

A Changing Environment for Peacekeeping in Africa: South African Perspectives

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Introduction

South Africa has increasingly engaged in supporting peace and security processes in Africa over the last 20 years, through both participation and leadership in peacekeeping¹ missions from the United Nations (UN) and the African Union (AU). The country has become an active player in global peacekeeping efforts, firstly while at the forefront of several engagements in Africa and, secondly, as an advocate for regionalised responses to peacekeeping operations. This complements global peacekeeping efforts provided by the United Nations. The 1999 South African White Paper on the Participation in Peace Missions recognised the ever-changing arenas in which peacekeeping operations would be deployed. It states, “South Africa must...make a careful appraisal of the political and strategic environment within which peace missions are to be launched and the principles governing South African participation in such efforts. A precise understanding is required of the type of mandate that governs peace missions.”² As such, South Africa’s engagements have occurred in a context of both great domestic and international expectations. These have hoped that the country would play a leading role in becoming an active participant in attempts to resolve various regional and international conflicts.

This paper identifies how South Africa has engaged in peacekeeping operations in Africa, following the premise that a more prosperous South Africa is dependent on a secure and peaceful Africa. The paper aims to show that, while South Africa has placed peacekeeping operations as a priority in its foreign policy, it also struggles to fully implement its vision due to a series of internal and external reasons that will be explained. In doing so, this paper discusses South Africa’s peacekeeping policy, especially

¹ There are different terms used for describing peacekeeping operations. While the United Nations often uses the term peacekeeping in its descriptions of its activities, other organisations favour a number of different terms, like peace-support operations or peace operations/missions. While there are different nuances related to each term, this paper uses all of these terms interchangeably, as they generally refer to similar types of interventions.

² South African Department of Foreign Affairs. *White Paper on South African Participation in Peace Missions*, February 1999, available at http://www.gov.za/sites/www.gov.za/files/peacemissions_1.pdf.

its wider importance in terms of both foreign and security policy. It highlights the country's priorities and national interests regarding peacekeeping operations while noting the changing nature of engagement and the requirements of deploying on complex conflict situations in Africa.

Peacekeeping within South African Foreign Policy

Since its process of internal transition in the early 1990s, South Africa has strengthened its roles in peacekeeping operations and engaged in several different peacekeeping operations on the continent. In particular, during the late 1990s there was a growing recognition that South Africa's stability would be directly linked to that of the continent as a whole.³ Thus peacekeeping, together with wider support for conflict resolution in Africa, has since been one of the key pillars of implementation for South Africa's foreign policy towards peace and security in the continent.

Two key documents assist in understanding the background against which South African participation in peacekeeping operations is based. The first is the 2011 White Paper on South Africa's Foreign Policy, which draws upon principles of interconnection between the interests and values that drive South Africa's national goals. The White Paper emphasises Africa as the focal point for its Foreign Policy.⁴ Given its aim of achieving African economic, political and social development, South Africa's foreign policy is clearly based on the understanding that only a more developed and stable Africa can guarantee South Africa's own prosperity and security.

The White Paper presents the view that South Africa has no choice but to participate in peacekeeping as an essential part of its foreign policy.⁵ The awareness of this linkage between national interest and continental stability was a key driver for South Africa's engagements in multilateral arrangements, including its participation in UN- and regionally-led missions. While some countries act in peacekeeping operations as a means to strengthen their international projection and others engage for more pragmatic reasons, South Africa engages in peacekeeping as a means of implementing its ideal of pan-Africanism and South-South solidarity. As a regional power, South

³ African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD). *South Africa's Peacekeeping Role in Burundi: Challenges and Opportunities for Future Peace Missions*. Occasional Paper Series, 2007, Vol. 2, No. 2. p. 11.

⁴ *Building a Better World: The Diplomacy of Ubuntu*. White Paper on South Africa's Foreign Policy, 13 May 2011. Available at http://www.gov.za/sites/www.gov.za/files/foreignpolicy_0.pdf.

⁵ Neethling, Theo. *South Africa's Evolving Role in Peacekeeping: National Interest and International Responsibilities*. Journal of Military and Strategic Studies, Fall 2003, Vol. 6, Iss. 2. p. 4.

Africa identifies certain responsibilities and understands the risks of not supporting processes when the need arises, as in situations where instability in the region might have economic, political and social spill-over effects in the country.

The second document that provides the foundation for South Africa's participation in peacekeeping is the White Paper on South African Participation in International Peace Missions, from 1999. The White Paper on peace missions provides an important tool for understanding the origin of the country's engagements in peace operations, and its revision was started in 2014. This document reflects much of the drive behind the country's engagements, although it also provides challenges to understanding the changing nature of the peacekeeping environment in which the country is presented. It focuses particularly on identifying core areas of engagement for South Africa on sub-regional, continental and international levels, reinforcing the White Paper's vision of prioritising engagements in Africa.

To a large extent, the revision process of the White Paper on International Peace Missions was led by the understanding of changes at a global level in peacekeeping operations, generating the need for South Africa to better align its policies and visions. In 1999, when the first document was approved, peacekeeping operations were very different from what it is currently seen in terms of its political challenges and areas of operation. The evolving peacekeeping environment brought the need for South Africa to better understand its own role, including, for instance, the increasing focus on multi-dimensional peacekeeping and the role of regional arrangements.⁶ Some of the changes and challenges faced by peacekeeping operations are presented in the section below.

The Changing Nature of Peacekeeping and Its Challenges

The international community is not yet able to address all conflict challenges, despite a reduction in the number of conflicts in recent years.⁷ Intractable conflicts in countries like South Sudan, Somalia and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) all demonstrate the need for more effective responses from the international community in addressing conflict challenges. As 87% of the uniformed personnel of the UN are

⁶ Departmental briefing at South African Parliament. *White Paper on South African Policy and Revised White Paper on South Africa's Participation in International Peace Missions*, 12 Feb 2014, available at <http://www.pmg.org.za/report/20140212-white-paper-south-african-policy-and-revised-white-paper-south-africas-participation-in-international-peace>.

⁷ Themnér, Lotta and Wallensteen, Peter. *Armed Conflicts, 1946-2012*. Journal of Peace Research, 2013, Vol. 50, No. 4, pp. 509-521.

deployed in Africa,⁸ there is a critical interest in deployment in Africa. More robust mandates, like those seen in the DRC and Mali, are increasingly present at the UN Security Council discussions. South Africa is involved in a large number of these complex situations, and has demanded and requested more robust actions from UN peacekeeping operations in support of the implementation of the political and strategic directions of the United Nations mandates.⁹

The UN peacekeeping budget—a tool increasingly being used to assist countries emerging from conflict—was increased from \$5.2 billion in 2007¹⁰ to \$7.8 billion in 2014.¹¹ This is a result of the expectation that peacekeeping operations can assist countries in their transitions from conflict. While studies have shown that peacekeeping operations have a conflict-reducing effect,¹² it is also clear that there is a need for addressing the changing nature of conflicts in which international organisations have structured their support. In the last 20 years, for instance, peacekeeping, particularly when led by regional organisations like the African Union, has often engaged in contexts where there is no peace to keep. A particular challenge has been dealing with the key peacekeeping pillars of consent, impartiality and non-use of force (except in self-defense or defense of mandate).¹³

In the 1990s, the failure of the international community to prevent violence against civilians in countries like Rwanda and Somalia increased the pressure for more effective peacekeeping operations. The 1999 UN Mission in Sierra Leone was the first mission to have the specific task and goal of protecting civilians in response to these criticisms.

⁸ Ladsous, Hervé. *Keynote Address: New Challenges and Priorities for UN Peacekeeping*. Challenges Forum October 2014. Remarks presented by Mr David Haeri, United Nations. Available at http://www.challengesforum.org/Global/Forum%20Documents/2014%20Beijing%20Annual%20Forum/Keynote_Haeri.pdf?epslanguage=en.

⁹ Sangqu, Baso. *Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Republic of South Africa*, Meeting of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations 2010 Substantive Session, 22 February 2010, available at http://www.southafrica-newyork.net/speeches_pmun/view_speech.php?speech=9920486.

¹⁰ United Nations General Assembly. *Approved Resources for Peacekeeping Operations for the Period from 1 July 2006 to 30 June 2007*. A/C.5/61/18, 15 January 2007.

¹¹ United Nations General Assembly. *Approved Resources for Peacekeeping Operations for the Period from 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014*. A/C.5/68/21, 23 January 2014.

¹² Hegre, Harvard, Hultman, Lisa and Nygard, Harvard. *Evaluating the Conflict-reducing Effect of UN Peace-keeping Operations*. Paper presented to the National Conference on Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala, September 9-11, 2010. Available at <http://folk.uio.no/haegre/Papers/PKOpredictionUppsala.pdf> or Fortna, Virginia Page. *Interstate Peacekeeping: Causal Mechanisms and Empirical Effects*. World Politics, 2004, No. 56, pp. 481-519.

¹³ Center for International Peace Operations (ZIF). *Glossary Peace Operations*. Available at http://www.zif-berlin.org/fileadmin/uploads/analyse/dokumente/veroeffentlichungen/ZIF_Glossary.pdf.

Since then, several other missions have been deployed with this specific mandate. Today, this is probably the major challenge faced by peacekeepers. The challenge becomes apparent not only in the implementation of the task of protecting civilians through the mere presence of the UN, but also in relation to the need for more specialized, robust and proactive responses to protecting civilians.

In order to understand the processes of change in peacekeeping environments, it is critical that the various normative expectations of peacekeeping be recognised, as well as the reality of what can be accomplished. The majority of peacekeeping operations are deployed in situations that still have an element of violent conflict. As such, the capability of deployment presents an increasing challenge for missions, as they are also expected to assist in the stabilization process. There is a need for further rapid response capacity, but this is often overlooked due to the critical challenge of developing logistics and infrastructure for the missions.

Peacekeeping missions have increasingly come under attack. Mali, for instance, where the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) was by mid-2013 was not able to fully deploy in the northern areas of the country, one year after its deployment, and has often been a target of attacks, presents an example of those challenges.¹⁴ MINUSMA has lost a total of 31 peacekeepers (and had dozens more wounded) between the deployment of the mission in June 2013 and October 2014.¹⁵ In 2014 peacekeepers were also held hostage in Golan Heights in a mission that was caught up in the embroilment of conflict in Syria.

Peacekeeping operations are faced with several challenges, such as dealing with issues of transnational threats and the regionalized nature of conflicts, which have directly affected the implementation of peacekeeping operations. Moreover, wider issues such as climate change, transnational organized crime, terrorism, corruption, cyber crime and disease pandemics, as demonstrated by the recent outbreak of Ebola in West Africa, have impacts in terms of state fragility, and therefore influence both the way in which peacekeeping operations are deployed and how they implement their mandates. Other changes relate to difficulties in the implementation of peacekeeping mandates that are embedded within political conflicts. The variety of tasks required by peacekeeping operations lead to the increasing multidimensionality of their structures, expanding the focus of missions from purely military tasks to increasingly include police

¹⁴ de Carvalho, Gustavo and Kumalo, Liezelle. *Building the Capacity of Malian Police: Why MINUSMA Needs to Think Outside of the Box*. Institute for Security Studies, Policy Brief 69, October 2014.

¹⁵ Ladsous, Hervé. Op Cit.

and civilian components within their scopes. Several missions have also been tasked with the responsibility of assisting countries with peacebuilding tasks during their transition processes. These often include promoting dialogue and reconciliation. However, this is a challenge for missions in terms of their own capacity, expertise and ability to respond to political and long-term issues. This is, in turn, linked to the challenges faced in the coordination of efforts amongst a variety of actors on the ground.

Peacekeeping forces are increasingly deployed through regional arrangements. In the African context, AU-led peacekeeping operations are deployed in high-risk environments, often requiring combat activities. In this context, where the UN will not enter before a peace agreement has been reached, the AU missions often act as “first responders” to crises.¹⁶ With the increase of the AU’s engagements, there have also been several challenges. AU missions are highly dependent on external support, with a majority of their budget coming from outside of the continent. Also, the readiness of AU troops has often been accompanied by deficiencies in terms of equipment and training. While engagement between the AU and the UN has increased, and cooperation between the UN and regional actors is seen as a priority for the UN and the AU, the two organisations struggle to work together, for instance in determining where the UN takes over from the AU.

The challenges faced by peacekeeping operations resulted in the request by the UN Secretary-General in June 2014 that a wide review of UN peace operations be conducted, including both peacekeeping and special political missions. It is the most important review conducted at the UN level for peacekeeping operations since the Brahimi report was launched in 2000. Its results will be presented before mid-2015, and provide an opportunity for the UN to assess its range of tools in the process of assisting countries in successfully emerging from conflict and achieving sustainable peace. As a process, it will aim to understand, in particular, the question of whether peacekeeping operations are elastic enough to adapt to the new realities on the ground. Practical and operational challenges are prevalent, and missions in Mali, the Central African Republic (CAR), and South Sudan, for instance, have all seen critical challenges in implementing their mandates effectively.

All of these issues impact directly upon South African engagement, especially regarding those challenges that affect Africa—South African foreign policy’s most

¹⁶ de Carvalho, Gustavo. *Increasing the Momentum for Police in African-led Peacekeeping Operations*. ISS Today, 24 October 2014, available at <http://www.issafrika.org/iss-today/increasing-the-momentum-for-police-in-african-led-peacekeeping-operations>.

important priority. In covering the multidimensional nature of peacekeeping operations and their civilian, police and military components, South Africa often focuses in particular on the coordination of actions and aims at better understanding regional approaches. As seen below, South Africa has been an active player in all of these areas.

South African Experiences in Peacekeeping Operations

South Africa's engagements in peacekeeping missions have largely focused on three different spheres, namely the UN, the AU and the Southern African Development Community (SADC). South Africa's first engagement in peacekeeping, in 1998, occurred prior to the development of both of the above-mentioned White Papers, as part of the SADC intervention in Lesotho. Such engagement was and remains controversial, as there is indication that, more than just a peacekeeping response, it was also a response to South Africa's own resource interests, making it somehow inconsistent with the UN Charter and SADC treaty.¹⁷

South Africa currently has uniformed personnel deployed in three peacekeeping operations, namely the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) under the United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO); the African Union/United Nations Hybrid operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and at the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). The role of South Africa in providing not only military but also political support to particular conflict situations was central to stabilising the situation and raising awareness of the conflicts in Burundi and the DRC. The deployments were often part of a wider South African engagement in these countries, which included assistance in mediation processes and institution-building engagements. Three examples will be presented below.

Firstly, South Africa's first major deployment, in Burundi, provided the space to play a critical role in initiating the mediation process. South Africa continued to be a leading country in the various peacekeeping efforts that occurred between 2001 and 2007. The death of Julius Nyerere—former president of Tanzania and the first facilitator of the Burundian peace process—prompted his succession in the facilitation process in 1999 by the former South African president, Nelson Mandela. This further shaped South African participation and the country's role in resolving the conflict.¹⁸ This ultimately resulted in the Arusha Reconciliation and Peace Agreement, which was finally signed by

¹⁷ Likoti, Fako. *The 1998 Military Intervention in Lesotho: SADC Peace Mission or Resource War?* International Peacekeeping, 2007, Vol. 14, Iss. 2.

¹⁸ African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD). Op Cit.

17 Burundian political parties, the government and the National Assembly in Arusha on 28 August, 2000. South Africa invested substantially in the deployment of its troops, firstly in a bilateral arrangement before any international organisation could deploy. The creation of the African Union in 2002 opened space for the deployment of the African Mission in Burundi (AMIB) that, in addition to South Africa's troops, also deployed personnel from Mozambique and Ethiopia. This contingent deployment was made viable due to the financial and logistical support of countries such as the United Kingdom, France, South Africa and the United States. AMIB's cost was estimated at US\$ 110 million.¹⁹ In the following years, South Africa continued to play a decisive role in Burundi; it was the biggest contributing country for the UN mission (UN Operation in Burundi: ONUB) that followed AMIB, providing 1,500 troops in 2004.²⁰

Secondly, another example of South Africa's participation in peacekeeping operations, the engagement in the DRC, has probably been the most consistent throughout the 15 years of South African engagement in peacekeeping operations. Similar to its role in Burundi, South Africa played a critical role in supporting the Congolese peace process, which culminated in the signature of a peace agreement in 1999 and swift deployment of the United Nations Mission in the DRC (MONUC) in the same year. With the continuation of tension in the country, South Africa was one of the leading actors in supporting the 18-month negotiation process, entitled the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, which culminated with the signature in South Africa of the Sun City Agreements in 2002. While South Africa's involvement in MONUC dated back to 1999 with the deployment of a liaison officer in Kampala, large-scale forces were only deployed in 2003.²¹ That year South Africa deployed around 1000 soldiers to the DRC, which later increased to around 1,500 troops.²² Afterwards South Africa continued supporting the mission with troops until the challenges provided by armed groups in the eastern DRC required a sizeable contingent to be sent to become part of the FIB. South African troops, together with other SADC countries (e.g. Tanzania and Malawi), have often engaged in direct combat with Congolese rebels²³ in the offensive role of neutralising

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ South African Department of Defence. Operation Mistral—Democratic Republic of Congo. Available at <http://www.dod.mil.za/operations/international/Mistral.htm>.

²² Ibid.

²³ Pillay, Venashri and Mataboge, Mmanaledi. *South African Soldiers Injured in DRC Attack*, Mail and Guardian, 01 May 2014, available at <http://mg.co.za/article/2014-05-01-south-african-soldiers-injured-in-drc-attack>.

rebel groups as part of a mission that is characterised mostly by its robust nature. During the mission South Africa has provided not only troops, but also the deployment of three helicopters to assist in offensive operations. The sizeable presence of South African troops in the FIB, with 1,343 South African troops deployed by September 2014,²⁴ shows South Africa's willingness to engage in operations that are more robust in nature.

Thirdly, it is important to cite the provision of South Africa's bilateral support during the crisis in 2013 in the Central African Republic (CAR), and its overall impact on engagement in the country. In early 2013, South Africa deployed around 240 troops (out of 400 that had been authorised by South Africa's president) to assist the CAR army with military training and other assistance, originally designated for a period of 5 years.²⁵ While the troops were initially deployed to provide VIP protection and security-sector reform assistance, the troops came under intense attack. Though not an approved peacekeeping operation, the challenges in the country raised concerns about South Africa's capability for operating in difficult scenarios (including its airlifting capability).

Having presented an overview of changes in the peacekeeping context and examples of South Africa's participation in line with its foreign policy, it is important to contextualise this participation in a wider environment. Thus the next section will present the extent of South Africa's engagement in peacekeeping operations in comparison to that of other African and developing countries.

Comparing South Africa's Deployment in Peacekeeping Operations to Other Developing Countries

As peacekeeping assumes greater importance, concerns have been raised regarding burden-sharing amongst countries for peacekeeping operations in the UN.²⁶ In this context, it would be expected that larger countries would have a larger share in the peacekeeping burden. However, what can be seen instead are disproportionate degrees of engagement in the sharing of peacekeeping efforts between larger and smaller countries. While larger countries are mostly contributing larger percentages to the financing of peacekeeping operations, developing countries are mostly contributing through the deployment of troops. For instance, amongst the permanent members of the UN

²⁴ United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations. *UN Mission's Summary Detailed by Country*. 30 September 2014. Available at http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/contributors/2014/sept14_3.pdf.

²⁵ Statement. *President Jacob Zuma Employs South African National Defence Force Personnel for Service in the Central African Republic*. Available at <http://www.thepresidency.gov.za/pebble.asp?relid=7515>.

²⁶ Shimizu, Hirofumi and Sandler, Todd. *Peacekeeping and Burden-sharing, 1994-2000*. Journal of Peace Research, 2002, Vol. 39, No. 6, pp. 651-668.

Security Council, only China features prominently in both financing and deploying troops to UN peacekeeping missions.

Where does South Africa feature globally, both in terms of troop deployment and of financing of UN peacekeeping missions? Is the country a leading African country? How does it relate to other developing countries? Assessing motivation and importance for countries in participating in peacekeeping operations, particularly at a comparative level, can become a speculative exercise. However, assessing different levels and degrees of participation can enable actors to have a stronger indication of where different countries are positioned in a global context and where their priorities lie. This section will look into some data in order to shed light onto those questions and compare South Africa's participation to other African and similar developing countries.

In September 2014, 12 out of the top 20 global contributors of uniformed personnel were African countries. In this pool, South Africa is placed as the 14th largest contributor of uniformed personnel to United Nations peacekeeping.²⁷ Consequently, South Africa can be identified globally as one of the key contributors to peacekeeping operations, but it falls behind many of its African counterparts in terms of uniformed personnel contribution.

As such, another point of comparison for South Africa would be in relation to countries of a similar nature (e.g. GDP, size and global relevance), including other emerging countries from both Africa and beyond. In such a comparison, South Africa ranks in positions similar to those of other emerging countries, showing it has similar levels of participation.

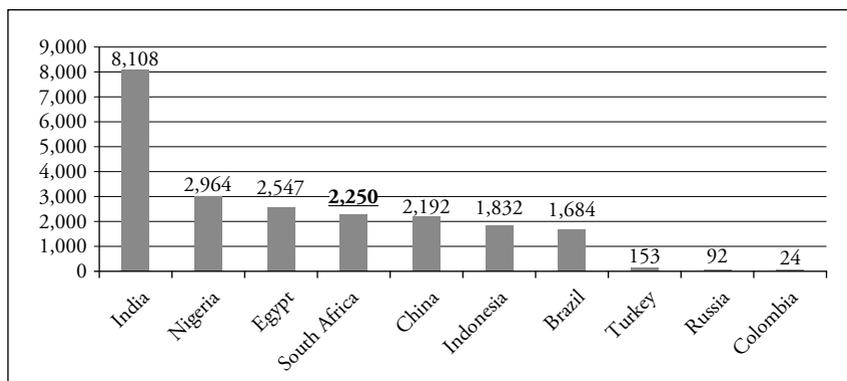
As mentioned earlier, peacekeeping missions are multidimensional. While the deployment of civilian (non-uniformed) personnel is not directly related to a particular country's engagements (often occurring through direct application rather than by secondment), understanding the numbers of civilians also allows one to see the reach and projection of the country in the implementation of mandates. The number of international civilian personnel involved in UN peacekeeping missions and special political missions is not readily available.²⁸ However, a baseline study conducted by the CIVCAP network in 2012 gathered the numbers of civilians deployed that year in a select number of countries. This study showed that South Africa has a considerably

²⁷ Adapted from September 2014 Monthly Summary of Contributions (Police, UN Military Experts, and Troops), from United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations, available at http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/contributors/2014/sept14_1.pdf.

²⁸ Keating, Paul and Wiharta, Sharon. *Synthesis Report of the Baseline Study on Civilian Capacities: A CIVCAP Network Joint Research Project*. CIVCAP Network, Security in Practice Report, 10, 2012.

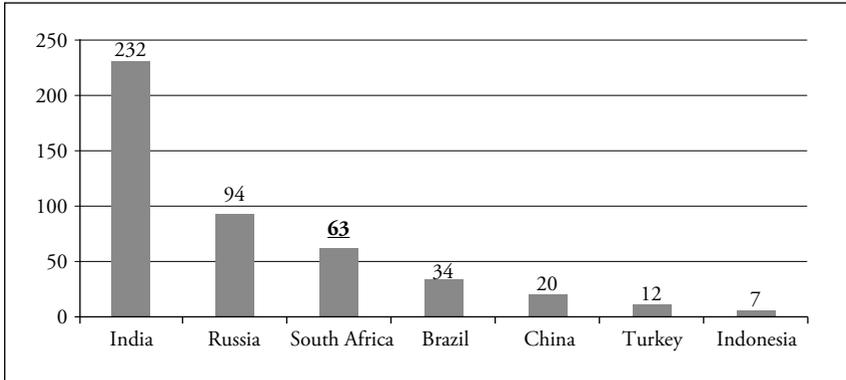
Table 1. Comparing South Africa's Deployment in Peacekeeping Operations: Personnel

	Country	Police	UNMEM	Troops	Total
1	Bangladesh	1,317	70	7,391	8,778
2	Pakistan	542	70	7,671	8,283
3	India	999	56	7,053	8,108
4	Ethiopia	33	98	7,677	7,808
5	Rwanda	523	18	5,091	5,632
6	Nepal	776	50	4,382	5,208
7	Nigeria	394	43	2,527	2,964
8	Ghana	167	65	2,689	2,921
9	Senegal	1,050	16	1,761	2,827
10	Egypt	409	74	2,064	2,547
11	Morocco	-	4	2,314	2,318
12	Tanzania	33	23	2,242	2,298
13	Jordan	1,492	43	746	2,281
14	South Africa	79	19	2,152	2,250
15	China	172	36	1,984	2,192
16	Burkina Faso	300	15	1,669	1,984
17	Niger	109	16	1,736	1,861
18	Indonesia	170	27	1,635	1,832
19	Uruguay	5	11	1,787	1,803
20	Togo	333	15	1,404	1,752

Figure 1. Number of Uniformed Personnel on UN Missions

higher participation of civilians in missions than other larger or emerging countries, such as Brazil or China.

Figure 2. Number of International Civilian Personnel in UN Peacekeeping and Special Political Missions



Beyond contribution of personnel, it is also important to examine financial contributions to UN peacekeeping missions so as to understand the disproportionate role division between countries as presented above. The following table provides a comparison between other contributing countries and South Africa's assessed contributions to the UN peacekeeping operations for the period of 2014-2015.²⁹ Out of its approved budget of \$7.06 billion for the period of 2014-2015, South Africa currently contributes 0.07%. While South Africa contributes significantly less than other BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) countries, its contribution level is comparable to other countries, like Indonesia. South Africa also financially contributes more than any other African country to UN peacekeeping operations. India, for instance, contributes two times more than South Africa to UN peacekeeping, but has an economy and population considerably larger.

²⁹ United Nations General Assembly. *Implementation of General Assembly Resolutions 55/235 and 55/236: Report of the Secretary General*. A/67/224/Add.1 27 December 2012.

*Table 2. Comparing South Africa's Deployment in Peacekeeping Operations:
Financial Contribution*

Country	Percentage of Assessed Contributions to United Nations Peacekeeping Operations
Nigeria	0.01%
Egypt	0.02%
Colombia	0.05%
Indonesia	0.06%
South Africa	0.07%
India	0.133%
Turkey	0.265%
Brazil	0.58%
Russia	3.14%
China	6.63%

South African Views on a Changing Peacekeeping Environment

What future (major challenges, demands, roles, etc.) does South Africa envision for itself in the global peacekeeping arena? There are growing expectations for what South Africa can provide in terms of future peacekeeping operations, and its contributions are often informed by wider engagements in countries, extending beyond just the deployment of troops. Lotze, de Coning and Neethling present three core trends in the deployment of South Africa:³⁰

1. Deployment as part of the role played by South Africa in the facilitation of the peace process, e.g. in Burundi, the DRC and the Sudan(s);
2. South Africa does not prefer providing peacekeepers to UN operations over other types of peace operations, and has deployed in either UN (e.g. the DRC), AU or sub-regional (e.g. Burundi, Darfur) operations, or through bilateral engagements (e.g. the DRC or the Central African Republic);
3. South Africa's deployments act as a tool for supporting its ambition to play a leading role as a "middle power."

³⁰ Lotze, Walter, de Coning, Cedric and Neethling, Theo. Contributor Profile: South Africa, available at <http://www.providingforpeacekeeping.org/2014/04/03/contributor-profile-south-africa/>.

There is an increasing understanding in South Africa that UN missions are globally under-resourced and that deployment is often too weak and too lightly armed and equipped.³¹ The relative success of the FIB is often used as an argument to support this idea. However, while South Africa shares these views, the country also has a limited capacity in terms of funding and operational capacity.³² The current number of approximately 2,500 troops is the usual average number of deployed uniformed personnel, showing that the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) lacks the full capacity necessary in order to deploy in multiple areas at any given time. Financial constraints within the South African budgetary framework also directly impact the way in which South Africa aims to implement its priorities in peacekeeping efforts.³³

South Africa has been an important driver in the development of continental mechanisms for dealing with peace and security matters, including the AU's peacekeeping mechanisms. As mentioned earlier, South Africa shares views of deploying through any of these types of arrangements, whether from the UN, AU or SADC, depending on the situation and the enabling conditions for deployment. For instance, South Africa was a leading actor in Burundi, and has also engaged in the AU Mission in Darfur (AMIS). More recently, in response to the slow progression of the development of the African Standby Force (ASF), the country has been in the forefront of the development of the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises (ACIRC). Such a project, in response to challenges faced in countries like the Central African Republic or Mali, would then complement the ASF in emergency situations. In the peace operations context, South Africa has been actively engaged in the development of the civilian component of the SADC's Standby Arrangement and the civilian dimension of the ASF.³⁴

South Africa's defence sector has faced several challenges in the implementation of its vision towards deployment and support for peacekeeping operations in the past years. Cilliers stated that the Department of Defence does not have the equipment or capacity to fulfil its goals towards peacekeeping missions. Between 2011 and 2014, South Africa has engaged in a process of reviewing its defence processes, presenting as one of its key findings the observation that the defence force is in a severe state of decline

³¹ E-mail interview with South African independent military and defence analyst.

³² Cilliers, Jakkie. Interview for IRIN News, Analysis: South Africa—Paper Tiger of African Peacekeeping Operations, available at <http://www.irinnews.org/report/94597/analysis-south-africa-paper-tiger-of-african-peacekeeping-operations>, accessed on 13 October 2014.

³³ Neethling, Theo. Op Cit.

³⁴ Keating, Paul and Wiharta, Sharon. Op Cit.

and facing critical challenges in meeting standing defence mobility.³⁵ In the review, South Africa presents its commitment to peacekeeping operations as the third goal of the SANDF, designating it as a goal to promote peace and security through the tasks of promoting strategic influence and contributing to peace and stability.

The Defence Review is particularly important for South Africa's peacekeeping capacities, as it directs the focus for increasing the capacity for dealing with challenges in the country's strategic environment, which, as presented before, is mostly related to developments in the continent as a whole. The review identified that while the SANDF is in a state of decline,³⁶ a critical challenge relates to the capacity of the SANDF to finance its own anticipated engagements. As mentioned above, the Defence Review provided a series of recommendations to strengthen the capacity of the SANDF, including recommendations that would enable South Africa to deploy in several simultaneous fronts, from short-term to extended periods.³⁷ The review was approved in March 2014.³⁸

One of the main priorities of President Zuma's administration, the development of ACIRC, would require further investments towards its creation, and for more South African troops to be deployed. However, in October 2014, following the release of the national budget, there has been no indication that these expectations will be met, deepening questions of whether or not South Africa is prepared to incur the costs of implementing some of its identified foreign policy priorities. During the release of the budget, it was said that South Africa's peace-support operations ambitions are not aligned with the country's peace-support capacity.³⁹ This shows how South African engagements often lack consistency of participation, as it is often dependent on the participation of the presidency. In the past 15 years, presidents Mandela, Mbeki and Zuma have each championed different engagements in the continent, including, respectively, their roles in Burundi, Darfur and the DRC.

South Africa, together with other African states, has shown less reluctance to engage in the use of force in its engagements in peacekeeping operations, as was seen in the engagement of the FIB in the DRC. In discussions for the implementation of the

³⁵ Cilliers, Jakkie. *The 2014 South African Defence Review: Rebuilding after Years of Abuse, Neglect and Decay*. Institute for Security Studies, Policy Brief, 56, June 2014.

³⁶ Fabricius, Peter. *Nene Fails to Put His Money Where Zuma's Mouth Is*. ISS Today, 23 October 2014, available at <http://www.issafrica.org/iss-today/nene-fails-to-put-his-money-where-zumas-mouth-is>.

³⁷ E-mail interview with South African independent military and defence analyst.

³⁸ South African Department of Defence. *South African Defence Review 2014*, 25 March 2014, available at <http://www.sadefencereview2012.org/publications/publications.htm>.

³⁹ Fabricius, Peter. Op Cit.

intervention brigade, South Africa has provided the majority of the troops for the force, focusing on ensuring stabilization as a priority area for South Africa's foreign policy.

Conclusion

With the current changes in contexts where peacekeeping operations are being deployed, South Africa faces challenges in enhancing its peacekeeping engagements. There are a wide range of expectations as to what South Africa can contribute as an African regional power.⁴⁰ Othieno and Smasuwu argue that regional powers can create a situation of political willingness, institutional strength and resource availability that is essential to the success of operations.⁴¹ With the current review of peacekeeping efforts at the UN, an opportunity is provided for South Africa to bring to the forefront its own views and vision, as well as to continue the process of strengthening African efforts. However, it is important that the country identifies its own comparative advantages, and presents its views actively in the international arena. This will only occur, however, when the country is internally able to consistently provide the necessary means to contribute to international peacekeeping.

⁴⁰ See Lucey, Amanda, de Carvalho, Gustavo and Gida, Sibongile. *South Africa and the United Nations: Strengthening Opportunities for Effective Peacebuilding*. ISS Paper 268, September 2014. Also Lucey, Amanda and Gida, Sibongile. *Enhancing South Africa's Post-conflict Development Role in the African Union*. ISS Paper 256, May 2014.

⁴¹ Othieno, Timothy; Samawuwo, Nhamo. *A Critical Analysis of Africa's Experiments with Hybrid Missions and Security Collaboration*. African Security Review, 2008, Vol. 16, No. 3, p. 31.