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Missions in a changing world: The Bundeswehr and its operations abroad

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SWP Research Paper

Rainer L. Glatz, Wibke Hansen, Markus Kaim and Judith Vorrath

Missions in a Changing World

The Bundeswehr and Its Operations Abroad



Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik
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Military operations abroad by the German Armed Forces are always a controversial instrument of German crisis management. Yet, such foreign deployments are likely to remain necessary for the foreseeable future while, at the same time, they are undergoing noticeable change. The conditions shaping this transformation can be captured in three dimensions of change: the change in war and violent conflict; the transformation of the international political and legal context; and the shifting institutional frameworks for these operations.

German policy-makers must address the related challenges — whether setting normative anchors and formats for operations, contributing to stabilisation in a context of continuing insecurity, building partners' military capacities, dealing with transnational threats or using benchmarks for exiting. Yet, they only have limited influence over the described changes. Fundamentally, decisions about military operations abroad are taken within the triangle of pressing problems (crises and conflicts), responsibility (obligations under international law, alliances, political commitments), and the political situation and available capabilities in Germany itself.

It is hard to predict the developments which will dictate the scope for action within this triangle. However, the worst possible approach would be to address the described challenges only from a short-term and ad-hoc perspective, especially since they do not exclusively concern operations abroad. In its 2017 Guidelines on crisis prevention and conflict resolution and 2016 White Paper, the German federal government outlined a framework for German engagement that it now has to fill. Furthermore, the expectations of Germany's partners within the EU, NATO and UN have grown — which will also require further military contributions.

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The Project “Operations Abroad by the German Armed Forces in Flux”

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Since early 2016, the SWP-based project has been looking into previous and current military deployments abroad by the German Armed Forces. Its focus has been on their various modes of participation: missions under NATO command, multidimensional UN missions, coalitions of the willing, and EU missions. The analyses included both the context of these operations and the civilian engagement; the main objective was to draw conclusions for future operations abroad.

Throughout 2016, the project was accompanied by a group of external experts who have, in various capacities, been dealing with military operations abroad and their contexts. Prior to this, expert-led talks had been held on the context, mandate and implementation of missions in the West Balkans/Kosovo, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali, (Northern) Iraq and Afghanistan (for figures on operations to which Germany contributed, see appendix, p. 45). The project team also organised a workshop in December 2016 on the experiences gained in evaluating individual military operations and civil-military cooperation, the perspectives on lessons learned in the UN and NATO, and specific methodological approaches for evaluations.

We would like to express our gratitude to all the experts who participated in these meetings and discussions. Needless to say, the content of this study is the sole responsibility of its authors.

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Missions in a Changing World: The Bundeswehr and Its Operations Abroad

Since the early 1990s, Germany's security policy has been influenced and changed in practice by the experience gained through operations abroad of the German Armed Forces (the Bundeswehr). They have paved the way for a reinterpretation of the Basic Law, whereby the federal government can deploy troops as part of a system of collective security – if approved by the German Bundestag. The concept of a “parliamentary army” is closely tied to this specific form of operations.

The debate about the alleged or actual “normalisation” of Germany's foreign and security policy also has its origins in domestic discussions of the 1990s and 2000s about missions abroad. Political decision-makers viewed these operations *inter alia* as an indication that Germany was assuming its responsibilities in international relations. From this point of view, they demonstrate the federal government's willingness to actively shape the international environment alongside others.

Operations abroad of the Bundeswehr are also seen as an expression of political solidarity within NATO and the European Union (EU), and thus as a foreign policy instrument going beyond crisis management in the narrow sense. The frequent argument that Germany cannot refuse to meet the expectations of its allies in this area illustrates this point.

In addition, foreign deployments have accelerated the transformation of the Bundeswehr into a “force on operations”. The Federal Ministry of Defence has used these operations to justify numerous procurement decisions during the past decades, and they have also played a decisive role in recruitment and development of personnel within the Bundeswehr.

First and foremost, operations abroad by the Armed Forces have been and are a controversial instrument of German crisis management – whether they concern responding to ethno-nationalist violence (Bosnia, Kosovo), supporting a government in its stabilisation and reconstruction efforts (Afghanistan), or fighting piracy (Horn of Africa/ATALANTA) and Islamist terrorism (Iraq and Syria/Counter-Daesh). These examples demonstrate not only the breadth of operations abroad, but also the way in which they have de-

veloped over time. Three dimensions of change stand out: the transformation of war, meaning changes in the type, scope and reach of armed conflict; the transformation of the international political and legal context, meaning the international community's overarching understanding of political order as applied to peace operations; and the transformation of the institutional framework for these operations, meaning changes within the organisations that plan and carry out peace operations. These processes of transformation are not simultaneous, they influence each other, and they cannot be neatly separated. Taken together, however, they define the context within which today's deployments abroad take place – a context which is unmistakably different from the 1990s or even the early 2000s. Six key challenges for today's operations abroad and peace operations more generally can be deduced.

First, the normative foundations of peace operations and the political processes in which they need to be embedded are crumbling. A certain disillusionment in Western capitals with the results of the larger state-building projects of the past decade coincides with increasing reservations in the UN Security Council and in host nations about the liberal peace paradigm. A consensus must therefore be reached to ensure that missions and host countries proceed according to a common agenda. Without such a consensus, it is difficult to embed operations in a political process that also has the support of influential UN member states.

Second, clarification is needed as to the coalitions and operational frameworks within which German deployments abroad should take place. The array of international actors directly engaged in conflict zones is becoming more multi-faceted, *inter alia* due to the growing number of missions by regional actors. At the same time, ad-hoc coalitions are more frequently deployed, for example in the fight against "Islamic State (IS)" in Syria and Iraq. The reliance on such coalitions raises questions of political control, the desired normative order and the operational framework. Issues such as these are likely to gain in importance in the coming years.

Third, given the incomplete, fragile or absent peace agreements in many countries of deployment, there is a growing focus on stabilisation. Corresponding operations have an extensive "robust" mandate under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. Such a mandate – as in Mali or the Democratic Republic of Congo – requires specific capabilities and above all the will to actually

implement it. At the same time, such mandates carry the risk that missions are seen as parties in the conflict. Where robust action is not part of the mandate, the question likewise arises of how to deal with persistent insecurity and violence and how to achieve stabilisation by using civilian and locally legitimised means once an acute crisis has been defused.

Fourth, there are challenges regarding the increasingly important military capacity-building in partner countries through funding, advice, training and/or equipment of armed forces. This approach, summarised in Germany as "Enable & Enhance", is more and more often at the core of operations abroad, as in the EU training missions in Mali and Somalia. However, there are numerous other European and bilateral initiatives, which often operate in the same context without necessarily converging. Moreover, this approach alone is usually not sufficient to build and sustain security. So how should this instrument be integrated into the German and European toolbox; what objectives can be attained; and what critical side effects might occur?

Fifth, operations in conflict zones are increasingly confronted with transnational and asymmetric threats. A consensus on whether and to what extent crisis management and peace operations should directly be involved in countering these threats – especially organised crime and terrorism – has yet to be achieved. Further challenges lie not only in providing an adequate analysis of the complex networks involved, but also in the capacities required for taking action against threats related to these networks – which reach far beyond the area of deployment.

Sixth, there is the "exit management" for operations abroad. The endpoint of a deployment can be defined temporally or be tied to attaining concrete objectives. Long-term operations such as in Kosovo or Afghanistan have shown the importance of defining benchmarks more clearly and systematically (re)checking them over time.

German foreign policy must address all of these challenges whilst being able to exert only limited influence on the dimensions of change outlined. Fundamentally, decisions about operations abroad will have to take into account the need for action emerging from crises, international responsibility (obligations under international law, alliances, political commitments), and the political situation and available capabilities in Germany itself.

It may be hard to predict the developments which will define the room for manoeuvre within this

triangle. However, it would be politically unwise to address the described challenges only on an ad-hoc basis, particularly as they do not exclusively concern military operations abroad. In its 2017 Guidelines on “Preventing Crises, Managing Conflicts, Building Peace”, and in its 2016 White Paper, the German federal government outlined a framework for German engagement in conflict situations. That framework now has to be filled. Furthermore, Germany’s partners within the EU, NATO and UN still expect more from it – including in the form of military contributions. These strands have to be brought together when the Bundestag decides on German contributions to peace operations, extending ongoing contributions, adapting them to changing circumstances, or terminating them.

German Operations Abroad¹ – An Obsolete Model?

Despite numerous trouble spots, the phase of large-scale stabilisation operations such as in Bosnia, Kosovo and Afghanistan seems to be coming to an end, at least where NATO and the EU are concerned. The pivotal factor is not general pacification making such operations superfluous, but mainly political fatigue in the capitals of troop-contributing countries, where sobering questions are being asked about the political goals that can be sustainably achieved through such operations.

While some UN peace operations have been completed or downsized in recent years, the remaining large missions are struggling to manage conflict in highly insecure environments without a clear prospect of a viable political solution. These peace operations in Mali, DR Congo, Central African Republic, Sudan and South Sudan comprise four in five of all military personnel and police currently deployed under UN command.² Within NATO, a turn away from military stabilisation operations can be discerned from 2012 onwards (if not earlier), when the Alliance decided at its Chicago Summit to end the ISAF mission in Afghanistan by 2014. NATO's decisions at its summits in Wales (2014) and Warsaw (2016), which were its response to Russia's annexation of Crimea as well as the destabilisation of eastern Ukraine, marked the final breakthrough of a development that amounts to a (re)prioritisation of collective defence. The Bundeswehr's deployment numbers also illustrate this phenomenon: from 1991 to August

2017, a total of 408,932 German soldiers were involved³ in 52 mandated operations abroad.⁴ At the highest point over 10,000 German soldiers were simultaneously deployed abroad. In late May 2018, it was less than half that number: Germany contributed just over 4,000 soldiers to a total of eleven missions – three NATO, three EU and four UN missions, and one so-called coalition of the willing. Additionally, there was a nationally led operation (STRATAIR-MEDEVAC) and the participation in two further international missions (UNSMIL in Libya and MINURSO in Western Sahara).⁵ In only one of these operations – Resolute Support in Afghanistan – does Germany currently act as a “lead nation”.

Since the early 1990s, German policy has primarily planned for political and military crisis management within multilateral formats, which were considered the most likely deployment scenario given the security environment. By contrast, issues of collective de-

3 Federal Ministry of Defence (BMVg), *Antwort auf schriftliche Fragen 8/28 und 8/30 der Abgeordneten Sabine Zimmermann vom 4. August 2017* (Berlin, 11 August 2017), https://www.linksfraktion.de/fileadmin/user_upload/PDF_Dokumente/Anfrage_Bundeswehr.pdf (accessed 23 March 2018).

4 We use the expression “operations abroad” to encompass all Bundeswehr operations outside of Germany that are mandated as such by the Bundestag, that generally occur within a multilateral framework and that are legitimised by a resolution of the UN Security Council wherever they include the use of military violence to carry out their mandate. For multilateral crisis operations in the broader sense, we use the term “peace operations” in line with United Nations practice.

5 See [bundeswehr.de, Einsatzzahlen – die Stärke der deutschen Kontingente](http://bit.ly/Bw_Einsatzzahlen) (Berlin: Federal Ministry of Defence, 25 May 2018), http://bit.ly/Bw_Einsatzzahlen (accessed 29 May 2018); the authors' itemisation does not take into account two operation-equivalent commitments: the contribution to Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 in the Aegean and Germany's role as lead nation for the combat troop battalion in Lithuania as part of enhanced Forward Presence (eFP).

1 The term “operations abroad” is commonly used by the German Armed Forces for the original German term “Auslandseinsätze”. Other translations like “missions abroad”, “expeditionary missions” or “foreign deployments” can also be found in official documents of the German government. This study applies “operations abroad” as the key term while sometimes also applying the other terms where appropriate.

2 Center on International Cooperation, *Peace Operations Review 2018* (New York: Center on International Cooperation, 2018), 8.

fence were seen as politically outdated or simply as basic functions of the Bundeswehr and NATO alike, in light of the fundamentally cooperative attitude of states within the Euro-Atlantic area. Numerous decisions on alliance policy, the military and armaments policy over the past 25 years reflect this view.

The annexation of Crimea in 2014, which indicated that the normative core of the Euro-Atlantic security order since 1990 had eroded, triggered a paradigm change in German policy and within NATO. The 2016 German White Paper still treats crisis management as virtually equal to collective defence. However, according to the provisional conceptual guidelines on the Bundeswehr's future capability profile, published in spring 2017, by 2032 the armed forces' capabilities will be primarily re-aligned with collective defence and deterrence – and thus with NATO's defence planning. This also involves a turn away from the 2011 guidelines for a reorientation of the Bundeswehr.

It would be premature to plan exclusively for collective defence.

From today's perspective, it may have been hasty to align the Bundeswehr's range of tasks – and thus also its structures, equipment and supplies – almost exclusively along multilateral crisis management. However, it would now be just as premature to plan exclusively for collective defence. The EU and NATO strategic frameworks point to at least a certain continuity. NATO's Strategic Concept from 2010, which defines international crisis management as one of three tasks along with collective defence and cooperative security, continues to be valid. The EU's 2016 Global Strategy also continues to list crisis management in Europe's neighbourhood as one of its security tasks. The current geopolitical situation will require continuous or rather increasing European contributions. Moreover, the security situation in the countries of deployment of large, ongoing UN missions has deteriorated rather than stabilised, making a continuing engagement for an extended period very likely.

Finally, the changing level of ambition in Germany's foreign and security policy does not support the conclusion that the era of military operations abroad has come to an end. Likewise, the voices of Germany's partners in the EU and NATO, which have since 1990 called ever more clearly for Germany to assume more military responsibility, have become rather louder – especially since the 2014 Munich Security Conference, at which Germany very prominently articulated

its readiness to take on more international responsibility. One facet of this is of course a continued active involvement in international crisis management including through Bundeswehr operations abroad.⁶

There is a need to address military operations abroad not despite an increasing insistence on the comprehensive approach, but because of it. In the Guidelines that the federal government adopted in June 2017, "Preventing Crises, Managing Conflicts, Building Peace", it outlined the structures and processes of this approach in more detail. Foreign deployments of the German Armed Forces, it stated, remained an instrument that could "help to restore and consolidate security and stability and to strengthen legitimate security structures"⁷; in isolation, however, they were ineffective.

The main assumption of this study is not that deploying the Bundeswehr should be the primary means of German crisis management. But the closer ties between diplomatic, development and security instruments in crisis regions presupposes that challenges for operations abroad are precisely identified. Germany has long promoted the primacy of civilian approaches, including in the Guidelines. However, even if increased civilian efforts to solve conflicts and promote peace are strengthened, operations abroad will not entirely be a thing of the past, especially if German soldiers are to be deployed in larger numbers as part of UN peace operations (as is the case in Mali). To identify the challenges accompanying such contributions to multidimensional frameworks, one needs to understand the transformations that shape both operations abroad themselves and their international context. A brief overview of German security policy debates and decisions of the past two decades regarding operations abroad, however, will first provide the domestic context.

⁶ See statements by the Federal Minister of Defence, quoted in Johannes Leithäuser, "Leyen verteidigt Einsatzdauer", *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 19 December 2017.

⁷ Federal Government of Germany, *Guidelines on Preventing Crises, Resolving Conflicts, Building Peace* (June 2017), 84, <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/blob/1214246/057f794cd3593763ea556897972574fd/preventing-crises-data.pdf> (accessed 28 August 2018).

Military Operations Abroad in the Debate on Security Policy, 2006–2016

White Papers tend to be documents of strategic reflection and affirmation in security policy. They reveal, in condensed form, security-policy challenges, shifts in priorities, and new instruments. The 2006 *White Paper on German Security Policy and the Future of the Bundeswehr* makes clear that deployments abroad were already part of the “normal” modus operandi of the German Armed Forces at the time. Among the tasks of the Bundeswehr, the document lists international conflict prevention and crisis management including the fight against terrorism in first place, followed by supporting allies, protecting Germany and its citizens, rescue and evacuation, and subsidiary forms of assistance.⁸

The previous White Paper, from 1994, still mainly focused on adapting security policy to the power-bloc confrontation having ended and to German reunification. For the first time, its authors placed crisis management operations on an equal footing with national and allied defence.⁹ In operational terms, Germany quickly became involved in such operations after reunification: as early as 1992–1993, Berlin supported the UN transitional authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) with 150 emergency medical staff. Germany contributed to the air bridge linking Somalia to Kenya as part of UN mission UNOSOM II from 1992 to 1994 and provided logistical support for UN troops. As part of the German contribution, 1,700 soldiers were stationed in Belet Uen, and a further 600 marines and 120 air force soldiers in Djibouti and Mombasa. In

1992–1993, the German Armed Forces also helped to monitor the weapons embargo in the Adriatic Sea and the no-fly zone over Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The SPD and FDP parliamentary groups subsequently lodged a complaint with the Federal Constitutional Court against the AWACS surveillance flights enforcing the no-fly zone over Bosnia-Herzegovina. The SPD also sued over the participation of the German Navy in the embargo against the remainder of Yugoslavia, and over operations in Somalia. The Federal Constitutional Court in Karlsruhe considered the four lawsuits together,¹⁰ and in its decision of 12 July 1994 confirmed that “out-of-area” deployments conformed to the German Basic Law under three conditions: they required, first, a mandate from the UN Security Council; second, a multilateral action framework for the deployment; and third, a mandate from the German Federal Parliament. Its ruling thus forms the legal basis for parliamentary approval but also for the “force on operations”.

Almost concurrently, three events plunged peace operations into a crisis: the battle for Mogadishu in 1993 and the withdrawal of the UN from Somalia two years later; the genocide in Rwanda in 1994; and the case of the UN “safe area” in Srebrenica in 1995. In the short term, these events led to a marked reduction of peace operations worldwide. In the long term, they influenced the conception of peace operations,

⁸ Federal Ministry of Defence (ed.), *White Paper 2006 on German Security Policy and the Future of the Bundeswehr* (Berlin, 2006), 55.

⁹ Federal Ministry of Defence (ed.), *White Paper 1994 on the Security of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Situation and Future of the Bundeswehr* (Bonn, 1994), para 254.

¹⁰ On this point, see Decision of the Second Senate, German Federal Constitutional Court, 12 July 1994 – 2BvE3/92 –, and Georg Nolte, “Bundeswehreinsetze in kollektiven Sicherheitssystemen. Zum Urteil des Bundesverfassungsgerichts vom 12. Juli 1994”, *Zeitschrift für ausländisches öffentliches Recht und Völkerrecht* 54 (1994): 652–755 (654), http://www.zaoerv.de/54_1994/54_1994_3_4_a_652_755.pdf (accessed 23 March 2018).

the normative debate, and the perception of such operations, including in Germany.

Cornerstones of the Debate

In 2006, after more than two decades of intense controversies, the era of profound debates on operations abroad seemed to be provisionally over. A tacit consensus had formed in Germany whereby military crisis management by the Armed Forces, while not the preferred instrument of security policy, was nonetheless both possible and acceptable. Thus, the 2006 White Paper's remarks on deployment abroad occasioned no major controversies.

The deployment to Afghanistan ignited all the issues that still determine the debate.

Simultaneously, the political and academic debate turned to specific operations. The German Armed Forces' deployment to Afghanistan from 2001 onwards has certainly attracted the most attention in the academic literature and public discussion. This particular deployment ultimately ignited all the issues that still determine the debate: the complementarity of military, political and economic instruments in stabilising states; the demarcation of state-building from counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism; generalisable criteria for deciding whether or not to participate in operations abroad; and the criteria for success, how to measure them, and how then to bring such operations to a close.

Networked Security

The expression "Vernetzte Sicherheit" (Networked Security) was introduced into the debate by the 2006 White Paper and gained particular conceptual importance in subsequent years. The Paper stated that "It is [...] not possible to guarantee security by going it alone, or with armed forces only. What is called for, rather, is an all-embracing approach that can only be developed in networked security structures based on a comprehensive national and global security rationale."¹¹ The ensuing debate first focused on clarifying the terminology: "networked security", "networked

approach", "whole-of-government approach" or "comprehensive approach". Some observers expressed concern that the phrase "networked security" concealed an increasing militarisation of conflict management.¹² By contrast, "comprehensive approach" ("Vernetzter Ansatz") appeared more capable of creating consensus. Ultimately, the goal behind all this terminology was "to effectively prevent or address international violent conflicts by coordinating the resources of all relevant institutions and using them through pooling and/or division of labour".¹³ While the idea has gained acceptance in principle, its implementation still generates controversy.

Criteria for Operations Abroad

Since the early 2000s, with almost a decade of experience of operations abroad, another strong focus of the debate both in politics and in academia has been to develop sets of criteria for Germany's participation or non-participation in such operations. In autumn 2006, the then-deputy head of the CDU/CSU parliamentary group argued that decisions about deploying the German Armed Forces had to be taken on the basis of German interests, fundamental German political values, and obligations to alliance partners, and he named a series of relevant criteria.¹⁴ In January 2007, the regional parliamentary group of the CSU set out ten guidelines for military operations abroad by the German Armed Forces to improve the predictabil-

¹² For a discussion about terminology, see also the debate in the Federal Parliament Subcommittee Crisis Prevention, 26 March 2012. On this point, see Andreas Wittkowsky, *Vernetzte Sicherheit: Begriff, Einordnung und Umsetzung in der Konfliktbearbeitung*. ZIF-Thesenpapier zur Anhörung des Unterausschusses "Zivile Krisenprävention und vernetzte Sicherheit" (Berlin: Zentrum für Internationale Friedenseinsätze [ZIF], 26 March 2012), http://www.zif-berlin.org/fileadmin/uploads/analyse/dokumente/veroeffentlichungen/ZIF_Thesenpapier_UA_ZKvS-2012.pdf (accessed 23 March 2018).

¹³ Andreas Wittkowsky and Jens Phillipp Meierjohann, *Das Konzept der Vernetzten Sicherheit. Dimensionen, Herausforderungen, Grenzen*, ZIF Policy Briefing (Berlin: ZIF, April 2011), 2. English translations from cited texts are by the study's authors, unless otherwise indicated.

¹⁴ See CDU/CSU group in the Federal Parliament, "Kriterien für Auslandseinsätze der Bundeswehr", press report, 11 September 2006, <https://www.cducsu.de/presse/texte-und-interviews/kriterien-fuer-auslandseinsaetze-der-bundeswehr> (accessed 23 March 2018).

¹¹ Federal Ministry of Defence (ed.), *White Paper 2006* (see note 8), 22.

ity and reliability of decision-making.¹⁵ Shortly afterwards, Winfried Nachtwei, who at the time was the Bündnis 90/Green Party's spokesperson on security and disarmament, also drafted criteria, which he summarised with the question, "Is an operation for the purpose of collective security urgent, reasonable, legal, achievable and responsible, or none of the above?"¹⁶ In the political sciences and within think tanks, there was also deliberation on appropriate criteria.¹⁷

Despite the number of differences between the sets of criteria highlighted above (as well as others), four common categories emerged, whose relevance for the decision-making process continues to be generally agreed:

1. the legality and legitimacy of the operation;
2. risks and the prospect of success;
3. the significance of the operation for German security and/or German interests;
4. formal or informal obligations to alliances and partners.

None of the authors claimed that decision-making could be based on generalised criteria, emphasising instead that they were merely for guidance. Ultimately, they said, decisions had to be made case by case, taking into account specific conditions.

"Focus on Operations"

2010 and 2011 were dynamic years for the Bundeswehr and its operations abroad – not so much in terms of new deployments but rather in terms of national political and defence-policy processes. In 2010 NATO published its Strategic Concept, and the Bundeswehr structural commission published its

report entitled "Focus on Operations", whose recommendations became the basis for the subsequent reform of the German Armed Forces. The recommendations primarily aimed to orientate structures and processes in the Bundeswehr and defence ministry more towards the requirements of operations abroad, and to streamline structures and staffing needs accordingly. Based on the political objective that future actions continue to be multinational – meaning within NATO, the UN or the EU – the commission emphasised that Germany would not be providing the full capacity by itself in every conceivable case.¹⁸

Participating in international military crisis management now seemed to have become the permanent state of affairs in security policy.

Nevertheless, the report developed ambitious objectives – not without referring to obligations towards German partners. For instance, it recommended doubling the number of soldiers sustainably available for operations from 7,000 to 15,000, perhaps as an expression of solidarity and capability within the alliance.¹⁹ This report thus establishes the deployment paradigm, namely the assumption that the Bundeswehr's entire political, military and financial planning should grant operations abroad the highest priority. Participating in international military crisis management now seemed to have become the permanent state of affairs in security policy, with a broad consensus as a matter of principle within both the executive and the legislative (except for the categorical rejection of military operations abroad by The Left parliamentary group).²⁰

Defence-Policy Guidelines

Crisis management is also prioritised in the Defence-Policy Guidelines (VPR) of May 2011, which form the political basis for the conception of the Bundeswehr. The document justifies giving the Armed Forces this

¹⁵ CSU Land group in the Federal Parliament, *Leitlinien für Auslandseinsätze der Bundeswehr*. Beschluss der XXXI. Klausurtagung der CSU-Landesgruppe im Deutschen Bundestag vom 8. bis 10. Januar 2007 in Wildbad Kreuth.

¹⁶ See Winfried Nachtwei, *Auslandseinsätze: Lehren und Kriterien*, 12 February 2007, <http://nachtwei.de/index.php?module=articles&func=display&catid=99&aid=471> (accessed 23 March 2018).

¹⁷ See Volker Perthes, "Wie, wann, wo, wie oft?", *Internationale Politik* 62, no. 5 (Mai 2007): 16–21; *Auslandseinsätze der Bundeswehr. Leitfragen, Entscheidungsspielräume und Lehren*, ed. Stefan Mair, SWP-Studie 27/2007 (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, September 2007); Winrich Kühne, "Kriterien, Interessen und Probleme der deutschen Beteiligung an internationalen Friedenseinsätzen – Wann? Wohin? Warum?", *Friedenswarte* 1 (2007): 23–38.

¹⁸ Federal Ministry of Defence, *Report of the Bundeswehr Structural Commission. Focus on Operations. Concentration, Flexibility, Efficiency* (Berlin, October 2010), 26.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 10.

²⁰ On this point, see e.g. the briefing paper by their parliamentary group demanding the immediate withdrawal of the German Armed Forces from all deployments abroad: <https://www.linksfraktion.de/themen/a-z/detailansicht/bundeswehr-auslandseinsatze/> (accessed 23 March 2018).

orientation primarily by a series of threat scenarios that could individually or jointly lead to the Bundeswehr being deployed abroad. It highlights in particular possible threats emanating from state failure: “Failing and failed states cause threats such as civil war, regional destabilisation, humanitarian crises and related phenomena including radicalisation and migration movements that help create safe havens and retreats for international terrorism and organised crime.”²¹

The guidelines describe a broad task profile for the Bundeswehr, consisting of national defence (or collective defence within NATO); international conflict prevention and crisis management; contributing to military tasks as part of the CSDP; homeland security; rescue and evacuation; and hostage rescue abroad. They also contain unambiguous statements on the prioritised capability profile of the Bundeswehr: “The more likely tasks of international conflict prevention and crisis management determine the outline of the new Bundeswehr structure. Essentially, the forces available for these tasks also fulfil the requirements of territorial and collective defence as well as homeland security tasks of the Bundeswehr. Where core tasks of the Bundeswehr demand it, these forces must be supplemented by additional structural elements.”²² The order of magnitude envisaged by the 2011 VPR for international crisis management is substantial, even though it remains lower than the structural commission’s previously mentioned suggestion from 2010: around 10,000 soldiers were to be kept ready and available for this task.²³

Germany on the UN Security Council

The German debate about military operations abroad was shaped not only by country- and region-specific considerations, but by the respective multilateral framework for action and the associated political commitments for such operations. This became obvious when Germany took up a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council in 2011/2012. Right at the beginning of this period, in March 2011, Germany’s

abstention during the vote on Security Council Resolution 1973 caused controversy. The resolution authorised UN members to establish a no-fly zone over Libya and take all necessary measures to protect the population. It thus provided the legal basis for NATO operation Unified Protector, whose additional objective was to impose an international weapons embargo. Germany’s abstention on the vote – justified by the then-federal government with reference to Germany’s “culture of military restraint” – was contentious primarily because the Resolution was the first by the Security Council authorising a mission that so explicitly referred to the so-called *responsibility to protect* and was thus deemed to buttress that emerging norm.

Problematically, the federal government contradicted its claim to a “culture of restraint” with its contemporaneous military engagement in Afghanistan. Ultimately, France, the UK and the US as supporters of the Resolution also voiced criticism of Germany’s voting behaviour because they saw it as renouncing solidarity with NATO. Berlin also simultaneously supported its alliance partners politically in the North Atlantic Council, giving the impression that its position was inconsistent. This led to doubts over Germany’s reliability and solidarity with the alliance.

“Enable and Enhance”

While the Bundeswehr’s military operations abroad, such as in Afghanistan, aimed to secure and assist the fundamental redesign of the post-conflict state order, a new aspect of operations emerged as of 2011. It concerned enabling individual governments or regional organisations in the interests of subsidiarity to manage security challenges themselves and thus safeguard peace and international security under the UN Charter. Such measures are partly embedded in peace operations.

In EU missions, for instance, the shift of emphasis from “security provider” to “security advisor” has been unmistakable, even though the formats have not replaced each other, and training, equipping and advising security forces in third states is not in that sense a new instrument. This approach became the subject of German debate primarily via the “Enable and Enhance Initiative”, which the federal government has been pursuing in various forums since

21 Federal Ministry of Defence, *Defence Policy Guidelines. Safeguarding National Interests – Assuming International Responsibility – Shaping Security Together* (Berlin, May 2011), 2, <http://www.bmvg.de/resource/blob/16136/0c1b6d8d0c0e6ba0aed5f0feb0af81d8/g-03-110527-vpr-engl-data.pdf> (accessed 16 August 2018).

22 Ibid., 14.

23 Ibid., 11.

2011.²⁴ The debate took a new turn when the federal parliament authorised the Bundeswehr in September 2014 to support the Kurdish Peshmerga in Northern Iraq in their battle against the so-called “Islamic State” by providing training. Even though the arming of the Peshmerga was not yet part of the Enable and Enhance Initiative – which was launched bilaterally later – two fundamental conceptual questions have since shaped the argument: one, to what extent can parties in a conflict or violent non-state actors legitimately be enabled; and two, what is the relationship between enhancing and enabling and direct stabilisation through military crisis management?²⁵

New Responsibility

The overarching debate about Germany’s increased global responsibility and its new view of its role as a global actor is also, and especially, crucial where military operations abroad are concerned. A significant impetus for the discussion was the 2014 Munich Security Conference, although there had certainly been precursors.²⁶ An increased German contribution to international crisis management did not necessarily mean a greater number of extensive stabilisation operations, but rather making available critical or special capabilities alongside – or possibly under the command of – Germany’s partners, such as France, the EU or the UN. Germany’s commitment in two operations in Mali since 2013 illustrates this approach: the EU training mission (EUTM) and the UN stabilisation mission (MINUSMA). It is worth noting that Germany contributes large numbers of personnel to MINUSMA as well as high-end capabilities: a specially equipped reconnaissance company, the reconnaissance drone TP Heron, and helicopters.

24 On the background, see Jana Puglierin, *Die “Ertüchtigungsinitiative” der Bundesregierung: Was steckt dahinter?*, Arbeitspapier Sicherheitspolitik, no. 1/2016 (Berlin: Bundesakademie für Sicherheitspolitik, 2016).

25 On this point, see also Claudia Major, Christian Mölling and Judith Vorrath, *Train + Equip = Peace? Stabilization Requires More Than Capacity Building*, SWP Comment 4/2015 (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, February 2015).

26 See *Neue Macht – Neue Verantwortung. Elemente einer deutschen Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik für eine Welt im Umbruch*, ed. German Marshall Fund and Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (Berlin, 2013).

Parliamentary Approval

The national framework for operations abroad also repeatedly came under discussion. In particular, the work of the commission to verify and secure parliamentary rights when mandating Bundeswehr operations abroad triggered a debate on the Parliamentary Participation Act or the requirement for parliamentary approval. The commission was launched by the Federal Parliament in March 2014 and tasked with verifying whether the Parliamentary Participation Act needed to be adapted, in particular with a view to the deepening integration within NATO. The commission submitted its final report in August 2015, which largely confirmed the legal status quo. The modifications and exceptions that it suggests primarily concern the deployment of soldiers to NATO and EU headquarters, and forces that are armed exclusively for self-defence or unarmed forces, such as during observation and training missions or logistical and medical assistance missions.²⁷ Additionally, it called for annual and ad-hoc parliamentary debates on security policy particularly in view of international security cooperation – which is deepening perceptibly – as well as corresponding advances in military integration. It also called for fundamentally improved evaluation of operations abroad. During the legislative period 2013 to 2017, there was no reform of the Parliamentary Participation Act, despite the fact that a corresponding draft law had already had its first reading in the German Bundestag.²⁸

The 2016 White Paper

The White Paper presented by the Federal Government in July 2016 entitled *White Paper on Security Policy and the Future of the Bundeswehr* has developed into a cornerstone of the debate on military operations abroad. As with the Defence Policy Guidelines, it lists collective defence within NATO and the EU, international crisis management and homeland security (or national crisis and risk prevention) as tasks of

27 See German Federal Parliament, 18th legislative period, *Unterrichtung durch die Kommission zur Überprüfung und Sicherung der Parlamentsrechte bei der Mandatierung von Auslandseinsätzen der Bundeswehr*, Document 18/5000, 16 June 2015, 33 and 35ff.

28 *Ibid.*, 46ff., where there is a synopsis of the text of the Parliamentary Participation Law containing the modifications suggested by the commission.

almost equal significance for the Bundeswehr.²⁹ However, overall, particularly when compared to the previous White Paper, the focus on collective defence within NATO and the EU, is somewhat stronger.³⁰

Simultaneously, the White Paper continues the discourse of the 2014 Munich Security Conference and stresses Germany's new responsibility on the world stage. In contrast to the EU Global Strategy adopted the same year, which clearly prioritises Europe's eastern and southern neighbourhood, the White Paper does not set any regional focus.³¹ However, it includes extensive provisions on the action framework for crisis management. The UN is mentioned in the first place, followed by the EU, NATO, OSCE, bilateral partnerships and ad-hoc coalitions. The discourse in this section appears to signal greater openness towards UN-led operations, but also a new pragmatism concerning ad-hoc coalitions.³²

Continuities and Asynchronicities

The 2006 and 2016 White Papers are linked by a series of continuities: the acknowledgement that international crisis management continues to be necessary, including by military means where required; the effort to couple military operations abroad with realistic conceptions of political order; and an acceptance of Germany being expected to assume more responsibility in international politics.

However, the debate on security policy also encompasses opposing trends. Besides a fundamentally critical view of using the military to assert conceptions of political order, the operations in Afghanistan have had a generally sobering effect with regard to large stabilisation operations.³³ There is also increas-

ing doubt over the prospects of success of multi-dimensional (and, above all, more robust) UN peace operations in increasingly complex conflict contexts. At the same time, the need for comprehensive and long-term approaches is seen as a central lesson learned from the experiences of the past decade. The necessity for international crisis management and the expectations placed on it seem to be growing still further; the shift in national and international parameters for military operations abroad is complex and does not unfold straightforwardly. As a consequence, the Bundeswehr has to adapt its capabilities to ever new challenges.

The Capabilities of the German Armed Forces

The security-policy debate about German military operations abroad has always concerned two issues: the objectives and framework of German military operations abroad, and the required military capabilities.

To date, the German federal government has been able to meet all its military commitments within NATO, the EU and the UN.

Germany has so far been able to meet all its military commitments within NATO, the EU and the UN. Whether or not Germany can offer more military involvement in the future and respond to the call of UN Secretary-General Guterres for more German blue helmets largely depends on the availability of Bundeswehr forces that are fit and ready for action.³⁴ In turn, this depends not only on the physical availability of soldiers, but also on their level of training, equipment and matériel, which has to be appropriate for each theatre of operation and the specifics of each mandate.

²⁹ See Federal Ministry of Defence (ed.), *White Paper 2016 on Security Policy and the Future of the Bundeswehr* (Berlin, 2016), 91ff.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 88.

³¹ European External Action Service (EEAS), *Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe. A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy*, June 2016, <https://europa.eu/globalstrategy/en/file/814/download?token=I-Kb0OrS> (accessed 23 March 2018).

³² See also Markus Kaim and Hilmar Linnenkamp, *The New White Paper 2016 – Promoting Greater Understanding of Security Policy?* SWP Comment 47/2016 (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, November 2016).

³³ On the first aspect, see Klaus Naumann, *Einsatz ohne Ziel? Die Politikbedürftigkeit des Militärischen* (Hamburg, 2008). On the

second, see *idem*, *Der blinde Spiegel. Deutschland im afghanischen Transformationskrieg* (Hamburg, 2013).

³⁴ See "UN-Generalsekretär: 'Wünsche mir mehr deutsche Blauhelm-Soldaten'", *Der Stern*, 14 February 2018, <https://www.stern.de/politik/ausland/un-generalsekretaer-antonio-guterres-appelliert--wuensche-mir-mehr-deutsche-blauhelm-soldaten--7862278.html> (accessed 23 March 2018).

Personnel: After 25 years of continuous downsizing, the Federal Ministry of Defence decided in May 2016 to raise the overall strength of the military personnel to 198,000 soldiers (“personnel trend reversal”). This was considered necessary to meet growing security challenges and increasing international obligations.

In March 2018 the total staff of the Bundeswehr still stood at 179,496 active soldiers. This should not be equated with the number of personnel reporting for duty every day in its units and formations, which is around 140,000 to 150,000. When calculating availability for operations, the significant number of staff on education courses and in training or on leave at the time must be taken into account, just as the fact that the above-mentioned total includes not only soldiers in operational units, but also those serving in the Federal Ministry of Defence, command authorities and offices, schools, training centres, national and integrated headquarters, etc.

The number of soldiers available for additional operations abroad is also reduced by measures beyond mandated operations abroad and operation-equivalent commitments. Consider, for instance, the greatly increased frequency of training exercises as part of NATO’s reassurance measures, which commit additional soldiers nationally or internationally,³⁵ and then consider that the permanent secondment of forces for continuous tasks such as air policing, host nation support for allied armed forces and national risk prevention (forces for hostage rescue and the evacuation of German nationals and other wards from crisis regions).

Furthermore, since late May 2018, just over 4,000 soldiers have been on 11 mandated deployments abroad and two international missions, and a further total of about 700 on two operation-equivalent commitments: Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 in the Aegean and the combat troop battalion in Lithuania as part of enhanced Forward Presence (eFP). If we take into account preparing for and debriefing after the operations, the number of participants (4,700) in operations triples, showing that 14,100 soldiers are permanently committed to mandated operations abroad or operation-equivalent commitments of the Bundeswehr. A significant number of offices and soldiers in Germany are occupied with command, communications and logistical-support tasks for these

³⁵ According to Federal Ministry of Defence planning, in 2018 up to 12,000 soldiers are meant to be made available for such drills alone.

operations. A conservative total estimate of those committed (in the broadest sense) to operations abroad would therefore be more than 16,000 soldiers.

If the current scale of mandated operations abroad is maintained, this number will once again increase substantially – probably to a total of just under 28,000 – due to Germany’s contribution to the NATO Response Force, including its role as lead nation in providing NATO-VJTF (Very High Readiness Joint Task Force) in 2018–2019 and 2020, and to the EU Battle Groups in 2018 and 2020.

This shows that the number of soldiers theoretically available for any future operations abroad lies considerably below the total size of the armed forces mentioned above. This has already led to a sizeable “vacancy management”, and not only in the contingents of ongoing mandated operations abroad.³⁶ To summarise: operational tasks are becoming ever more varied, and the total number of operational commitments is growing – including through the refocusing of collective defence and a series of commitments of various scopes relating to the NATO reassurance measures of the NATO summits in Wales (2014) and Warsaw (2016). Since measures to reverse the downward staffing trend still need to be implemented and have an impact, the number of personnel available for undertaking further operations abroad can be considered rather low.

Matériel: An additional factor in evaluating readiness for duty and the possibility of taking on new commitments is the armed forces’ matériel. In the early 1990s, the Bundeswehr still deployed on mandated operations abroad with the equipment and matériel that had previously been available for collective defence in Central Europe – and which had, accordingly, been developed for the geographical, topographical and climatic conditions of Central Europe. In other words, as long as operations abroad took place in Germany’s own “backyard” (for instance in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo), there were initially no noteworthy problems with the equipment or matériel, apart from the fact that some of it was already

³⁶ According to the annual report of the parliamentary ombudsman for the armed forces (59th report, 20 February 2018, p. 21), “21,000 military posts below the grade of sergeant were vacant” in the reporting year 2017, <https://www.bundestag.de/blob/543920/e2535fce8d264119b54523ead6537ffb/jahresbericht-2017-pdf-data.pdf> (accessed 20 February 2018).

over 30 years old, which generated increasing maintenance costs.

This shifted with the increased deployment radius and the changes in environmental conditions and threat scenarios (for instance through improvised explosive devices, etc.). Adaptations and new purchases became necessary; in particular, the dynamically evolving operations in Afghanistan accelerated this process. Many of the procurements occurred outside of the regular budgetary procedures and through the “Rapid Procurement Initiative” mechanism.

The Ministry prioritised operations that were part of international crisis management and seen as determining structures, but neglected the remaining structures as capabilities for collective defence assumed a lower priority. This created “hollow structures”, which had to manage without being fully equipped. Because of the need to make additional savings since 2011, the Federal Ministry of Defence has also intervened in ammunition and spare parts stockpiling and the allocation of funds for materiel maintenance. This has taken its toll, leading, inter alia, to a conspicuous lack of spare parts.

In the fourth quarters of 2014, 2015 and 2016, the German Bundestag defence committee received the respective annual report on the material deployability of the main weapons systems of the Bundeswehr – documents that essentially describe the shortages plainly and clearly.³⁷ Press reports on the deployability of the Bundeswehr – including submarines, frigates, helicopters and battle tanks – had already hinted that no improvement could be expected for 2017. The report on the material deployability of the main weapons’ systems of the Bundeswehr dated 26 February 2018 has confirmed this concern.³⁸

The leeway for new and larger operations abroad by the Bundeswehr is currently very limited.

The parliamentary ombudsman for the armed forces has addressed the issue prominently in recent

annual reports.³⁹ He emphasised in early 2018 that although operations abroad with small contingents were easily managed, the Bundeswehr as a whole could not currently be deployed for collective defence.⁴⁰ If we accept this verdict – as the context clearly suggests we should – then the leeway for new and larger operations abroad by the Bundeswehr or the provision of high-value assets for additional UN missions is currently very limited. This will only change if the currently looming development of the defence budget actually allows for the announced trend reversals in personnel, matériel and finances to be successfully implemented. Even if it does, substantial improvement will take at least years.

37 See e.g. Thomas Wiegold, “Bericht zur Materiallage der Bundeswehr: Warten auf den Verteidigungsausschuss”, *Augen Geradeaus!*, 24 November 2017, <http://augengeradeaus.net> (accessed 13 May 2018).

38 Federal Ministry of Defence, *Bericht zur materiellen Einsatzbereitschaft der Hauptwaffensysteme der Bundeswehr 2017*, https://www.dbwv.de/fileadmin/user_upload/Mediabilder/DBwV_Info_Portal/Politik_Verband/2018/Bericht_Einsatzbereitschaft.pdf (accessed 23 March 2018).

39 See e.g. the annual reports 2014 (56th report), German Bundestag, 18th legislative period, Document 18/3750, 27 January 2015; 2015 (57th report), German Bundestag, 18th legislative period, Document 18/187250, 26 January 2016; 2016 (58th report), German Bundestag, 18th legislative period, Document 18/10900, 24 January 2017, and 2017 (59th report), 20 February 2018.

40 “Scharfe Kritik an Einsatzbereitschaft der Bundeswehr”, *Cellesche Zeitung*, 21 January 2018.

The Three Dimensions of Change

It is practically impossible to make reliable statements about future operations abroad by the Bundeswehr. Changes in parameters, however, *are* available for analysis. These modify the pressure to act on the German government and parliament, as well as their room for manoeuvre, and thus influence not only whether operations abroad take place or are continued, but also how.

1st Dimension: The State of War and Security-Policy Challenges

The increased debate over deployments of the Bundeswehr outside of the NATO zone (*out of area*) and Germany's first military experiences in international crisis management came at a time of change in wars. After the end of the East-West conflict, the number of armed conflicts first increased markedly (peaking at 51 active conflicts in 1991) before dropping in the 2000s, reaching its lowest point of 31 in 2010.⁴¹ However, the more fundamental transformations had already begun after World War Two, in particular the growing dominance of wars within states rather than between states, and shifts in the regional distribution of armed conflicts.

Conflict Types and Regions

According to the Arbeitsgemeinschaft Kriegsursachenforschung (Working Group Research on the Origins of War, AKUF), 249 of the 176 wars conducted between 1945 and 2014 were within states.⁴² Even if types of

conflict are differentiated beyond intrastate and interstate, as they are in the Heidelberg Conflict Barometer, intrastate conflicts are in the clear majority in 2016 as well.⁴³ The regional distribution of armed conflicts also changed, even before 1989, "from the centres of the world order to its periphery".⁴⁴ This mainly concerns the relocation of war from Europe to other regions of the world. More than 90 percent of the wars that occurred between 1945 and 2010 were in Latin America, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East.⁴⁵

Wars are less frequently settled by military decisions and more frequently by mediation – the apparent price being an increased rate of recurrence.

These findings are relevant for several reasons. On average, intrastate wars last longer than interstate ones. According to AKUF statistics, no interstate war since 1945 has lasted for more than ten years, whereas more than 20 percent of intrastate wars have. Less than 30 percent are resolved within one year. It should also be noted that, overall, wars are less frequently settled by military victory and more frequently by mediation – the apparent price being an increased

[internationales/weltweit/innerstaatliche-konflikte/54508/innerstaatliche-kriege-seit-1945](#) (accessed 23 March 2018).

⁴³ The Barometer distinguishes between "interstate, intrastate, substate, and transstate conflicts". Numbers for conflict intensity for 2016 from the Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research, *Conflict Barometer 2016*, vol. 25/2017, 15.

⁴⁴ Lothar Brock, "Vorwort", in Sabine Kurtenbach and Peter Lock, *Kriege als (Über)Lebenswelten: Schattenglobalisierung, Kriegsökonomien und Inseln der Zivilität*, EINE Welt-Texte, vol. 16 (Bonn: Stiftung Entwicklung und Frieden, 2004), 11 – 19 (13).

⁴⁵ Roy Karadag and Klaus Schlichte, "Die Verunsicherung der Welt. Aktuelle Gewaltkonflikte und globale Ordnung", *Politische Vierteljahresschrift* 57, no. 4 (2016): 534 – 59 (536).

⁴¹ Therése Pettersson and Peter Wallensteen, "Armed Conflicts, 1946 – 2014", *Journal of Peace Research* 52, no. 4 (2015): 536 – 50.

⁴² Wolfgang Schreiber, *Innerstaatliche Kriege seit 1945, Dossier Innerstaatliche Konflikte* (Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 10 November 2015), <http://www.bpb.de/>

rate of recurrence. In the early 2000s, about 60 per cent of ostensibly solved conflicts reignited within five years.⁴⁶

Because of the changes outlined above, the category of intrastate conflicts has been further differentiated. Academia now uses concepts such as “violent conflict” or “armed violence” to capture the variety of types and manifestations of conflicts. The expression “organized violence”, for instance, is employed within the Uppsala Conflict Data Programme (UCDP) to encompass not only the established category of civil war, but also armed conflicts carried out exclusively between non-state actors or one-sided violence of an organised actor against unarmed civilians.⁴⁷ These differentiations were not only driven by the increase in intrastate conflicts, but by their growing complexity and blurred boundaries.

“New Wars” and Transnational Threats

In the early 2000s, the debate about “new wars” concentrated on the characteristics of and driving forces behind armed conflicts.⁴⁸ A contentious issue was the extent to which fundamental change had occurred after the end of the East-West conflict in the actors, objectives, methods, and forms of financing of (civil) wars. According to the thesis of “new wars”, the boundaries are increasingly dissolving between state and non-state actors, who are connected in many ways and use ethnic or religious identities, rather than political ideologies, to mobilise. Moreover, open warfare is fairly rare, and violence mainly targets civilians. The “new wars” are also no longer chiefly funded by state money but by “private” sources: looting, “taxes” on humanitarian aid, diaspora donations, kidnappings, or the smuggling of oil, diamonds, drugs and other goods.⁴⁹ Critics primarily argued that many of the listed characteristics were not actually new, but

had already occurred in the World Wars, for example.⁵⁰ The research literature also used the expression “new war” to describe more and more phenomena and thereby devalued its content.⁵¹

Regardless of how armed conflicts are categorised, the debate on the privatisation of violence and the economy of intrastate wars directed greater attention onto the logic behind the actions of violent actors. The relevant research usually ascribes one of two motives to (non-state) parties in conflicts: either individual economic profit-seeking (*greed*) or responding to political exclusion or inequalities, such as e.g. by ethnic discrimination (*grievance*).⁵² From the former perspective, war economies – such as developed in the 1990s in Liberia, Sierra Leone or Angola – exist not only to finance the armed combat. The associated economic incentives are also considered a cause for the outbreak of these wars. Others point to the significance of group identities in connection with political and economic inequalities for mobilising violence.⁵³ Whether the economic interests of those who use violence are the cause for a conflict or whether they become an end in themselves during the fighting, they are overwhelmingly seen as prolonging the conflict. Furthermore, war economies do not just have an impact within the state, but can also destabilise the surrounding region by their transnational linkages in smuggling, organised crime and similar factors.⁵⁴

The connection between changing wars and the weakness or failure of states is another aspect. Since the 1990s, the State Failure Task Force, for example, has recorded intrastate conflicts and violence as an expression of state failure.⁵⁵ The terror attacks of 11

46 Sebastian von Einsiedel (with Louise Bosetti et al.), *Civil War Trends and the Changing Nature of Armed Conflict*, Occasional Paper 10 (Tokyo: United Nations University Centre for Policy Research, March 2017), 2.

47 Erik Melander, *Organized Violence in the World 2015: An Assessment by the Uppsala Conflict Data Program*, UCDP Paper 9/2016 (Uppsala, 2016), 2.

48 See e.g. Mary Kaldor, *New and Old Wars: Organised Violence in a Global Era* (Stanford, 1999); Herfried Münkler, *Die neuen Kriege* (Reinbek bei Hamburg, 2004).

49 Mary Kaldor, “In Defence of New Wars”, *Stability. International Journal of Security and Development* 2, no. 1 (2013): 1–16.

50 Klaus Schlichte, “Die politische Ökonomie des Krieges”, *Initial – Berliner Debatte*, 20 March 2008, <https://www.linksnet.de/artikel/21088> (accessed 23 March 2018).

51 Christopher Daase, “Neue Kriege und neue Kriegführung als Herausforderung für die Friedenspolitik”, in *Der ambivalente Frieden*, ed. Ines-Jacqueline Werkner and Ulrike Kronfeld-Goharani (Wiesbaden, 2011), 21–35 (21).

52 Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, *Greedy and Grievance in Civil War*, *Oxford Economic Papers* 56 (Oxford, 2004), 563–95.

53 Lars-Erik Cederman, Kristian Skrede Gleditsch and Halvard Buhaug, *Inequality, Grievances, and Civil War* (Cambridge, 2013).

54 Schlichte, “Die politische Ökonomie des Krieges” (see note 50).

55 Later renamed the Political Instability Task Force. See Monty G. Marshall, Ted Robert Gurr and Barbara Harff, *PITF – State Failure Problem Set: Internal Wars and Failures of*

September 2001 put the spotlight on the risks for international security associated with state failure. Research has identified fragile states as places of retreat or transit for transnational terror networks. Transnational illegal activities, especially those linked to organised crime, were also increasingly considered security threats. It is no coincidence that the 2003 EU Security Strategy lists as key threats (alongside the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction) terrorism, regional conflicts, the failure of states, and organised crime, which interlock in many ways. The complexity of armed conflict in the past decade particularly originates in this interaction.

As the 2016 OECD report on fragile states shows, connections can be drawn between the dimensions of fragility and violence. Thus, in contexts of high political fragility all forms of violence occur at high levels and with greater intensity; and where economic fragility increases, so do homicide rates and social violence. The places with high security fragility are among the most violent in the world: this currently concerns Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia and South Sudan in particular.⁵⁶

Alongside massive violence, another challenge that should not be underestimated is the relatively high probability that newly pacified countries will find themselves in a situation of renewed civil war within a decade.⁵⁷ Even where long-lasting armed conflicts have been settled, the consolidation of peace will require a great deal of patience.

The complexity of armed conflicts and the significance of transnational influences that became apparent in the past decade can be seen as the expression of new threats or simply as continued challenges. Either way, the use of irregular or non-conventional methods has changed warfare. This is especially true for the US-led “global war on terror” and the counter-insurgency in Afghanistan. While these may not necessarily be new forms of war, major changes in information, organisation, doctrine and technology have certainly occurred that will have a lasting impact on military operations abroad.⁵⁸ Both here and

in conflict dynamics generally, the distinction between war and peace has often become blurred.⁵⁹ Formal declarations of war have become at least as rare as comprehensively negotiated peace accords.

A Tendency of More Violence and Increased Internationalisation

Overall, then, armed conflicts have become more protracted and often defy resolution through political negotiations. The fragility of states in combination with transnational organised crime is considered to be a cause, along with the presence of jihadi groups in conflicts and the internationalisation of civil wars. Growing criminal markets and the increasing flow of illicit goods not only change the overall political economy of conflicts, but obviously also facilitate access to weapons, funding and recruits.⁶⁰ This results in relatively constant challenges for security policy. In the broader security-policy debate, the impact of climate change, urbanisation, digitalisation and epidemics also plays a role.

Whatever reasons may have been decisive in individual cases, the past few years have once again seen clear changes, not least due to the intensified and increasingly regionalised wars in Syria and Iraq, as well as the conflict in Ukraine. Having decreased since the 1990s, the number of armed conflicts has risen again. In 2014 there were more than at any point since 1999. The intensity of armed conflicts has also increased again. While it was primarily the war in Syria that made 2014 the most deadly year with regard to warfare since the end of the Cold War, even without it 2014 would have witnessed the most casualties since 2000, primarily due to the conflicts in Iraq, Afghanistan, Nigeria, Pakistan, Ukraine and South Sudan.⁶¹ Despite a reduction in the number of deaths from organised violence in 2015 and 2016, these were still the fourth-highest for the entire period 1989 to 2016.

Governance, 1955–2014 (Vienna, VA: Center for Systemic Peace, 6 May 2015), <http://www.systemicpeace.org/inscr/PIITFProbSetCodebook2015.pdf> (accessed 23 March 2018).

⁵⁶ *States of Fragility 2016: Understanding Violence* (Paris: OECD, 2016).

⁵⁷ Anke Hoeffler, *Growth, Aid and Policies in Countries Recovering from War* (Paris, 2012), 4.

⁵⁸ However, according to Ehrhart, these are characteristics of “postmodern warfare”, which should be considered a new

form of war. See Hans-Georg Ehrhart, “Postmoderne Kriegführung. In der Grauzone zwischen Begrenzung und Entgrenzung kollektiver Gewalt”, *S+F Sicherheit und Frieden* 34, no. 2 (2016): 97–164 (98).

⁵⁹ See the interview with Herfried Münkler, “Die gemeine Waffe”, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 13 April 2015.

⁶⁰ Von Einsiedel et al., *Civil War Trends and the Changing Nature of Armed Conflict* (see note 46), 2–5.

⁶¹ Pettersson and Wallenstein, “Armed Conflicts, 1946–2014” (see note 41), 539.

The proportion of intrastate conflicts with external involvement has recently become the highest ever since World War Two.

The increased internationalisation of intrastate conflicts is also striking. In 2014, a third of armed conflicts involved troops from other countries supporting one or even several sides.⁶² Such constellations already existed in the Cold War, for instance in the so-called proxy wars. However, the share of intrastate conflicts with external involvement has recently become the highest ever since World War Two.⁶³ External military involvement not only prolongs conflicts and drives up casualty numbers; it also increasingly blurs the line between intrastate and interstate conflicts, as the report by the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) found in 2015. A political solution thus recedes even further.⁶⁴

2nd Dimension: The International Political and Legal Context

The mandating of Bundeswehr operations abroad is embedded in both international politics and international law. There are fundamental shifts in international relations, which have clear consequences for German politicians' decision-making and room for manoeuvre.

Changes in the International Peace Order

The most momentous recent normative development is the so-called *responsibility to protect* (R2P), a concept codified in 2005 to protect people against serious violations of human rights and international law. States have long been obliged under international law to protect their populations from the worst human-rights violations. However, the responsibility to protect goes further: it implies a declaration of intent on the part of states to intervene following authorisation

by the UN Security Council – including by military means – wherever a state is not in a position or not willing to meet its own responsibility to protect. This is not the place to discuss the status of R2P as an international law standard in the making.⁶⁵ A much more politically charged issue is the extent to which R2P, following its politically controversial (and for some observers abusive) use during the Libya conflict, can still be applied to legitimise the international community in military crisis management.

Many observers insist on the fact that R2P should not primarily be considered a means of legitimising military action and that it has therefore lost much traction due to the intervention in Libya. Some researchers emphasise instead the moderate progress made by the international community in dealing with crises in the Central African Republic or Mali, and warn against wholly rejecting R2P as a norm. They are cautiously optimistic that the responsibility to protect still offers a basis for the international community to act.⁶⁶

The German government has shown some reticence. On the one hand, it committed itself to R2P in its report on the collaboration between Germany and the UN in 2013 and 2014, and supports its conceptual development as a member of the “Group of Friends of R2P”. On the other hand, the responsibility to protect does not warrant a single mention in the 2016 White Paper – in contrast with the 2006 White Paper, which still assumed that it would have a long-term impact on the mandating of international peace operations. At the very least, R2P has been compromised as a legitimising basis.

However, certain UN member states have always had strong reservations about the (potential) infringement of national sovereignty, which limited the scope for action. Some members have also long questioned both the extended conflict management set out in the 1992 Agenda for Peace by the then-UN Secretary Gen-

⁶² Ibid., 537.

⁶³ Uppsala Conflict Data Program, *Armed Conflict by Type, 1946–2015*, http://www.pcr.uu.se/digitalAssets/595/c_595102-1-1-k_type.pdf (accessed 23 March 2018).

⁶⁴ United Nations, *Uniting Our Strengths for Peace – Politics, Partnerships, and People*, Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, 16 June 2015, http://peaceoperationsreview.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/HIPPO_Report_1_June_2015.pdf (accessed 23 March 2018).

⁶⁵ For such a discussion, see e.g. Lars Brozus and Christian Schaller, *Über die Responsibility to Protect zum Regimewechsel*, SWP-Studie 13/2013 (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, June 2013).

⁶⁶ See the following special issues for an extensive survey of the responsibility to protect: *International Politics* 53, vol. 1 (2016): Special Issue “The Responsibility to Protect. Ten Years On from the World Summit” and: *International Spectator* 51, vol. 2 (2016): “Special Issue on the Responsibility to Protect”. *The Oxford Handbook of the Responsibility to Protect*, ed. Alex J. Bellamy and Tim Dunne (Oxford, 2016), is also comprehensive.

eral Boutros-Ghali and the overriding guiding principle of “liberal peace”. From the point of view of fundamentally critical researchers, R2P and the Agenda for Peace are expressions of Western-dominated international decision-making, which at best integrates local actors and perspectives from conflict zones only superficially.⁶⁷ More moderate critics emphasise that hopes in the 1990s for a rapid consolidation of peace through political and economic liberalisation were exaggerated and partly misguided, but they advocate reforming rather than abandoning the approach.⁶⁸ The academic debate has continued in many political forums and via exchanges with practitioners; however, no clearly defined alternative to the liberal guiding principle has emerged.

Growing Antagonism in the UN Security Council

For the Bundeswehr to participate in a multilateral military operation that is carried out as part of a collective security system, it needs a mandate from the UN Security Council. In each case, the process of issuing a mandate was and is heavily politicised due to the specific political interests and constraints of the states involved, or their willingness to secure common action via the UN or under its authorization.⁶⁹ In this context, the permanent Security Council members’ willingness to cooperate is a prerequisite.

It is becoming increasingly difficult to generate such willingness given the opposed interests that have been noticeable since 2014, especially between the US, France and the UK on the one side and Russia or China on the other. These are ostensibly triggered by tensions caused by the territorial revisionism of Russia’s foreign policy, which manifested itself particularly in the annexation of Crimea in 2014.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Roger Mac Ginty and Oliver P. Richmond, “The Local Turn in Peace Building: A Critical Agenda for Peace”, *Third World Quarterly* 34, no. 5 (2013): 763–83 (763f.).

⁶⁸ Roland Paris, “Saving Liberal Peacebuilding”, *Review of International Studies* 36 (2010): 337–65 (362).

⁶⁹ See in general: Matthias Wolfram, *Entscheidungsprozesse im Sicherheitsrat der Vereinten Nationen. Die Mandatierung von Militäreinsätzen*, The United Nations and Global Change, vol. 6 (Baden-Baden, 2012).

⁷⁰ In addition, two further varieties of this revisionism can be seen in international relations: an institutional revisionism targeting the fundamental modification or abolition of existing institutions, and a normative revisionism pursuing the same goal with international norms.

However, behind the tensions lie different normative and power-political conceptions of order and organisation, which concern both the international system as a whole and several of its regional branches.⁷¹

The Security Council has ultimately agreed to continue existing UN missions and missions with a UN mandate that are carried out by a regional organisation, for instance the NATO operation Resolute Support in Afghanistan. The latter was extended by the Security Council in December 2014, immediately after Russia’s annexation of Crimea, and several times since. Nevertheless, there is cause for concern that the opposing conceptions of political order held by Security Council members might paralyse the UN’s commitment to peacekeeping measures in new crises and conflicts. From Germany’s perspective, the absence of legitimisation through the Security Council could restrict options for action.

Ad-Hoc Coalitions: A Way Out?

Ad-hoc coalitions are alliances of convenience formed on a specific occasion with one objective: solving or at least containing a specific security policy issue outside of fixed institutional formats. Such informal cooperation is nothing new, even in the military arena. However, Germany’s only example before 2015 – the contribution to Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), concluded in 2010 – had at least a legitimising connection to an established system of collective security. The mandate for this operation combating transnational Islamist terrorism after the attacks of 11 September 2001 drew its legal basis from article 51 of the UN Charter as well as, inter alia, from article 5 of the NATO Treaty, which the North Atlantic Council activated the following day.⁷² Ultimately, however, a

⁷¹ See for representative treatments of the current debate on the future of the international order: Amitav Acharya, “After Liberal Hegemony: The Advent of a Multiplex World Order”, *Ethics & International Affairs* 31, no. 3 (2017): 271–85; Guy De Jonquières, “The World Turned Upside Down. The Decline of the Rules-based International System and the Rise of Authoritarian Nationalism”, *International Politics* 54, no. 5 (2017): 552–60; Matthew D. Stephen, “Emerging Powers and Emerging Trends in Global Governance”, *Global Governance* 23, no. 3 (2017): 483–502.

⁷² See German Bundestag, 14th legislative period, *Antrag der Bundesregierung. Einsatz bewaffneter deutscher Streitkräfte bei der Unterstützung der gemeinsamen Reaktion auf terroristische Angriffe gegen die USA auf Grundlage des Artikels 51 der Satzung der Vereinten Nationen und des Artikels 5 des Nordatlantikvertrags sowie*

so-called coalition of the willing carried out this operation outside of NATO's command structure.⁷³

Recently, such forms of cooperation have become more regular. The main reasons are the latest power-political changes and institutional frictions: the UK's looming exit from the European Union, which has weakened the community; the decreasing willingness of the US to embrace its traditional global leadership role; and the political return or ascent of other international actors. These have all created doubts over the effectiveness of the existing multilateral structures for consultation and decision-making.

Furthermore, a regional diversification of security threats, norms and standards as well as preferences in conflict management has been noticeable for years.⁷⁴ It is no coincidence, for example, that ad-hoc coalitions play a greater role in conflicts in the Middle East. Given regional and international interconnections, which are increasingly including the support by individual states for local parties within a conflict, informal forms of military cooperation are seen by a growing number of countries as an extension of their own scope for action and in some cases as the only remaining option.⁷⁵

This trend is already evident in Bundeswehr operations abroad as well. Since December 2015, the German government has been using a similar constellation to OEF in its support for the anti-IS coalition. The mandate for this operation is based on the support clause in article 42 paragraph 7 of the Treaty on the European Union (TEU), and thus still refers to a system of collective security according to Germany's Basic Law. However, it has no operational implications since the operation is led by the Combined Joint Task Force – Operation Inherent Resolve (CJTF-OIR), under US command.

der Resolution 1368 (2001) und 1373 (2001) des Sicherheitsrats der Vereinten Nationen, Document 14/729, 7 November 2001.

73 See Christian Freuding, "Die Operation Enduring Freedom und Active Endeavour. Deutschlands militärischer Beitrag zum Kampf gegen den internationalen Terrorismus", in *Armee im Einsatz. Grundlagen, Strategien und Ergebnisse einer Beteiligung der Bundeswehr*, ed. Hans J. Gießmann and Arnim Wagner, Demokratie, Sicherheit, Frieden, vol. 191 (Baden-Baden, 2009), 340–52.

74 See e.g. Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson and Pamela Aall, "The Mosaic of Conflict Management", in: *Rewiring Regional Security in a Fragmented World*, ed. idem (Washington, D.C., 2011), 3–24.

75 See the remarks on ad-hoc coalitions in the 2016 White Paper (see note 29), 81ff.

The associated training support for Northern Iraq has a different legal basis: It rests on a bilateral agreement between Berlin and Baghdad. Nevertheless, the Bundeswehr participates in it together with international partners, again under the aegis of CJTF-OIR.⁷⁶ The operation does not have a UN Security Council mandate, the Council's presidency having merely appealed for the operation in a declaration. The anti-IS coalition is thus a coalition of the willing under US leadership.

There is a tendency towards the legal and operational differentiation of military operations abroad.

Overall, what we see is a tendency towards the legal and operational differentiation of military operations abroad. Operations that have been clearly legitimised under the UN Charter stand alongside those justified on other grounds. Deployments in ad-hoc coalitions complement those that take place within the framework of traditional multilateral formats for action.

3rd Dimension: Institutional Framework and Partnerships

Customarily, the Bundeswehr's military operations abroad are conducted as per the jurisdiction of the Federal Constitutional Court, within the framework and rules of a system of collective security under article 24 paragraph 2 of Germany's Basic Law (GG).⁷⁷ This encompasses operations within the established multilateral formats of German security and defence policy – UN, NATO or EU – which have, as a rule, been given the relevant UN Security Council mandate.⁷⁸ While exceptions to this rule have been on the

76 See on these two operations Rayk Hähnlein, *Die deutsche Militärbeteiligung am Kampf gegen den "Islamischen Staat" (IS). Warum die deutschen Mandate den künftigen Erfordernissen nur bedingt genügen*, SWP-Aktuell 72/2016 (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, November 2016).

77 See article 24 para 2 GG: "With a view to maintaining peace, the Federation may enter into a system of mutual collective security; in doing so it shall consent to such limitations upon its sovereign powers as will bring about and secure a lasting peace in Europe and among the nations of the world."

78 This is not the place to debate whether or not the EU is a system of collective security. While the German Constitu-

rise, linking military action to multilateral formats continues to be a cornerstone of Germany's security policy.

The Evolution of UN Peace Operations

The United Nations continue to be the largest deployer of peacekeeping troops. In early 2018, more than 80,000 blue-helmet soldiers were deployed to 15 different peacekeeping missions.⁷⁹ Alongside the traditional providers of troops – India, Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh – various African countries now contribute large contingents, including Ethiopia, Rwanda and Egypt. By far the greatest number of the blue helmets is also deployed in Africa.

China's commitment to UN peacekeeping illustrates the world's changed power configurations and associated ambitions to engage and shape missions. After some reservation, Beijing now provides the (quantitatively) largest contribution of all the permanent members of the Security Council with over 2,500 soldiers, and complements this active support by making available so-called high-value assets, such as a helicopter unit in Darfur.⁸⁰ A number of Western nations have only returned to UN peacekeeping after years of reticence⁸¹ – first and foremost Italy with 1,120 soldiers (as of 30 April 2018).

German security policy might well also have new emphases: in the coming years, Bundeswehr deployments abroad as part of UN-led operations might be used more frequently and more substantially as an instrument than in the past. The main reason is the increasing willingness of the German government to

take on responsibility in this policy area.⁸² The Bundeswehr's most extensive operation abroad at the present time – its contribution of up to 1,000 soldiers to MINUSMA – illustrates this tendency.⁸³

Correspondingly, the evolution of the UN doctrine for peace operations has great significance for Germany as well. The relevant fundamental documents are the Brahimi report from 2000,⁸⁴ the so-called Capstone Doctrine from 2008,⁸⁵ and especially the HIPPO recommendations submitted in June 2015.

This extensive inventory of UN peace operations, requested by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon in 2014, documents the extent to which the challenges have changed.⁸⁶ Its authors advocate fundamental

82 For examples of this reasoning, see Daniel Maier, "Mehr deutsches Personal für Friedenseinsätze der Vereinten Nationen", *PeaceLab 2016*, <http://www.peacelab2016.de/peacelab2016/debatte/friedenseinsaetze/article/mehr-deutsches-personal-fuer-friedenseinsaetze-der-vereinten-nationen> (accessed 23 March 2018); Max Weckemann, "UN stärken – auch militärisch", *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 29 December 2015; Joachim A. Koops, "Germany and United Nations Peacekeeping: The Cautiously Evolving Contributor", *International Peacekeeping* 23, no. 5 (2016): 652–80.

83 See German Bundestag, 18th legislative period, *Antrag der Bundesregierung, Fortsetzung und Erweiterung der Beteiligung bewaffneter deutscher Streitkräfte an der Multidimensionalen Integrierten Stabilisierungsmission der Vereinten Nationen in Mali (MINUSMA) auf Grundlage der Resolutionen 2100 (2013), 2164 (2014), 2227 (2015) und 2295 (2016) des Sicherheitsrates der Vereinten Nationen*, 25 April 2013, 25 June 2014, 29 June 2015 and 29 June 2016, Document 18/10819, 11 January 2017.

84 United Nations, *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations*, 17 August 2000, http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/55/305 (accessed 23 March 2018).

85 United Nations, *United Nations Peacekeeping Operations. Principles and Guidelines* (New York, 2008), http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/documents/capstone_eng.pdf (accessed 23 March 2018).

86 See United Nations, *Uniting Our Strengths for Peace* (see note 64). Developments in the operations doctrine and reform efforts had already been documented and advanced between 2000 and 2015. See e.g.: *United Nations Peacekeeping Operations. Principles and Guidelines (Capstone Doctrine)* (New York, 2008); United Nations Department of Field Support, *Global Field Support Strategy 2010–2015. Overview of Context, Objectives, Results and Lessons Learned* (New York, 2015); United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations/United Nations Department of Field Support, *A New Partnership Agenda. Charting a New Horizon for UN Peacekeeping* (New York, 2009); United Nations, General Assembly, *Civilian Capacity in the Aftermath of Conflict*, Report of the Secretary-General. A/66/311 – S/2011/527 (New York, 19 August 2011).

tional Court explicitly characterises both the UN and NATO (and the Western European Union [WEU], disbanded in 2011) as systems of collective security, it was rather reticent in its decision on the Lisbon Treaty to assess the EU with a view to the CSDP. However, large swathes of the most recent legal literature clearly tend towards characterising the EU as a system of collective security under article 24 para 2 GG. See Wissenschaftliche Dienste des Deutschen Bundestages, *Die EU als System gegenseitiger kollektiver Sicherheit* (Berlin, 2016).

79 United Nations Peacekeeping Data, <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/data-0> (accessed 23 March 2018).

80 See Courtney J. Fung, *China's Troop Contributions to UN Peacekeeping*, USIP Peacebrief 212 (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace [USIP], 2016).

81 Joachim A. Koops and Giulia Tercovich, "A European Return to United Nations Peacekeeping? Opportunities, Challenges and Ways Ahead", *International Peacekeeping* 23, no. 5 (2016): 597–609.

modifications in four areas. First, they emphasise the primacy of politics: peace operations must be part of a comprehensive political strategy. Second, member states should utilise the whole spectrum of peace operations, from small political presences to large multidimensional missions. Third, the authors call for better collaboration with regional partners for peace and security, and fourth for making the future work of the UN Secretariat and the operations themselves more “field-focused” and “people-centred”. The HIPPO report recommendations do not provide an entirely new field map of peace operations. However, the document does make clear the broad spectrum of functions of UN peace operations.⁸⁷

Overall, the Brahimi Report from 2000 and the 2015 HIPPO report captured the need for conceptual and structural reforms of UN peace missions. Nevertheless, many of their recommendations have still not been (fully) implemented. However, shortly after Secretary-General Guterres assumed office, he initiated structural reforms in the peace and security architecture that also addressed some of the HIPPO recommendations. The priority of these ongoing projects – along with improving the overall performance of operations – is prevention.⁸⁸

Since the early 1990s, UN peacekeeping missions have become more robust and multidimensional: police components play a greater role; more attention is paid to promoting the rule of law; and mandated tasks, such as protecting civilians and extending the state’s authority, signal significant adaptations to today’s primarily intrastate conflicts and current mission contexts. With regard to robustness, critical debates have recently emerged on its limits and the use of force within the context of such operations.⁸⁹ The continually extended tasks portfolio of multidimensional missions has also met with criticism – especially where there is a gap between the ambition

of a mandate and the reality of its implementation. In previous decades, the UN Security Council has formulated mandates that are ever more extensive and differentiated and thus ever more demanding – to the point of overload.

An example is the development of the UN mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO). When the task of protecting civilians was added to the original key focus on monitoring the 1999 Lusaka ceasefire and the withdrawal of troops, it forced UN soldiers to assume a more robust role due to the ongoing violence in the east of the country. This culminated in the setting up of a force intervention brigade as part of MONUSCO, which has a mandate to use violence offensively and the objective of “neutralising” militias.

In Mali the Security Council deployed a multidimensional stabilisation mission, MINUSMA, from the outset. Apart from supporting the ceasefire agreements and the peace agreement of 2015, protecting the population and re-establishing the state’s authority over the whole Malian territory are among its tasks. Both missions are also examples of how operations continuously evolve simply due to requirements in the field, and how procedures have to be adapted, for instance when dealing with non-state violent actors or asymmetrical threats such as terrorism and organised crime. The effect of the reviews of ongoing multidimensional peacekeeping missions initiated by the Secretary-General and the structural reforms of the UN peace and security architecture remains to be seen.

The EU’s Crisis Operations

In the context of the multiple crises within Europe, aspirations for the Common Security and Defence Policy have become more modest over time compared with the intentions of the 1990s. While the EU has long had the political and military institutions necessary for crisis management, the high political expectations could only be met selectively. Prevailing reservations by member states as regards deepening political cooperation and integration are mainly responsible. Nevertheless, despite aspirations of sovereignty and the evident prioritisation of domestic issues by many EU member states, diametrically opposed tendencies co-exist.

First of all, since the summer of 2017, increased cooperation within the CSDP has gained momentum. Three developments were decisive: the reaction to the

⁸⁷ On the efforts to implement elements of the HIPPO report, see Tobias von Gienanth, Wibke Hansen and Alischa Kugel, *Making Reform Reality – Enabling Change for United Nations Peace Operations*, ZIF Background Paper (Berlin: ZIF, 2016).

⁸⁸ On the concrete plans for reforms to the “Peace and Security Pillar” and the associated management reforms, see Tanja Bernstein, *Reforming the United Nation’s Peace and Security Pillar*, ZIF Policy Briefing (Berlin: ZIF, December 2017).

⁸⁹ See Peter Rudolf, *VN-Friedensmissionen und der Einsatz militärischer Gewalt*, SWP-Studie 18/2017 (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, September 2017).

UK's decision to leave the EU; the impression that US security commitments were in doubt under President Trump; and the adoption of the EU's new Security Strategy. Many EU members are cautiously discarding their previous security and defence-policy reticence, which is reflected above all in the establishment of a new planning unit to carry out military CSDP missions, in the coordinated development of respective national capabilities, and in the creation of a European defence fund.⁹⁰ Furthermore, there is the new PRISM unit ("Prevention of conflicts, Rule of law/ SSR, Integrated approach, Stabilisation and Mediation") at the European External Action Service, which is meant to promote the integrated approach to crises and conflicts. PRISM will also be responsible for operationalising stabilising actions under article 28 (1) of the Lisbon Treaty.⁹¹

Moreover, the EU has engaged ever more frequently in crisis management, albeit incrementally. The EU Battle Groups, which have existed since 2005 and been ready for deployment since 2007, have not yet been deployed. But there have been several individual peace operations since EUFOR Concordia in Macedonia in 2003: a rather impressive total of 16 missions until mid-2017 (of which six military and ten civilian ones) with over 4,000 operatives.⁹² These missions tend to be limited in both time and function, and revolve mainly around conflict management using civilian, police and military means. The CSDP's military operations currently consist of two maritime missions in the Mediterranean and around the Horn of Africa, and EUFOR Althea in Bosnia-Herzegovina. As for the size and scope of European missions, their regional focus is on the eastern and particularly the extended southern EU neighbourhood. This tendency of regional prioritisation is likely to increase in the coming years, though it remains unclear to what extent military missions will take precedence. The EU's support for the G5 Sahel Joint Force – which

brings together troops from Mali, Mauretania, Niger, Burkina Faso and Chad in the transnational fight against terrorism, drug and human trafficking – seems to indicate that it intends to continue prioritising the enabling of partners.⁹³

It is currently doubtful that the EU's ambitions in this area can be extended in the near future. If the Union wants to increase its effectiveness in crisis management, it is hard to see how it can avoid deepening political integration in this policy area in the long term. This is likely, however, to meet with substantial resistance from individual EU member states.

The Development of NATO Crisis Management

During the Balkan wars in the 1990s, NATO turned from a hesitant United Nations subcontractor into an active military-political actor. Since then, the spectrum of NATO operations has ranged from robust peacekeeping missions to maritime peace operations, training missions, humanitarian relief operations in emergencies, missions to support other organisations, and contributions to counterterrorism. The Alliance emphasised the latter through its formal accession to the anti-IS coalition during the NATO summit in Brussels on 25 May 2017. For some time, there have also been missions in the complex area of "post-conflict peacebuilding" following intrastate conflicts.

NATO now focuses on reactivating and expanding its collective defence capacities.

No serious operational changes for the Bundeswehr's ongoing operations abroad are unfolding at the level of NATO. NATO currently leads two larger missions abroad on behalf of the United Nations: KFOR in Kosovo (February 2018: 4,030 soldiers) and the Resolute Support Mission (RSM) in Afghanistan (September 2017: 13,500 soldiers). Further sizeable commitments are currently not planned, except for a

⁹⁰ See in detail Olaf Wientzek, *Hoffnungsschimmer für die Gemeinsame Sicherheits- und Verteidigungspolitik der EU*, KAS Analysen & Argumente 236 (Berlin: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung [KAS], 2017).

⁹¹ For an overview of more recent developments, see Tobias Pietz, *Flexibilisierung und "Stabilisierungsaktionen": EU-Krisenmanagement ein Jahr nach der globalen Strategie*, ZIF Policy Briefing (Berlin: ZIF, September 2017).

⁹² ZIF, *Peace Operations 2017/2018* (as of June 2017), http://www.zif-berlin.org/fileadmin/uploads/analyse/dokumente/veroeffentlichungen/ZIF_World_Map_Peace_Operations_2017.pdf (accessed 15 December 2017).

⁹³ For further details, see European Commission, *Annex 2 of the Commission Decision of 1 August 2017, amending Commission Decision C(2017) 2579 of 27 April 2017 on the 2017–2018 Action Programme of the African Peace Facility in Favour of the African Union Commission and Allocating Funds of the African Peace Facility from the 11th European Development Fund for the Support to the G5 Sahel Joint Force*, <http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/3/2017/EN/C-2017-5291-F1-EN-ANNEX-2-PART-1.PDF> (accessed 23 March 2018).

repeatedly discussed capacity-building mission to Iraq and the recently agreed upsizing of RSM in Afghanistan to 16,000 soldiers, including up to 1,300 German soldiers. The modest political accomplishments of international action in Afghanistan and the resulting intervention fatigue as well as the Russian annexation of Crimea or ongoing destabilisation of the Donbas have led to a shift in priorities. NATO now focuses on reactivating and expanding its collective defence capacities, and on reassurance measures for its members in Central and Eastern Europe.

In its Warsaw Summit declaration of July 2016, NATO once again confirmed its cooperation with the UN (a necessity it has accepted since the NATO Council declaration of 1992), and described it as ever more important. It also re-emphasised its commitment to increasing support for UN peace missions. This concerns, inter alia, measures against explosive devices, to improve training and deployability, to relocate UN troops and to cooperate in defence capacity-building in at-risk countries.⁹⁴ NATO has also offered the African Union a closer partnership, which might range from operational and logistical support via cooperation in capacity-building to supporting the African Standby Force through conception, training and exercises. However, such forms of cooperation aim to provide selective support rather than comprehensive NATO-led missions.

The Increasing Military Integration in Europe

There is one development that concerns both EU-led and NATO-led Bundeswehr operations abroad: military integration in Europe. This will inevitably bring lasting change not only to the military framework, but also to the political framework of German military deployments abroad. Since the mid-1990s, the countries of the Euro-Atlantic area have consistently expanded their military cooperation and pushed forward with integrating their armed forces. It is worth noting, however, that forms of cooperation and levels of commitment do (still) vary.

First of all, there is NATO's integrated command structure and its joint reconnaissance and command

capabilities, which require a high degree of cooperation commitment from all involved. The permanent integrated command structure gives the alliance a unique reservoir of permanently available reconnaissance, planning and command capabilities, which are crucial for political decision-making and control within NATO. In recent years, this capacity has been complemented by a specific form of cooperation – the “framework nation” concept – under which participating countries align their joint new projects and capacity-building with the objectives of NATO's defence-planning process. The respective framework nation takes on greater responsibility compared with other cooperating countries by, inter alia, making available larger formations and ensuring coordination within the capability cluster (submarine warfare, anti-missile defence, etc.) and with NATO.⁹⁵

Second, many governments have initiated various multinational cooperation projects under the conceptual keywords *pooling* and *sharing*. The *pooling approach* is characterised by bringing together the capabilities of several nations for joint optimal use and management. However, the capabilities contributed by each nation remain under national control with regard to concrete operations – as they do in the framework nation concept. The gain for those involved therefore initially consists of an opportunity for flexible – but not necessarily reliable – access to capabilities that far exceed each individual contribution. Military advantages can also occur, for instance through more interoperability.⁹⁶

In *sharing*, the situation is somewhat similar. Here, one or several states make a binding commitment to make capabilities available for joint use. In the context of operations abroad, this form of cooperation is more momentous because it concerns state sovereignty in three ways. One, the prerequisite for sharing is that the state making a capability available is actually

⁹⁵ See Rainer L. Glatz and Martin Zapfe, *Ambitious Framework Nation: Germany in NATO. Bundeswehr Capability Planning and the “Framework Nations Concept”*, SWP Comment 35/2017 (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, September 2017), 4f.; Erhard Bühler, “Die europäisch abgestimmte Fähigkeitsplanung. Instrumente der Streitkräftekooperation wie das Rahmennationenkonzept und Pesco müssen synergetisch eingesetzt werden”, *Die Bundeswehr. Zeitschrift des Deutschen Bundeswehrverbandes* (February 2018), 14f.

⁹⁶ See Henrik Heidenkamp, “Die strategische Notwendigkeit von *Pooling & Sharing*”, in *Europa als Sicherheitspolitischer Akteur*, ed. Dan Krause and Michael Staack (Opladen, 2014), 233–51.

⁹⁴ NATO, *Warsaw Summit Communiqué*. Issued by the Heads of State and Government Participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Warsaw, 8–9 July 2016, para 120, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133169.htm (accessed 23 March 2018).

willing to restrict its own control in a specific crisis situation in favour of another state. Two, when several countries jointly make a capability available, it is difficult to say how each individual country's right of disposal relates to that of the others. And finally, with changing political priorities it is somewhat uncertain whether third states can rely on the firmly committed capabilities of the other states.

The UK's looming exit from the European Union and the Trump government's Europe policy have given momentum to military integration in Europe. However, this dynamic is no longer accompanied by the idea that the CSDP could be developed "top-down", in other words, that far-reaching ambitions and conceptions of political order could drive policy. Rather, it will be developed "bottom-up", meaning that it will grow incrementally through building joint capabilities and institutions. In this context, numerous bilateral and multilateral cooperation projects have been initiated in the past few months. It is likely that these will expand in the coming years and further "denationalise" the Bundeswehr's operational readiness. The German Bundestag may therefore soon be faced with the question of whether national control over multinational military capabilities needs to be generally modified if these approaches are to prove successful.⁹⁷

Partnerships

The increased complexity of armed conflicts means that, with growing frequency, peace operations with different mandates or under different leadership are in the field at the same time. In Mali, for example, there are two CSDP missions along with the UN mission MINUSMA, which took over the tasks of the African-led support mission AFISMA in 2013: the military training mission EUTM Mali and the civilian mission EUCAP Sahel Mali. In addition, since 2014 France has deployed 3,000 soldiers in Mali and four other Sahel countries for counter-terrorism purposes as part of Operation Barkhane. In July 2017, to relieve this operation and support MINUSMA, the Joint Force officially began its duty during a G5 Sahel Summit in

Bamako attended by President Macron.⁹⁸ The EU provides 100 million euros in financial support to the force.⁹⁹ Finally, the EU plans to send a stabilising mission to Mali for the first time under article 28 of the Lisbon Treaty. This small civilian presence, named EU Stabilisation Action in Mopti and Segou (EUSTAMS), will primarily help with the rebuilding of administrative structures.

The multitude of parallel operations leads to more complex decision-making structures.

Such a multitude of parallel operations leads to ever more complex decision-making structures, and increases the need to synchronise and coordinate. Questions also arise as to how the region's population perceives the different operations, what their joint situation report is, and how it should be assessed. The traditional military tenets of *unity of effort* and *unity of command* risk falling by the wayside in these parallel operations.¹⁰⁰ Nevertheless, even if the problem of coordinating parallel operations has not been comprehensively solved either conceptually or practically, progress has certainly been made in institutionalising cooperation, for instance between the UN and EU or UN and AU.¹⁰¹

Since 2003, the EU has continuously expanded its strategic partnership with the United Nations in peacekeeping and crisis management. Since 2012, it has implemented a corresponding action plan to improve support for UN peacekeeping missions, which both sides then updated along with priorities

⁹⁸ See also United Nations, *Security Council Resolution, S/RES/2359 (2017)*, 21 June 2017, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/594d1dc14.html> (accessed 23 March 2018).

⁹⁹ European Commission, "EU Mobilises the International Community for Africa's Sahel Region", press release (Brussels, 23 February 2018).

¹⁰⁰ See e.g. Rainer Glatz, "International Assistance Force (ISAF) – Erfahrungen im Afghanistan-Einsatz", in *Am Hindukusch – und weiter? Die Bundeswehr im Auslandseinsatz: Erfahrungen, Bilanzen, Ausblicke*, ed. Rainer Glatz and Rolf Tophoven, Schriftenreihe, vol. 1584 (Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2015), 67f.

¹⁰¹ See Joachim A. Koops and Thierry Tardy, "The UN's Inter-organizational Relations: Advancements and Achievements", in *The Oxford Handbook of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations* (Oxford, 2015), 60 – 77.

⁹⁷ For details on individual proposals, see Ekkehard Brose, *When Germany Sends Troops Abroad. The Case for a Limited Reform of the Parliamentary Participation Act*, SWP Research Paper 9/2013 (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, September 2013).

for the period 2015 to 2018.¹⁰² In its Global Strategy of June 2016, the EU re-affirmed its cooperation with the UN. The Strategy focuses inter alia on the EU's role at the onset of a crisis to bridge the critical period until a UN mission has been set up and reached its operational capacity in situ.¹⁰³

Nevertheless, EU member states clearly still prefer to negotiate with the UN directly rather than let the EU indicate, let alone provide, their capabilities. Due to the overlap of membership, this similarly holds true for NATO. In many European capitals, UN peacekeeping missions are being rediscovered as effective instruments for crisis management due to their long-term stabilising impact.¹⁰⁴ Somewhat representative of this development are the UK and the Netherlands: after years of "abstinence", London deployed 100 soldiers to the UN Operation in South Sudan (UNMISS) in autumn 2016 while in 2014 the Netherlands had sent 450 soldiers to Mali. This policy area is also undergoing a renaissance among other European partners, such as Denmark, Norway and Sweden, albeit to a lesser extent. However, one could hardly describe the member states' support for the UN in this area as forceful enough to suggest it is a political priority – especially since there continue to be some suspicions over the effectiveness of UN command and control structures. The desire to retain (national) autonomy as regards decision-making processes and conducting operations also plays a part.

102 See Carmen-Cristina Cirlig, *EU–UN Cooperation in Peacekeeping and Crisis Management*, European Parliamentary Research Service Briefing (November 2015), [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/ReData/etudes/BRIE/2015/572783/EPRS_BRI\(2015\)572783_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/ReData/etudes/BRIE/2015/572783/EPRS_BRI(2015)572783_EN.pdf) (accessed 23 March 2018).

103 See EEAS, *Shared Vision, Common Action* (see note 31), 25: "CSDP could assist further and complement UN peacekeeping through bridging, stabilisation or other operations. The EU will also enhance synergy with UN peacebuilding efforts, through greater coordination in the planning, evolution and withdrawal of CSDP capacity-building missions in fragile settings."

104 See Koops and Tercovich, "A European Return to United Nations Peacekeeping?" (see note 81).

New Challenges for Operations Abroad

These shifts during the past decades have given rise to a series of current and specific challenges for Germany's policy on Bundeswehr operations abroad. They concern three fundamental areas:

- the objectives of the operations, or of German participation: what does the German government hope to achieve in the context, and how can operations abroad contribute to these goals?
- alliances and partners: what is the best action framework to pursue these goals?
- means of implementation: how can these goals be realised most effectively?

The above order might seem self-evident – in practice, however, the second or third step is often taken before the first, meaning that solicitations from alliance partners or the use of certain instruments occur before the fundamental objectives have been defined. This happens not least because of the often very short time lapse between the emergence of a military need and the decision on German participation. In a rapidly changing environment, it is therefore crucial to grapple sufficiently early with challenges and areas of tension regarding objectives, partners and instruments, and to lay down some guiding principles for future operations abroad.

Germany's position is inevitably influenced by the development of conflicts; the perceived urgency of the problem; and responsibility arising from obligations under international law, international alliances and political commitments. The objectives set for each operation will prioritise these factors differently and depend, for instance, on where precisely the armed conflict takes place and how great the impact is on Germany and Europe.

The level of ambition of Germany's foreign and security policy and its decision-making concerning operations abroad will take their bearings from the balance of power in international politics, Germany's own capacities, and specific negotiations in international forums that take into account its own

analysis and evaluation of the situation as well as the feasibility of a German contribution. The operational framework set by UN resolutions makes it difficult to formulate one's own objectives clearly in mandates, rather than give descriptions of capacities. Nevertheless, even when operations are legitimised by international law, it is imperative to work towards embedding them in an overall political strategy. The associated challenges result from the transformations described.

Normative Anchors for a Viable Political Process

The evaluation of the normative objectives of many peace operations – such as support for state-building following an armed conflict so as to succeed in a democratic transformation – has changed. Today more reservation and realism prevail than in the late 1990s, for example.¹⁰⁵ Researchers have for some time questioned not only the effectiveness but also the legitimacy of promoting liberal democracies and market economies in conflict contexts, referencing mainly the fact that local actors and ideas are not sufficiently taken into account.¹⁰⁶

Political reservations about "liberal peacebuilding" have also always existed within the UN Security Council. The balance of power and stances have now shifted in such a way that it has become markedly more difficult to reach a consensus on new or existing mandates even just among the five permanent mem-

¹⁰⁵ See Shahar Hameiri, "The Crisis of Liberal Peacebuilding and the Future of Statebuilding", *International Politics* 51, no. 3 (2014): 316–33.

¹⁰⁶ For an overview, see Edward Newman, Roland Paris and Oliver P. Richmond, "Introduction", in *New Perspectives on Liberal Peacebuilding*, ed. idem (Tokyo, New York and Paris, 2009), 3–25.

bers of the Security Council (P5). This concerns peacekeeping missions as much as other forms of conflict management or resolution, as demonstrated by the failure to reach agreement on a special tribunal for war crimes in Syria. The international and regional organisations that deploy troops particularly need to reflect on what the normative “anchors” of future missions might look like, how to reach consensus on them, and how to define the politically desired end state of each mission using those anchors.

This is all the more vital because operations – or even the decision to launch operations – increasingly meet with resistance in the host country.¹⁰⁷ Political confrontations over ongoing or planned missions or troop surges in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Darfur, South Sudan or Burundi are just a few examples. Following pressure by the Congolese government, for instance, the UN was forced to reduce staff levels for MONUSCO. The South Sudanese government prevented the relocation of the Security-Council-mandated Regional Protection Force for a year, and the Burundian government has declined the deployment of 228 police officers, decided in July 2016, to support the efforts of the UN Special Adviser. This is an expression of diverging agendas: the international community can less and less take it for granted that the political elites in the country of deployment share its goals. After all, along with robust military components, today’s peacekeeping missions also encompass programmes on human rights, rule of law, security sector reform, and more.

However, it is not only the implementation of peace agreements, but also and especially state-building and peace-building that are almost impossible without the accord of the host country. For robust operations, a consensus at the strategic level is also indispensable. The question of whether or not a host country has given its consent ultimately separates robust peacekeeping from peace enforcement.¹⁰⁸ A brittle consensus is always a political headache. It becomes an operational problem when reservations about an international mission lead to a worsening of the personnel’s security, to limitations of the deployed forces’ freedom of movement, and an active undermining of the implementation of the mandate – be

it through detention or arrests, delays or restrictions in importing equipment and supplies, or even the expulsion of individuals.

Reaching and maintaining a consensus is ultimately tied to the question of whether there is a common conception of the desired end state, and whether the mission is embedded in a robust political process that is sufficiently broad, so that the mission can rely on the support of influential member states.

Coalitions and Action Formats

The institutional framework for Bundeswehr operations abroad is unclear, given the difficulty of political decision-making in international organisations. Observers diagnosed a crisis of multilateralism over a decade ago. Where peace operations are concerned, this means conflicting tendencies:

On the one hand, the more recent political shifts have pushed even established institutions like the EU and NATO into troubled waters. On the other hand, there is a noticeable rise of (regional) powers and new actor constellations – whether as part of the African Peace and Security Architecture or in (sub)regional coalitions or loose, non-institutionalised formats. This increasing differentiation of action formats offers both opportunities and risks.

From the German perspective, an especially weighty issue is whether or not to participate in ad-hoc coalitions like the one to fight “Islamic State” in Iraq and Syria. Politically, these formats were upgraded in the 2016 White Paper. However, the German government has not yet finally clarified which formats it intends to prioritise in future operations abroad. Three important aspects of ad-hoc coalitions need to be considered.

First, political control is non-transparent and the operational framework vague. This distinguishes ad-hoc coalitions from those in which bodies of multilateral organisations – for example the North Atlantic Council for NATO or the Political and Security Committee for the EU – take the helm. As was demonstrated by the confrontations over the visiting rights of German parliamentarians to the German contingent at the Turkish air base Incirlik in 2016, it is more difficult for national institutions to exercise their right of oversight.

Second, multilateral cooperation essentially forces those involved to coordinate their expectations of the political outcome that a specific operation abroad is supposed to deliver. Informal coalitions, however,

¹⁰⁷ For an early shaping of this trend in Africa, see Denis M. Tull, *When They Overstay Their Welcome: UN Peacekeepers in Africa*, SWP Comment 15/2010 (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, June 2010).

¹⁰⁸ See Paris, “Saving Liberal Peacebuilding” (see note 68).

cannot provide these transparency and coordination functions. This results in individual coalition members (for instance within CJTF-OJR) focusing on national interests, with no consensus being reached on the politically desired end state.

Third, there are no agreed procedures for financial burden-sharing or provision of military capabilities. These have to be renegotiated for every mission. By contrast, in multilateral formats there are pre-existing agreements and procedures on sharing the financial and military burden.

Ad-hoc coalitions do not deliver political control, nor do they coordinate the conceptions of political order pursued by the participating states.

The central challenge thus consists of preventing the above-mentioned “depoliticisation” of such operations. Ad-hoc coalitions do not deliver political control, nor do they coordinate the conceptions of political order pursued by the participating states. Nevertheless, it is also obvious that multilateral institutions such as NATO are increasingly developing into platforms for operations with crumbling reliability, resulting in a lack of clarity as to which states are actually partners in a mission. Depending on political interests, only some members will participate alongside partner countries. The German government can therefore no longer automatically assume that the UK, France or the Netherlands will also shoulder their share of an operation as part of NATO. The alliance’s Libya operation illustrates this development: all members gave their political agreement, but only 14 NATO countries participated operationally. Uncoordinated withdrawals of individual partners can also occasionally occur: examples are France and Canada, which backed out of the ISAF mission. It is thus less and less frequently the case that those who start an operation together also finish it together. In other words: the political bonding effect of multilateral military action is weakening.

This development has two consequences for Bundeswehr operations abroad. One, it complicates operating in integrated military units, which are likely to gain in importance in coming years. Two, the fluctuation makes it even more difficult to reach a lasting, viable and politically consistent agreement on the objectives which the military deployment should or can realise.

Stabilisation in Conditions of Persistent Insecurity

Armed conflicts are once again increasing in number, intensity and degree of internationalisation, whereas the UN Security Council’s ability to take decisions is currently diminished. Viable and lasting peace agreements will increasingly be difficult to achieve in the foreseeable future. Operations have often taken place in contexts of incomplete peace settlements. In recent years, however, the problem of “no peace to keep” has worsened. The intervention of external actors and the fragmentation of parties in conflicts seem to be the primary causes. In the UN’s largest peacekeeping missions — overwhelmingly in African states — the peace that the troops are attempting to secure, in some cases as successors to missions by other actors such as the AU, is often fragile. In these situations, the functions of operations are occasionally expanded in the direction of peace enforcement, for instance when a mission provides offensive military support for the respective government against non-state armed actors.

The mandate for the Force Intervention Brigade, which constitutes part of the UN mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo, entails a new degree of robustness in peace operations. It has a mandate to neutralise armed militias; the main novelty is that its troops have explicitly been given the authority and capabilities for offensive action.¹⁰⁹ In August 2016, the Security Council similarly appended the Regional Protection Force to its mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). Its task is to secure access to the town of Juba, protect its airport and other central facilities, and respond immediately to attacks against civilians, UN personnel, humanitarian actors or UN protection sites. It is authorised to use all necessary force.¹¹⁰ Moreover, its mandate is formulated much more proactively than regular mandates under Chapter VII. However, the deployment could not begin for a year after the mandate was issued since the South Sudanese government withheld its approval. By February 2018, only a little over 1,000 of the 4,000 mandated soldiers were stationed in South Sudan.

¹⁰⁹ See Denis M. Tull, *United Nations Peacekeeping and the Use of Force. The Intervention Brigade in Congo Is No Model for Success*, SWP Comment 20/2016, (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, April 2016).

¹¹⁰ United Nations, *Security Council Resolution, S/RES/2304* (2016), 12 August 2016.

The UN-mandated but AU-led mission in Somalia (AMISOM) is undoubtedly the peace operation with the greatest degree of robustness at present. Along with the missions in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) and Mali (MINUSMA), observers see these operations as a new category of “stabilisation mission”.¹¹¹ Such missions increasingly run the risk of being perceived as a party to the conflict in their country of deployment. There are growing calls for a separate doctrine for such operations, which would be uncoupled from the classical principles of peacekeeping – consent, impartiality and non-use of force except in self-defence and defence of the mandate¹¹² – and which would clearly distinguish *peacekeeping* from *enforcement peacekeeping*.

This does not involve questioning the principle of robust operations as such. In the early 1990s, the Security Council started equipping operations with the authority to use force under Chapter VII of the UN Charter to protect them against a worst-case scenario. This change was largely based on lessons learned from the missions in Somalia and the Balkans. Fundamental reform reports such as the Brahimi or HIPPO reports have since confirmed that robust peacekeeping is a logical and necessary development.¹¹³

This is all the more apt since protecting civilians has become one of the key tasks of modern UN peace operations. Most missions, however, can barely live up to this task. There are rules of thumb for the size of a protection force in proportion to the area of operation and the population living there in order to guarantee such protection.¹¹⁴ Even the large UN missions do not come close to this ratio. The question

of how to implement the protection of civilians effectively has not yet been sufficiently clarified, either conceptually or operationally. Troop-contributing states are also very reluctant when it comes to actually fulfilling a robust mandate. An internal UN analysis of the implementation of “Protection of Civilians” emphasises that troop contingents often do not act even when the situation requires it.¹¹⁵

In stabilisation efforts, the military component will remain ineffective without complementary political and financial efforts.

What options are there for responding to sustained violence in cases where no viable peace agreement comes about for years? In the past decade, both as part and outside of UN peacekeeping, the focus has increasingly shifted to stabilisation measures: defusing crises; at the very least containing violence; and establishing a minimum of security for the population. In contexts such as Mali, the volatile security situation in the north of the country means that, alongside MINUSMA, there are both the French mission (Operation Barkhane) and the military EU training mission, whose objective is to build up the capacities of Mali’s armed forces to guarantee the country’s territorial integrity and a secure environment. The Bundeswehr’s training support for security forces in Northern Iraq also fits into the category of stabilisation efforts since the mission aimed to “stabilise Iraq in such a way that all population groups are appropriately integrated, and to work towards the political pacification of Syria, Iraq and the region through diplomatic efforts on the international stage”.¹¹⁶ As with all stabilisation efforts, the military component will remain ineffective without complementary political and financial efforts.

Generally, stabilisation measures should be carried out by civilian and legitimate local authorities. However, in particularly adverse settings, the military may assume command of international measures – co-

111 For case studies, see John Karlsrud, “The UN at War: Examining the Consequences of Peace Enforcement Mandates for the UN Peacekeeping Operations in the CAR, the DRC and Mali”, *Third World Quarterly* 36, no. 1 (2015): 40–54.

112 E.g. Cedric De Coning, “Offensive and Stabilization Mandates”, in *United Nations Peace Operations: Aligning Principles and Practice*, ed. Peter Mateja (Oslo, 2015), 17f.

113 United Nations, General Assembly/Security Council, *Comprehensive Review of the Whole Question of Peacekeeping Operations in All Their Aspects*, Identical letters dated 21 August 2000 from the Secretary-General to the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council, A/55/305-S/2000/809, 21 August 2000, <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/docs/55/a55305.pdf> (accessed 23 March 2018).

114 Paul Williams, *Enhancing Civilian Protection in Peace Operations: Insights from Africa*, Research Paper no. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 2010), 21.

115 See United Nations, *Evaluation of the Implementation and Results of Protection of Civilians Mandates in UN Peacekeeping Operations*. Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, A/68/787, March 2014, https://oios.un.org/resources/ga_report_a-68-787-dpko.pdf (accessed 23 March 2018).

116 German Bundestag, Federal Government motion, *Ausbildungsunterstützung der Sicherheitskräfte der Regierung der Region Kurdistan-Irak und der irakischen Streitkräfte*, Document 18/3561, 17 December 2014, 4.

ordinating and consulting as closely as possible with other actors. It remains an open question how such an integrated approach can work in cases where military stabilisation, possibly involving a variety of military actors, precedes civilian activities. The fundamental issue with this kind of scenario is whether there can be credible support for an open political process when external actors have already de facto taken sides.

Building Partners' Capacities

Due to mixed experiences with direct stabilisation interventions, an instrument frequently used is building the capacities of partners in the countries of deployment. As a rule, funding, advice, training and/or equipment is meant to enable the state security forces to establish and maintain security by themselves. These measures can be part of a multidimensional mission with a comprehensive mandate for crisis management or peacekeeping, or else be assigned to indirect subsidiary missions that are solely focusing on supporting and enabling local forces.

Individual Bundeswehr missions are poised between the two formats, especially the Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan, which stems from the functional development of this mission over time. By contrast, the EU training missions in Mali and Somalia can be straightforwardly categorised. Apart from providing training for the armed forces they give strategic advice to the defence ministries, but neither participate in combat nor support military operations. The tasks of 14 of the EU's 16 ongoing CSDP missions encompass capacity-building measures for the security sector, including the police.¹¹⁷

Beyond this, there are other – often bilateral – formats for advising, training and equipping partners. These include the already mentioned German “Enable

and Enhance Initiative”, which had a federal budget of 100 million euros in 2016 and a further 30 million euros in 2017. In 2016 projects in the focus countries “primarily, but not exclusively, concerned supporting Iraq in the fight against the terrorist militia IS; Tunisia and Jordan in border security; Nigeria in fighting the terrorist militia Boko Haram; and Mali in building state structures to combat Islamist terrorists”.¹¹⁸

These measures are not tied to military operations abroad. In part, they are meant to prevent the spread of instability in partner countries in the first place. However, the German government has informed the Bundestag that it regards the participation of Germany in the UN and EU missions to Mali and in the anti-IS coalition in Iraq as a selection criterion for “Enable and Enhance” measures, which could be complementary.¹¹⁹ The initiative essentially reflects a preference for more indirect intervention, rather than direct military involvement in crisis management.

A similar logic drives the German and European support for the African Union in operationalising the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). This potentially affects European operations abroad as actors from the regions concerned are meant to be active in crisis management and peacekeeping themselves, as has repeatedly been the case with AU missions, starting in Burundi from 2003 to 2004. However, with the exception of AMISOM, these African peace operations relatively quickly handed over responsibility to UN missions or were morphed into a hybrid AU/UN mission as in Darfur. Moreover, despite all the progress made in building APSA, the results have so far fallen below the expectations of African and external actors.¹²⁰

117 In late October 2017, the European Council confirmed a compromise on adapting the EU funding instrument for peace and security so as to empower the EU to support military actors in partner countries under the heading Capacity Building in Support of Security and Development (CBSD). For the period 2018 to 2020, 100 million euros will be made available for this form of capacity-building, which must not include financing running military budgets, weapons, ammunition or combat training. See European Parliament/ European Parliamentary Research Service, *The EU's New Approach to Funding Peace and Security, Briefing – EU Legislation in Progress*, Fourth Edition (15 September 2017), 6.

118 *Antwort der Bundesregierung auf die Kleine Anfrage der Abgeordneten Jan van Aken, Christine Buchholz, Annette Groth, weiterer Abgeordneter und der Fraktion Die Linke, Document 18/11358, German Bundestag, Document 18/11889, 7 April 2017, 5, <http://dip21.bundestag.de/dip21/btd/18/118/1811889.pdf> (accessed 23 March 2018). Since then, new individual projects have been added, e.g. in Lebanon, Niger and Chad.*

119 *Ibid.*, 2.

120 See Judith Vorrath, “Wo steht die Afrikanische Friedens- und Sicherheitsarchitektur? Bilanz und Herausforderungen”, *Sicherheit + Frieden* 31, no. 1 (2013): 23–28.

Missions providing security assistance to governments in conflict need to be closely monitored.

Given the growing resistance to large-format operations abroad, military capacity-building of partners will continue to gain in importance in the coming years as an instrument of German and European security policy. Some examples demonstrate, however, that “enhancing and enabling” only works under very specific conditions, namely when such measures complement rather than replace already established stabilisation or peacekeeping operations. Above all, missions providing security assistance to governments in specific conflict configurations need to be closely monitored to ensure that they are not counterproductive by aggravating the conflict. This notion transcends the well-established criterion of partner countries having to respect human rights, because by choosing a partner to assist, Germany anticipates its own indirect participation in a conflict. When the German government decides to improve or expand the military capacities of another country’s government, it sides with it. This has political consequences that need to be taken into account, including when considering the relationship of operations abroad and “enhancing and enabling” in general.¹²¹

Transnational Threats and Conflict Factors

A fundamental challenge for all types of peace operations is that, unlike important conflict dynamics, they tend to be limited to one country of deployment. This aspect is not new in itself, but it has noticeably gained in importance through stronger regional and global intertwining. This concerns not merely “new threats”, such as transnational terrorism or organised crime, but the complex connection between these phenomena in conflict zones. Sources of income from war economies can prolong conflicts if they offer

relevant violent actors a lasting economic incentive or simply the means to continue the conflict. Moreover, state and non-state actors and their motives are increasingly difficult to distinguish. Since groups with quite different interests converge – and are furthermore active across borders – such complex networks complicate concluding a sustainable peace agreement, especially since they are potentially tools for other states to intervene in conflicts indirectly or profit from them.

For missions in countries that are characterised by such cross-border threats, four key questions need convincing answers:

- 1) how to guarantee the security of the personnel deployed in such an environment;
- 2) how to ensure the implementation of the mandate;
- 3) how to avoid playing into the hands of criminal or terrorist actors;
- 4) and whether a mission should combat the actors or inhibit their activities.

The relevant departments in international organisations are already addressing the first issue intensively. Questions 2 and 3 have to be solved depending on the context, using the relevant analytical capacities within the missions and at the headquarters of the deploying organisations. Nevertheless, there are overarching ideas and concepts on how to consolidate peace in such a context and avoid accidentally strengthening criminal actors¹²² – even though concrete mission instructions from multilateral organisations are still pending.

The really controversial issue, however, is point 4: participating in the direct fight against transnational organised crime and terrorism. Many mandates for peace operations do refer in one way or another to these phenomena and the associated dangers.¹²³ These include missions to which Germany currently contributes substantially – such as MINUSMA, UNIFIL, EUTM Mali, EUNAVFOR Med-Operation Sophia, Resolute Support and Operation Sea Guardian. However, references to these threats are not always accompanied by a mandate for actual tasks.

121 For critical appraisals of enable-and-enhance operations, see Stephen Biddle, Julia MacDonald and Ryan Baker, “Small Footprint, Small Payoff: The Military Effectiveness of Security Force Assistance”, *Journal of Strategic Studies* 41, no. 1 – 2 (2018): 89 – 142; Mara Karlin, “Why Military Assistance Programs Disappoint. Minor Tools Can’t Solve Major Problems”, *Foreign Affairs*, (November/December 2017), <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2017-10-16/why-military-assistance-programs-disappoint> (accessed 23 March 2018).

122 See e.g. Louise Bosetti, James Cockayne and John de Boer, *Crime-Proofing Conflict Prevention, Management, and Peacebuilding: A Review of Emerging Good Practice*, Occasional Paper 6 (Tokyo: United Nations University Centre for Policy Research, August 2016).

123 A list of references to organised crime in UN mandates can be found in Walter Kemp, Mark Shaw and Arthur Boutellis, *The Elephant in the Room: How Can Peace Operations Deal with Organized Crime?* (New York, 2013).

While EUNAVFOR Med shall directly engage in combating the smuggling and trafficking of humans in the Mediterranean, the majority of mandates concerns assisting governments and national security forces. MINUSMA, for instance, is meant to help the Malian government in tackling the arms trade, and MONUSCO is helping the Congolese government to prevent armed groups from profiting from the illegal trade in natural resources.

In general, peace missions were and are associated with a large number of measures that can be considered direct or indirect contributions to fighting organised crime related to the trafficking in arms or drugs, the smuggling of diamonds and raw materials as well as of human beings, and piracy.¹²⁴ The international engagement in Kosovo was far-reaching in this respect – particularly due to its executive mandate. To this day EULEX Kosovo works intensely on organised crime. The measures employed by MINUSTAH – the recently replaced UN mission to Haiti – were similarly comprehensive, tackling drug trafficking and the violence of drug cartels, among other factors.

The role of peace operations in combating terrorism is even more selective and controversial. Few multilateral missions have mandates authorising such interventions: one example is Operation Sea Guardian. Several other operations provide capacity-building in counter-terrorism in the country of deployment.

The UN last made clear statements on the role of peace operations in combating terrorism in the HIPPO reform report and the Secretary-General's implementation report: "UN Peacekeeping operations [...] are not suited to engage in military counter-terrorism operations".¹²⁵ A large number of observers in research and political consultancy agree – not only because UN operations lack the necessary equipment, training, logistics and intelligence, but also because the engagement in combating terrorism is hard to reconcile with the basic principles of peace operations. Expectations are that this debate will gain in momentum and that the role of peace operations will

be interpreted in a more nuanced way in this area, given the increased weighting of anti-terrorism policy within the UN, especially through the creation of the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism, and efforts to improve internal coordination of such work.¹²⁶

One fundamental problem remains, however. The described threats mostly fall under the responsibility of domestic law-enforcement authorities; predominantly military approaches are therefore contested. Military interventions are particularly problematic when – like EUFOR Althea in Bosnia – they apply a different approach in pursuing criminals than a parallel EU policing mission.¹²⁷ At the same time, the states concerned are, for various reasons, often not in a position to proceed with effective law-enforcement. Exchanging information and cross-border cooperation are also difficult. In Mali, the civilian mission EUCAP Sahel Mali therefore assists in the fight against transnational crime. However, since its scope for action is limited by the volatile security situation, here too there are unanswered questions over the relationship between military and police/civilian means.¹²⁸

While criminal and terrorist groups easily move across state borders within their region, international contingents are limited to operations in the country of deployment. The UN's efforts to increase cooperation between "neighbouring" peace operations – initially proposed mainly with a view to West Africa – should also be seen in this context.¹²⁹ The direct

¹²⁶ See Hartmut Behr, "Die Antiterrorismuspolitik der UN seit dem Jahr 2001", *Vereinte Nationen* 65, no. 4 (2017): 147–51; Timo Smit, *Multilateral Peace Operations and the Challenges of Terrorism and Violent Extremism*, SIPRI Background Paper (Solna: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute [SIPRI], 2017).

¹²⁷ Sasha Jespersen, "Assessing Militarised Responses to Transnational Organised Crime", in *Militarised Responses to Transnational Organised Crime*, ed. Tuesday Reitano, Lucia Bird Ruiz-Benitez de Lugo and Sasha Jespersen (Cham, 2018), 1–9 (4).

¹²⁸ The European Gendarmerie Force (EUROGENDFOR) can be deployed at this interface as part of UN, EU or NATO international crisis management. Most recently, this occurred in Mali, the Central African Republic and Afghanistan. The EU is also working to improve the exchange of data between police, intelligence services and the military during operations such as EUNAVFOR Med.

¹²⁹ See also the remarks and recommendations of the SG Reports on Intermission Cooperation, S/2005/135, *Report of the Secretary-General on Inter-mission Cooperation and Possible Cross-border Operations between the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone, the United Nations Mission in Liberia and the United Nations*

¹²⁴ For an overview of concrete examples, see Wibke Hansen, *Mehr Interaktion als geplant. Friedenseinsätze und Organisierte Kriminalität in fragilen Staaten*, Wissenschaftliche Schriften der WWU Münster, Reihe VII, vol. 12 (Münster, 2013), 22f.

¹²⁵ See also United Nations, United Nations, *Uniting Our Strengths for Peace* (see note 64), 45.

cooperation between peace operations, however, has primarily concentrated on sharing resources, especially by assisting new missions: for instance, the recently closed-down UN mission in Côte d'Ivoire (ONUCI) helped set up MINUSMA in Mali. Joint military and police activities, as practiced by the UN missions in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Côte d'Ivoire, have so far remained the exception.

Therefore, troops from neighbouring and directly affected states are frequently deployed in cases of sustained terrorist threats. Examples are the G5 Sahel Joint Force, the Regional Cooperation Initiative against the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda, South Sudan, the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF) in the Lake Chad region focusing mainly on combating Boko Haram. Such coalitions can act across borders, especially in cases of hot pursuit. However, they are mainly based on bilateral agreements between participating states and, as such, are not a formal part of the African Peace and Security Architecture.¹³⁰ The EU and some of its members mainly appear as financial sponsors for operationalising such Joint Forces, which are thus ultimately a variant of building partner capacities.¹³¹

When and How to Exit

For years, the political debate in Germany and elsewhere revolved around criteria for participating in operations abroad rather than issues of effectiveness, success (or rather achievement of objectives), and exiting. If reflections on exit management occurred, they were suspected of being synonymous with short-term and half-hearted commitment. Political decision-makers also feared sending negative or counter-productive signals to the country of deployment

Operation in Cote d'Ivoire, http://dag.un.org/bitstream/handle/11176/20190/S_2005_135-EN.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y (accessed 23 March 2018).

130 All three, however, were authorised by the AU Peace and Security Council. Moreover, for the MNJTF, a Strategic Support Unit within the AU is responsible inter alia for coordinating the contributions of international donors.

131 See Denis M. Tull, *Mali, the G5 and Security Sector Assistance. Political Obstacles to Effective Cooperation*, SWP Comment 52/2017 (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, December 2017); Finding the Right Role for the G5 Sahel Joint Force, Africa Report no. 258 (Brussels: International Crisis Group, 12 December 2017).

through the open discussion of exit strategies and timing, and thus encouraging potential “spoilers of peace” while discouraging constructive actors. Finally, the issue of withdrawal is associated with a dilemma. No troop-contributing state wants to commit its contribution indeterminately; yet it is generally almost impossible to schedule an end date right at the start of an operation.

Exit management always becomes a prominent part of the debate when political pressure grows – whether in the country of deployment or among the providers of troops – to withdraw (from) a specific operation. It is this political pressure that shapes the ensuing discussion, and ultimately also exit management, as the example of Afghanistan shows. In Germany and elsewhere, a debate about exit criteria and options is just as crucial as one about entry or participation in a mission.

The question of exit needs answering on two levels: the level of the executing international or regional organisation (*how long will the operation last?*) and the level of individual states contributing troops (*how long will their national contribution have to be?*). Two fundamental approaches can be distinguished in exit management. The end of an operation can be scheduled or tied to achieving specific objectives. Each approach comes with its own challenges.

Scheduled Exits

Even though mandates for peace and crisis management operations are initially only drawn up for a manageable period of six or twelve months, they are often repeatedly renewed. End of mandate and exit should therefore be viewed as distinct.

A scheduled exit is only really an option for the international or regional organisations carrying out the operation if a follow-up mission is planned at a certain date or if the deployment is a bridging operation or short-term reinforcement. In both cases, a follow-up arrangement makes it possible to schedule the withdrawal from the start. In the past, the exit option for EU missions was often to have the UN take over – or rather EU operations provided short-term assistance to UN missions, as with Operation Artemis in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The situation is similar for national contributions, mainly for political reasons. Withdrawing a national contribution from an ongoing mission is of course a sovereign national decision. Purely from a planning perspective, the maximum length of a country's par-

ticipation could therefore be fixed early on. However, such a decision has a series of political and practical consequences due to the multilateral framework. Clear timelines can serve transparency and predictability, but might also raise questions with partners over reliability and solidarity. Such timelines require multinational coordination and subsequent handling of very concrete operational consequences. Setting an end date for a national contribution to a multinational mission is primarily an option when a follow-up has already been arranged, usually another member state stepping in. Germany has taken over some of the tasks of the Dutch contingent within MINUSMA, thus relieving it. Another example is the withdrawal of German helicopters from MINUSMA in June 2018, which had to be coordinated with Canada and El Salvador since the UN wanted to continue its operation uninterrupted. This means that the time required for military measures to repatriate the respective capabilities has to be calculated; agreements have to be reached with the UN's department for peacekeeping operations, the "relieving nation", and the mission's leadership in situ; and the modalities and timing of the transfer have to be settled at the national political and military levels. Unilaterally withdrawing its national contribution would be unthinkable for Germany, if only because of the associated threat to the mission's success and the political costs to its relationship with important partners.

Exit Based on Benchmarks

However, an exit can also be based on criteria or benchmarks. When multidimensional missions began in the late 1980s, it soon became clear that the creation of a functioning police and justice sector and an army fit for duty, as well as a viable reform of the security sector, needed to be seen as fundamental conditions for ending an operation. In other words: successful peace-building was soon considered the only responsible exit strategy.

Relapse into conflict, such as initially in East Timor (2005) or the rapid succession of more than ten international missions to Haiti within a decade (1994–2004) have shown the consequences of withdrawing before lasting stability has been attained: further operations are programmed. It is now well-known that any exit strategy needs to be based on stability criteria. However, what does this mean for its implementation?

Exit benchmarks should be laid down for each operation abroad according to either quantitative or qualitative considerations, and be adapted over time if necessary. This requires reaching consensus via a multilateral consultation process while taking into account that at least some of the objectives can presumably not be achieved within a straightforward time frame. Once political pressure to withdraw grows, these goals will often no longer be the basis for decision-making. Nevertheless, an attempt should be made after a detailed analysis of each conflict context to define objectives and also interim objectives for each operation that are not overly ambitious, yet sufficiently far-reaching to promote peace. This is what an analysis of effectiveness, decisions (for example about the use of funds), and the military planning and implementation of an ordered withdrawal need to be measured against.

At the heart of the debate should be the strategy, benchmarks, and criteria for the successful conclusion of a mission.

The overarching debate on the way in which missions or national contributions are ended is closely linked to the normative anchors for peace operations mentioned above, as well as the international consensus on which end state to strive for politically, i.e. how to define success.

It is crucial that the domestic political debate reveals the dilemmas associated with exit strategies as much as distinct ideas about the forms and prerequisites of a responsible exit – if only so that the conclusion of Bundeswehr operations is not regarded as "regularly unpredictable".¹³² This also means facing a simple fact: security, stability and functioning institutions cannot be created in six months, and not even in six years. Ultimately, the debate needs to focus less on timeframes and more on strategy, benchmarks, and criteria for the successful conclusion of a mission.

¹³² Thomas Wiegold, "Klare Exit-Strategie bereits bei Beginn einer Mission", Deutscher Bundeswehrverband, 9 February 2017, <https://www.dbwv.de/aktuelle-themen/einsatz-aktuell/beitrag/news/klare-exit-strategie-bereits-bei-beginn-einer-mission> (accessed 23 March 2018).

Conclusions and Recommendations

The challenges discussed in this study highlight contradictions that can only partially be resolved. Every decision by the Bundestag and federal government is ultimately a balancing act: an increasingly complex crisis landscape, a difficult global political situation, and the prevalent political mood in Germany – whose voters are reticent about it assuming a greater role in international crises – are all decisive.¹³³ It is almost impossible to make reliable statements about what the Bundeswehr's operations abroad might look in 10 or 15 years' time. This would depend on numerous variables that German policy largely cannot influence and which are highly volatile as well. Even more uncertain is the room to manoeuvre for security policy actors should violent conflicts on Europe's periphery further escalate.

The worst solution would be for Germany to take a stance primarily on a case-by-case basis and at short notice.

At the same, expectations of German foreign and security policy have almost continuously been rising since the 1990s – whether at the European level or beyond. The German non-permanent seat in the UN Security Council 2019/20 is a vehicle as much as an obligation in this regard. Given its membership in the only body that can make binding decisions for all UN members, the worst of all possible solutions would be for Germany to take a stance primarily on a case-by-case basis and at short notice. Crisis-driven decisions contradict the primacy of prevention and even as a mainly reactive approach do not go far enough. More-

¹³³ However, in the latest Körber-Foundation survey, the percentage of those in favour of Germany committing itself more strongly rose slightly, to 43 percent (see Körber Foundation, *Einmischen oder zurückhalten? Aktualisierung 2017. Eine repräsentative Umfrage im Auftrag der Körber-Stiftung zur Sicht der Deutschen auf die Außenpolitik* [Berlin, 2017]).

over, the debate on Germany's leadership responsibility, which has been ongoing since 2014, now has an additional European dimension. Therefore, the following five points should be considered with regard to the future of military operations abroad.

Defining Political Cornerstones

Creating a sustainable consensus on the political objectives to be pursued or the “politically desired end state” of a mission is a top priority. Only then can the UN Security Council and influential member states set in motion, accompany and support a comprehensive political process in which missions are embedded. These processes require greater effort and attention than they have been granted so far. The political weight of regional organisations and individual UN member states must be used in a more targeted manner. With Germany's tenure as non-permanent member of the UN Security Council it will be able to exert more direct influence than before. On the one hand, the focus should be on supporting the Secretary-General's agenda to improve prevention and respective reform processes in the organisation with a view to reducing the need for future interventions. On the other hand, given the many deadlocked conflicts and ongoing missions, political support for effective crisis management and peace-building must also be strengthened. Supporting the establishment of so called “groups of friends” for specific missions could furthermore help to secure political support for the full length of their deployment. As UN Secretary-General Guterres stressed in September 2017 in his presentation on the reform of UN peace operations, “United Nations peace operations must be deployed in support of – not in place of – active diplomatic

efforts.”¹³⁴ Ongoing efforts to reform the UN peace and security architecture are critical but can only be a first step in this direction.

While normative benchmarks in peace-building and state-building have been disputed before and have to be renegotiated time and time again there are now more fundamental rifts particularly as political weights and dependencies have shifted with a new, emerging set of relevant state actors. Moreover, democracy and the rule of law are coming under pressure in Western societies as well. It is therefore all the more important that the normative core of any German commitment is clearly identified and communicated early on in international fora: what does Germany hope to achieve politically with its operations abroad? At the international level, the cornerstones of multilateral engagement are defined before actual decisions on deployments are taken in Germany. Solidarity towards allies remains a yardstick in German security policy, but on its own it offers little orientation for decision making. In future, German policy will itself have to set out political cornerstones for a commitment – be it military or civilian – in a timely and proactive manner. For a parliamentary army such as the Bundeswehr, it is also crucial that the Bundestag engages in ongoing debates about operations and accompanies them. The German parliament should therefore consider establishing a missions committee reflecting the comprehensive approach in its composition.

Focus on Responsible Exit

Setting clear and realistic goals is consistently cited as a key factor for successful operations. A review of ongoing UN missions to determine whether their mandates are even realisable should contribute to better defining tasks and objectives. Yet, Germany should work to ensure that other actors do not use this process to abandon the multidimensional approach and politically controversial goals prematurely. Rather, it is important to describe the desired end state of an operation more clearly in general, not just within the UN framework.

¹³⁴ “Peace Operations ‘Not a Substitute’ for Diplomatic Efforts, Security Council Told”, *UN News*, 20 September 2017, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2017/09/565672-peace-operations-not-substitute-diplomatic-efforts-security-council-told> (accessed 23 March 2018).

This concerns both the previously mentioned debate of exit options and the control mechanisms that are geared towards an end state. While it will always be necessary to adapt mandates and equipment, adjustments should be based on consistent monitoring of the situation and coordination with other instruments. This also means more effective networking on the German side, without blurring the responsibilities of different actors.

For operations where there is no “peace to keep”, the primary issue is how to contain violence against the civilian population without complicating the search for a lasting solution to the conflict. In addition to protecting civilians through UN peace operations, this could also entail short-term support missions. For these, the goal is clearly defined, but at the same time the (political) scope is limited.

Avoiding Fragmentation

From the German perspective, a UN mandate should continue to be a prerequisite for every operation abroad. However, even where a consensus exists in the UN Security Council, the formats for today’s operations are extremely varied. The spectrum ranges from operations carried out by individual states at the request of the government of the country of deployment via ad-hoc coalitions outside of existing structures to missions that are fully integrated institutionally – at times all in the same conflict context.

A large number of non-military missions and actors are usually active in the same place – often with German support, including personnel. This increases the need for information and coordination for national ministries and for various international actors. However, there is still considerable discrepancy between the rhetoric of the comprehensive approach and operational reality. With its focus on stabilisation, Germany increasingly supports projects alongside operations abroad. In addition to the coordination of military and civilian actors on the ground, the use of instruments such as mediation and peace-building is also required.

Expanding Conflict Analysis

The provision of resources for missions is only one side of the coin. Comprehensive analyses in advance and ongoing assessments of the impact of individual

missions that extend beyond a description of the situation are the other side. This requires realism: detailed evaluations have been demanded time and again, but they are almost impossible to deliver during an ongoing deployment and as a means of monitoring progress. By using progress reports or similar instruments effective ways have to be found to follow and assess the political dynamics in the country of deployment and draw conclusions for the further progress of the mission, its strategy and implementation. With current changes in conflict patterns, it is particularly vital to reflect on how leaders and the deployed forces can deal with cross-border challenges and the non-formalised orders that exist in fragile states. Constructs of “governance without government”¹³⁵ may be a normative deviation from the Western model of the modern state, but often enough they are also expressions of society’s ability to adapt and survive.¹³⁶ A differentiated assessment of dynamics, actors and potential partners on the ground is therefore essential. Whilst operations abroad cannot ignore the threats by terrorism or organised crime, they should not be used to fight these without prior reflection. Criminal or terrorist labels should not be rashly assigned to non-state armed actors and a principal convergence of criminal networks and violent actors should not simply be assumed. It is essential to take a close look and invest in an accompanying analysis to avoid negative side-effects of outside actions. International policing expertise – whether it is integrated, as in UN missions, or in separate civilian missions – must be incorporated where primarily military coalitions act against transnational threats. This is just as relevant for the political strategy guiding the action as for specific capacity-building projects.

Think beyond “Enable & Enhance”

Capacity-building in partner countries will grow in importance. Along with countless bilateral initiatives, Europe will in the future provide advice, training and equipment for security forces e.g. via Capacity-

¹³⁵ See Tanja A. Börzel and Thomas Risse, “Governance without a State: Can It Work?”, *Regulation and Governance* 4, no. 2 (2010): 113–34.

¹³⁶ Tobias Diebel and Daniel Lambach, “State Fragility as a Development Policy Challenge”, *Rural* 21 46, no. 1 (2012): 6–9 (9).

Building in support of Security and Development (CBSD) and, as hitherto, via CSDP missions. But how should the German bilateral “Enable & Enhance Initiative” be linked to operations abroad, currently especially in the priority countries of Mali and Iraq? Political decision-makers in Germany often still view Enable & Enhance as an alternative to a more far-reaching direct intervention. In fact, military capacity-building measures in some cases aim to prevent widespread destabilisation in the first place. At the same time, a presence on the ground is vital for implementing projects and particularly in the context of conflict, this will usually mean participating in larger and more comprehensive missions. Enable & Enhance is thus not a substitute for direct military intervention, but rather complements it.

In this parliamentary term, it will be important to evaluate the previous German and multilateral experiences with capacity-building in partner countries and to make them available for further development of the concept. The experiences with Enable & Enhance in the context of persistent conflicts will be especially valuable here: with regard to the risk of being seen as a conflict party, the challenges posed by armed non-state actors, and the “fog” of intrastate conflicts. German and European support for the transnational operation of security forces within the G5 Sahel Joint Force may be an understandable step in the current situation. Yet, this cooperation between five states must be integrated into the regional context. As it stands, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) regards the G5 as a competitor since it operates outside of the structures of the African peace and security architecture, of which ECOWAS is one regional pillar. It is therefore urgent and imperative to include ECOWAS.

Outlook: Responsibility, Reliability, Resources

Beyond the concrete recommendations related to the five aspects outlined above, any discussion of missions abroad by the German Armed Forces must be placed into context. After more than 20 years, operations abroad have become an established part of German security policy. The 1994 ruling of the Constitutional Court and the 2005 Parliamentary Participation Act have given them a solid legal framework. The operations themselves contributed to a “normalisation” of Germany’s foreign and security policy that

has been partly called for and partly feared. Their multilateral embedding and their legal foundation in UN Security Council mandates have – despite all justified criticism and associated controversies – also been proof of Germany’s commitment to a rules-based world order. This needs to be kept in mind, especially during times when that order is being challenged or undermined.

Germany’s policy within the European Union over the next few years will be significantly determined by one assumption: in a changed security environment, the EU must be able to act with greater autonomy – i.e. more independently from the US – and also show greater international commitment than it has to date.¹³⁷ This does not necessarily mean more EU peace operations, but concerns all foreign and security policy instruments. Looking at Germany’s role in Europe, it will be virtually impossible to stand on the sidelines, not least as security and defence policy has been defined as one of the key areas to drive integration processes. Numerous European politicians see a militarily capable EU as an added value not just in security policy, but also in integration policy.¹³⁸

Due to the obvious financial and military limitations of individual states, multilateral action in security and defence policy increasingly means action that is militarily integrated. This has political consequences. In the 1950s, surrendering sovereignty over foreign policy within the European community was a prerequisite for Germany regaining its sovereignty; today deepened cooperation (if not integration) in security policy is the precondition for preserving a country’s ability to act. Even though Germany’s leading role within the EU is being called into question and is only just beginning to take shape in NATO while the “intervention scepticism” of the German public seems to persist, any claim to shape the political order must be put into concrete political and military terms in the coming years. This does not only concern EU and NATO, but also UN engagement. Traditionally, Germany has been very reticent about

meeting its obligations to the UN and especially to the latter’s peacekeeping missions, aside from making financial contributions. In the 2016 White Paper, the UN is top of the list as an international arena, ahead of NATO and the EU. But until operation MINUSMA in Mali, Berlin has, in the last decade, only contributed to UN peace operations to a limited extent.

Ad-hoc coalitions should remain the exception for Bundeswehr operations abroad. The federal government would be well-advised to make this very clear to its partners in NATO and the EU. The Bundestag will have to examine more closely to what extent it can (still) fulfil its political oversight on such operations in conjunction with other national parliaments.

Operations abroad (especially as part of EU missions) aiming to train partners in the EU’s neighbourhood will be more frequent. This largely means continuing current capacity-building efforts, including as part of CSDP training missions led by staff from the recently established Military Planning and Conduct Capability.

In the event of renewed outbreaks of massive violence in Europe’s neighbourhood, Germany could still envisage UN-mandated operations similar in scope and/or objectives to those in Bosnia, Kosovo or Mali. Traditional peacekeeping operations also seem feasible again, as the debate over a potential UN peacekeeping operation in eastern Ukraine made clear.¹³⁹

With its exposed position in international politics and its economic strength, Germany can deliver more than others, but this “more” has to go beyond increased military capabilities or the well-known chequebook diplomacy. As a guiding principle for Germany’s participation in peace and crisis management operations, “quality before quantity” is also of limited use. First and foremost, Germany’s commitment must have a coordinated political direction. The (further) development of its own instruments and capacities – including for Bundeswehr operations abroad – must be geared towards that. With its Guidelines on crisis prevention and conflict resolution and White Paper, the federal government established a framework during the last legislative period that now needs to be elaborated.

¹³⁷ See the speech by Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel, “Europa in einer unbequemeren Welt. Warum Europa eine neue Außenpolitik braucht”, 5 December 2017, <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/de/newsroom/berliner-forum-aussenpolitik/746464> (accessed 23 March 2018).

¹³⁸ On the most recent developments in this policy area, see Rosa Beckmann and Ronja Kempin, *EU Defence Policy Needs Strategy. Time for Political Examination of the CSDP’s Reform Objectives*, SWP Comment 34/2017 (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, September 2017).

¹³⁹ See *Can Peacekeepers Break the Deadlock in Ukraine?*, Europe Report no. 246 (Brussels: International Crisis Group, 15 December 2017); Alexei Arbatov, “A U.N. Peacekeeping Operation Is the Only Way Forward in Ukraine”, *War on the Rocks*, 28 September 2017, <https://warontherocks.com/2017/09/a-u-n-peacekeeping-operation-is-the-only-way-forward-in-ukraine> (accessed 23 March 2018).

Appendix

Abbreviations

AFISMA	African-Led International Support Mission to Mali	OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
AKUF	Arbeitsgemeinschaft Kriegsursachenforschung (Working Group Research on the Origins of War)	OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia	ONUCI	United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire
APSA	African Peace and Security Architecture	OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
AU	African Union	P5	Permanent Five
AWACS	Airborne Warning and Control System	PRISM	Prevention of conflicts, Rule of law/SSR, Integrated approach, Stabilisation and Mediation
CBSD	Capacity Building in Support of Security and Development	R2P	Responsibility to protect
CDU/CSU	Christian Democratic Union of Germany/Christian Social Union	RSM	Resolute Support Mission
CJTF-OIR	Combined Joint Task Force – Operation Inherent Resolve	SPD	Social Democratic Party of Germany
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy	STRATAIR	Strategic Air Medical Evacuation
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States	MEDEVAC	
EEAS	European External Action Service	TEU	Treaty on the European Union
eFP	enhanced Forward Presence	UCDP	Uppsala Conflict Data Program
EU	European Union	UN	United Nations
EUCAP	European Union Capacity Building Mission	UNIFIL	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
EUFOR	European Union Force	UNMISS	United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan
EULEX	European Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo	UNOSOM II	United Nations Operation in Somalia II
EUNAVFOR	European Union Naval Force	UNSMIL	United Nations Support Mission in Libya
EUROGENDFOR	European Gendarmerie Force	UNTAC	United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia
EUSTAMS	European Union Stabilisation Action in Mopti and Segou	VJTF	Very High Readiness Joint Task Force
EUTM	European Union Training Mission	VPR	Verteidigungspolitische Richtlinien (Defence-Policy Guidelines)
FDP	Free Democratic Party	WEU	Western European Union
GG	Grundgesetz (Basic Law)	ZIF	Centre for International Peace Operations
HIPPO	High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations		
IS	“Islamic State”		
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force		
KFOR	Kosovo Force		
MINUSCA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic		
MINURSO	United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara		
MINUSMA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali		
MINUSTAH	United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti		
MNJTF	Multi-National Joint Task Force		
MONUSCO	United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the DR Congo		
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization		

Overview:

Military operations abroad by the Bundeswehr – German and international troop contingents

Mission	German soldiers (maximum)	Total soldiers (maximum)	Sources
Artemis	350 (2003)	ca. 2,000 (2003, stationed)	Document 15/1168 (13 June 2003); Damien Helly, “Operation ARTEMIS (RD Congo)”, in <i>European Security and Defence Policy: The First 10 Years (1999–2009)</i> , ed. Giovanni Grevi, Damien Helly and Daniel Keohane (Paris: EU Institute for Security Studies, 2009), 181 – 85
EUFOR RD Congo	780 (2006)	2,466 (2006, stationed)	Document 16/1507 (17 May 2006); Annemarie Peen Rodt, “ The EU: A Successful Military Conflict Manager? ”, <i>Democracy and Security</i> 7, no. 2 (June 2011)
EUTM Mali	350 (2015)	584 (2015, stationed)	Document 18/3836 (28 January 2015); Thierry Tardy, <i>CSDP in Action. What Contribution to International Security?</i> , Chaillot Paper 134 (Paris, 2015)
International Security Assistance Force	5,350 (2010/11)	ca. 130,000 (2011, stationed)	Document 17/654 (9 February 2010)/ Document 17/4402 (13 January 2011); UN Security Council, <i>Letter Dated 28 November 2014 from the Secretary-General Addressed to the President of the Security Council</i> , S/2014/856
Kosovo Force	8,500 (1999 – 2008)	ca. 50,000 (1999, stationed)	Document 14/1133 (11 June 1999); NATO, <i>Kosovo Force (KFOR) – How Did It Evolve?</i> , updated 20 February 2008
MINUSMA	1,000 (2017)	13,289 (2016/17, mandated)	Document 18/10819 (11 January 2017)
Operation Inherent Resolve	150 (2016/17)	no details available	Document 18/7207 (6 January 2016)/ Document 18/10820 (11 January 2017)
Resolute Support Mission	980 (2016/17)	16,000 (as of 2018, stationed) 2017: 13 576	Document 18/6743 (18 November 2015)/ Document 18/10347 (16 November 2016) und Document 19/21 (25 October 2017); NATO, <i>Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan</i> , November 2017; NATO, <i>Resolute Support Mission (RSM) – Key Facts and Figures</i> , May 2017

