern in that regard. Yet in practice, Hammarskjöld apparently did not give his own warning much weight, because he was content for the next UN peacekeeping operation deployed to the Congo in 1960 (ONUC) to comprise primarily African states that had a special interest in the process of Congo's decolonization.

Nevertheless, during the Cold War the force generation process generally avoided neighborhood contributions in UN peacekeeping missions. Some analysts have suggested that “in the case of the UN” there has been “a long-standing principle of not allowing a country to engage in a peace support operation in a neighboring country.”<sup>4</sup> While it goes too far to suggest that keeping neighbors out of missions was ever a formal principle of UN peacekeeping, it does appear that consideration of neighborhood contributions was taken into account under the UN's broader principle of impartiality. The need for impartiality was not based on geographic proximity per se but was one of the three basic principles of modern UN peacekeeping and remains a bedrock of the UN's approach today.<sup>5</sup> As expressed in the UN's “capstone” doctrine of 2008, impartiality meant

that its peacekeeping operations “must implement their mandate without favor or prejudice to any party.”<sup>6</sup> This would resonate with Hammarskjöld's 1958 warning about including states with a “special interest” in the conflict as TCCs.

That said, the UN also recognized that neighborhood or regional politics were always likely to affect its peace operations. Indeed, one of the central lessons learned over several decades of UN peacekeeping was that the “regional character” of many of the crises that came before the Security Council gave neighboring states an important role in the success or failure of missions. As the “capstone” document noted, “Rarely can the problems in one state be treated in isolation from its neighbours. The attitude of neighbouring states can be as important a factor in determining the viability of a peace process, as the commitment of the local parties, some of whom may even be acting as proxies for neighbouring states.”<sup>7</sup>

Today, there is significant variation across UN and other forms of peace operations as to whether they contain peacekeepers from the neighborhood. Some peace operations have no neighbors as TCCs. Others have a small number and proportion of peacekeepers from neighboring states. And in rare cases, peace operations are almost entirely made up of troops from next-door neighbors.

However, a trend has started to develop in Africa whereby several multinational forces have formed to combat regional threats posed by insurgencies, including the Regional Task Force against the Lord's Resistance Army in Central Africa (2011), the Multinational Joint Task Force against Boko Haram (2015), and the G5 Sahel Joint Force (2017). Similarly, since 2012, the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) has seen nearly half its troops come from Somalia's neighboring states of Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Kenya. This reversed the initial approach by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and later the AU, which at first banned Somalia's next-door

3 UN General Assembly, *Summary Study of the Experience Derived from the Establishment and Operation of the United Nations Emergency Force—Report of the Secretary-General*, UN Doc. A/3943, October 9, 1958, para. 60.

4 Adam M. Fejerskov, Signe Marie Cold-Ravnkilde, and Peter Albrecht, “African Peace Operations and the Power of Regional Interests,” Danish Institute for International Studies, November 2017, p. 12, available at [www.diis.dk/en/research/african-peace-operations-and-the-power-of-regional-interests](http://www.diis.dk/en/research/african-peace-operations-and-the-power-of-regional-interests).

5 UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support, *United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines*, 2008, pp. 31–33, available at [www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/documents/capstone\\_eng.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/documents/capstone_eng.pdf); Emily Paddon Rhoads, *Taking Sides in Peacekeeping: Impartiality and the Future of the United Nations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

6 UN DPKO/DFS, *United Nations Peacekeeping Operations*, p. 33.

7 Ibid., p. 50.



neighbors from contributing troops to the IGAD Peace Support Mission to Somalia (IGASOM) in 2005 and then, briefly, to AMISOM in 2007.<sup>8</sup> Finally, in 2013 and 2014, respectively, African states within the Southern African Development Community proposed the formation of an Intervention Force in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, while IGAD states proposed the formation of a Protection and Deterrent Force to deploy to South Sudan. As it turned out, both of these forces ended up being deployed within the existing UN peacekeeping operations: the Force Intervention Brigade in the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and the Regional Protection Force in the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS).

These developments prompted the Nigerian diplomat and scholar Ibrahim Gambari to observe that the risk of these crises spreading across the wider region had increased the pressure on neighboring states to provide peacekeepers for these missions. Consequently, he said, whereas UN peacekeeping operations might be appropriately characterized as “saving strangers,” recent African-led operations have been predominantly about “saving neighbors.”<sup>9</sup> In fact, data from the IPI Peacekeeping Database suggests that “saving neighbors” has also become a more salient issue over the last decade of UN peacekeeping operations.

What follows is a brief discussion of why neighboring states might provide UN peacekeepers and a summary of the neighborhood dynamics of providing peacekeepers for UN operations between 1990 and 2017. Further research and analysis could use this data as a starting point for evaluating the opportunities and challenges raised by having neighbors as contributing countries, and then for assessing the conditions under which policymakers should encourage or discourage neighbors from

providing peacekeepers to UN operations.

## Theorizing Peacekeeping Contributions from the Neighborhood

Why do neighboring states decide to provide peacekeepers for UN operations, and what are the principal incentives for them to do so? Some clues are provided in the relatively small scholarly literature that has theorized about why states provide UN peacekeepers, especially in Africa.<sup>10</sup> In generic terms, a state’s decision on whether or not to provide peacekeepers results from its key policymakers weighing motivating factors that encourage deployment against inhibiting dynamics that militate against it.<sup>11</sup> These motivating rationales and inhibitors can be generic (creating predispositions over time) or mission-specific. Explaining why a state contributed peacekeepers should therefore take account of both sets of factors.

Once a state has decided to deploy peacekeepers, it has additional choices about *what* to contribute (personnel/unit type and equipment), *where* to contribute (particular regions and missions), with *whom* to contribute (particular institutions or coalitions), and even *how* to contribute (in terms of national caveats). This report’s focus is limited, however, to describing when neighboring states provided uniformed peacekeepers (soldiers or police) and does not address what type of units were deployed.

Employing the framework developed by Alex Bellamy and Paul Williams and used as the basis for drafting the Providing for Peacekeeping Project’s seventy-one country profiles,<sup>12</sup> this comparative analysis is intended to illuminate why states provide uniformed personnel for peace operations. It is based on assessing the interplay among five clusters of rationales and inhibitors

8 Paul D. Williams, *Fighting for Peace in Somalia: A History and Analysis of the African Union Mission (AMISOM), 2007–2017* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

9 Ibrahim Gambari, keynote conference speech, “The Future of African Peace Operations,” Cape Town, December 17–18, 2014, available at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mw8KXtXWK3w](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mw8KXtXWK3w).

10 Jonah Victor, “African Peacekeeping in Africa: Warlord Politics, Defense Economics, and State Legitimacy,” *Journal of Peace Research* 47, no. 2 (2010); Bellamy and Williams, eds., *Providing Peacekeepers*; Philip Cunliffe, *Legions of Peace: UN Peacekeepers from the Global South* (London: Hurst, 2013); and Jacob D. Kathman and Molly M. Melin, “Who Keeps the Peace? Understanding State Contributions to UN Peacekeeping Operations,” *International Studies Quarterly* 61, no. 1 (March 2017).

11 Bellamy and Williams, eds., *Providing Peacekeepers*, pp. 1–22, 417–436.

12 Ibid.



related to political, security, economic, institutional, and normative concerns. In brief, these can be understood as follows:<sup>13</sup>

- **Political factors** relate to prestige, reputation, and influence; bilateral partnerships; or pressure or persuasion by external actors.
- **Security factors** involve national and regional threats.
- **Economic factors** include financial benefits or losses for the government, the security sector, individual soldiers, and private or national corporations.
- **Institutional factors** concern the domestic security sector, including its reputation, operational experience, or assistance packages.
- **Normative factors** include ethical commitments to act as a “good international citizen” and promote peace or solidarity with groups in the crisis zone in question.

We are unaware of any published study that focuses specifically on why neighboring states might become UN T/PCCs. However, we would initially suspect that the decision calculus of next-door neighbors, as a distinct category of potential T/PCCs, would be influenced more heavily by security, political, and potentially normative considerations than that of more distant states. In Africa, where the majority of UN peacekeepers have been deployed since 1990, this is captured by the popular adage about the imperative of helping to put out a fire in your neighbor’s house. This embodies a security imperative to prevent the fire from spreading and burning your own house, a political imperative to maintain good relations with your neighbors, and a moral imperative to help a neighbor and fellow African in trouble.

In more negative terms, neighbors would presumably face all the usual inhibitors that might prevent them from becoming T/PCCs. These could include that the neighbor might lack previous

experience providing peacekeepers; lack relevant capabilities (either because they do not possess them or because they are being deployed elsewhere); lack political will to act for various reasons; be a secondary party to the conflict with partisan ties to one of the primary parties; or have other, more pressing national priorities.

## The Data

This report focuses on data on what are usually referred to as UN peacekeeping operations. We define the broader category of peace operations in the following manner:

the expeditionary use of uniformed personnel (troops, military observers/experts, and police), with or without a UN mandate, but with an explicit mandate to assist in the prevention of armed conflict by supporting a peace process; serve as an instrument to observe or assist in the implementation of ceasefires or peace agreements; or enforce ceasefires, peace agreements or the will of the UN Security Council in order to build stable peace.<sup>14</sup>

This definition excludes humanitarian military interventions and collective self-defense operations, sometimes referred to as “interventions by invitation”<sup>15</sup> or “solidarity deployments.”<sup>16</sup> It also excludes civilian missions, and hence we do not include UN special political and peacebuilding missions in this analysis.

Our data about neighborhood contributions is drawn from the IPI Peacekeeping Database.<sup>17</sup> Assembled from UN archival records, the database tells us which countries have sent UN peacekeepers where in the post–Cold War period and what kind of uniformed personnel they chose to deploy. Specifically, it includes the total number of uniformed personnel contributions of each contributing country by month, by type (troop, police, or expert/observer), and by mission, from November 1990 to the present.<sup>18</sup>

Importantly, this database is institutionally

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., pp. 18–21, 418–424.

<sup>14</sup> Alex J. Bellamy and Paul D. Williams, “Trends in Peace Operations, 1947–2013,” in *The Oxford Handbook of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations*, edited by Joachim A. Koops, Thierry Tardy, Norrie MacQueen, and Paul D. Williams (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), p. 13.

<sup>15</sup> Georg Nolte, “Intervention by Invitation,” in *Max Planck Encyclopedia of Public International Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), available at <http://opil.ouplaw.com/view/10.1093/law:epil/9780199231690/law-9780199231690-e1702?prd=EPIL>.

<sup>16</sup> Katharina Coleman, “Innovations in ‘African Solutions to African Problems’: The Evolving Practice of Regional Peacekeeping in Sub-Saharan Africa,” *Journal of Modern African Studies* 49, no. 4 (2011).

<sup>17</sup> Data and charts presented in this report and additional mission-level material are available at [www.providingforpeacekeeping.org](http://www.providingforpeacekeeping.org).

<sup>18</sup> Chris Perry and Adam C. Smith, “Trends in Uniformed Contributions to UN Peacekeeping: A New Dataset, 1991–2012,” International Peace Institute, *Providing for Peacekeeping* no. 3, June 2013, available at [www.ipinst.org/2013/06/trends-in-uniformed-contributions-to-un-peacekeeping-a-new-dataset-1991-2012](http://www.ipinst.org/2013/06/trends-in-uniformed-contributions-to-un-peacekeeping-a-new-dataset-1991-2012).

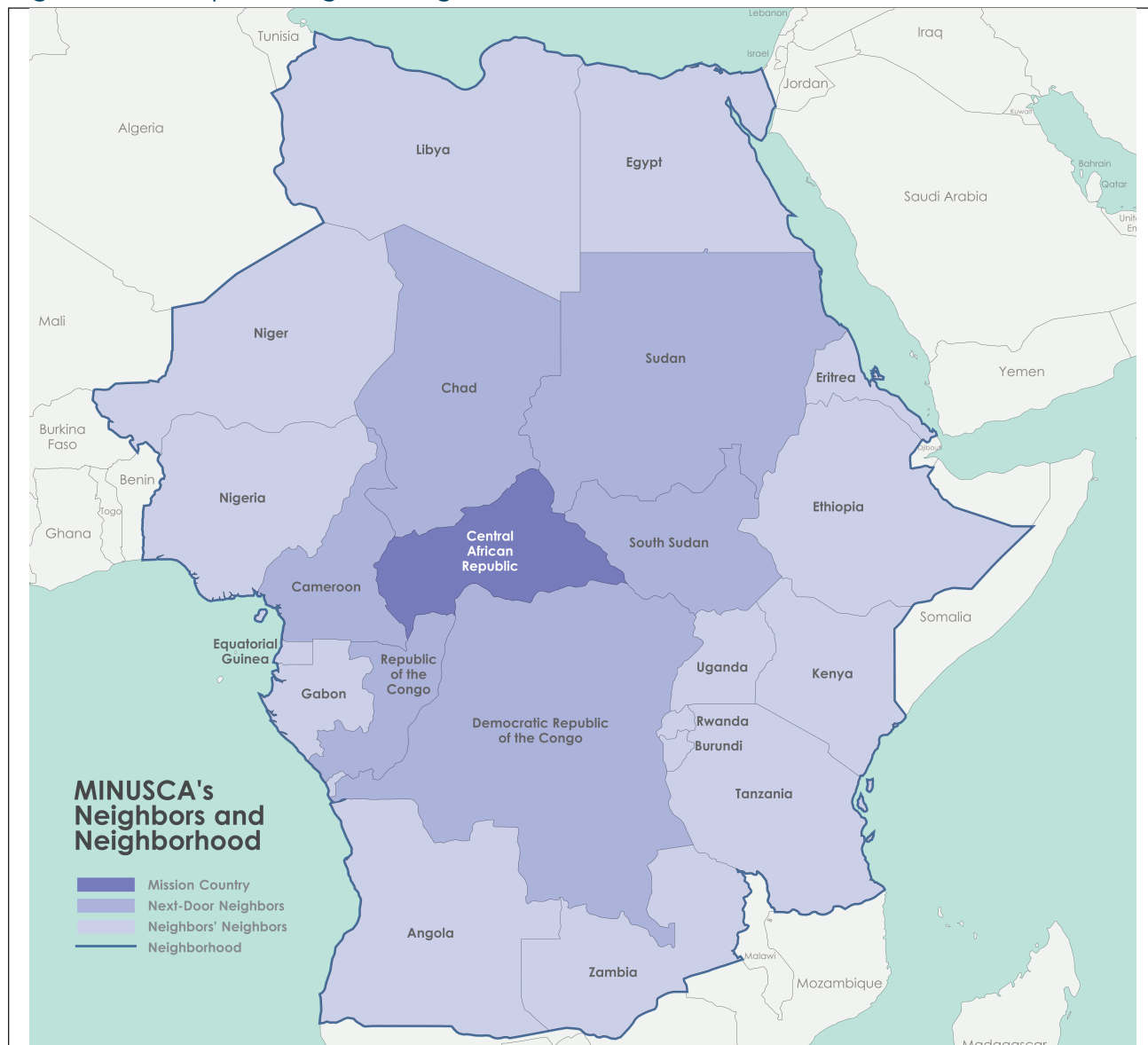
limited inasmuch as it only contains contributions to UN peace operations. A comprehensive analysis of neighborhood dynamics in peace operations would require investigating this issue across all forms of peace operations, including those conducted by regional organizations and coalitions of the willing in addition to UN missions. Comprehensive equivalent data on those actors and missions, however, is not publicly available. The IPI Peacekeeping Database is also limited in terms of its time coverage. While the first UN peacekeeping operation deployed in 1948, the IPI data is only available from November 1990.

Defined in this manner, the IPI Peacekeeping

Database contains a total of fifty-four UN peacekeeping operations between November 1990 and December 2017. This gives us a total of 325 potential monthly observations.

In presenting the data, we used the concept of “neighbor” in three ways to distinguish between states immediately contiguous to the state hosting the UN peacekeeping operation and the wider subregion. In this sense, we used geographic proximity as the principal factor in defining a neighborhood. We acknowledge that there are other useful ways in which to define “neighborhoods” that focus on non-geographic space. As Yuri Zhukov and Brandon Stewart show, these

Figure 2. Conceptualizing the neighborhood: MINUSCA



could include ethnic proximity neighborhoods, trade proximity neighborhoods, intergovernmental proximity neighborhoods, and alliance proximity neighborhoods.<sup>19</sup>

First, we identified “next-door neighbors.” These are states that share a land border with the host state or, in missions where the host state is an island (e.g., the UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus), the countries closest to it.<sup>20</sup> Second, we use the concept of “neighbors’ neighbors” to refer to those states that share a land border with the next-door neighbors. Finally, we use the concept of “neighborhood” to refer to the sum of next-door neighbors and neighbors’ neighbors. Figure 2 illustrates our three concepts of “neighbor” using MINUSCA as an example.

## Observations

In terms of overall trends in neighborhood dynamics for the period between 1990 and 2017, a few observations can be made.

First, the database shows that twenty-one of the fifty-four peacekeeping operations had troop contributions from next-door neighbors, thirty-two from only the neighbors’ neighbors, and thirty-three from the neighborhood (both next-door neighbors and neighbors’ neighbors). In other words, 61 percent of these missions had some TCCs from the neighborhood, and 39 percent had next-door neighbors as TCCs. For police contributions (individual officers and formed police units), the database shows almost identical trends. Specifically, twenty of the fifty-four UN peacekeeping operations had police contributions from next-door neighbors, twenty-nine from only the neighbors’ neighbors, and thirty-two from the neighborhood. In other words, 59 percent of these missions had some PCCs from the neighborhood, and 37 percent had next-door neighbors as PCCs. Figure 3 shows the trends in the number of neighborhood troop contributions between 1990 and 2017, while Figure 4 shows the numbers for police contributions. Table 1 shows the missions

receiving troop and police contributions from their next-door neighbors and neighborhoods between 1990 and 2017.

Second, it is clear that the tendency for neighborhood states to become T/PCCs has increased over time. Specifically, very few uniformed UN peacekeepers came from neighboring countries until the late 2000s. With a brief exception during August 1994, it was not until October 2004 that more than 5,000 UN peacekeeping troops increasingly came from the respective neighborhoods, and January 2008 that more than 5,000 came from next-door neighbors. However, by December 2015, the numbers of UN peacekeepers from next-door neighbors had grown to approximately 18,000, although there has been a slight drop from this peak.

Until August 2008, with a brief exception from February 1992 to July 1992, less than 3 percent of UN peacekeeping troops were deployed from next-door neighbors. Since then, however, the percentage has grown steadily to about 20 percent by 2017 (see Figure 5). For the neighborhood as a whole, the number of peacekeeping troops was rarely more than 10 percent until January 2008 but has since grown to nearly 34 percent by 2017. For police, after a brief spike from February 1992 to September 1993, which saw roughly 40 percent of police deployed from the neighborhood and about 20 percent from next-door neighbors, most of the period until September 2014 saw less than 5 percent of police deployed from next-door neighbors, rising to nearly 14 percent by 2017 (see Figure 6). For the neighborhood as a whole, the percentage rose to about 35 percent by 2017.

Our third observation is that most of the increase in these neighborhood contributions stems from a relatively small number of recent missions. What missions have accounted for this rise? If we take a snapshot of troop contributions in December 2017, we can see which missions presently account for the rise in the contributions from next-door neighbors and the neighborhood. The total number of troops contributed in December 2017

19 Yuri M. Zhukov and Brandon M. Stewart, “Choosing Your Neighbors: Networks of Diffusion in International Relations,” *International Studies Quarterly* 57, no. 2 (2013).

20 Missions involving multiple countries received special coding: next-door neighbors were countries sharing a land border with those countries involved. These missions include: MINURCAT, MINURSO, ONUCA, UNIIMOG, UNIKOM, UNMEE, UNMOGIP, UNMOP, UNOMUR, and UNPROFOR. UNISFA is deployed in the Abyei region, which remains a part of Sudan, thus, only Sudan’s next-door neighbors were counted. Cyprus’s next-door neighbors were those close to shared waters: Greece, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Libya, Syria, and Turkey. However, Cyprus was not counted as a neighbor for those countries.

Figure 3. Neighborhood troop contributions to UN peacekeeping operations (1990–2017)

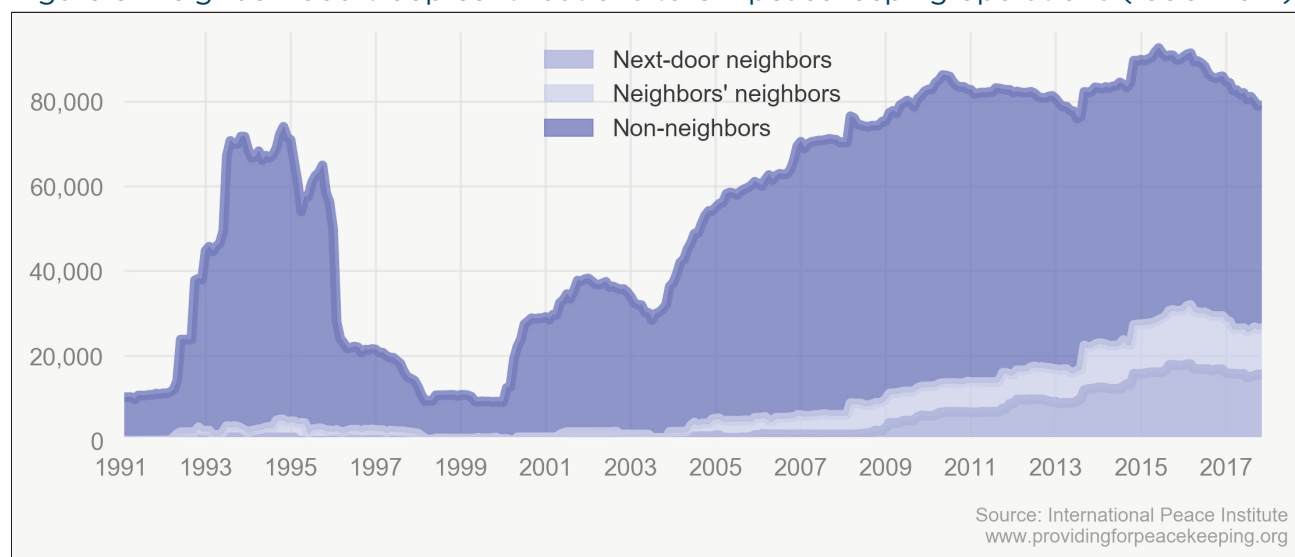
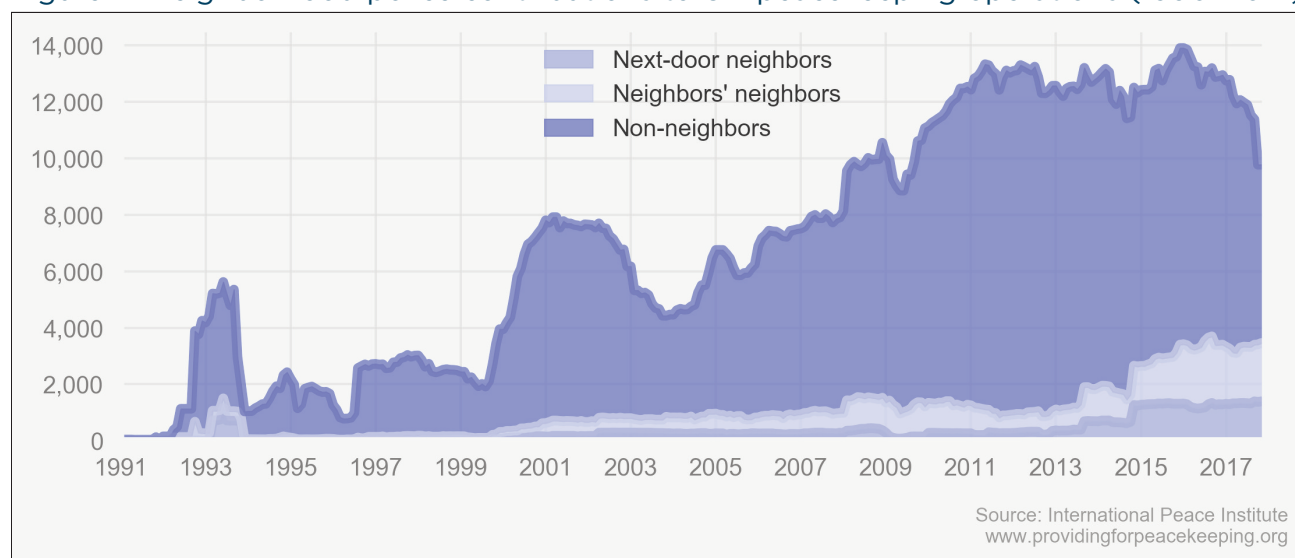


Figure 4. Neighborhood police contributions to UN peacekeeping operations (1990–2017)



was 79,038. The total of next-door neighbor contributions was 15,684, while the total neighborhood contributions was 26,555. Figures 7, 8, and 9 indicate that six operations in Africa account for almost all the increase in this area: three operations in Sudan/South Sudan and those in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali, and the Central African Republic.

Our fourth observation concerns the timing of this trend. Looking at the current UN peacekeeping operations in 2017 and when they were established reveals that missions established after 2007 have essentially received all of the next-door neighbor

and neighborhood contributions (see Table 2) with the minor exception of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon, which had about ninety troops from the neighborhood. The rise in contributions from the neighborhood thus appears to be limited to missions established in the last decade, while current missions established from 1948 to 2003 had received practically no neighborhood contributions by the end of 2017.

A fifth observation concerns the considerable variation in the extent to which individual operations comprise TCCs from the neighborhood. The ten missions with the highest peak percentages

Table 1. Missions receiving troop and police contributions from their next-door neighbors and neighborhoods (1990–2017)

Troops		Police	
Next-door neighbor	Neighborhood	Next-door neighbor	Neighborhood
MINURCA	MINURCA	MINUGUA	MINUGUA
MINURCAT	MINURCAT	MINURCA	MINURCA
MINUSCA	MINURSO	MINURCAT	MINURCAT
MINUSMA	MINUSCA	MINUSCA	MINURSO
MONUA	MINUSMA	MINUSMA	MINUSCA
MONUC	MONUA	MONUA	MINUSMA
MONUSCO	MONUC	MONUC	MONUA
ONUMOZ	MONUSCO	MONUSCO	MONUC
UNAMID	ONUB	ONUMOZ	MONUSCO
UNAMSIL	ONUCA	ONUSAL	ONUMOZ
UNAVEM I	ONUMOZ	UNAMID	ONUSAL
UNNIIMOG	UNAMIC	UNAVEM I	UNAMID
UNIKOM	UNAMID	UNAVEM II	UNAMIR
UNISFA	UNAMIR	UNISFA	UNAMSIL
UNMEE	UNAMSIL	UNMIK	UNAVEM I
UNMIK	UNAVEM I	UNMIS	UNAVEM II
UNMIL	UNCRO	UNMISS	UNCRO
UNMIS	UNIFIL	UNOCI	UNFICYP
UNMISS	UNIIIMOG	UNOMIG	UNISFA
UNOCI	UNIKOM	UNTAC	UNMIBH
UNTAC	UNISFA		UNMIK
	UNMEE		UNMIL
	UNMIK		UNMIS
	UNMIL		UNMISSET
	UNMIS		UNMISS
	UNMISSET		UNOCI
	UNMISS		UNOMIG
	UNOCI		UNPREDEP
	UNOMIL		UNPROFOR
	UNPROFOR		UNTAC
	UNTAC		UNTAES
	UNTAES		UNTAET
	UNTAET		



Figure 5. Percentage of neighborhood troop contributions to UN peacekeeping operations

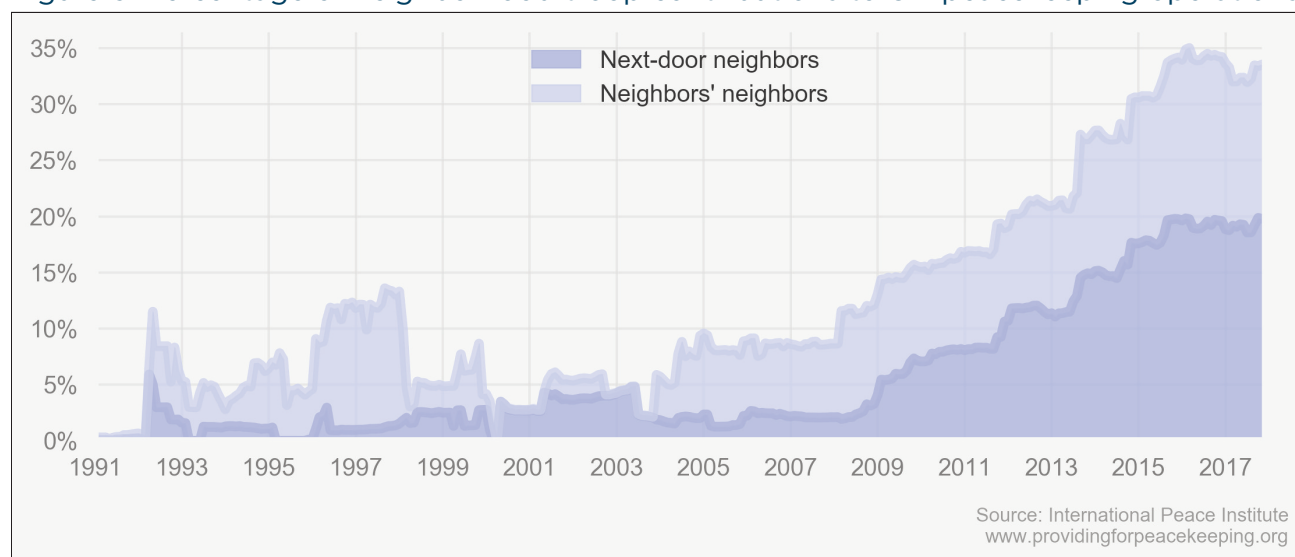
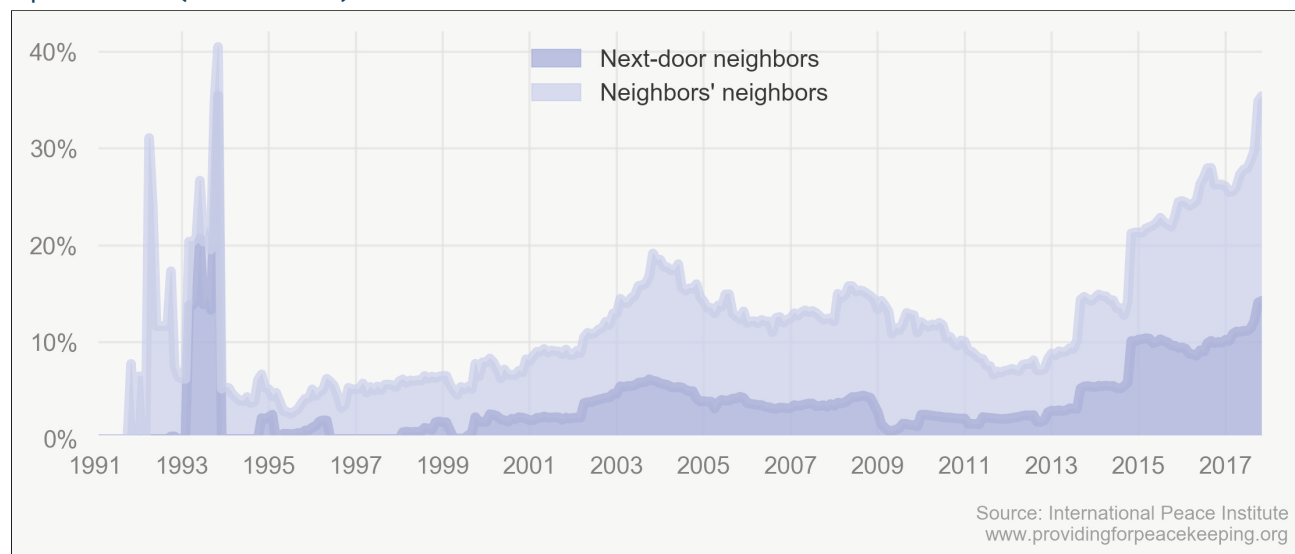


Figure 6. Percentage of neighborhood police contributions to UN peacekeeping operations (1990–2017)



of contributions from next-door neighbors are shown in Figure 10.

The outlier is UNISFA, deployed in mid-2011 to deal with the unfinished implementation of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement in the Abyei region between Sudan and South Sudan. Almost all of UNISFA's troops come from a single country, Ethiopia, which was prepared to deploy its soldiers to help implement the agreement even before the UN Security Council authorized the

mission.<sup>21</sup> This set of circumstances is unique in the history of UN peacekeeping operations since 1948. The very high percentage for the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC, 1991–1993) is somewhat misleading since it fell quickly to below 20 percent after the first couple of months of the mission. The other notable observation is that the two most recent UN peacekeeping operations in Mali (MINUSMA) and the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) have the next highest

21 Holger Osterrieder, Johannes Lehne, and Vladimir Kmec, "United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA)," in *The Oxford Handbook of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations*, edited by Joachim A. Koops, Thierry Tardy, Norrie MacQueen, and Paul D. Williams (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).



Figure 7. UN peacekeeping operations troop percentages and totals from next-door neighbors (December 2017)

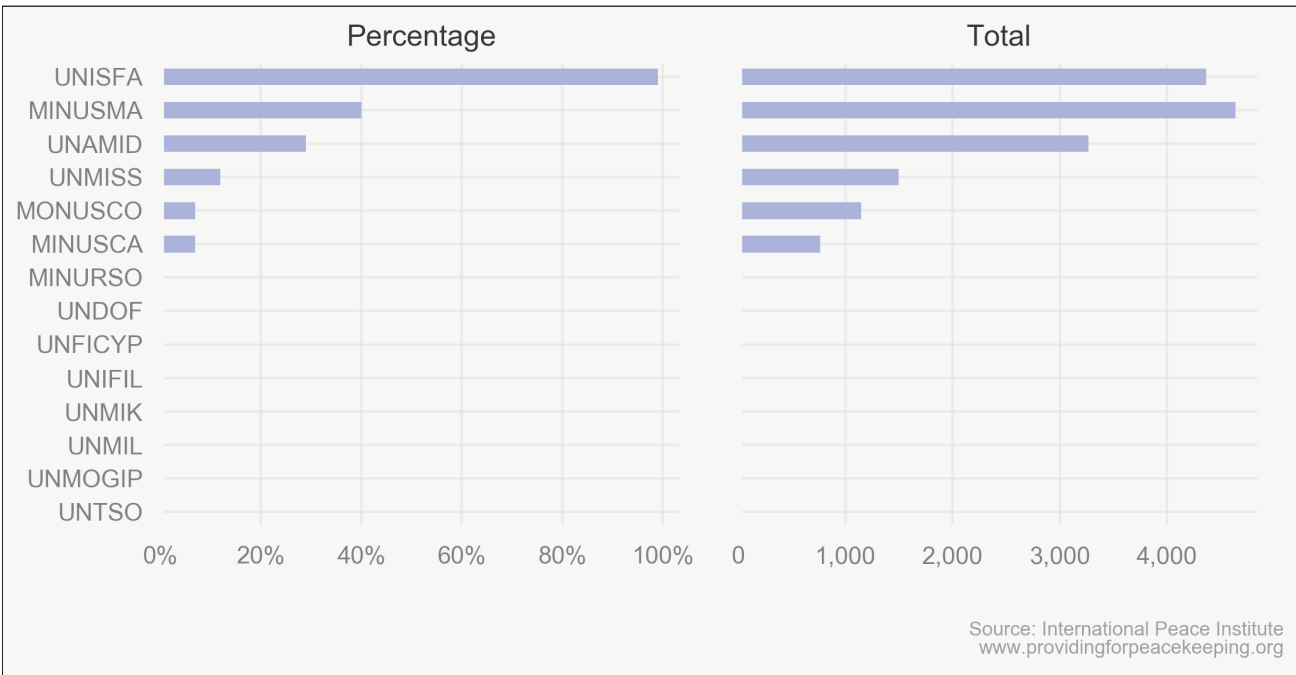


Figure 8. UN peacekeeping operations troop percentages and totals from neighbors' neighbors (December 2017)

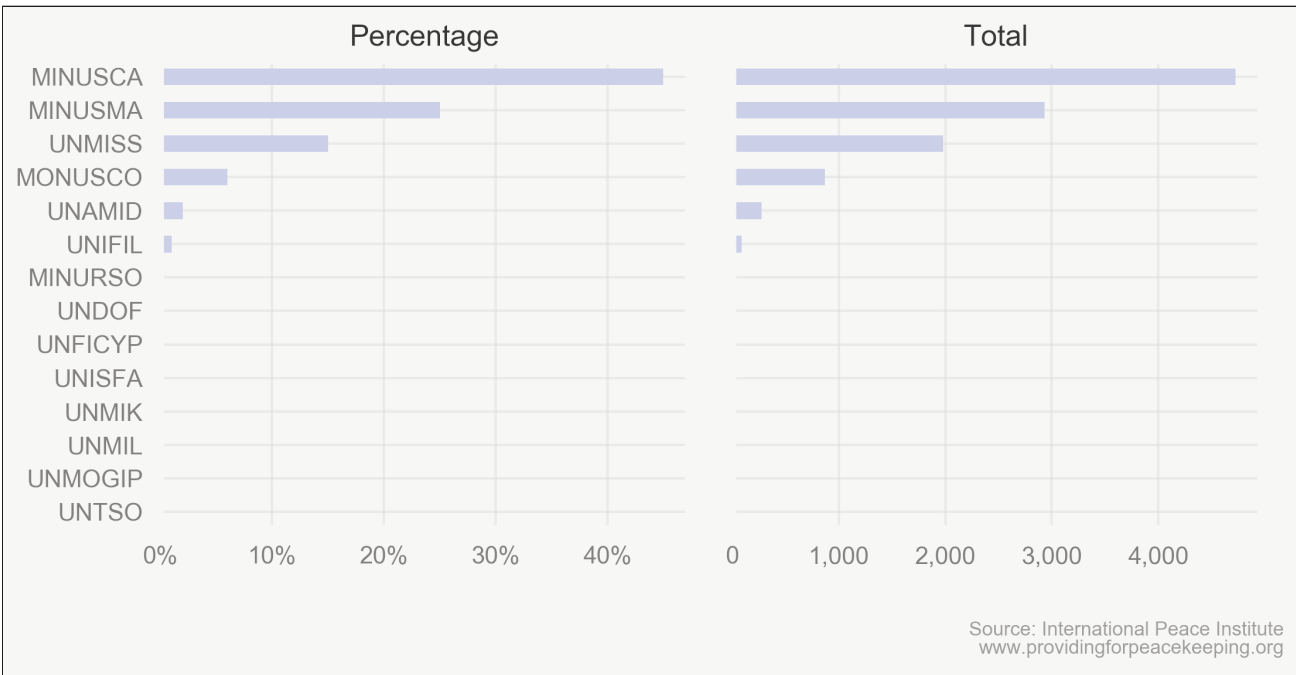


Figure 9. UN peacekeeping operations troop percentages and totals from the neighborhood (December 2017)

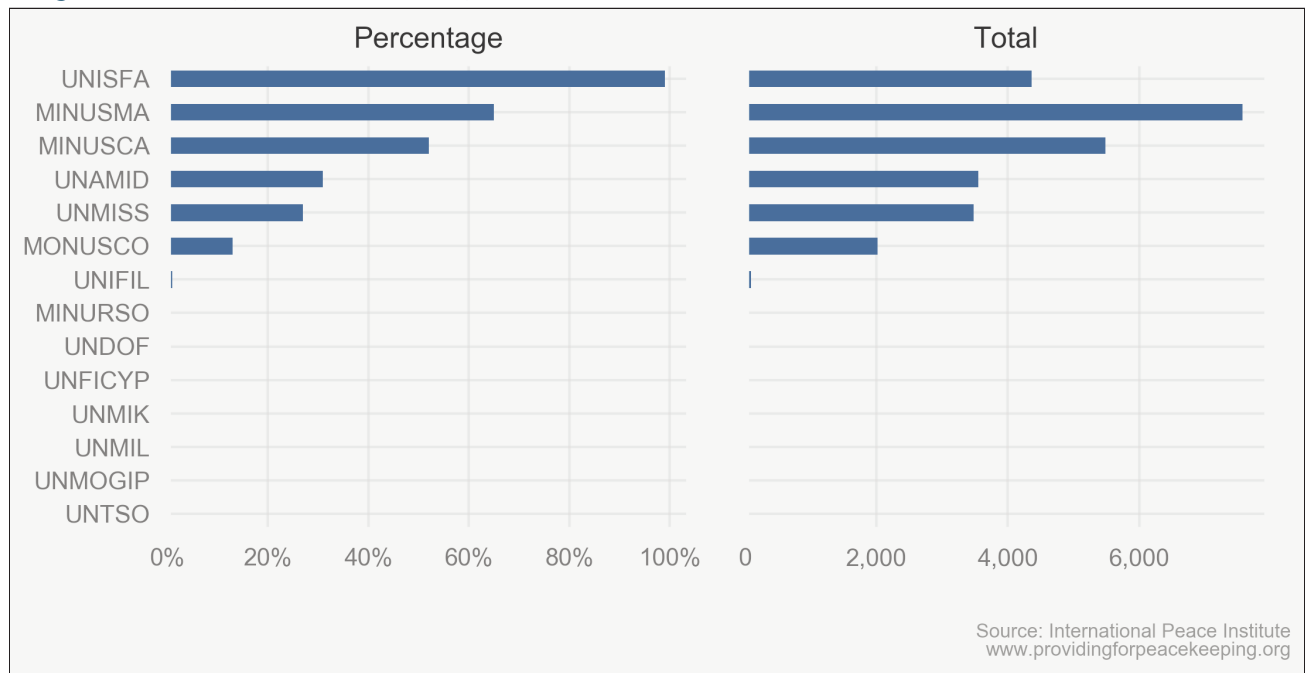


Figure 10. UN peacekeeping operations with the highest percentage of troops from next-door neighbors (1990–2017)

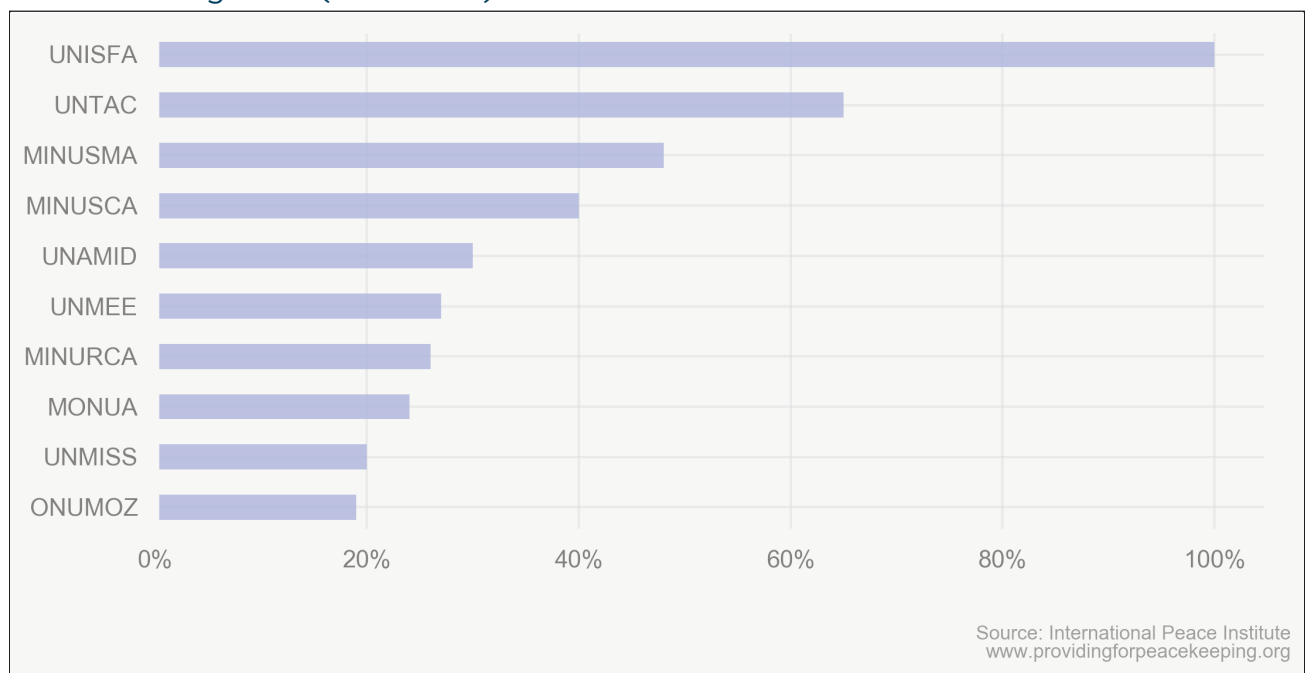


Table 2. Neighborhood contributions to UN peacekeeping operations (December 2017)

Mission	Date established	December 2017 next-door neighbor contribution?	December 2017 neighborhood contribution?
MINUSCA	2014	YES	YES
MINUSMA	2013	YES	YES
UNISFA	2011	YES	YES
UNMISS	2011	YES	YES
MONUSCO	2010	YES	YES
UNAMID	2007	YES	YES
UNMIL	2003	NO	NO
UNMIK	1999	NO	NO
MINURSO	1991	NO	NO
UNIFIL	1978	NO	YES
UNDOF	1974	NO	NO
UNFICYP	1964	NO	NO
UNMOGIP	1949	NO	NO
UNTSO	1948	NO	NO

percentages of next-door neighbors as TCCs, in large part because they were the result of a transition from an earlier African Union-led stabilization mission (the African-led International Support Missions to Mali and the Central African Republic). The same is true of the UN–African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID), which took over from the African Union Mission in Sudan and has maintained a consistently high number of peacekeeping troops from Sudan’s next-door neighbors.

For the troop contributions from neighbors’ neighbors, the ten missions with the highest percentage are depicted in Figure 11. In this case,

the UN Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM) is the outlier because of a surge of troops from the neighborhood for a brief period of a few months in 1993. Once again, it is relevant to note that the UN Operation in Côte d’Ivoire (UNOCI) was initially spearheaded by a regional force, the Economic Community of West African States Mission in Côte d’Ivoire (ECOMICI), which deployed briefly in 2003. The same was true for the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). Combining these results, Figure 12 shows the ten missions with the highest percentage of troop contributions from the neighborhood.

Figure 11. UN peacekeeping operations with the highest percentage of troops from neighbors' neighbors (1990–2017)

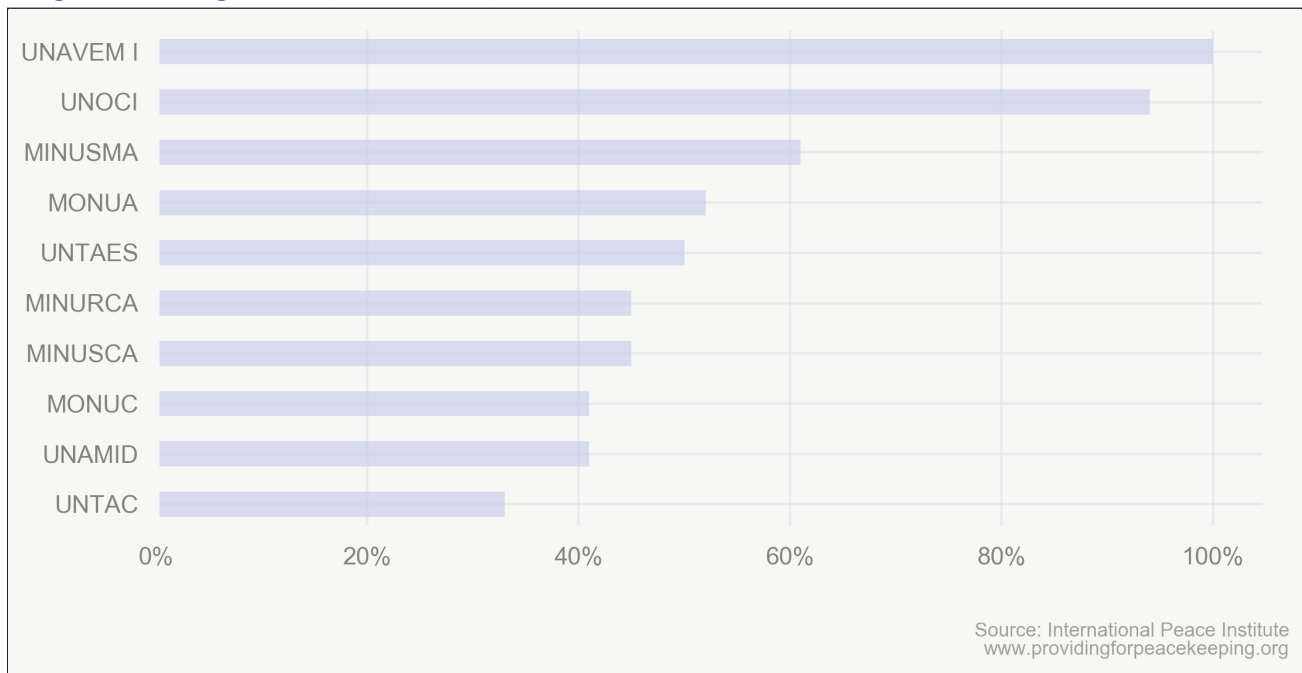
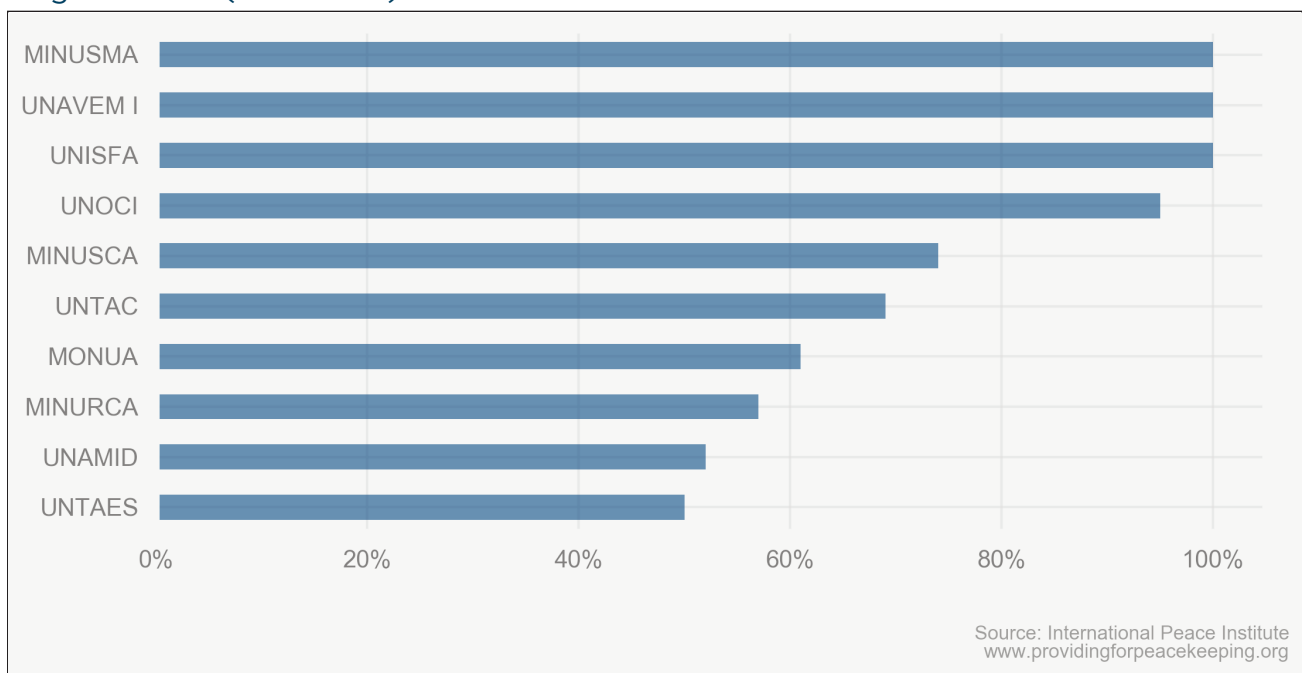


Figure 12. UN peacekeeping operations with the highest percentage of troops from the neighborhood (1990–2017)



## Conclusion

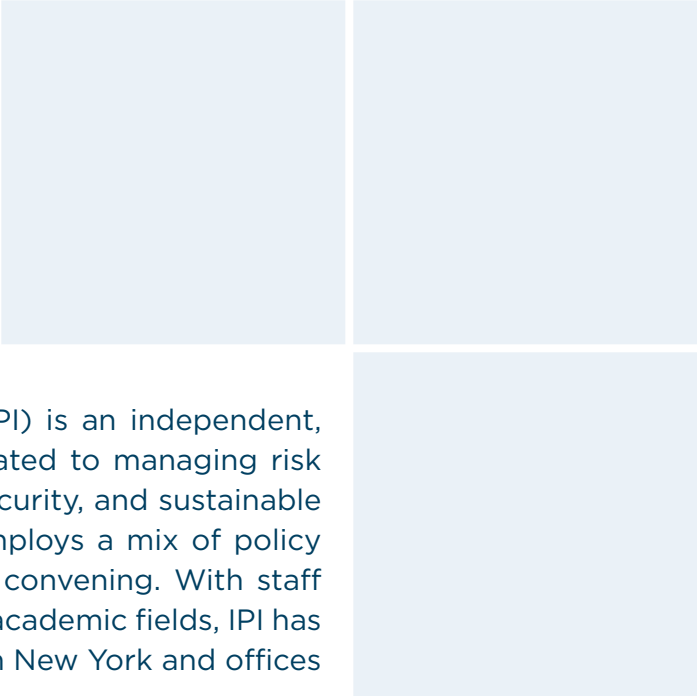
The preceding data charts the increasing tendency of UN peacekeeping operations to draw their contributing countries from next-door neighbors and the broader regional neighborhood. This information should be useful not only for researchers studying trends in peace operations but also for policymakers who need to start systematically weighing the practical pros and cons of this trend. In presenting this data, we have not conducted the additional analysis that would

enable us to convincingly explain why the UN's newest peacekeeping missions saw much greater participation of next-door neighbors and contributing countries from the neighborhood. This would require further detailed research into the motives behind why these states provided peacekeepers to UN missions, whether those factors also applied to non-UN missions, and the impacts of the larger geopolitical and financial dynamics that shape the UN's force generation process.









The **INTERNATIONAL PEACE INSTITUTE** (IPI) is an independent, international not-for-profit think tank dedicated to managing risk and building resilience to promote peace, security, and sustainable development. To achieve its purpose, IPI employs a mix of policy research, strategic analysis, publishing, and convening. With staff from around the world and a broad range of academic fields, IPI has offices facing United Nations headquarters in New York and offices in Vienna and Manama.

[www.ipinst.org](http://www.ipinst.org)

[www.theglobalobservatory.org](http://www.theglobalobservatory.org)



777 United Nations Plaza  
New York, NY 10017-3521  
USA  
TEL +1-212-687-4300  
FAX +1-212-983-8246

Freyung 3  
1010 Vienna  
Austria  
TEL +43-1-533-8881  
FAX +43-1-533-881-11

51-52 Harbour House  
Bahrain Financial Harbour  
P.O. Box 1467  
Manama, Bahrain  
TEL +973-1721-1344