

A Comparative Analysis of the Effectiveness of Operations in Mali and Somalia

by Lawrence J. Richardson

The United Nation's Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) are actively operating against violent extremist organizations and insurgencies. These threat actors and the tactics, techniques, and procedures they employ are posing significant challenges to the way the international community executes peace enforcement operations. This article conducts a comparative analysis within a doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership, personnel, facility, and policy (DOTMLPF-P) construct of the effectiveness of MINUSMA and AMISOM. Through an examination of the information, this research determined that the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations is not constituted to conduct peace enforcement missions against violent extremist organizations or insurgencies. The analysis of the research did provide recommendations to improve the effectiveness of the MINUSMA and potential future United Nations (UN) peacekeeping missions.

There are currently 14 active UN peacekeeping operations worldwide. Of those 14 peacekeeping missions, 7 are on the continent of Africa. The African Union (AU) also has two active peace operations being conducted alongside and with the support of the UN. Peace operations are not easy, and the complex environment would challenge even the most experienced military and civilian professionals. The threat actors and instability of the twenty-first century have only added more complexity to peace operations. The UN speaks extensively on the role of the international community and the UN to maintain peace through dialogue or, when necessary, military means. The UN Charter, Chapters VI and VII are referenced repeatedly when people speak of peace operations. Specific articles within these chapters reference the role of the Security Council and the means by which the UN can maintain or enforce peace. Articles 36 and 37 of Chapter VI are most commonly known as the peacekeeping articles and typically will result in a more restrained application of force.

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Chapter VI missions are commonly employed as a force to maintain a mutually-agreed-to peace. Chapter VII missions, however, are linked to Articles 41 and 42. Chapter VII missions are referred to as peace enforcement missions, and these missions authorize coercion in order to restore international peace. Chapter VII missions are much more robust and have more expansive powers to fulfill the mandate. The UN has deployed military, police, and civilian formations to increase stability, create peace and stability, and support fragile states struggling with internal conflict.

The UN and the AU differ in their approaches to peace operations. “The AU’s peacekeeping posture in Burundi, Darfur and now Somalia points to the emergence of a different peacekeeping doctrine; instead of waiting for a peace to keep, the AU views peacekeeping as an opportunity to establish peace before keeping it.”¹ This mindset sits at odds with standing UN principles, but these two organizations are mutually supporting and simultaneously conducting similar missions. Both organizations also operate alongside one another in the same countries. Thus, the AU sees the viability of allowing greater authority to conduct non-standard peace operations. Both organizations are facing similar threats and challenges, which means that there is a potential need to recalibrate the approach taken during peace enforcement missions.

Given that counterterrorism (CT), counter violent extremist organizations (C-VEO), and counter insurgencies (COIN) are becoming more capable and robust, the question does arise: Is there a fundamental shift in the character of peace operations?

With threats to international peace arising from fragile and failed states, the UN finds itself fighting the same old battles but with a new more capable threat. Insurgents, extremists, and terrorists can take root and infiltrate many ungoverned spaces unopposed. However, these

ungoverned spaces are not truly ungoverned. Though the central state authority may be weak or non-existent, societies always create a system to govern their affairs. The UN, therefore, has deployed military, police, and civilian agents in far-flung corners of Africa to facilitate the peaceful resolution of conflict. Many of these locations cause significant challenges due to a lack of resources and infrastructure. Add to the equation a lack of security and governmental control and porous borders that allow the free flow of fighters, weapons, and funding to prop up combatants, and the challenges can seem insurmountable. Therefore, this article analyzes and provides recommendations for the UN and the international community on the following question. Is the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations properly constituted to conduct peace enforcement operations against violent extremist organizations in fragile nations that are unable to prosecute counter insurgency/counter terrorism operations on their own? In order to answer this question, this article focuses on the UN MINUSMA and the AMISOM.

Is there a fundamental shift in the character of peace operations?

MINUSMA

The deployment of the MINUSMA traces its roots to the French and AU intervention in 2013. A military coup broke out in Bamako in March of 2012, and these events led to the eventual deployment of African regional forces.² The political instability in Bamako provided the opportunity for ethnic tensions in the north to boil over. As the new government in Bamako worked to consolidate its position, the tribes in the north began to push south eventually seizing Kidal, Gao, Timbuktu, and other smaller towns. In response to the offensive from the north, France began a military operation to restore

Malian governmental authority in the recently-lost territory in January of 2013.³ The AU and the Economic Community of West African States deployed a peace support operation to coincide with the French operation, which established the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA). AFISMA would eventually be re-hatted as MINUSMA and expanded under UN Security Council Resolution 2100 on July 1, 2013.⁴

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AFISMA was turned into a UN mission at the request of the transitional government in Bamako, as well support from France.⁵ The decision to deploy a multidimensional, integrated, stabilization mission came as the UN Security Council was given the option of providing a multidimensional, integrated, political presence to work alongside AFISMA or the option of deploying a multidimensional, integrated mission under a Chapter VII mandate with a parallel military force.⁶ MINUSMA's mandate fell under a Chapter VII deployment, with key tasks of stabilizing key population centers; reasserting state authority; protecting civilians, UN personnel, and human rights; and supporting humanitarian assistance, cultural preservation, and international justice.⁷ France's military force, originally operating under the name *Serval*, which later transitioned to *Barkhane* with a more regional approach, was authorized to serve as a parallel force to MINUSMA by the Security Council.⁸

MINUSMA found itself immediately at a disadvantage upon assuming control of the mission, as northern Mali lacks substantial infrastructure, and at the time of assumption the AFISMA troops in country were operating below the standards of the UN.⁹ MINUSMA has also struggled to reach its authorized military

personnel strength.¹⁰ The challenge to provide for enough personnel was further exacerbated when the Security Council expanded MINUSMA's presence beyond the population centers of Gao and Timbuktu to further provide for protection of civilians further north.¹¹ The UN Security Council, through Resolution 2227 in June 2015, authorized MINUSMA 11,240 military personnel and 1,440 police personnel. As of April 1, 2016, MINUSMA had 10,320 military personnel and 1,105 police personnel with 91.96 percent and 95.25 percent respectively deployed in regions.¹² In October 2017, MINUSMA had reached 11,231 contingent troops and 1,745 police, which when teamed with the remaining UN staff brings the current number of deployed UN personnel to 14,865.¹³ MINUSMA as of October 2017, is authorized 15,209 military personnel, which includes police as well.¹⁴ It has not been demonstrated that the amount of personnel on the ground addresses the issue of capacity that MINUSMA faces in order to implement its robust mandate.¹⁵

MINUSMA also implemented the Modular U-Staff construct for operations in Mali. The UN adopted the multidimensional, integrated staff construct in order to increase communication, synchronization, and coordination among all the various civilian and military offices.¹⁶ The multidimensional mission staff is designed specifically to address violent "spoilers" and asymmetric threat actors.¹⁷ The creation of the multidimensional staff aims to align all vested parties that play into operations, operations support, and personnel, evaluation, and training to achieve unity of effort to accomplish the mandate.¹⁸ Figure 1 shows the relationship between the force commander and the various staff functions. The Deputy Chief of Staff (DCOS) for Personnel, Evaluation, and Training focuses on personnel actions, lessons learned, and mission effectiveness, which then feeds into identified training requirements. The DCOS for Operations plans (U5) and executes operations

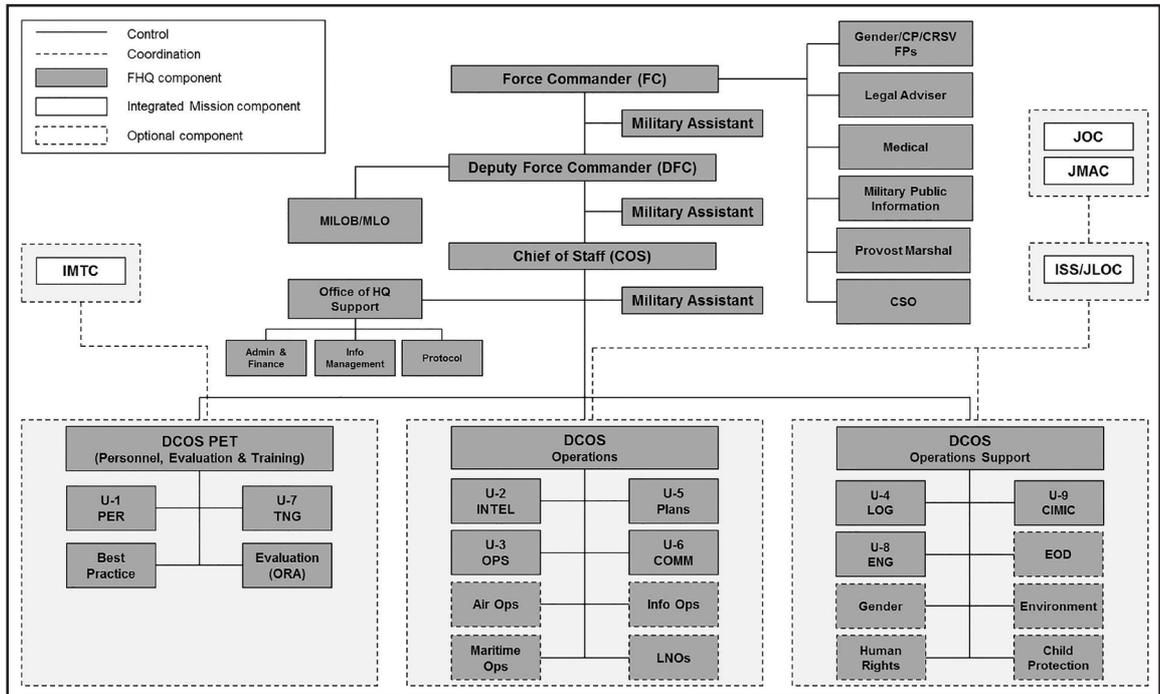


Figure 1. UN Multidimensional Mission: Modular U-Staff structure

Source: United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations, United Nations Force Headquarters Handbook, November 2014, 28, accessed December 21, 2017, <http://dag.un.org/handle/11176/89596>.

(U3) while being informed by intelligence (U2). The DCOS for Operations staffs serve to synchronize actions and enablers through aviation, maritime, information operations, liaisons, and communications capabilities. The DCOS for Operations Support provides enabler and logistical support to deployed units. The U4 provides planning and supply distribution operational support. The U9 serves as the civil military integration staff, which is crucial to the multidimensional staff structure. The U8 provides engineering support. The DCOS for Operational Support also houses any explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) capability required in the mission. The staff is supplemented by other staff focusing on human rights, gender equality, and child protection. The Joint Operations Center (JOC) is encompassed in the Force Headquarters and coordinates daily military activities and provides situational awareness.¹⁹ The Joint Mission Analysis Centre (JMAC) serves as a coordinating staff, synchronizing

civilian and military information requirements to inform decision makers.²⁰

Mali is the 25th largest country in the world, with 1,240,192 square kilometers (km).²¹ The capital of Bamako sits 1,190 km from Gao (Sector East Headquarters), 1,003 km from Timbuktu (Sector West Headquarters), and 1,542 km from Kidal (Sector North Headquarters), all via roadway. By comparison, Baghdad sits 404 km via roadway from Mosul and, at best, Mali's roadway infrastructure can be considered at parity with Iraq's.

In order to manage this vast amount of terrain, MINUSMA organized into three sectors and established regional sector headquarters. These sector headquarters serve as forward deployed locations to better implement the mandate and report back to the overall Force Headquarters located in Bamako. Sector North with a headquarters in Kidal, Sector East with a headquarters in Gao, and Sector West with a headquarters in Timbuktu provide MINUSMA

forward deployed staffs enablers and direct links to the individual units deployed in theater. MINUSMA has struggled with positioning troops forward due to the severe lack of infrastructure throughout the country, which is particularly pronounced north of the Niger river.²² The lengths to which supplies needed to be delivered also meant that aircraft would be crucial in the ability to conduct resupply operations.²³ MINUSMA is tasked with providing security in the north, but this was done prior to the support capabilities being in place.²⁴ The UN forces suffer from

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over-extended lines of communication and supply. The average UN infantry battalion is anywhere from 50-850 soldiers, which can easily be consumed in purely conducting logistical resupply, with little time or capacity to secure the population centers or achieve other vital aspects of the mandate.²⁵ This overextension creates vulnerabilities to MINUSMA, as a great deal of effort is dedicated to securing convoys, which then leads to forces being placed into static positions due to logistics requirements.²⁶ The logistical situation in northern Mali creates a condition in which MINUSMA's forces are essentially conducting survival operations and not focused on achieving the mandate.²⁷

Given the asymmetric threats that face MINUSMA, the UN has focused on deploying EOD and has identified training in defeating improvised explosive devices (IEDs). As of October 2017, MINUSMA has fielded four EOD units to support each of the sectors.²⁸ These EOD formations are to support the maneuver forces in each sector upon the report of an IED incident or any IED identified but undetonated. This, in turn, requires each patrol to request EOD support that may be many miles from the incident. This distance leads to a level of responsiveness that

may preclude the reporting of IEDs or lags in report times. This leaves UN infantry battalions to handle IED threats without the proper training and equipment.²⁹

Given the complex nature of the threats operating in Mali, the UN has had to adapt its traditional model of peacekeeping. These asymmetric threats and groups ranging from organized crime to violent extremist organizations and liberation movements mean that MINUSMA is working against a complex network of personalities and interests. The operating environment in northern Mali shares many similarities to those the U.S. has seen in Iraq or Afghanistan over the last 16 years.

With the complex situation that exists in Mali, the UN deployed a new intelligence capability provided primarily by the Scandinavian countries of NATO. The All Sources Information Fusion Unit (ASIFU) was fielded in MINUSMA in 2013 and was the first deployment of a dedicated military intelligence entity inside a UN mission.³⁰ The ASIFU also deployed with unmanned aerial vehicles to perform intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance missions, which were further reinforced by Dutch attack helicopters.³¹ In order to provide for additional means of information collection, the ASIFU deployed capabilities to conduct human intelligence, an intelligence analysis cell, and an open source intelligence section, all of which allowed the ASIFU to begin to understand the network of threats in northern Mali.³² The ASIFU has provided a valuable resource to MINUSMA and the leadership, but as time has progressed, the ASIFU has spent more time on tactical-level intelligence to enable decision making.³³ Originally the ASIFU was geared toward understanding the drivers of conflict and operational-level intelligence, which means it may only be providing intelligence to treat symptoms of the larger drivers of the conflict.³⁴

Peace enforcement organizations are

typically deployed as the result of complex social issues or unresolved political issues.³⁵ As MINUSMA's mandate includes the reassertion of central government authority, police and law enforcement play a crucial role. According to the UN, there are currently 1,747 police deployed inside MINUSMA.³⁶ These police are split among the sectors and play a role in developing the capacity of the Malian government to provide law enforcement.

The underlying conflict in northern Mali has led to MINUSMA being one of the most dangerous missions the UN has conducted. Since MINUSMA began operations in 2013, it has had 95 fatalities classified as malicious acts (as of November 2017).³⁷ The tactics used against UN peacekeepers include ambushes, IEDs, mortar and rocket attacks, and suicide bombs. With the withdrawal of the Malian military from the north, the peacekeepers are serving as the main security presence.³⁸ Nine peacekeepers from Niger were attacked and killed by armed men on motorcycles during a convoy operation in October 2014 in the Gao region of Mali.³⁹ The peacekeepers were operating a convoy from Ménaka to Asongo in Sector East. From reports, the armed assailants attacked the convoy with heavy weapons. At the time, this was the deadliest attack on peacekeepers in Mali.⁴⁰ The fatality total due to malicious activity in 2014 reached 28, which was the highest of any other ongoing peace operation that year.⁴¹ 2014 saw numerous attacks against peacekeepers in which many were ambushed, exposed to IEDs, or came under attack from indirect fire.⁴²

In 2015, the fatalities due to malicious activity for MINUSMA fell to 12. In 2015, the first engagement by Dutch attack aviation occurred when a UN Bangladeshi force near the town of Tabankort in the Kidal region came under persistent heavy weapons fire.⁴³ The town, its civilian population, and UN peacekeepers had been isolated by elements of National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad for

days, and the aviation attack was done within the constraints of the mandate according to the force headquarters in Bamako.⁴⁴ The incident in Tabankort demonstrated the need for aviation support, but it also demonstrated that the armed groups in northern Mali have, at minimum, parity with regards to combat power to the average UN fighting force. The Tabankort incident also highlighted the response process that MINUSMA uses. For aviation support to be released, the isolated Bangladeshi unit had to relay its request for support through the sector North headquarters, which then passed the request to Bamako for crisis planning and response. The sector headquarters in Kidal did

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not have release authority for attack aviation to respond to the battle. The requirement for Bamako to approve, plan, and grant authority as opposed to the closer headquarters demonstrates the predominance on centralized control. The battle at Tabankort came under heavy scrutiny for the use of hellfire missiles even though force used by the aviation was within the authority of the mandate and used only after issuing warning shots. The introduction and utilization of attack aviation in MINUSMA provided additional capability to counter the threats in northern Mali. The ground force numbers in MINUSMA, however, did not increase. The enabler support in MINUSMA provided more security for convoys and a reasonable expectation of substantial and responsive support in the event of a concerted attack. The enabler support, however, did not increase the capacity of the UN ground forces to shift from logistical missions to protecting civilians and providing stability.

2016 saw an uptick in violence in Mali with

the total number of fatalities due to malicious activity increasing to 27.⁴⁵ In February of 2016, the UN camp in Kidal was subjected to a mortar and rocket attack that was used to facilitate a suicide vehicle attack that left 30 peacekeepers wounded and 6 dead.⁴⁶ In May of 2016, four separate attacks against peacekeepers occurred, two of them consisting of IEDs and follow-on ambushes, which is in line with other complex attacks seen throughout Africa and the Middle East.⁴⁷ On May 31, 2016, two incidents took place in Gao. A vehicle-borne, suicide bomber attempted to breach the main UN camp, while a UN Mine Action Service contractor and two security guards were assassinated.⁴⁸ The UN peacekeepers came under attack again in August, October, and November with a combination of IED attacks against convoys as well as ambushes.⁴⁹ These incidents only highlight the fatalities, but there were numerous other incidents around Mali that did not leave any other peacekeepers dead, but still involved the use of suicide bombing attempts and ambushes.⁵⁰

From 2013 through 2017, MINUSMA was facing the same threats that have been seen across the Middle East and Africa.

As of November 2017, the fatalities in MINUSMA had totaled 24. The sector headquarters in Timbuktu was attacked by gunmen that resulted in seven personnel being killed with a similar style attack against a UN camp near Mopti in central Mali.⁵¹ The Gao and Kidal regions continued to see IED and small-scale attacks against UN facilities and personnel throughout 2017. The increase in attacks is forcing the UN to trend toward heavy vehicles capable of surviving IEDs. This trend is, however, reactionary, and the threats will simply use heavier explosives. The heavy vehicles also restrict all UN ground movement to roads, which

are easily targeted, especially with little variation in convoy procedures or timing of movements. Heavy vehicles also restrict the ability of UN patrols to effectively maneuver off road, which then effectively limits the patrol's ability to seek a position of advantage from which to deal with the threats. Heavily-armored vehicles serve to increase logistical convoy survivability, and with limited infrastructure, the necessity of maintaining open convoys is obvious. Heavily-armored vehicles may reduce UN casualties, but their use does not necessarily correlate to the successful implementation of the mandate. The circumstances in Mali require variety in UN force type, composition, capability, equipment, and training.

From 2013 through 2017, MINUSMA was facing the same threats that have been seen across the Middle East and Africa. Crucial to success in these environments is the ability to understand all the dynamics and networks operating in a region. Tactical intelligence can serve to increase survivability of patrols, but to successfully counter asymmetric threats, intelligence must simultaneously be oriented operationally to better understand the dynamics driving conflict, especially with the UN's aversion to offensive operations. Tactical intelligence serves a reactionary role but does not increase capability. As the UN focuses on defensive measures, intelligence assets oriented operationally will better serve the sectors and Force Headquarters.

MINUSMA is effectively serving as the sole provider of security in northern Mali.⁵² MINUSMA has placed itself in direct opposition to the violent extremist groups in the region, thus, essentially becoming party to the conflict, which undermines the ability to serve as a peacekeeping force.⁵³ MINUSMA is also expected to employ what the UN calls active defense to prevent the return of armed elements and also engage in direct operations to serious and credible threats.⁵⁴ The mandate under operative

paragraph 20 and subsequent bullets tasks MINUSMA with not only ensuring protection of civilians, but also the task to actively prevent attacks by asymmetric threats. This language means that the UN has given MINUSMA the responsibility and authority to actively target and defeat the VEOs in northern Mali. The UN Security Council has also actively decided to support the host nation government in Bamako and issued orders as such in the mandate. The implementation of MINUSMA's mandate does require the central governmental authority in Bamako to be reestablished in the north, which inherently requires MINUSMA to be able to conduct joint operations with the Malian security forces. There is still a question as to whether MINUSMA is capable of joint operations with the Malian security forces or whether it will simply coordinate.⁵⁵ MINUSMA's mandate also requires it to perform tasks that allow for and require preventive actions, which in some aspects could be considered counterterrorist in nature.⁵⁶ MINUSMA's mandate make the force a party to the conflict, siding with the government in Bamako. This situation poses concern for the mission which may be caught performing COIN operations in order to win the support of the local population against the other threat actors.⁵⁷

Aspect of DOTMLPF-P: Organization

MINUSMA's Force Headquarters uses the multidimensional, modular, U-staff construct, which is designed to fit inside an Integrated Mission Headquarters Structure.⁵⁸ The Force Commander serves as the primary military advisor to the Head of Mission and is responsible for synchronizing military operations toward political objectives.⁵⁹ As MINUSMA is utilizing the modular U-Staff construct, the staff is aligned to achieve operational objectives. The execution of operations falls under the purview of the DCOS for Operations, whose staff comprises intelligence (U-2), operations (U-3), plans (U-5), and communications (U-6). Due to MINUSMA's

extensive mandate and force requirements, the Operations staff is supplemented with Air Ops, Information Ops, and liaison cells (see Figure 1).⁶⁰ The MINUSMA headquarters also has a DCOS for Operations Support, which includes logistics (U-4), engineering (U-8), civil-military affairs (U-9), explosive ordnance disposal (EOD), and other support staff (see Figure 1).⁶¹ Finally, the DCOS for Personnel, Evaluation, and Training staff includes the personnel section (U-1), training (U-7), and best practices, and evaluation (ORA) staffs (see Figure 1).⁶²

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Due to the size and complexity of MINUSMA, as well as the distances required to operate, the Force Headquarters established similarly-structured headquarters in each of the sectors. The Force Headquarters is required to establish a Military Operations Center to serve a command, control, communication, and integration function for all military operations.⁶³ Each of the sector headquarters is also responsible for establishing its own respective Military Operations Center.

The UN Force Headquarters handbook provides roles and responsibilities for the staff and subordinate cells, but the UN Peacekeeping Operations Principles and Guidelines also annotates that civilian and governmental agencies are more comfortable with ambiguity than military staffs are, which may pose challenges to operations in a complex environment.⁶⁴ The UN is a top-down organization that empowers decision makers at senior levels due to the political nature of the situation in which they deploy. MINUSMA's sector headquarters serve

as forward nodes to facilitate understanding at the Force headquarters in Bamako. The different sector headquarters must relay and coordinate with the headquarters in Bamako for any operation to take place. The U5 plans all missions from logistic convoys to crisis response plans, which essentially takes all command and control authority away from the sector headquarters and the units operating in the various regions.

This mentality is not adequate in a situation like Mali, where units are operating in far flung locations and encounter situations ad hoc. According to UN doctrine, the Mission Headquarters should synchronize and provide clear guidance and strategy to the Force Headquarters, which would, in turn, be disseminated down to the Sector headquarters.⁶⁵ Ideally the Force HQ would provide clear intent and guidance down to subordinate locations, as decentralized decision making is essential in executing COIN.⁶⁶ MINUSMA, at times, has suffered from a lack of clear strategy and guidance to the military component that would allow for the proper allocation of military resources against country objectives.⁶⁷

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The Force Commander given appropriate guidance and working closely with the civilian leadership should be able to generate an operational approach for the overall military contingent to successfully operate in an environment where insurgents or terrorist groups are the primary antagonists.⁶⁸ The modular U staff construct however still operates in parallel to the civilian mission staff. This parallel structure means there is potential for a lack of unity of effort or stove-piping that limits communication. UN doctrine also does not

offer examples or protocols on how to integrate a staff with what is commonly referred to as fusion cells. The UN force headquarters staff must be capable of informing on the operational environment, so the Force Commander and the civilian leadership can adjust or react properly to the changing situation.⁶⁹ The UN force headquarters does have a plans section inside the U-5 directorate, but there is no clear linkage between the formulation of plans from long-term to short-term execution. An example of this is seen in NATO countries, when plans move from the J-5 through the J-35 on to current operations with the J-3. MINUSMA is aided by the support provided by the ASIFU, which is a formation that was first deployed in order to provide a better understanding of the operational environment in order to inform planning and execution.

The ASIFU, first deployed in 2014 in support of MINUSMA, was the first time a UN mission had its U-2 supplemented with a purely military intelligence unit.⁷⁰ The role of the ASIFU is to analyze intelligence to support operational decision making, and the unit is comprised mainly of NATO or NATO-associated countries. The organization uses primarily NATO intelligence doctrine. The organization also provides analysis of non-military factors, such as ethnic and tribal dynamics, as well as illicit trafficking activities.⁷¹ The ASIFU is intended to support the Joint Mission Analysis Center (JMAC), which was already resident in multidimensional missions whose purpose was to synchronize and share information from civilian, military, police, and humanitarian UN agencies. The JMAC's primary role was to report to the Head of Mission with medium to long term analysis but was not primarily supporting military operations.⁷² The U-2 served as the primary connective tissue to the JMAC. The intent of the ASIFU was to provide a more robust intelligence capability to the Force Commander and answer priority intelligence requirements for the military component.⁷³ The ASIFU provides

capability to generate, identify, analyze, and disseminate intelligence through surveillance platforms, human intelligence, and open source intelligence.

The ASIFU manages surveillance platforms through unmanned aerial vehicles whose full capabilities are classified. However, given the size of the terrain in which MINUSMA operates, the unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) on hand are inadequate to the tasks required.⁷⁴ As of this writing and in reference to the current force deployment information published by the UN, there is no ASIFU element supporting Sector North in the Kidal region. This immediately identifies a potential knowledge and capability gap. The ASIFUs are also using NATO equipment, whose capabilities and limitations are not immediately releasable to UN contingents. The UN does not possess its own intelligence collection platforms, which means it operates at the whim of the contributing countries and caveats on willingness to share the full suite of capabilities.

The ASIFU has been focused on tactical-level intelligence to address force protection concerns, which may or may not be a limiting factor on the ability of the unit to further address the drivers of conflict or threat actors.⁷⁵ The ASIFU currently passes all information up through the chain of command to the Force Commander, who is then authorized to release information to subordinate commanders. This potentially creates a long timeline in which information is collected, analyzed, and disseminated to address the tactical concerns of the Force Commander.⁷⁶ Arguably this would not be a concern if the ASIFU was concerned with providing operational intelligence to inform planning and future operations, but as identified earlier, the focus has shifted to tactical operations and force protection.⁷⁷ The ASIFU is incapable of providing direct feeds to the sector HQs or non-NATO ground units due to the previously mentioned classification requirements used by

the intelligence platforms, which in turn has limited the intelligence's value.⁷⁸ This then leads to the ASIFU focusing on tactical intelligence to support static defense or intelligence to prevent attacks against UN facilities or personnel in the surrounding areas. MINUSMA's ability to conduct process, exploitation, and dissemination for military planning seemed to focus primarily on tactical-level considerations.⁷⁹ This combined with a lack of shared common intelligence competence has hindered the effectiveness of the JMAC, U-2, and enabler support provided by the ASIFU.⁸⁰ The UN at the force headquarters or sector headquarters does not conduct what would be considered in U.S. Department of Defense parlance "working groups" focusing and prioritizing intelligence collection to inform plans or any intelligence cycle.

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Infantry Organization

There are currently nine infantry battalion headquarters deployed to support MINUSMA with an associated 34 infantry company groups as referred to by UN standards (see Figure 1). The UN infantry battalion and associated infantry companies are the mainstay of UN peacekeepers and the most prevalent.⁸¹ The UN provides for a suggested organization for infantry formations and training guidelines to ensure a baseline of capability upon arrival in a UN peacekeeping mission. The UN has identified that a battalion should consist of three to four infantry companies and one support company, with entire battalion strength comprising some 850 personnel.⁸² The UN infantry battalion identifies materiel capabilities that should arrive with an infantry

battalion and subsequently with all associated companies. The UN structure is not significantly different than U.S. DoD structure, but the UN caveats its organizational requirements with the statement that there is flexibility during the negotiation of the memorandum of understanding.⁸³ The UN also requires its infantry battalions and companies provide at least one company and one platoon per outpost as quick reaction forces.⁸⁴ The UN does not require the support company, which provides logistical support and transportation, to be equipped with weapons or vehicles capable of convoy protection. This leads to the infantry companies assigned to a given area to provide convoy protection, which in turn limits their ability to conduct patrols. Given the distances convoys may have to travel between outposts in Mali, an infantry company may lose an entire platoon for a series of days. Most infantry companies are stationed at primary population centers such as Gao, Kidal, and Timbuktu, while some other units are in minor locations such as Asongo or Menaka.

The size of the areas in which the infantry battalions operate in Mali also serves as a limiting factor on capability.

As the Security Council forced MINUSMA to expand outside of Gao and Timbuktu, the infantry battalions were further stretched thin, leading to an even larger gap in personnel.⁸⁵ This expansion and the existing poor infrastructure exacerbated an already significant challenge to resupply and support the infantry formations.⁸⁶ The deployment of two companies in Menaka 220 km from their battalion headquarters in Asongo and 97 km from Gao and the main resupply base demonstrates the potential hazards of deploying basic infantry battalions.

The current environment in northern Mali requires formations be deployed into very

austere locations to protect the population and fulfill the mandate. Every form of sustenance and housing must be provided externally in order to even occupy the terrain.⁸⁷ The three-sector headquarters do not have transport or logistical units assigned to them. The infantry battalions provide security, logistical convoy support, and patrols supporting all the camps. The tasks of camp security and convoy security detract from the capacity of the infantry units to conduct patrols and protect the population. The austere locations and frequency of attacks along main supply routes or on isolated cantonments mean that countries are also less willing to deploy their infantry into regions where the threat is high, and the battalions have limited capability to defend themselves.⁸⁸

The size of the areas in which the infantry battalions operate in Mali also serves as a limiting factor on capability. The capacity and capability limitations serve to exacerbate any training deficiency. The threats faced in Mali require specific training needs and material capabilities. The threats and environmental considerations mean that specific unit types and capabilities must be identified and resourced to fill specific needs. Transport formations capable of defending themselves would free up regular infantry to conduct their primary tasks. Infantry formations in all-terrain vehicles allow for maneuverability to project presence, denying areas to threat actors.

Mechanized infantry versus motorized infantry has organizational and capability impacts that should be parsed against mission requirements. Mechanized or heavy infantry is not addressed in the organizational charts in the UN infantry manual, but likely would depict smaller formations that would require more robust logistical support. Light infantry functions well in austere environments with poor infrastructure providing more flexibility. However, when any formation is stuck to operating on roads, it becomes a vulnerable

target, which means combat power must be assigned to increase force protection.⁸⁹

The infantry battalion does not have organic engineering or counter-IED, as annotated in the UN manual. This further stretches thin any combat power an infantry battalion provides. This article is not capable of assessing if MINUSMA has done the planning associated with tailoring requests for specific types of infantry to fulfill roles against required mission sets.

The size of the UN infantry battalion staff section is similar to an U.S. Army staff element, but because the battalion does not have a brigade or higher element to plug into with additional enablers, it may not be adequate.⁹⁰ Battalion staffs should be more robust with associated enablers. Deploying infantry battalions with no higher UN parent unit is not adequate. The lack of higher parent unit teamed with a sector headquarters with limited authority further impacts operational capability. The UN infantry manual provides for a robust infantry company with equipment and personnel, but arguably these capabilities are not being deployed to MINUSMA as troop contributing countries (TCCs) seem reluctant to provide troops for service in the northern regions of Mali.⁹¹

Aspect of DOTMLPF-P: Training

The UN Operational Readiness Guidelines (ORG) primarily serve as a reference for pre-deployment training and are “self-evaluated” by the individual TCC.⁹² The guidelines also provide a baseline of capability each soldier should possess prior to deployment. The UN Global Peacekeeping Training Needs Assessment in 2013 identified weapons firing as a skill that required further enhancement for peacekeepers.⁹³ This observation teamed with the firing requirements as laid out in ORG demonstrate that as early as 2013 the UN identified that either personnel were not arriving trained for the missions or that the associated

guidelines prior to 2013 were not adequate. Numerous sources have identified that TCCs are wholly unprepared to conduct operations in a COIN environment.⁹⁴

The ambush of the Niger convoy in 2014 demonstrates how ineffective some ground forces have proven against insurgent attacks. The Tabankort battle highlights how ground forces are being outmaneuvered and isolated. The constant success of mortar and rocket attacks demonstrate the inability of UN forces to respond quickly and thus eliminate repeated threats. The requirement for the Force Headquarters to conduct any reactionary planning to an incident prior to any actions in the sectors being taken highlights how overly-centralized control further limits effectiveness against insurgent threats.

The constant success of mortar and rocket attacks demonstrate the inability of UN forces to respond quickly and thus eliminate repeated threats.

Understanding basic tenets of mounted movement are required to maneuver against threats or properly support logistical operations. UN personnel must be capable of land navigation and map reading, though there is no mention of mounted navigation.

The ORG also does not lay out a difference in types of patrols.⁹⁵ The ORG also does not specify infantry skills other than general patrolling, anti-ambush, observation post, and sentry duties.⁹⁶ No mention is given to counter-IED training, vehicle recovery, medical evacuation (save the generic 9-Line medical report), or logistical or convoy operations, all of which have been identified as required skills during pre-deployment training.⁹⁷ The UN has invested heavily, though, in “in-mission training for counter-IED” skills.

The ORG also does not identify the capability ground units should have to

communicate with aviation assets, which has proven so crucial in Mali. In order to fully use aviation assets for medical evacuation, the TCCs on the ground must at a minimum be capable and fluent in calling for support and communicating with the air platform, which is not a required skill set according to the ORG.⁹⁸

The 9-Line medical call for support presupposes capabilities that may not be inherent to the average UN infantry company.

The 9-Line medical call for support presupposes capabilities that may not be inherent to the average UN infantry company.

The UN has not standardized TCC communications equipment, as a TCC's equipment is a national requirement and must comply with the Statement of Unit Requirement.⁹⁹

The ORG does not provide any guidelines on how a company or battalion would conduct or input intelligence into the U-2 intelligence cycle.¹⁰⁰ The Force Headquarters handbook does provide templates for incident reports or medical casualty reports, but these reports are not required training for infantry units. The ORG only requires a TCC to provide a memorandum identified in Annex E of the Operational Readiness Assurance and Performance Improvement Policy of December 2015.¹⁰¹

To sum up, there are noticeable additional requirements in training that an environment like MINUSMA requires. Non-materiel solutions such as pre-deployment training for COIN environments could alleviate some of the most effective tactics used by threat actors in northern Mali.

Aspect of DOTMLPF-P: Materiel

Due to the high number of IEDs, the natural inclination would be to provide vehicles

similar to the mine-resistant ambush protected (MRAP) vehicles fielded by the U.S. in Iraq. The UN has fielded MRAP variants alongside the more traditional land cruiser/land rover equivalent vehicles. The MRAP vehicles do provide survivability along main supply routes or roads on which UN convoys are particularly vulnerable.¹⁰² The value in light trucks is their ability to move off road and maneuver easily in response to ambushes or while conducting patrols. The MRAP vehicle is restricted to hard surfaces, which requires more training to mitigate threat-actor tactics. Heavily-armored vehicles have a role when used for logistical resupply. The value of heavy vehicles can be offset by tactics used by threat groups. Heavily-armored vehicles serve a specific role, but their limitations also restrict the effectiveness of a force tasked with missions other than defense and logistical resupply.

Light vehicles provide more maneuverability and speed and are easier to maintain through local procurement, as most areas in Mali have light pick-up trucks. The attributes of light vehicles increase UN forces' potential effectiveness against threats. Any materiel solution must be properly aligned to the specific mission set of a TCC. An infantry battalion's effectiveness in mission tasks can be increased or limited by the vehicles it operates.

The TCCs in MINUSMA face basic challenges with regards to communication equipment. All TCCs are required to deploy with appropriate communication equipment to accomplish their unit requirements, but there is no standardized UN communication platform. At the basic level, this creates two issues: 1) the ability of separate communication platforms to actually talk with one another; and 2) the logistical support for replacement parts is wholly the responsibility of the TCC or the UN Department of Field Support. As of September 2017, each MINUSMA sector did have an assigned communication unit ranging from

a platoon-size to company-size element. UN forces have tactical communications platforms, but formations do not have strategic-level communications that allow them to effectively communicate from very isolated locations. These communications elements can facilitate the synchronization of communication capability across the TCCs conducting ground operations, while linking in available aviation assets.

MINUSMA is one of the first UN missions to field a UAV capability as seen from analysis of the ASIFU. The UN Infantry manual also identifies that each infantry company and battalion should deploy with a minimum of one small UAV to support ground operations.¹⁰³ The use of UAVs recognizes the role increased situational awareness plays in survivability and mission accomplishment. MINUSMA faces the following challenges when using UAVs:

- The UN infantry handbook suggests but does not require UAVs at the individual company level.
- The ASIFU has the most robust UAV capability, but due to the distances required, that capability is limited.
- The approval process to allocate resources and release information requires too much time to be effective, which causes UAV support to be non-responsive to immediate demands.

According to the MINUSMA force deployment map of September 2017, the UN has deployed aviation assets to Gao, Timbuktu, and Bamako. Kidal does receive aerial resupply, but MINUSMA has in the past had issues due to the airfield's location among the population. The location of the airfield teamed with the security requirements have precluded the deployment of aviation assets to Sector North. The value of helicopters is undeniable when considering the MINUSMA operations environment. Aviation continues to be one of the primary requests and

high-value enablers the UN is requesting from TCCs.

Aspect of DOTMLPF-P: Leadership

The threats to MINUSMA require peacekeepers to adapt to a capable enemy that is, arguably, informed by successes and failures from the recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The threats require UN peacekeeper leadership to possess traditional skill sets, such as the capability to properly integrate with civilian partners and senior civilian leadership. Asymmetric threats as termed by the UN also require peacekeeper leadership to operate in ambiguity. The UN's centralized command and control structure limits the ability of lower-level leaders to effectively employ their forces. Asymmetric threats adapt, and their adaptation requires that UN peacekeeping leaders be equally adaptable. Requiring all decisions and responses be made by the Force Headquarters leadership limits initiative and timely responses to incidents. The current decision-making process decreases the ability of UN forces to be effective in the eyes of the population.

The UN's centralized command and control structure limits the ability of lower-level leaders to effectively employ their forces.

Situational awareness and understanding are crucial to success in the complex environments that characterize insurgencies. The Force Headquarters and subordinate commands must be capable of identifying the current situation by incorporating all various information inputs and then developing approaches that achieve the desired outcomes.¹⁰⁴ Though leadership's capability to facilitate a close relationship with the local population is not new, when operating in a COIN environment, the people now serve as the enabler to being successful as never before.¹⁰⁵

MINUSMA leaders must be capable of making informed decisions at tactical levels within the guidance of senior leaders. Leaders at the tactical level to include noncommissioned officers must be empowered to make decisions while understanding their strategic implications.¹⁰⁶

The asymmetric threats do not necessitate infantry battalions deploying from NATO countries, but the threats do necessitate more robust niche capabilities.

Aspect of DOTMLPF-P: Personnel

The largest contingents in UN peacekeeping missions do not come from Western nations. As threats evolve, the need for more niche capabilities has increased. Many of these niche capabilities, honed over time and through combat, come from NATO countries or NATO-aligned countries that have supported operations in the Middle East over the last 16 years. Though some of the other TCCs have fought insurgencies, few have fought COINs with the enabler support available to Western militaries. UN MINUSMA, the main intelligence capability provided through the ASIFU, is essentially a NATO capability. MINUSMA is currently fielding one aviation unit from South America, while the rest come from NATO countries. The infantry battalions, however, all come from African or South Asian countries. The asymmetric threats do not necessitate infantry battalions deploying from NATO countries, but the threats do necessitate more robust niche capabilities.

Aviation has already been identified, but EOD, engineering (currently there are engineering units located in all sectors), and potentially, special operations forces, to name a few, are increasingly needed. MINUSMA, as a multidimensional operation, requires robust civil military operations capabilities, as well as information operations capacity.¹⁰⁷ Any COIN

and CT operation takes place in an environment where criminal actors or transregional crime plays a role, both of which are prevalent in developing/failed countries and aid in terrorist activities.¹⁰⁸ Security Sector Reform does not simply apply to the military aspect of a nation's security apparatus but also to local or national law enforcement agencies.¹⁰⁹ In the vein of Security Sector Reform, the UN police mission in MINUSMA plays a crucial role. It is especially crucial when one considers the fact that northern Mali is plagued by transregional criminal activity, and those networks facilitate the violent extremist networks.

The UN manual for Special Operations lays out key tasks that include everything from surveillance and reconnaissance to what are termed Special Tasks.¹¹⁰ Importantly, the UN does not specify what makes a special forces unit, it merely identifies tasks that a special forces unit must be capable of doing. This lack of specificity leads to the implication that any country whose forces have received the appropriate training to conduct the UN special operation force (SOF) tasks can be deployed and identified as UN SOF.

MINUSMA has demonstrated through its parallel force in the French Task Force *Barkhane* or the deployment of NATO special forces the need for a capable decisive action arm. *Barkhane*, however, is not a part of the UN mission but available for assistance. It is not known how populations perceive *Barkhane*, but whether or not *Barkhane* undermines the legitimacy of the Malian forces or the UN does identify either a potential increased capability to the UN or an increased risk to the mission. As Task Force *Barkhane* operates outside the control of MINUSMA, but is actually associated with MINUSMA, the use of a bilateral external force undermines MINUSMA's legitimacy and poses a risk to the mission. The association *Barkhane* has with the MINUSMA means that actions taken by *Barkhane* can have immediate impact on UN forces, as they are seen as the

same entity. This perception opens MINUSMA to being seen as a legitimate target as opposed to being impartial.

Similar to the French Task Force *Barkhane* operation, the *Sahel 5* has deployed a regional military force. In the summer of 2017, the initial operational capability was established in Mali. The organization is still young and receives funding from France and the European Union. The *Sahel 5* is actively seeking to secure UN funding and logistical support. This force is expected to operate alongside MINUSMA and *Barkhane*, which again raises the question of unity of effort, deconfliction, synchronization, and ultimately legitimacy for the MINUSMA. An additional parallel force in Mali may only contribute to further mudding the waters of situational awareness. The deployment of the *Sahel 5* may expose MINUSMA to more retaliation, as it will now be associated with yet another military force operating in its area of operations over which it does not exercise any command or control.

The UN is also operating alongside a Malian military that is receiving support to increase its capacity. It is not clear if MINUSMA is interoperable with the host nation forces or simply attempting to coordinate operations.¹¹¹ With the mandate to reassert central government authority, the UN may also need to be capable of training host nation forces to achieve the mandate, which according to UN doctrine is feasible through the use of special forces. Though the European Union is currently conducting a program to increase the capacity of the Malian government, the UN has a vested interest in participating in any host nation capacity building. In order to assist in the reassertion of central government authority, MINUSMA must have a role in building ongoing partner capacity activities in the country. The UN Special Forces manual states that the UN can use Special Forces troops to conduct training, advising, and mentoring.¹¹² These tasks would fall in line with

what U.S. DoD calls foreign internal defense. These niche capabilities require UN personnel who are specifically trained or aligned to non-standard peacekeeping roles.

The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM)

Somalia, like many countries in Africa, is large and contains many open regions of little vegetation. Slightly smaller than Texas, Somalia is 637,657 square km with a coastline of 3,025 km.¹¹³ Somalia has suffered from governmental instability and famine over the last thirty years. These conditions have created an environment that has consistently drawn international attention. Due to violence and lack of strong central state governance, the UN has been involved in Somalia since the early 1990s.¹¹⁴ The instability in the early 1990s began the cycle of violence that still takes place in Somalia. The UN intervened in Somalia with two very challenged missions: the first UN Mission to Somalia (UNOSOM I) and the subsequent UN

Due to violence and lack of strong central state governance, the UN has been involved in Somalia since the early 1990s.

Mission to Somalia II (UNOSOM II). Though UNOSOM I transitioned to UNOSOM II, the latter is considered a disaster and complete failure.¹¹⁵ UNOSOM II's departure led to the creation of the UN Political Office Somalia (UNPOS) stationed in Kenya. UNPOS assisted with the creation of the Transitional Federal Government, and its overthrow by the Islamic Courts instigated a military intervention by Ethiopia. Eventually, Ethiopia was replaced by the AMISOM.

In March 1995, all UN personnel had departed Somalia, and the UN established the UNPOS. The UNPOS was headquartered in

Nairobi, Kenya, and mainly served to maintain links with political leaders and assist where possible in peace processes.¹¹⁶ The UNPOS helped to enable the creation and establishment of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in 2004. 2006 saw the rise of the Islamic Courts Union (ICU), which was a coalition of moderate and extremist groups that seized large swaths of Somalia and Mogadishu. Ethiopia perceived this rise as a direct threat to the security in the region and launched an intervention that ejected the ICU. The ICU's collapse led to the creation of Al-Shabaab and the insurgency that continues to take place in Somalia.

Each sector of AMISOM is controlled by a different country, and as such, the TCCs generally pursue their own nations' political and military objectives.

The UN, with UNSCR 1744, authorized the AU to deploy a peace enforcement force in February 2007. Originally, AMISOM was authorized for a six-month deployment and mainly facilitated the security of the reestablished TFG.¹¹⁷ Initially, a force of some 1,600 Ugandan troops deployed to replace a much larger Ethiopian force that had ejected the ICU from power.¹¹⁸ The original force of Ugandans swelled to a combination force of 3,500, comprised of Ugandan and Burundian troops. Al-Shabaab contested the deployment of the AU's contingent and a battle ensued for control of Mogadishu. The AU force fought alongside the TFG forces to finally push Al-Shabaab out of Mogadishu in 2011.¹¹⁹ This battle for Mogadishu consisted of mainly urban, street-to-street fighting throughout the city. In 2011, Kenya and Ethiopia both intervened in Somalia and deployed troops, opening multiple fronts against Al-Shabaab. By the end of 2012, Mogadishu as well as the surrounding suburbs had been secured. Simultaneously the Kenyans

secured the southern strategic town and port of Kismayo, while the Ethiopians secured the cities of Baidoa and Belet Weyne in south-central Somalia.¹²⁰

AMISOM was intended to transition into yet another UN peacekeeping mission in Somalia. However, due to senior level disagreement and skepticism at the UN, this never occurred.¹²¹ AMISOM has never followed the traditional role of a peacekeeping mission and has been more recognizable as a conventional military mission.¹²² With the TFG again in control of Mogadishu and supported by AMISOM, the AU decided to begin a stabilization mission.¹²³ This evolution turned AMISOM into something that resembled a multidimensional peace enforcement mission, whose role was to support the political stability of the TFG, as well as continue to support the institutional development of the central government.¹²⁴ The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) adopted Resolution 2036 that laid out the role AMISOM should play in supporting delivery of stabilization plans, establishing an AU police mission to support Somali police units, and providing security throughout south-central Somalia.¹²⁵ Resolution 2036 also authorized the AU to increase the force size of AMISOM from 12,000 to 17,731 military and police units.¹²⁶

AMISOM was originally designed as a warfighting mission and not necessarily a stabilization and peacekeeping mission.¹²⁷ The command structure for AMISOM has always remained more a multinational construct, as opposed to a fully-integrated political and military construct more in line with the UN multidimensional mission.¹²⁸ Consistently, AMISOM is criticized that the Force Headquarters does not exercise true operational control over the sectors. Each sector of AMISOM is controlled by a different country, and as such, the TCCs generally pursue their own nations' political and military objectives.¹²⁹ This has created a situation in

which the Force Headquarters in Mogadishu serves a coordination function at most.¹³⁰ This lack of actual operational control is not suited to deal with a threat like Al-Shabaab, and also means that the ability of AMISOM to effectively implement stabilization programs is limited.¹³¹

AMISOM lacks the consolidated command and control mechanisms and interagency coordination or synchronization capabilities of MINUSMA. AMISOM's command and control construct along with the national sector construct mean the coordination and security along the TCC sector borders has suffered. Al-Shabaab has been able to exploit the sector gaps in security and has effectively found a haven in between AMISOM forces.¹³² AMISOM's national caveats and objectives of each of the respective TCCs has made any cross-sector coordination challenging for the mission. AMISOM has struggled to incorporate civilian or police experts in conjunction with the mission's transition from a military-centric, warfighting command structure to a more UN-styled, multidimensional mission structure.¹³³ Effectively, AMISOM's expansion out of Mogadishu meant that the headquarters only lost more control over the forces.

With Al-Shabaab's removal from Mogadishu and other major population centers, the organization transitioned to an insurgency. The insurgent tactics implemented by Al-Shabaab forced AMISOM to adapt as well, and in 2012, Kismayo, Baidoa, and Belet Weyne became AMISOM Sector Headquarters.¹³⁴ The Sector Headquarters serve as spokes from which smaller settlements would then be occupied by AMISOM camps. In 2012, the country of Djibouti provided a force to AMISOM, and the Kenyan forces that had intervened unilaterally now came under the AMISOM umbrella.¹³⁵ The Ethiopians, however, maintained a unilateral force independent of AMISOM mainly focused around Baidoa and Belet Weyne.

By mid-2013, Al-Shabaab had been pushed out of the major cities in south-west Somalia,

but instead of abandoning the cities outright, the organization left sleeper-cells that continue to harass local government and AMISOM forces.¹³⁶ Al-Shabaab regularly conducts IED attacks, ambushes, targeted assassinations, suicide bombings, and rocket/mortar attacks. The threats in Mali regularly use the same tactics to further undermine the legitimacy of the government. In addition to insurgent attacks

AMISOM lacks the consolidated command and control mechanisms and interagency coordination or synchronization capabilities of MINUSMA.

against AMISOM, Al-Shabaab still maintains the capability to extract taxes and resources from smaller villages that AMISOM cannot occupy. This ability enhances Al-Shabaab's capability to conduct highly-effective operations against AMISOM. AMISOM recognized that Al-Shabaab possessed the means to extort local communities that allowed them to expand further into rural areas and bring the newly-formed Somali National Army (SNA) along with them. As AMISOM increased its footprint, formations found themselves in isolated forward operating bases with long and vulnerable supply routes.¹³⁷ In 2013, AMISOM's Military Operations Coordination Committee recommended that it cease expansion as it could no longer support the expanded requirements, and the mission's capacity had been reached.¹³⁸ Again, MINUSMA and AMISOM share a common problem of over-extension.

As AMISOM has expanded and increased its presence, the isolated and far flung outposts have been surrounded by terrain controlled by Al-Shabaab. The freedom of maneuver enjoyed by Al-Shabaab has allowed the group to mass on isolated AMISOM, SNA, or regional security forces, which has led to incidents where

Al-Shabaab has secured victory and increased its resources for continued operations. In 2014, Al-Shabaab defeated the Jubaland security forces at Koday island, which further diminished the capability of the southern region's local security apparatus.¹³⁹

In January 2016, the Kenyan outpost at El Adde was overrun by Al-Shabaab. The El Adde attack handed Kenya one of its worst military defeats and led to the deaths of over 100 Kenyan soldiers (according to the Somali President at the time, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, though the Kenyan government disputed this total).¹⁴⁰ The El Adde outpost was located in the Gedo region, and its isolated location and lapses in the Kenyan security posture allowed Al-Shabaab to mass and maneuver on the camp. Al-Shabaab closed in quickly on the outer perimeter at dawn and through surprise, massed fires and a vehicle-borne IED effectively breached the gate. The Kenyan unit was routed, and with the fall of El Adde, Al-Shabaab secured further arms and ammunition.

Al-Shabaab simply retreats into the countryside but still exerts control over the population through the establishment of checkpoints.

Similarly, in 2015, a Ugandan base located in Janaale was overrun by Al-Shabaab. Again, they used a vehicle-borne IED to breach the perimeter. After the perimeter was breached, an exploitation force followed behind to continue the attack and eventually forced the withdrawal of the Ugandans.¹⁴¹

2015 saw another high-profile attack at an AMISOM base located in Leego. These complex attacks provide Al-Shabaab the opportunity to capture additional equipment that allows the group to continue its insurgency in the country. The freedom of maneuver Al-Shabaab enjoys essentially has created a stalemate and allows

the group to continue its control of much of the rural local population.¹⁴² Al-Shabaab continues to extort local populations to fund its operations and continues to pose a significant threat to the government in Mogadishu. In October 2017, Al-Shabaab detonated the largest vehicle-borne IED to date in downtown Mogadishu killing at least 300 and wounding hundreds more.¹⁴³ Along with the large attacks, Al-Shabaab continues to conduct localized IED attacks, ambushes, and assassinations of AMISOM and government personnel.

The AU has defined the stabilization effort as the presence of AMISOM in all regions and further providing support to increase the Somali law enforcement's capacity. The focus on building police capacity is teamed with civilian administrators to increase the capacity of local governance.¹⁴⁴ In 2014, the AU published the new Concept of Operations for AMISOM, and the approach was essentially the clear-hold-build COIN formula.¹⁴⁵ This approach requires AMISOM to jointly operate with an increasingly capable SNA. The joint AMISOM SNA expansion of control would eventually facilitate a handover and withdrawal of AU forces.

During this expansion, Al-Shabaab allowed the SNA and AU forces to move into smaller towns, but typically only after leaving IEDs or booby traps and then only retreating far enough away to still conduct raids or convoy ambushes.¹⁴⁶ Al-Shabaab simply retreats into the countryside but still exerts control over the population through the establishment of checkpoints.¹⁴⁷ AMISOM and the SNA's footprint has extended, and their expansion has forced Al-Shabaab to move further into the countryside. Al-Shabaab's relocation further into rural areas has diminished the group's combat effectiveness. Al-Shabaab simply avoids direct combat with AU forces, and thus, rarely loses any equipment or suffers from high casualty rates.¹⁴⁸ The preservation of Al-Shabaab's combat power means that the threat to AMISOM and the SNA

has not significantly diminished, and the local population is not secured through stabilization activities. The group's perseverance undermines the government's legitimacy.¹⁴⁹

AMISOM and the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) in Mogadishu do not always share the same understanding of purpose behind the stabilization campaign.¹⁵⁰ AMISOM and other actors, be it SNA, NGOs, or other governments involved in Somalia, find it hard to operate jointly or in coordinated actions due to perceived operational security gaps.¹⁵¹ The military expansion was not supported with governance or stabilization personnel to consolidate the military gains.¹⁵² AMISOM did not have sufficient police or civilian experts who could properly implement any of the required stability programs that would directly challenge Al-Shabaab's influence and provide legitimacy to the government in Mogadishu.¹⁵³ With no personnel to backfill the military and conduct stabilization activities, AMISOM's military forces are only extending their presence but not increasing governmental control. MINUSMA also suffers from a lack of capability to provide stabilization activities in the northern reaches of Mali, thus leaving the UN military units providing limited security while not addressing the roots of instability. The Somali government and AMISOM's expansion of control has suffered from a perceived lack of legitimacy because some security forces are considered illegitimate and foreign because of ethnic dynamics.¹⁵⁴ Like many places in Africa, clan and ethnic dynamics can contribute or hinder the effectiveness of security forces.

AMISOM's primary partner in providing security is the SNA, which has struggled due to limited capability.¹⁵⁵ In order for AMISOM and the SNA to expand their areas of control and subsequently counter Al-Shabaab, both require a minimum level of interoperability. Effective interoperability between AMISOM and the SNA has not materialized.¹⁵⁶ The inability of the two

organizations to work jointly allows Al-Shabaab to capitalize on the divisions between the two.

Also, in order to reestablish central governmental control, it is crucial that the FGS foster a trusting and cooperative relationship with the regional administrations. The central government in Mogadishu's relations with the various regional administrations has been strained in the past because of the existing clan divisions in the countryside.¹⁵⁷ The implication of clan dynamics means that AMISOM must be capable of working tactically with the regional leaders. Simultaneously, AMISOM must be capable of incorporating regional

AMISOM and the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) in Mogadishu do not always share the same understanding of purpose behind the stabilization campaign.

forces and considerations at the operational and strategic levels in conjunction with the central government. All of this must be done recognizing that the lack of governance and security means many of the regions developed their own security apparatus, which do not necessarily run contrary to AMISOM or the FGS's goals but whose presence means the SNA alone may not be the guarantor of security after AMISOM's handover of areas. This means AMISOM also cannot deny the legitimate, regional, security organizations a role in countering Al-Shabaab. The security situation in Somalia will necessitate continued persistent engagement from the international community, whether AMISOM transitions to a UN mission or remains an AU mission, until the government in Mogadishu is capable of supporting itself.

AMISOM was originally designed to transition to a UN mission. As the security environment evolved and the threats in Somalia

persisted, the UN continued to not take full responsibility for the peacekeeping mission in Somalia. In order to support AMISOM, but also to not have to take full responsibility for the execution of the mission, the UN has built two organizations to enhance the capability and build stabilization capacities inside AMISOM.

AMISOM consistently suffers from a lack of unity of effort among the sectors.

The UN has two parallel efforts operating inside Somalia: The UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSAM) and the UN Support Office in Somalia (UNSO). UNSAM's primary role is to support AMISOM through policy and peacekeeping advisement, demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration activities; security sector reform; and rule of law, to name a few. UNSAM also supports the FGS through similar activities. UNSO provides the overarching logistical support to AMISOM, UNSAM, and the SNA in limited circumstances or when operating alongside AMISOM forces for operations.¹⁵⁸ The two UN organs operating inside of Somalia have separate but mutually supporting roles that aim to increase the capability to AMISOM and the effectiveness of the FGS. The SNA, however, is still not fully supported by UNSO.¹⁵⁹ The level of support provided by UNSO to the Somalis has led to situations where SNA forces, which are chronically under-resourced, are incapable of operating effectively when not alongside AMISOM.¹⁶⁰ Similar to how outside donors support the Malian security forces, the SNA does receive outside donor support to increase capacity through the European Union Training Mission in Somalia, the U.S., Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates. These efforts to build capability and capacity in the SNA will allow it to work alongside AMISOM and receive further

support in the fight against Al-Shabaab. Until the SNA shows a sustained ability to work jointly with AMISOM, AMISOM must serve as the main offensive, holding, and stability force.

Aspects of DOTMLPF-P: Organization

AMISOM was originally designed and deployed as a military mission. Stabilization, primarily executed by a UN mission, was a secondary concern. AMISOM continues to evolve in order to execute its increasing stability role but is, essentially, still a multinational headquarters. As a multinational headquarters, the AMISOM leadership in Mogadishu consistently has command but little control over the national contingents in its respective sectors.¹⁶¹ AMISOM consistently suffers from a lack of unity of effort among the sectors. Each sector is controlled by a single TCC, which creates a situation where the AMISOM headquarters serves as more of a coordination cell than a command headquarters.¹⁶²

Ethiopia's and Kenya's involvement are linked to their national interests in Somalia. Ethiopia and Kenya deployed forces under the auspicious of the AU, but they conduct operations that are primarily aimed at achieving national interests. The AMISOM headquarters lacks the ability to ensure that all TCCs operate within the mandate, which degrades the legitimacy of the mission to the local population. Any violation of civilian rights by AMISOM troops simultaneously undermines faith in the FGS in Mogadishu, as AMISOM and the SNA are also associated with the FGS.¹⁶³ The parallel operating structure has meant that AMISOM has struggled to conduct synchronized offensive operations, which allows Al-Shabaab to exploit the seams between sectors.¹⁶⁴

An example of the lack of synchronization is seen in the Juba River region, which serves as a strategically-important area for the FGS to clear of Al-Shabaab. The Juba River Offensive has been in planning for years and has yet to

be launched, which allows Al-Shabaab to operate freely in the region and collect funds from the local population. The Juba River Offensive requires cross-sector coordination and synchronization of effects to ensure Al-Shabaab is effectively removed. These operations have proved difficult for AMISOM to execute, in part because of the force headquarters' inability to provide an operational framework within which the TCCs can operate.

Each of the countries within AMISOM have security interests in Somalia. The involvement of Ethiopia and Kenya are particularly nuanced, as the fragility of Somalia directly impacts their shared borders. The political dynamics between Ethiopia, Kenya, Djibouti, Burundi, and Uganda all play out in AMISOM's execution of the mission's mandate. Ethiopia serves as the primary political and military power in East Africa. Kenya generally ranks second in the power dynamics of eastern Africa. Djibouti regularly follows Ethiopia's lead with regards to Somalia policy. Uganda and Burundi have deployed under AMISOM the longest and generally maintain force presence for international recognition in the UN and the AU. In recent years, Uganda's central government has faced domestic discontent with the seemingly, never ending, military investment requested by the UN and the AU. In the last two years, Uganda has been a major proponent for implementing a draw down and executing a handover of security to the FGS, due in part to the years-long AMISOM mandate and the little perceived progress by the FGS.

Ethiopia and Kenya became involved in AMISOM because of the threat posed by Al-Shabaab's operations. Kenya has endured numerous cross-border incursions by the group, including the infamous attack on the Westgate Mall in 2013, which left over 65 people dead. In 2015, a similar attack occurred at the Garissa University in Kenya. These attacks reinforced the calculus that Kenya needed to

remain inside Somalia to maintain pressure on Al-Shabaab and hinder the group's ability to conduct activities inside Kenya. Ethiopia, like Kenya, has national security interests in Somalia. Ethiopia's original incursion was to topple the ICU prior to AMISOM's deployment. Al-Shabaab's emergence from the collapsed ICU only reinvigorated Ethiopia's desire to remain involved in Somalia. Ethiopia also has economic reasons for its involvement in Somalia. Somalia's location and fledgling government serve as a ripe opportunity for investment. Ethiopia sees the ability to reach the Indian Ocean through investment projects as a crucial line to increase the economic vitality of Ethiopia. All these concerns and interests directly drive and contribute to Ethiopia's willingness to remain involved.

Each of the countries within AMISOM have security interests in Somalia.

The national interests that drive involvement in AMISOM can also undermine the mission headquarters' ability to provide for unity of effort. The command and control exercised by the mission headquarters extends as far as the contingents' home country governments allow. The relationship between the TCCs and the AMISOM command and control structure has directly impacted effectively operating against a group like Al-Shabaab.

AMISOM has struggled in coordinated military operations among the TCCs. The coordination difficulties are amplified by the mission's expanding areas of operation. These areas facilitate Al-Shabaab's ability to consolidate, move, and threaten local populations. AMISOM has expanded its presence over the years to seize more territory from Al-Shabaab, but much like Mali, this expansion has only made supply routes and

convoys more vulnerable.¹⁶⁵ This expansion has sometimes had catastrophic impacts. The fact that numerous AMISOM outposts were not mutually supporting was part of the reason the Kenyan base in El Adde was overrun in 2016. AMISOM is still in the process of evolving its Force Headquarters into a structure more closely related to a UN multidimensional mission, while still recognizing that the mission must be capable of warfighting operations.

The SNA and AMISOM suffer from a trust deficit in some regions and among some commanders.

AMISOM, much like MINUSMA, is designed to work alongside the host government security forces. AMISOM continues to train and increasingly operate parallel to SNA formations. The SNA, still in its infancy, is slowly becoming a force capable of securing regions that AMISOM clears or effectively operates in while being reinforced by AU troops. AMISOM headquarters has yet to integrate SNA personnel into its structure to increase interoperability. The SNA and AMISOM suffer from a trust deficit in some regions and among some commanders.¹⁶⁶ This distrust has influenced the lack of integration of SNA personnel into the force headquarters. Distance also plays a role, as the AMISOM headquarters is located within the AU compound inside the Mogadishu International Airport complex, while the SNA headquarters is roughly a 45-minute drive north on the outskirts of Mogadishu at Villa Gashandiga. The international airport in Mogadishu has turned into an ecosystem that the SNA struggles to penetrate, which leads to further challenges of integration between AMISOM and the SNA.

AMISOM and the SNA receive support from international donors and the UN. AMISOM is particularly reliant on the UN. The UNSOS and the UNSOM both serve as examples of how the

UN has chosen to support, as opposed to lead, a peace-enforcement-style mission against violent extremist groups.

Intelligence Capabilities

AMISOM has taken full advantage of the benefits that intelligence operations can have on improving the security environment. AMISOM has consistently received support from donors, other than the UN, in intercepting communications among Al-Shabaab networks. AMISOM has been trained and equipped or provided assets during operations including reconnaissance UAVs, signals intelligence, and other intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance platforms.¹⁶⁷ AMISOM's intelligence is significantly aided by the fact that three of the TCCs are direct neighbors of Somalia and share ethnic, tribal, and cultural ties, making it easier to develop an understanding of the threat networks. Due to the command and control aspects of AMISOM and the fact that each sector ostensibly is the sole responsibility of a singular TCC, the coordination and intelligence-sharing is not always done. Each one of the TCCs also uses its respective host nation's intelligence methods inside Somalia. Differing methods and techniques mean that it is impossible to fully understand the specific benefits and lessons learned from the individual countries' operations in Somalia. AMISOM does not have the same level of transparency as MINUSMA, but this is no different than any other traditional military operation, and there is a noticeable level of importance placed on operational security.

AMISOM's TCCs have made a point of deploying fully-staffed infantry battalions as well as niche unit formations to Somalia. Generally, AMISOM's forces are light infantry with full battalion staffs.¹⁶⁸ A unique attribute of the AMISOM forces is that each TCC has deployed forces that existed in its home country and are serving as a rotation in Somalia. The habitual relationship and history of the

formations implies that generally the forces' commanders and staffs know the strengths and weaknesses of their respective units. There is no standard battalion or formation that deploys as a part of AMISOM, and the battalions are sourced by the TCC at a determination of the force requirements in their respective sectors. Once in Somalia, many of the AU forces fall in on equipment supported by the UN field office in Somalia. Many of the AMISOM troops travel in MRAP heavily-armored vehicles. Much like in Mali, the AMISOM troops are light infantry, restricted to roads because of the heavily-armored vehicles. During the early stages of the AU's deployment, the forces were less reliant on heavily-armored vehicles, which served them well in the battle for Mogadishu and Kismayo. As time as progressed, however, AMISOM has transitioned to increasing the armor with which its forces operate. The early successes of AMISOM against Al-Shabaab with light infantry reinforced by limited armored vehicles demonstrates that MRAPs do not necessarily ensure success. Al-Shabaab moves quickly, is light, and easily blends into the population, which when being pursued by slow, unwieldy vehicles on fairly-hardened roads only further aids the terrorist group.

In addition to the traditional TCC infantry battalions, AMISOM has also seen the deployment of country-specific, enhanced infantry. The Ugandans in Sector 1 and the Kenyans in Sector 2 have deployed infantry with increased capability. These formations have received additional training and perform more than targeted missions, which further reinforces the stability missions of the more traditional infantry formations.

Aspects of DOTMLPF-P: Training

The TCCs for AMISOM receive significant support from outside donors in the pre-deployment training for Somalia deployments. The U.S. Department of State's Africa

Contingency Operations Training and Assistance is only one such pre-deployment program. These activities have tailored their training regime for Somalia, using historical techniques used by Al-Shabaab to inform training. Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance supports all of Africa, but unlike Mali, the AMISOM TCCs focus more on abilities to respond to asymmetric attacks, informed from numerous prior rotations fighting against Al-Shabaab. The environment in which AMISOM operates means small unit tactics,

Much like in Mali, the AMISOM troops are light infantry, restricted to roads because of the heavily-armored vehicles.

ambush drills, outpost defense, and IED-defeat play crucial roles in pre-deployment training. AMISOM has demonstrated its ability to conduct effective offensive operations to clear areas of Al-Shabaab. The shortcomings come in the training on stability operations as the mission transitions from primarily warfighting to stability. Because of the limited number of police units deployed by the AU, the requirement for a secure environment has generally been filled by AMISOM military units.¹⁶⁹ Law enforcement, good governance, and judiciary functions are not a focus for AMISOM's military units, thus expertise in civil services and law enforcement functions is lacking. The UN has proved very adept at performing police functions and training. AMISOM has cleared numerous areas but lacked the ability to exploit the expulsion of Al-Shabaab.¹⁷⁰ The struggle to provide security demonstrates that a pure warfighting force like AMISOM needs an equally robust law enforcement arm.

Aspects of DOTMLPF-P: Materiel

AMISOM TCCs have fielded everything from light-wheeled vehicles to tanks, armored

personnel carriers, armored wheeled vehicles, and variants of MRAPs. As AMISOM continues its operations, the force must ensure it does not become overly reliant on MRAPs that do not increase the capability of its forces to attack and pursue Al-Shabaab. Al-Shabaab consistently targets AMISOM convoys with IEDs, which have necessitated the deployment of heavily-armored vehicles. Though MRAPs serve a purpose, when Al-Shabaab attacks in light pick-up trucks and uses hit and run tactics, the AU troops cannot pursue. The SNA typifies how Al-Shabaab maneuvers; both organizations ride in what are commonly referred to as “technical” that are easier to maintain and are cross-country capable. AMISOM must ensure that it does not sacrifice effectiveness for security when deploying vehicles.

Like MINUSMA, AMISOM has suffered from a lack of aviation assets.

The AU TCCs in Somalia have been supported with common communications platforms from the UN and numerous fielding programs from donors, which has led to AMISOM having the capability to communicate throughout its formations. AU troops have been resourced with NATO-compliant communications systems and interoperable commercial systems. The AMISOM’s communication interoperability was not always the case. The Kenyan clearing operation in Kismayo was conducted without solid communications between AMISOM HQ in Mogadishu and the Kenyan military headquarters.¹⁷¹ A common or interoperable communication system allows for adjacent contingents to support on another.

Many of the AMISOM TCCs have been supported by bilateral forces’ UAVs or the deployment of their home nations’ platforms. AMISOM has used UAVs to successfully support offensive, convoy, and counter-IED

operations. The contingents have also received substantial home-station training and equipment fielding from bilateral partners in preparation for Somalia deployments. Because UAVs are ubiquitous, the TCCs in AMISOM have a higher level of proficiency with the systems. UAVs in reconnaissance roles to support convoys or offensive operations further enabled the effectiveness of AMISOM troops.¹⁷²

Like MINUSMA, AMISOM has suffered from a lack of aviation assets. The lack of attack rotary aircraft has limited AMISOM’s ability to strike Al-Shabaab in austere regions, further forcing ground troops to follow and pursue.¹⁷³ AMISOM’s ability to provide rapid aviation support to convoys, offensive operations, and reactionary strikes is hindered by the shortfall in aviation, a concern consistently voiced to the UN Security Council.¹⁷⁴ Through over 100 helicopter landing sites and fixed wing services to the six sector headquarters and smaller outposts, UNSOS supports search and rescue, logistical resupply, and aerial medical evacuation for AMISOM troops.¹⁷⁵ The size of Somalia and the varied requirements of the mission have proven the necessity of a robust aerial capability to support ground operations.

Aspects of DOTMLPF-P: Leadership

Many of the leaders in AMISOM have had numerous rotations with the mission and have a thorough understanding of the situation and threats. The leaders in Somalia are learning to be adaptable and persistent as they have transitioned to stability operations alongside more traditional warfighting missions. AMISOM suffers from leadership challenges. The AMISOM Force Commander has limited command and control over the respective sectors and contingents.¹⁷⁶ The sometimes-limited unity of command has required leaders of AMISOM to navigate the political caveats of each respective TCC. The leaders at the sector headquarters similarly retain a level of autonomy from the Force Headquarters

in Mogadishu. The sector commanders generally answer to their respective home nations' capitals, which can further undermine the legitimacy of the Force Commander and similarly limit effectiveness.¹⁷⁷ The sector commanders in AMISOM do receive general guidance from the home nation and the force headquarters, which allows each of the sector contingents to pursue operations that strive toward desired end states. Unlike MINUSMA, the AMISOM sector headquarters has a more robust command and control relationship, likely because of homogenous nature of the contingents operating in each sector. The autonomy of each sector commander allows for the freedom to adapt, but simultaneously, this often occurs without sector objectives nesting within the Force Headquarters designs, which only further undercuts the Force Commander's legitimacy.

Aspects of DOTMLPF-P: Personnel

AMISOM currently deploys 22,126 uniformed personnel, including military and police.¹⁷⁸ The security situation and the threat actors in Somalia require a capable military arm, a police arm, and a civil advisory aspect. Somalia has come a long way from the late 1990s and early 2000s, due in large part to AMISOM's ability to degrade Al-Shabaab. Al-Shabaab is now forced to fight as an insurgency, rarely confronting AMISOM in open conventional combat. Alongside conventional infantry units, AMISOM has also deployed enhanced and specialty-trained combat formations (i.e., Kenya Rangers and the Ugandan People's Defense Force Special Forces Group) capable of precision strikes, information operations, civil affairs, and medical evacuation.¹⁷⁹ These forces fill what the UN would consider Special Forces roles and provide the commanders with an agile, effective force compared to traditional peacekeeping infantry formations.

Alongside the enhanced infantry capabilities, AMISOM has developed an increasingly robust

EOD capacity to combat Al-Shabaab's IEDs. Each TCC in AMISOM fields some level of EOD capability, which has increased the survivability of convoys and regular patrols. The tactics that Al-Shabaab uses has forced AMISOM to rely more on niche capabilities than on purely light infantry. The long lines of communication and sometimes isolated outposts mean that AMISOM must be capable of sustaining forces that have been projected into rural areas. AMISOM forces must have formations that are capable of coordinating with air platforms for medical assistance as well as close combat aviation. AMISOM relies heavily on UNSOS for medical capacity and UNSOS manages medical evacuations. UNSOS has proven that the UN is quite capable of conducting MEDEVAC. UNSOS has designated numerous helicopter landing zones throughout Somalia. Formations have less responsive medical care from their organic organizations and must rely on UN's ability to respond.

The tactics that Al-Shabaab uses has forced AMISOM to rely more on niche capabilities than on purely light infantry.

AMISOM also suffers from a lack of attack aviation. The lack of aircraft means that AMISOM suffers from a lack of knowledgeable staff and personnel trained in the employment of aviation. Those TCCs that have deployed their own aviation assets have had to supply the personnel to ensure the operability and maintenance of the equipment.

AMISOM must increase its capacity in police advisors and civil governance advisors. The FGS has recently had another round of elections with a new president and cabinet. These 2016 elections highlight how Somalia is further progressing toward a more legitimate government, and AMISOM's support to that

government will require robust law enforcement and rule of law support. To be successful, the military arm of AMISOM must have a coordinated and synchronized civil-military cooperation plan with personnel trained in the aspects of security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration.

As Al-Shabaab continues to attempt to undermine the legitimacy of the national and regional governments, AMISOM must have a capable partner in the Somalia security organizations. AMISOM is currently working alongside the European Training Mission in Somalia to train and advise the growing SNA. Simultaneously AMISOM's police arm is working to train Somali Police and thus create a capable partner. The necessity to have a partner capable of parallel or joint operations has thrust AMISOM into the role of warfighter as well as trainer. The role of advisor and trainer requires specialized training and requires an additional capability resident inside AMISOM.

...the Security Council should not authorize mandates that encompass CT or COIN tasks because the normal TCCs do not possess the specialized units and training to conduct these missions.

Finally, AMISOM has fielded forces that are can operate jointly with bilateral partners currently conducting CT operations in Somalia. The ongoing CT operations in Somalia have supported AMISOM and the SNA by operating simultaneously but not at cross purposes per se.¹⁸⁰ The U.S. has conducted operations unilaterally as well as with AMISOM and the SNA respectively. The unilateral and bilateral operations conducted by third parties does share the similarity with MINUSMA.

MINUSMA and AMISOM share many

similarities. Both missions demonstrate two methods the UN has taken to address the threat posed by violent extremist organizations operating in fragile states. Mali and Somalia also share fragile state institutions that struggle to conduct CT, COIN, and stability operations.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The UN is now more actively engaged against VEOs as seen in Mali or insurgent groups such as Al-Shabaab in Somali. MINUSMA is the first UN peacekeeping force deployed with the specific mandate to support the reestablishment of a host nation's sovereignty against insurgent groups, while also specifically responsible with combatting VEOs.¹⁸¹ The UN was on a steep learning curve when it transitioned AFISMA to MINUSMA and was still learning from the ongoing AMISOM about the resilience of terrorist groups and how difficult and complex a peace operation is against a lethal terrorist organization. MINUSMA and AMISOM have forced the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) to come to grips with the evolving threats peacekeepers now face and whether the organization can be successful against such actors.

This article has laid out the facts and analyzed the ability of the DPKO to execute peace enforcement mandates in a fragile state where that state cannot prosecute CT, COIN, or stability operations. The inability of the host nation to successfully conduct CT or COIN operations shifts this responsibility to the UN force.

Analyses of the AU's mission in Somalia and the UN's mission in Mali show that the Security Council should not authorize mandates that encompass CT or COIN tasks because the normal TCCs do not possess the specialized units and training to conduct these missions. The UN does not readily embrace the execution of COIN and especially CT missions. The UN Secretary General has demonstrated that the UN is willing

to conduct CT activities; however, through the current Counterterrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), those actions are focused on countering propaganda, addressing roots of terrorism through stabilization activities, and thorough communication and coordination. The UN must be willing to conduct kinetic actions to C-VEOs in the field. The DPKO must operationalize its C-VEO approach and team with a peace enforcement mission. VEOs are extremely capable of operating transnationally, which poses immediate challenges to the UN because PEOs are solely based in a singular country. For the UN to be effective, the peace operations must take a regional approach. This organizational unpreparedness leads to the TCCs being equally unprepared or untrained to operate in an environment where VEOs or insurgent groups serve as the main adversary. The UN and DPKO can effectively support stability activities in a fragile state, but the organization cannot effectively conduct stability activities while simultaneously facing VEOs and/or insurgent groups. MINUSMA has demonstrated how the UN struggles to effectively support its own forces in an austere environment facing asymmetric threats. The UN has allowed individual nations to conduct unilateral or multilateral operations in the same operational areas as peacekeeping forces. The UN has authorized the French taskforce *Barkhane* and just recently the *Sahel 5* to conduct operations against the same threats facing MINUSMA. MINUSMA's reliance on other organizations to directly combat the asymmetric threats demonstrates the lack of capability inside the peacekeeping force. These parallel forces allow MINUSMA to defer responsibility for offensive acts, but these are actually not disassociated from MINUSMA. The local inhabitants and threat groups associate these bilateral forces with MINUSMA, which can undermine the legitimacy of the mission and simultaneously justify the targeting of MINUSMA. The fact that these bilateral forces

are associated with MINUSMA, but do not operate under its purview means the UN pays the consequences of any actions taken by *Barkhane* or the *Sahel 5*, forces it does not control. This means that MINUSMA could fail to achieve unity of effort with these parallel forces. If a third party or bilateral force is not used to combat VEOs or insurgents then the peace enforcement operation force must be properly structured, trained, equipped, and supported.

This analysis has demonstrated that MINUSMA is not trained or equipped to execute mandates against VEOs or insurgent groups. The DPKO must update its procedures to identify and recruit TCCs with the requisite skill sets.

The UN DPKO is not constituted to be successful in mandates such as MINUSMA. DPKO and MINUSMA suffer from structural deficiencies that prevent them from combatting VEOs. They must address several issues involving capabilities, training, restructuring, and resourcing to be successful in this new environment.

MINUSMA's reliance on other organizations to directly combat the asymmetric threats demonstrates the lack of capability inside the peacekeeping force.

Recommendations

The UN multidimensional modular U staff force structure must be fully integrated with the political mission headquarters. The separation of the two staffs means that the entire mission lacks unity of effort and a shared campaign plan. Bringing all the UN's agencies under one staff structure allows for positioning civilians alongside military staff officers, further increasing a common understanding and shared purpose.

The observations of AMISOM and MINUSMA both demonstrate how essential effective command and control is to conducting operations against VEOs or insurgents. Both missions demonstrate that that effectiveness is closely linked to the ability of the force headquarters to properly synchronize and communicate with subordinate headquarters. To improve common understanding, communications, and staff effectiveness, the multidimensional force headquarters should have a Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations (DCOS OPS), a Deputy Chief of Staff for Future Operations and Plans (DCOS FUOPS-P), a Deputy Chief of Staff for Operational Support (DCOS OS), and finally a Deputy Chief of Staff for Information (DCOS-I).

The observations of AMISOM and MINUSMA both demonstrate how essential effective command and control is to conducting operations against VEOs or insurgents.

The DCOS OPS would be responsible for the Joint Operations Center, battle tracking, ensuring the leadership had a common understanding of the environment, and executing all operations inside the mission's area of responsibility. The Operations staff would be supported by civilian and military representatives from all UN agencies and associated staff sections. Similarly, it would be supported by air operations, maritime operations (as necessary), an EOD cell, a CT cell, and police and law enforcement personnel. Finally, the UN must recognize the value in the employment of indirect fires assets. The DCOS OPS should encompass a fires cell to properly employ these assets. The fires cell would be capable of planning lethal and non-lethal fires as required through the area of operations. MINUSMA and AMISOM have

both proven that peacekeepers must be capable of properly targeting and returning indirect fire. The incidents at Tabankourt and Kidal demonstrate that UN forces can easily be fixed and suppressed due to enemy indirect fires, and the units must have the capacity to respond. This ability achieves one of the core aspects of the MINUSMA mandate, which is to protect UN personnel and facilities.¹⁸²

DoD organizations have an S3 (U3 DCOS OPS) that handles current operations. The S3, however, has a small staff that takes future operations, generated by the S5 (U5), and provides more detailed planning and resources, making general plans capable of being turned into current operations. The DCOS OPS (U3) would be supported by a staff (U35) that would serve as a bridge from future operations and plans to current operations. The U5 and associated staff would be in the lead of the DCOS FUOPS-P, a staff that includes civil affairs experts, CT planners, political advisers, police and law enforcement advisers, humanitarian assistance advisers, UN agency liaison officers, and the evaluation and best practices cells. This staff must develop a campaign plan and lines of effort. MINUSMA's past and current operations have demonstrated that the force is challenged by the fact that besides the tasks in the initial mandate, no other campaign plan exists to guide the mission. Without a detailed plan, the forces on the ground are perpetually in a reactionary mode. A complete and holistic campaign plan that encompasses all civilian and military actions with measures of effectiveness and performance allows the U5 and Force Commander to gauge progress and accountability.

Crucial to the execution of operations and the allocation of resources is a robust operational support staff. The U4 would serve as the lead for the DCOS OS. Incorporated within the DCOS OS staff would be the U1, medical leads, and the U6. MINUSMA and AMISOM have both demonstrated the dangers of overextension and

supply shortfalls. An effective OS staff would help alleviate this.

VEOs have proven their lethality, which necessitates robust and responsive medical assets. MINUSMA and AMISOM both share a necessity for medical evacuation via ground or, more commonly, air. A lack of medical support or planning only serves to discourage TCCs from actively patrolling and allows VEOs or insurgents to freely maneuver throughout the area of operations.

Crucial to any force conducting stability operations or facing asymmetric threats is a robust intelligence collection and analysis capacity. Traditionally, the UN has shied away from intelligence collection. Understanding the drivers of conflict, threat networks, population dynamics, and enemy actions requires the UN to establish this capacity. The multidimensional force structure should create a DCOS-I to provide the leadership and staff the best planning information. The DCOS-I would be led by the U2 and be composed of an ASIFU-like capability. The ASIFU has proven to be a force multiplier in MINUSMA, but there is untapped potential as currently structured. The ASIFU is essentially a NATO capability and because of national disclosure regulations, information sharing has been a challenge. If the UN developed an in-house ASIFU capability, all information collected and analyzed could be shared throughout the organization and disseminated to all TCCs. The JMAC and UN ASIFU equivalent could then be merged, increasing efficiency and streamlining efforts. Finally, to ensure appropriate messaging from the mission, the DCOS-I (a civilian) would support the messaging campaign through a military information support operation cell. Messaging has proven to be crucial when combatting VEO or insurgent groups, as it serves as a direct link to the populace and recruiting mechanism. Messaging by the enemy necessitates the need for a force to be capable of creating a timely

and effective messaging campaign to isolate bad actors from the population.¹⁸³

Restructuring the main force headquarters is not sufficient. Proportional, robust staff structures at subordinate sector headquarters is also required. The central headquarters cannot be expected to effectively manage operations over distances that countries like Mali or Somalia require. To properly disseminate and communicate the mission and vision to subordinate TCCs' formations, the sector headquarters should have the same capabilities and integration as the force headquarters. The sector headquarters should provide bottom-up refinement back to the force headquarters. The sector headquarters in MINUSMA and AMISOM both have TCC battalions deployed into the missions. These battalions typically do

MINUSMA and AMISOM both struggle with span of control as each sector is allocated more than three to five battalions...

not deploy with robust staff sections and require aid from the sector headquarters. The sector headquarters effectively serves as the brigade command staff for the battalions. MINUSMA and AMISOM both struggle with span of control as each sector is allocated more than three to five battalions, which is historically demonstrated as the most any one brigade can effectively command and control. The force headquarters and sector headquarters are simultaneously acting alongside the host nation forces.

MINUSMA and AMISOM both must be capable of interoperability with the host nation's forces: 1) the host nation should be incorporated into the headquarters through liaison officers; and 2) The headquarters must possess the capacity to train the host nation's forces. In both countries, bilateral agreements exist with third party countries to train host

nation's forces. This initial training provides the host nation forces basic skills, but it is dependent on the UN forces in the field to operate jointly or at a minimum in parallel before attempting to act independently. This facilitates the need for the UN to have some capacity to conduct FID or security force assistance. The principles of building partner capacity in the host nation are well suited for special forces units, which would allow UN special forces units to advise, assist, and accompany host nation forces, thus working toward the mandate objective of reestablishing central governmental control.

If the UN desires to continue to execute missions such as MINUSMA, it must recognize that not all infantry are suited to accomplish the same tasks.

The sheer size of countries like Mali and Somalia demonstrates that these complex missions cannot be successful with inadequate staffing. A little over 13,000 forces in MINUSMA cannot be expected to effectively secure a country larger than the state of Texas. The UN must recognize that it must design and attempt to recruit a force capable of occupying such a large footprint, realizing this is dependent on the constraints of willingness of TCCs to provide forces and budgetary considerations. However, understaffing a mission has demonstrated that the force becomes consumed with simply trying to resupply itself rather than conducting operations to seize, retain, and deny the enemy safe haven.

If the UN desires to continue to execute missions such as MINUSMA, it must recognize that not all infantry are suited to accomplish the same tasks. Al-Shabaab in Somalia and Al Qaeda or ISIS-linked groups in Mali are very maneuverable and capable of massing quickly to conduct attacks. After their attacks, the groups are capable of melting back into the

local population, thus making pursuit difficult. Due to the asymmetric nature of the threats, the UN deploys a mixture of light infantry, heavy infantry, and special forces or advanced infantry combined with the increased intelligence collection.

The light infantry would be equipped with light trucks for standard patrols and traditional peacekeeping tasks. The light infantry formations would be more maneuverable in austere environments, and increased maneuverability would improve force survivability. The forces could effectively pursue attackers. These light infantry battalions would be trained and very capable in small-unit tactics for mounted or dismounted operations. These forces must also be self-sufficient and capable of long duration patrols. The light infantry would be best suited for denying threat groups a safe haven. The increased operational tempo would also serve the function of allowing the staff to receive consistent reports with regards to the local population. This information from tactical units would allow higher commands to adjust planning and resources or address incidents that may undermine the effectiveness of the mission. The other benefit of light infantry would be the lower cost of maintenance and the employment of vehicles that could be supported through the local economy.

The role of convoy security or resupply operations would rest with the heavy infantry formations. These formations would not be expected to pursue attackers but must be survivable against the tactics employed by asymmetric threats. The heavy infantry would be equipped with mine or IED resistant vehicles, such as MRAPs. The heavy infantry would receive additional training on convoy operations, vehicle recovery, and vehicle maintenance. The heavy infantry would provide the force headquarters a formation dedicated to addressing the constant supply requirements without draining combat forces from necessary patrolling

missions. The heavy infantry would also serve as route security forces and, if necessary, provide a platform for cordon operations.

Finally, the UN should recruit more SOF-qualified forces from TCCs. AMISOM has proven the effectiveness of employing special forces or advanced infantry to C-VEOs. Example of this are the Ugandan Special Reconnaissance unit in Somalia and the Senegalese Advanced Infantry in Mali. These forces are crucial to conducting operations directed at those asymmetric threats and have the training to be more effective than a traditional peacekeeping infantry battalion. These forces when properly trained, deployed, resourced, and managed allow the UN to mitigate the actions of parallel forces, while effectively achieving the aims outlined in the mandate. The UN has already recognized the value of SOF and designated specific missions for SOF-identified units through its UN Peacekeeping Missions Military Special Forces Manual from 2015. The tasks and skills required to carry out these missions are already resident in many of the TCCs that deploy in Africa. The U.S. currently trains numerous partner countries in skills that would qualify them to serve as UN SOF. DPKO can encourage the recruitment and deployment of these advanced infantry or SOF forces through financial incentives.

Explosive ordnance disposal units are also becoming increasingly necessary due to the proliferation of IED tactics and materials. Explosive ordnance disposal units must be deployed to meet sector requirements for route clearance and support patrols.

Additionally, MINUSMA and AMISOM have demonstrated that a robust UAV capability can pay large dividends. Each infantry unit should deploy with small UAVs, but each sector headquarters should also have an UAV component. UAV forces at each sector headquarters would provide increased situational awareness, ISR support, increased survivability, and route reconnaissance. The UN force must

also reconsider requirements for piloted aircraft to support heavy lift operations and medical evacuation missions.

Aviation should not be primarily aligned against support operations but should be forward deployed as it proves crucial in responsiveness to conduct CT and COIN operations. Mandates such as MINUSMA's allow for attack aviation to conduct kinetic operations. AMISOM has effectively deployed attack aviation to serve as a quick reaction force when available. Al-Shabaab's exploitation of its attack on El Adde was cut short by the response of Kenyan attack aviation. Aviation limited to a quick reaction force does hinder a more proactive capability to effectively C-VEOs. Similarly, the UN use of Dutch attack aviation in Tabankort preserved the lives of UN peacekeepers.

The UN should incorporate specific mission training for leaders and soldiers alike on COIN and CT operations.

Peacekeeping and peace enforcement are complex and dynamic environments, but operating against insurgencies or VEOs adds an additional layer of complexity. The UN already possesses the institutional knowledge to conduct stability operations. That knowledge must be teamed with a clearer understanding of how to conduct operations against the asymmetric threats that operate in places like Mali or Somalia. The UN should incorporate specific mission training for leaders and soldiers alike on COIN and CT operations.

Kinetic operations against threats like those in Mali or Somalia can be taught at home station through programs similar to those already conducted by the U.S. or European Union. The leaders, soldiers, and their staffs must be trained on the non-kinetic aspects of CT and COIN operations. For the UN to be successful

in missions like Mali or Somalia, the staff and leaders must understand how to isolate threat actors from the local population, while similarly not alienating themselves or undermining the mission's legitimacy.

This article has laid out how the force structure should be organized and adjusted in order to conduct missions like MINUSMA. Evidence has shown that increased personnel and variations in types of units with niche capabilities pay huge dividends. The threats faced by forces like MINUSMA and AMISOM require specialized training to be effective. The staff and force commanders must be trained to properly employ niche forces and equally trained to use these forces against VEOs or insurgents. Missions like MINUSMA require robust enabler equipment, but equipment that is equally survivable and maintained. Leaders operating in missions like MINUSMA must be agile and adaptive, simultaneously, they must be innovative and not risk-adverse. The VEOs and insurgents are very adept at taking advantage of instability and ungoverned spaces. Peace operations leaders facing forces like those in Mali must be capable of providing a common vision and communicating that vision. Finally, the leaders must be capable of visualizing the operating environment and developing innovative approaches to achieving their mandates. **IAJ**

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