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## Rising Powers in the New International Security Order

Edmond Mulet

UN peacekeeping has become increasingly diverse and multidimensional, responding to a shifting and complex international context. Peacekeeping missions today operate in failing or failed states emerging from civil strife – where the challenge is to simultaneously help create the conditions to promote reconciliation while rebuilding institutions in charge of ensuring good governance, security, and the rule of law.

The last decade has been one of sustained, substantial growth in UN peacekeeping operations. With 111,512 peacekeepers on the field from 114 contributing Member States deployed in 16 operations across four continents, today, there is almost three times the number of blue helmets as there was in 2003, and nearly six times the number of peacekeepers as 15 years ago. This includes around 80,000 military personnel, almost 13,000 policemen, and approximately 20,000 civilians. The 2013 approved budget for peacekeeping operations is over 7,33 billion USD. Therefore, the increasing demand for peacekeeping missions to deploy on the field has generated additional pressure on member states to provide resources for these operations, including troops, military equipment, technical expertise, and of course financial support.

With the growing demands for UN peacekeeping, we also see increasingly diverse models and mandates for missions. On the one hand, the UN still has relatively static border-monitoring roles, as in the United Nations Peacekeeping force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), and, on the other hand, it has large integrated or multidimensional missions, such as the

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). There are also cases in which unarmed military observers are deployed, as in Syria in 2012, or where the mandate is limited to border monitoring coupled with a protection of civilians role as is the case in Abyei (Sudan). Moreover, UN Missions are often deployed alongside parallel forces, such as the Somalia model of UN support to the African Union (AU) military personnel.

We witness today both a continued demand for peacekeeping and a wide diversification in models and configurations to implement the Security Council's mandates. This demonstrates that UN peacekeeping remains a flexible tool for collective security and burden sharing among Member States.

In this context, global partnerships are core to UN operations around the world, as the Missions work in close collaboration with regional organizations, coalitions of Member States, and other partners. Enhancing the effectiveness and dynamic nature of these partnerships is essential to achieve common goals of peace and stability.

Internal partnerships are just as important for the functioning of peacekeeping operations. Indeed, the UN does not have a standing army, or a police, or readily available equipment. Each new mission, and each authorized increase in troop levels or expansion of a Mission's mandate requires a major effort to generate troops and resources, which have to be provided by Member States. In this regard it is important to keep in mind that the four main actors to UN Peacekeeping have to stand in unison – the Security Council that sets the mandates, the General Assembly that helps define peacekeeping policy and resources for the missions, the Troop and Police-Contributor Countries (TCC's and PCC's) who provide military and civil personnel, and the UN Secretariat in charge of executing the aforementioned mandates – to enable operations on the ground to work efficiently.

This article will focus mainly on the evolving trends of uniformed contributions to peacekeeping, underscoring the outstanding support to this endeavour of emerging actors in the international scene. I will start by presenting broadly some of the current trends in contributions to UN peacekeeping operations, while highlighting the role of Asian, African and increasingly Latin American countries. I will then focus on three countries: Brazil, China and Ghana to illustrate the valuable participation of rising powers in peacekeeping operations. I will conclude by outlining some elements about the positive impact that these trends could have on strengthening peacekeeping operations to face new challenges that arise in the international scene.

## **Evolving Trends in Troop Contributions to UN Peacekeeping**

In spite of the changing nature of peacekeeping, the military component remains a defining factor for its success. Troop and police contributing countries (TCC's and PCC's) are vital to the partnership that enables UN peace operations to implement the Security Council mandates. They contribute to re-establishing and maintaining basic security, to extending the authority of the state and to the protection of civilians. In addition, TCC's provide resources, capabilities, equipment, as well as savoir-faire and technical expertise channelled through experienced and knowledgeable military commanders to peace operations.

As previously mentioned, the past decade has witnessed significant variations among the regions and sub-regions that prominently contribute with troops to peacekeeping operations. The International Peace Institute (IPI) published a paper on “Trends in Uniformed Contributions to UN Peacekeeping”<sup>1</sup>, in which they analyze data related to troop contributing countries. In their report, they demonstrate that from 1991 to 2012 there were two separate waves of troop contributions to the UN. Each one of these significant increases was led by a different set of actors. The first one took place in 1992 and was mainly led by European contributors to the Balkans region. After a four year slow down, in 2000, a second, still ongoing wave, led mainly by Asian and African countries took place. As the IPI points out, “at the end of 2012, more than 85 percent of UN peacekeepers were Asian or African in origin.” Moreover, South America and Europe currently provide approximately the same number of peacekeepers.

These trends are consistent at a regional level and have not been reversed since the beginning of the 21st century. African contributions have gone from being almost inexistent by the end of the 1990’s to almost 40,000 troops in 2012. If we look closely at regional disaggregated statistics, Western and Eastern African countries are leading in terms of numbers of troops provided by Africa. However, these numbers should not conceal the fact that countries all across the continent have added, if in a smaller scale, to peace operations. The augmentation in Asian contributions to peacekeeping is also significant in terms of numbers and it operates within the framework of a long-term tradition of troop provision, especially stemming from South Asian countries. Most recently, China has played an essential role in strengthening the region’s role in peacekeeping. Finally, South American countries contribution’s follow the same rising trend as Africa or Asia, although in a less dramatic manner. In this case, Brazil is undeniably the leader in the region with a substantial contribution to the United Nations Stabilisation Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH).

This significant change in the geography of troop contributing countries should not go unnoticed as it reflects a number of meaningful changes in the world order and in the way emerging countries perceive their own role in global security. In my view, the first change is related to the wider recognition of peacekeeping operations as a useful, flexible and effective tool in building and maintaining peaceful environments, in spite of its limitations, from a larger geographical scope. Secondly, it reflects the increasing interest of rising powers in endowing the maintenance of a peaceful world and in many cases, in being a part of stabilization efforts in turbulent countries in their own regions. Indeed, emerging economies highly value the benefits obtained from thriving in a more peaceful and stable region. Thirdly, it reflects a positive evolution in the perception of the armed forces role, which is now oriented towards peacekeeping activities in addition to a more traditional national security role. Furthermore, and from a more pragmatic point of view, emerging countries are interested in having their troops training alongside other armed forces, as they can gain new skills and abilities. From a broader perspective, I believe that the greater involvement of emerging countries in peacekeeping operations is

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<sup>1</sup> Perry C., and Smith A.C. (June 2013), Trends in Uniformed Contributions to UN Peacekeeping: A New dataset, 1991-2012. Providing for Peacekeeping No 1. New York: International Peace Institute

a positive evolution that unveils a tacit recognition of our global and collective responsibility in maintaining peace and stability in the world.

Motivations and means to participate in peacekeeping operations vary. Allow me to expose three different examples that illustrate well the role played by emerging countries in peacekeeping.

### **Emerging Countries in Peacekeeping Operations, some Examples:**

The first example I would like to mention is the case of Brazil. Its engagement in the United Nations Mission for the Stabilisation in Haiti (MINUSTAH) since 2004 marked a new era in its participation in peacekeeping as it became the main troop-contributor to the Mission. As such, it has played a central role in stabilizing Haiti, helping the response to the immediate post-earthquake recovery, and to longer term assistance requirements.

The increase of Brazil's commitment to UN peace operations was dramatic, as it made a leap from providing token contributions to providing over 1,300 troops to MINUSTAH in 2004. This number reached 2,200 troops to reinforce the Mission's capacities after the 2010 earthquake, only to be subsequently reduced as MINUSTAH's downsizing process began. As of June 30, 2013, Brazil was the 17th largest troop contributor to the UN with 1,713 troops mainly in MINUSTAH (1,403 troops) and UNIFIL (265 troops). Brazil also contributes with Military experts and police to UNMIT, MINURSO, UNFICYP, UNISFA, UNMIL, UNMISS and UNOCI. Furthermore, the leadership provided by Brazilian Force Commanders<sup>2</sup> has been key to the success of peace operations.

On the political side, Brazil's involvement in MINUSTAH has provided a bridgehead for other Latin-American countries to contribute to this Mission. As a result, there is a strong sense of regional ownership of MINUSTAH based on the contributions of Member States who have strong links with Haiti not only because of geographical proximity but also because of cultural and historical bonds.

Beyond MINUSTAH, Brazil's engagement is also serving as an example for other countries from the region to seek greater participation in peacekeeping operations around the globe. Through its peacekeeping training centre, Brazil has put in place an institution dedicated not only to prepare the next generation of Brazilian peacekeepers but also to share Brazil's experience with other Member States.

The case of the People's Republic of China is also extremely interesting, because, as in the case of Brazil, its role in peacekeeping has shifted during the past ten years.

<sup>2</sup> There are currently three Brazilian General Officers serving in the UN. Brazil consistently holds the post of Force Commander MINUSTAH (Haiti) – currently Lieutenant General Edson Leal Pujol - and the UNIFIL Maritime Component is commanded by Rear Admiral, Jose de Andrade Bandeira Leandro. In addition, Lieutenant General Carlos Alberto dos Santos Cruz has recently been appointed as Force Commander for MONUSCO.

According to the IPI dataset, since the early 2000's, China's contribution in uniformed personnel, including engineers, military experts, transport and logistical support units, individual police, formed police units, and medical staff, has multiplied by 20. As of June 30 2013, China deployed 1,782 peacekeepers in nine UN missions, more than all of the remaining Permanent Members of the UN Security Council together. Moreover, most recently China has committed to contribute to Mali with almost 400 blue helmets, including a hospital unit and an engineering unit. Today, most of China's peacekeepers are deployed in Africa. Not only does China deploy troops, it also provides experienced commanders to fill in leadership position in the missions, as was the case in the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) and the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP).

Both through its contributions and through its role as a decision maker at the Security Council level, China has become an essential actor in peacekeeping. This increasingly important role reflects China's high-level profile in international politics and its increasing openness to the rest of the world. China has assumed a leadership role in Asia and as such, it has also assumed greater responsibilities in terms of peacekeeping. Moreover, China is keen in deploying its troops alongside other countries' as this allows the armed forces to improve their capabilities and coordination skills. Finally, some argue that China has also pragmatic interests in safeguarding the African continent and ensuring peace in order to create a more favourable environment for investments. In my view, this is in line with a more global trend in which emerging countries are increasingly aware of the active role they can play in creating a more peaceful, and therefore prosperous, global environment.

The last troop-contributor country I would like to briefly mention here is the Republic of Ghana. Unlike the two countries cited beforehand, Ghana has long been an important troop and police contributor to peacekeeping missions. Indeed, Ghana ranks 9th among troop contributing countries, ahead of both China and Brazil. Currently, Ghana contributes with 2,859 blue helmets to eight different missions. Throughout the past decade it has contributed not only with essential military personnel, but it has also provided experienced senior officials to fulfil leadership positions in various Missions, as Force Commanders, Police Commissioners and also as Special-Representatives of the Secretary-General. Ghana has also established the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Center (KAIPTC). Furthermore, it is also an important contributor to African-led peacekeeping missions.

As it is the case for the two preceding examples, Ghana's commitment to peace operations demonstrates its willingness to participate in building a more peaceful world while highlighting its interest in projecting a positive image of the country. Ghana also seems to have a rationale of preventing a spill-over effect from conflicts in the region that might affect the country. In this regard, as is the case for Brazil, there is a sense of leadership and regional ownership to some of the Missions it contributes to.

## Conclusion

As UN peacekeeping works to respond to both the demands for flexibility and expansion, there are many challenges that lay ahead. Currently, the UN is facing different risks and threats in unstable environments. In certain contexts, as is the case of Mali, peacekeepers must be prepared to face asymmetric threats, which are similar in nature but not in scale, to those found in Afghanistan, Iraq and Somalia. The rebel groups active in the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo also require a special type of response adapted to the regional and local challenges that render that area unstable. The United Nations has taken measures to adapt to these risks, including the adoption of new technologies and more robust and flexible mandates.

Moreover, the UN is constantly struggling to improve its effectiveness and performance in order to deliver more potently on its mandates. This requires a clear political framework, adequate capabilities, and a solid political will on the troop contributors side. Therefore, efforts have been made to institutionalise a capability driven approach to peacekeeping that sets standards, assists in training, and measures performance with the creation of an Inspector General function for uniformed components, including for formed police units.

The important role played by emerging countries in peacekeeping is essential to face these challenges. Their participation as decision makers, troop contributors or external partners, reinforces the partnership needed to succeed in our endeavours. In particular, as analyzed in this article, their increasing efforts in peace operations through troop commitment reflects a sense of collective responsibility in a multipolar world, in which we are all responsible for building a more peaceful environment as we are all affected when this is not the case. Rising powers are also increasingly assuming a leadership role at a regional and international level, and to do so in a challenging, necessary and noble effort such as contributing to peacekeeping is commendable.