Contributor Profile: United States of America

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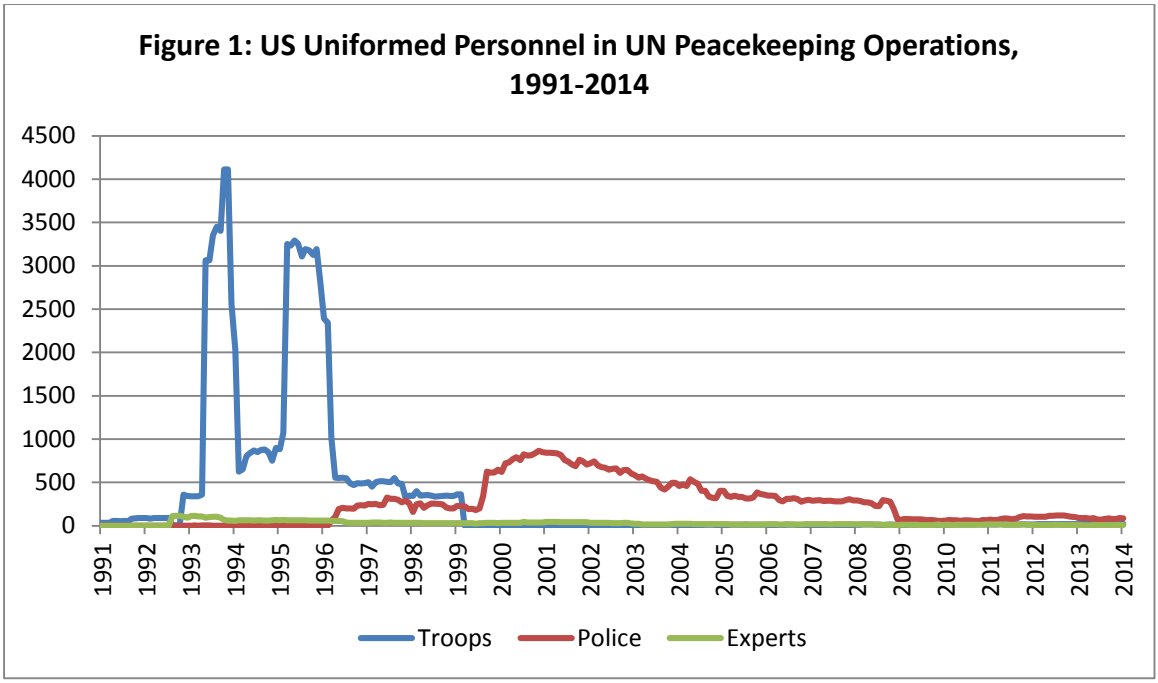
Active armed forces[1]	Helicopters and fixed-wing transport	Defense Budget	UN Peacekeepers	UN Contribution Breakdown	Other Significant Deployments
Active (2014): 1,492,200 World Ranking (size): **2** Army 586,700 Navy 327,700 Air Force 337,250 Marine Corps 199,350 Coast Guard 41,200	907 Attack helicopters 2,870 Heavy/medium transport helicopters 721 Heavy/medium fixed-wing transport 524 Tanker transport aircraft	2011: US$687bn (4.56%) 2012: $655bn (4.19%) 2013: $600bn (3.70%) 2014: $527bn (est)	**121** (13 women) Feb 2014 Ranking: **63rd** (9th largest NATO contributor)	MINUSMA: 10 troops MINUSTAH: 60 police and 8 troops; MONUSCO: 3 troops; UNMIL: 13 police, 4 experts, 5 troops; UNMISS: 11 police, 5 troops; UNTSO: 2 experts	Afghanistan (ISAF) 33,6000 South Korea (USFK) 28,500 Egypt (MFO) 693 Kosovo (KFOR) 669 Gulf of Aden (Operation Ocean Shield) 1 frigate
Defense Spending / Troop:[2] US$**353,000** (compared to global average of approximately US$70,000)					

Part 1: Recent Trends

The number of uniformed Americans serving in UN-led operations has remained low throughout the post-Cold War period, with the exception of a spike in contributions from November 1992 to March 1996, when the US sent significant numbers of personnel to UN missions in Somalia (UNOSOM II), Haiti (UNMIH) and the former Yugoslavia (UNPROFOR and UNPREDEP). Contributions peaked at 4114 personnel deployed in October of 1993. That same month, however, the deaths of eighteen US soldiers in Somalia, along with the numerous difficulties of the broader UN-led operations there, in Haiti, and in the Balkans, led to a strategic shift regarding US participation in UN peacekeeping. Although the US troops in Somalia were killed while carrying out a mission commanded by US officials, the experience encouraged the view among American policy makers that the US military should work outside of the strictures of UN command, focus on traditional combat operations, and leave the peacekeeping duties to other countries. Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 25, signed by Bill Clinton in May 1994, ushered in this new strategy, and the remaining years of the Clinton Administration saw the US extricate itself from large military or police commitments to UN missions.

From February 1999 to the present, the contribution of American troops remained in the single to double digits. Figure 1 shows a steady reduction in overall US contributions (military and police) over the decade, from a total of 888 (764 of which were police deployed to Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina) at the start of 2001 to only 87 personnel at the end of 2010.



Since 2000, however, the US has advocated for, and proven instrumental in, the growth of UN peacekeeping. As a permanent member of the Security Council, the United States consistently voted for an expanded peacekeeping agenda that pushed up annual US costs to over $2 billion (approximately 28% of the UN peacekeeping budget). The administration of President Barak Obama also helped ensure that Congress fully funded American peacekeeping assessments to the UN, including the payment of $721 million in arrears in 2009.

A focus on supporting other countries' troop and police contributions has been a key feature of the US government's engagement strategy since the experiences of the mid-1990s. Beginning with the Clinton Administration's African Crisis Response Initiative in 1997, the US has been funding training programs for potential and emerging UN troop- and police-contributing countries, primarily in Africa. The Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI), established in 2004, has spent between $85-115 million annually to train and equip peacekeepers from other countries, provide equipment and transportation for peacekeeping missions, and build peacekeeping skills and infrastructure. This makes the US the largest bilateral capacity-builder of any UN member state. About half of that funding is focused on 25 African states, and managed separately by the African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) program. GPOI has also supported the training of nearly 2,000 police trainers from 29 countries at the Italian-run Center of Excellence for Stability Police Units (CoESPU). The US Department of State manages GPOI and implements it jointly with the Department of Defense.

The US has also been a leading provider of financing, air lift, training, and equipment for African Union missions in Darfur and Somalia. For example, from 2004 to 2006, the US government spent $280 million to build and maintain the camps that housed AU forces throughout Darfur,[3] and from 2007 to 2010, spent an estimated $230 million to provide logistics support, equipment, and pre-deployment training for AMISOM troop contributors.[4] More recently, in January 2014, the US Air Force through its Africa Command (AFRICOM) provided strategic airlift to Rwanda and Ugandan peacekeeping soldiers and equipment deploying to the African Union mission in CAR.

Programs in the US Department of State like GPOI also work to fill gaps in peacekeeping by supporting the development of policy and guidance, for instance by funding work on the development of military training standards and guidance on tasks like the protection of civilians, as well as funding studies on issues such as the UN's shortage of critical air assets, and co-deployments as a means of expanding the base of contributing countries.

At his first address to the UN General Assembly in 2009, President Obama said the US would be "willing to consider contributing civilian police, civilian personnel, and military staff officers" to the UN. Absent from this endorsement was any consideration of contributing American troop contingents. Although it may have been considered from time to time, there has been no movement to do so during the Bush or Obama presidencies. While the general political and institutional barriers to contributing described in Part 4 below have certainly factored into this decision, of perhaps larger prominence was the US engagement in major wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, which sapped the military capacity, political capital and policy-making attention span of successive US presidents. American troops withdrew from Iraq in late 2011 and are set to withdraw most combat troops from Afghanistan by the end of 2014. (Up to 10,000 US troops could remain based in Afghanistan as protection for military, intelligence and diplomatic officials).

The Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) (released in March 2014), and a new National Security Strategy (set to be released in spring 2014), aim to lay out American defense and security priorities for the coming years. According to the most recent QDR, US priorities remain the following: "rebalancing to the Asia-Pacific region to preserve peace and stability in the region; maintaining a strong commitment to security and stability in Europe and the Middle East; sustaining a global approach to countering violent extremists and terrorist threats, with an emphasis on the Middle East and Africa; continuing to protect and prioritize key investments in technology while our forces overall grow smaller and leaner; and invigorating efforts to build innovative partnerships and strengthen key alliances and partnerships." The second Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR) will be released in 2015, outlining the priorities for the Department of State and the US Agency for International Development (USAID). The first QDDR (2011), was titled "Leading through Civilian Power" and focused in part on internal reforms aimed at strengthening civilian capability to prevent and respond to crisis and conflict.

In December 2013 civil conflict in South Sudan – a place the US has supported diplomatically since before its independence – led to several internal proposals to help reinforce the UN peacekeeping mission there (UNMISS); none of which were ultimately implemented. (Similarly, in 2011, a proposal to contribute an American military engineering company to UNMISS made it to a high level before being abandoned). In any case, given UNMISS's inability to prevent or fully respond to that crisis, as well as critical force generation shortfalls in Mali and the Central African Republic, there is general concern about the need to strengthen the UN peacekeeping system. With only three years left of an administration that came to power voicing strong support for the United Nations, the time is possibly ripe for a broad re-examination of US policy with regard to UN peacekeeping. The goals of such a review would be to present a vision for how UN peacekeeping could be more effective and efficient, as well as set the overall US policy for the immediate future, not unlike what PDD 25 did in 1994.

Part 2: Decision-Making

Unlike many countries, the US government has not yet developed a specific system to efficiently respond to operational requests for contributions of personnel or equipment to UN peacekeeping operations. UN requests for American military or police contributions are made through the US Permanent Mission to the UN (USUN) and then directed to both the US Department of State and the Department of Defense where they are typically reviewed at the Deputy Assistant Secretary level. The National Security Council and the US Ambassador to the UN weigh in on most matters regarding peacekeeping contributions. Any military deployment to a UN peacekeeping mission is approved by the Deputy Secretary of Defense (and agreed to by the President).

Notwithstanding, the division of war powers between Congress and the US President has always been a source of significant debate. Although the US Constitution gives Congress the power to declare war and to decide financial appropriations as such, it also declares the President the Commander in Chief of US armed forces. In 1973, Congress passed the War Powers Resolution, which mandates the president to inform Congress within 48 hours of the introduction of American troops "into the territory, airspace or waters of a foreign nation, while equipped for combat," and limits the President's ability to maintain that deployment without Congress taking supportive legislative action within 60 days. Although US Presidents have never been compelled to fully comply with the Resolution, in late 1993, Congress did use both its appropriations power and its mandate under the War Powers Resolution to put pressure on the Clinton administration to withdrawal US forces from Somalia.

Decisions on authorizing a UN peacekeeping operation as well as contributing US personnel to a particular mission are to be guided, in theory, by Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 25. PDD 25 gives separate lists of criteria for both questions. The criteria are left open to interpretation (e.g. whether or not "the threat to international peace and security is considered significant.") In practice, PDD 25 is not consistently consulted, and when so, the criteria for US participation in peace operations are interpreted more restrictively than those used when voting for a peace operation's establishment. In this respect, PDD 25 is seen more as a set of US principles regarding UN peacekeeping rather than firm guidelines.

Part 3: Rationales for Contributing

Normative rationales: American support for the UN derives heavily from normative factors, influenced strongly by a current of exceptionalism among American leaders and public. The US Government's peacekeeping activism in the Security Council has on several occasions resulted from organized domestic lobbying with normative roots.[5] Since the mid-1990s, however, this domestic activism has rarely led to calls for US boots on the ground.

Security rationales: US financial and diplomatic support for UN peacekeeping, as well as its support to other countries' peacekeepers stems in large part from its security interests. In her testimony to the House Foreign Affairs Committee in 2009, Susan Rice, then-US Permanent Representative to the UN made the case that UN peacekeeping operations advanced American national security interests by, among other things, helping to protect the borders of war-torn states, police their territory, halt the flow of illicit arms, drugs and trade, and deny sanctuary to transnational terrorist groups such as *al-Qa'ida*. The 9/11 attacks reinforced the view that major threats to US national security or the security of its allies could emanate from underdeveloped and remote locations. As the 2002 National Security Strategy puts it, "Enemies in the past needed great armies and great industrial capabilities to endanger America. Now, shadowy networks of individuals can bring great chaos and suffering to our shores for less than it costs to purchase a single tank."

Political rationales: The domestic political rationale for US military contributions is related to seeing that US tax-payer money is well-spent, i.e. in ensuring successful peacekeeping operations, (a goal which could be assisted through more, targeted American military assistance). Internationally, the US has a political interest in preserving the status quo global governance architecture, including an effective Security Council. Given its unparalleled military capabilities, the US is always under some implied political pressure from the UN Secretariat and various Member States to provide more direct support to UN peacekeeping operations.

Economic rationales: UN reimbursement rates do not factor into decisions to deploy American troops or police officers. American police are recruited and deployed through private security companies sub-contracted by the US Department of State. These companies and their employees presumably have an economic motive to see more US police contributions. American support of peacekeeping more generally is influenced by the need for economic burden-sharing, given the wide, global security focus of the US Government and its finite resources. At the same time, as the largest contributor to the UN peacekeeping budget, the US has an interest in keeping peacekeeping costs as low as possible, and is often known to exert pressure on individual missions to cut costs and resist policy reforms that would inflate the peacekeeping budget. Finally, the argument has been made that successful peacekeeping is good for America's business interests in post-conflict countries, e.g., US exports to Liberia increased from $33 million to $200 million annually from 2003 to 2011.

Institutional rationales: From the perspective of the US military, there are few significant institutional rationales for US participation in peacekeeping, such as career development or providing opportunities for training or increasing inter-operability with other armies. Given its size, the US does not necessarily need to develop inter-operability with other armies, but it does develop this capacity in part through multi-national NATO deployments and various bi-lateral training exercises.

Part 4: Barriers to Contributing

Alternative political or strategic priorities: While the 9/11 attacks on Washington and New York focused more US attention on insecure and fragile states and some areas hosting UN peacekeeping operations, they also led to a large and ongoing US military commitments in Afghanistan (2001-14) and Iraq (2003-11). And thus, despite US financial and diplomatic support for UN peacekeeping, America's main strategic engagement lies in areas other than where the UN does most of its peacekeeping. As the 2010 National Security Strategy makes clear, "The cornerstone of this engagement is the relationship between the United States and our close friends and allies in Europe, Asia, the Americas, and the Middle East."[6] Africa and peacekeeping are discussed only in the final section of the report as they relate to maintaining an international order that "will support our efforts to advance security, prosperity, and universal values."[7]

Alternative institutional preferences for crisis management: The US has the ability, and clear preference, to deploy troop contingents unilaterally or as part of the NATO alliance or other coalitions of the willing.

Difficult Domestic Politics: There is no broad domestic constituency in the US to pressure political leaders to increase US involvement in UN peacekeeping. In addition, a fierce isolationist sentiment resonates with a segment of American society and some representatives

in Congress. This population is overtly hostile to US engagement with the UN, particularly when it comes to military matters and whether US troops should be placed under foreign command. Some US politicians continue to view the UN as anti-Israel and do not support US engagement.

Difficult International Politics: Increased US military engagement in UN peacekeeping can be politically unwelcome by some UN member states, particularly those of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). Indeed, the US, like some other Western countries, can find it difficult to contribute military staff officers (gratis or otherwise) to UN Headquarters given the concern by some countries about increased American influence over UN operations. There is also a concern, both within the UN and the US government, that significant US military involvement in some missions would increase the likelihood of terrorist attacks against the mission.[8]

Institutional: There are few incentives for individual military officers to serve in UN operations in terms of their career development, as the promotion system in the military does not favor UN deployments.[9]

There is also feeling among some military and political elite that UN peacekeeping can – and should – be performed by militaries that do not carry the burden of being a world superpower. The US military was not designed with nation-building or governance tasks in mind (unlike the armed forces of some colonial powers). Rather, it has been developed to win conventional wars and safeguard its interests and its various allies across the world. This helps explain the strong US interest in training other militaries to participate in UN peacekeeping.

Finally, the US has no national police force or gendarmerie, but rather thousands of municipal, state, and specialized federal agencies. It has no institutionalized police contribution mechanisms or policies. For the individual police officer international deployments are not generally seen to be career enhancing in the United States. Therefore the US relies on privately contracted police in an ad hoc manner for any international deployments.

Financial Costs: This is not generally a barrier to US participation in UN peacekeeping operations. However, the US military is currently in the context of major budget cuts, which are estimated to be almost 22% by 2017 from its peak in 2010. See more below. Reduced defense expenditures could further restrict US security interests to those areas deemed most essential.

Part 5: Current Challenges and Issues

In late 2011, an article in Foreign Policy by US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton signaled a shift in American foreign policy priorities away from the Middle East and toward the Asia-Pacific region. Popularly known as the "pivot to Asia," the strategy calls for increased diplomatic engagement and, among the six lines of action, "forging a broad-based military presence" there. While this pivot is still in the early stages and some believe will not result in much change in US foreign policy, the fact remains (and the 2014 QDR confirms) that Africa and peacekeeping issues will likely continue to be lower on the list of American strategic priorities than other security issues in Europe, the Middle East, and Asia.

This Obama Administration's 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance outlines a more nimble and lower cost approach to US defense strategy, an approach on display in recent years in the US military's increased dependence on Special Operations units and UAVs. Signaling a tactical shift, the guidance document explicitly states that "in the aftermath of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the United States will emphasize non-military means and military-to-military cooperation to address instability and reduce the demand for significant US force commitments to stability operations." It is worth noting, however, that as part of the 100-person US anti-LRA deployment to central Africa in 2012, the US did station two military personnel as advisers within the UN's stabilization mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). This kind of token contribution to UN missions can have a multiplier effect when it comes from the US, in terms of the encouragement of other TCCs to contribute their personnel, and the logistical and intelligence support that the Pentagon and other US agencies provide to US personnel in the field.

The lower-cost approach to defense is also partly out of necessity. As part of the "budget sequestration" package – an assortment of automatic spending cuts to various elements of the US budget – that began to take effect in March 2013, cuts of $500 billion from the defense budget over the next ten years are planned. This is in addition to the $487 billion in cuts (over 10 years) necessitated by the Budget Control Act (2011). The defense budget proposed by the White House for FY 2014 would set spending levels at $526.6 billion, a reduction of 12.2% from FY 2013.

In such a context, it is unlikely that funding of US training and equipping programs would continue at their current levels – or be increased – past 2014. However, the possibility of targeted military assistance, made easier by the US military drawdown in Afghanistan, is still a possibility. Such assistance would be targeted toward those areas that would make the most impact and where the US deems there is a gap that no one else can fill. This could possibly include the provision of key enablers, such as airlift and sealift, military utility helicopters and land transport (APCs), and intelligence and logistics support. On the non-military side, the next QDDR could point toward developments with regard to State Department, USAID, and Justice Department initiatives to develop reliable, rapidly deployable rosters of specialized policing and rule of law experts, as well as initiatives to support developing countries in the recruitment, training and use of indigenous rule of law capacities.

Part 6: Key Champions and Opponents

The current US Ambassador to the United Nations, Samantha Power, is a strong advocate of United Nations peacekeeping. Supportive members of Congress include Sen. Robert Menendez (D-NJ), the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and Reps. Adam Kinzinger (R-Ill.) and David Cicilline (D-R.I.) of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. A number of American NGOs advocate for more US support to the UN, including the UN Foundation and its Better World Campaign, the UN Association of the USA (UNA-USA), and the NGO coalition, Partnership for Effective Peacekeeping. The actor George Clooney is a well-known advocate for UN peacekeeping and genocide prevention. The United States Institute for Peace (USIP) is a US government funded research and training institute that features speakers and conducts research related to peace operations.

Certain members of US Congress are consistently critical of the UN and US engagement in it, such as Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL) and Senator Mike Lee (R-UT). John Bolton, the former US Ambassador to the UN under President George W. Bush, is an outspoken critic of the UN. Conservative think tanks, such as the Heritage Foundation,

popular news media outlets, such as Fox News, and member organizations, such as the John Birch Society, are consistently distrustful of the UN and its supporters.

Part 7: Capabilities and Caveats

The United States has the largest defense budget and the most technologically advanced military in the world. It possesses every military capability the UN might need, including prized enablers such as strategic air and sea lift, aviation, land, and naval transport, medical, engineering, logistics, planning and intelligence gathering/processing, as well as special forces. The Global Peace Operations Initiative provides training and equipment to other PCC/TCCs. The Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute (PKSOI), part of the US Army War College, develops and reviews doctrine and training, and advises the military in developing the requirements and capabilities to plan, prepare, and execute "peace and stability operations."

There are no obvious caveats with regards to rules of engagement or areas of operation, although any significant contribution of US troops could come with a heavier US hand with regard to command and control. If the mission's force commander was not an American, the typical UN command and control arrangements would likely have to be modified to give Washington a greater degree of command authority than is normal, similar to the establishment of the Strategic Military Cell for the Europeans in UNIFIL.

Part 8: Further Reading

Ian Johnstone (ed.), *International Peacekeeping*, Special Issue: "The US Role in Contemporary Peace Operations: A Double-Edged Sword?" 15:1 (2008)

Don Kraus, Robert A. Enholm, and Amanda J. Bowen (eds.), "U.S. Engagement in International Peacekeeping: From Aspiration to Implementation," Partnership for Effective Peacekeeping, 2011.

Edward C. Luck, *Mixed Messages: American Politics and International Organization: 1919-1999*, (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1999)

Steward Patrick and Shepard Forman (eds.), *Multilateralism and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2002)

Adam C. Smith, "United States of America" in Alex J. Bellamy & Paul D. Williams (eds.), *Providing Peacekeepers: The Politics, Challenges and Future of United Nations Peacekeeping Contributions* (Oxford University Press, 2013)

Nancy Soderberg, 'Enhancing US Support to UN Peacekeeping', *Prism*, 2:2 (2011)

Notes

[1] IISS, *The Military Balance 2014* (London: IISS/ Routledge, 2014)

[2] Defense Spending/Troop is the total defense budget (in US$) divided by the total number of active armed forces. The approximate global average is the mean defense spending/troop of the 136 countries that a) have armed forces and b) for which data on expenditures and troop numbers are available. Uses figures from IISS, *The Military Balance 2014* (London: IISS/ Routledge, 2014).

[3] United States Government Accountability Office, 'Darfur Crisis: Progress in Aid and Peace Monitoring Threatened by Ongoing Violence and Operational Challenges', November 2006, p.45.

[4] Lauren Ploch, *Countering Terrorism in East Africa: The US Response* (Washington DC: Congressional Research Service, 3 November 2010), p.29.

[5] See Rebecca Hamilton, *Fighting for Darfur: Public Action and the Struggle to Stop Genocide* (New York: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2011).

[6] The White House, "National Security Strategy," May 2010, p. 3.

[7] *Ibid*., p. 40.

[8] Author's interviews with UN and US officials, 2012.

[9] Nancy Soderberg, 'Enhancing US Support to UN Peacekeeping,' *Prism*, 2:2 (2011), p. 22.