

NĚMECKO A UDRŽOVÁNÍ MÍRU OSN Změna na obzoru, nebo vše při starém?

GERMANY AND UN PEACEKEEPING Winds of change or business as usual?

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Abstrakt

Článek si klade za cíl prozkoumat hlavní trendy v rámci participace Německa na udržování míru OSN. Zvláštní pozornost je věnována období od roku 2014, kdy vrcholní němečtí politici představitelé oznámili zvýšenou ochotu zintenzivnit zapojení Německa do mezinárodního dění. Z Německa coby váhavého peacekeepera se brzy poté stal nejvýznamnější evropský přispěvatel vojenských jednotek do operace OSN na udržení míru v Mali (MINUSMA). Diskutována je možnost vzniku nového trendu na poli participace Německa na udržování míru OSN.

Abstract

The article aims to explore the main trends in German participation in United Nations (UN) peacekeeping operations. Special attention is devoted to the period since 2014 when top German political representatives announced an increased willingness to step up German engagement in international affairs. Soon after, Germany shifted from a rather hesitant UN peacekeeper to the most significant European troop provider to UN peacekeeping operation in Mali (MINUSMA). The increased involvement of Germany in MINUSMA as a new trend is discussed.

Poděkování

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Klíčová slova

Německo; udržování míru OSN; Mali; MINUSMA.

Keywords

Germany; UN peacekeeping; Mali; MINUSMA.

INTRODUCTION

The German attitude to the use of expeditionary forces in the period after the end of the Cold War has been characterized by strict restrictions and a persisting culture of restraint. Germany has been a political and economic leader in Europe and beyond, however, from a military perspective, it was lagging behind his partners.² At the Munich Security Conference 2014, the German political elite unanimously proclaimed German readiness to take on more responsibility in international affairs, including in the military sphere.³ Soon after, Germany turned out to be the second most significant European contributor to United Nations (UN) peacekeeping in terms of personnel contributions and the most significant European troop provider to the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA).⁴

This shift gives us a strong reason to explore German military deployment under the UN flag in more detail and to find out whether there are some “winds of change” in the ways Germany participates in UN peacekeeping. Since the flagship of the ongoing German UN deployments is the UN peacekeeping operation in Mali, special attention is devoted to this mission in order to illustrate key patterns that characterize German participation in UN peacekeeping.

From a relatively large pool of studies on German foreign and security policy, only limited emphasis has been put on German involvement in UN peacekeeping so far. Ronald D. Asmus,⁵ Hans-Georg Ehrhart⁶ and Tono Eitel⁷ analysed early challenges of Germany as a new peacekeeper, while Torsten Stein⁸ focused on the legal constraints of German

² BULMER, Simon - PATERSON, William E. Germany as the EU's reluctant hegemon? Of economic strength and political constraints. *Journal of European Public Policy*. 2013, Vol. 20, No. 10, pp. 1387-1405; BIERLING, Stephan. *Vormacht wider Willen: Deutsche Außenpolitik von der Wiedervereinigung bis zur Gegenwart*. München: C.H.Beck, 2014; HAVLÍK, Vratislav - JANEBOVÁ, Pavlína. Fenomén Německa v EU. PITROVÁ, Markéta (ed.). *Postlisabonské procesy v Evropské unii*. Brno: Muni press, 2014, pp. 301-321.

³ GAUCK, Joachim. *Germany's role in the world: Reflections on responsibility, norms and alliances*. Speech by Federal President Joachim Gauck at the opening of the Munich Security Conference on 31 January 2014 [accessed 10 May 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/2LLRR11>; STEINMEIER, Frank-Walter. Speech by Foreign Minister Frank Walter Steinmeier at the 50th Munich Security Conference on 1 February 2014 [accessed 10 May 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/2NL05tH>;

VON DER LEYEN, Ursula. Speech by the Federal Minister of Defense, Dr. Ursula von der Leyen, on the Occasion of the 50th Munich Security Conference on 31 January 2014 [accessed 10 May 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/2XP3LOQ>.

⁴ UN DPKO. Summary of Troop Contributing Countries by Ranking, 31 May 2018 [accessed 11 May 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/2JBFO4a>.

⁵ ASMUS, Ronald D. *Germany's Contribution to Peacekeeping. Issues and Outlook*. Santa Monica: RAND, 1995.

⁶ EHRHART, Hans-Georg. Germany. FINDLAY, Trevor (ed.). *Challenges for the New Peacekeepers*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996, pp. 33-51.

⁷ EITEL, Tono. Am I My Brother's Keeper? A German View on UN Peacekeeping. *The Brown Journal of World Affairs*. 1996, Vol. 3, No. 1, pp. 45-48.

⁸ STEIN, Torsten. Germany's Constitution and Participation in International Peacekeeping Operations. *Asia Pacific Review*. 2000, Vol. 7, No. 2, pp. 33-40.

participation in UN peacekeeping. Joachim A. Koops⁹ and Nadine Ansorg and Felix Haas¹⁰ explained the motives that make Germany contribute personnel to UN peacekeeping operations. Several scholars have concentrated on case studies of German contributions to particular missions.¹¹ Last but not least, a number of German experts have issued policy papers about German involvement in UN peacekeeping containing an intercession for the increased engagement of Germany in the field of UN peacekeeping.¹² Still, the number and depth of studies on German participation in UN-led missions is considerably lower than that of studies on Bundeswehr's deployments in NATO-led operations. The article seeks to narrow the persisting gap in the scholarly literature by analysing German participation in UN peacekeeping with a special focus on its contributions to MINUSMA.

The structure of the article is as follows. In the first part, the nature and scope of German contributions is introduced. The second part turns our attention to the UN peacekeeping operation in Mali, which currently serves as a flagship of German deployments under the UN flag. German motives for its participation in UN peacekeeping with a special emphasis on MINUSMA are analysed and the significance of German contributions to MINUSMA for the country's participation in UN peacekeeping from a long-term perspective is discussed. The article concludes with a brief outline of the main challenges that Germany as a UN peacekeeper is facing.

Germany as a UN peacekeeper

German experience with participation in UN peacekeeping operations began at the end of the Cold War. Until that point, Bundeswehr troops were not allowed to leave German (later NATO) territory.¹³ After the re-unification of the country in 1990 and with the increasing engagement of Germany in international affairs, tensions surrounding Bundeswehr's foreign deployments arose, including within the field of UN peacekeeping. These tensions were finally clarified by a decision by the Federal Constitutional Court in

⁹ KOOPS, Joachim A. Germany and United Nations Peacekeeping: the Cautiously Evolving Contributor. *International Peacekeeping*. 2016, Vol. 23, No. 5, pp. 652-680.

¹⁰ ANSORG, Nadine - HAAS, Felix. *Country Profile: Germany*. Providing for Peacekeeping, 2017 [accessed 11 May 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/30tYpWV>.

¹¹ RAUCH, Andreas M. *Auslandseinsätze der Bundeswehr*. Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2006; GIEßMANN, Hans J. - WAGNER, Armin. *Armee im Einsatz: Grundlagen, Strategien und Ergebnisse einer Beteiligung der Bundeswehr*. Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2009.

¹² NITZSCHKE, Heiko - WITTIG, Peter. *UN-Friedenssicherung. Herausforderungen an die deutsche Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik*. Vereinte Nationen, No. 3, 2007 [accessed 20 April 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/2XzDmVK>; GRIEP, Ekkehard - NACHTWEI, Winfried. *Für eine politische Aufwertung der VN-Friedenssicherung in Deutschland - Ungenutzte Chancen im VN-Peacekeeping nutzen*. DGVN Policy Paper, No. 1, 2011 [accessed 20 April 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/2YTEj7S>;

KAIM, Markus - STRAUß, Lena. *More German 'Blue Helmets'. Four Reasons the Federal Republic of Germany Should Show Greater Commitment to UN Peacekeeping*. SWP Comments, No. 29, 2017 [accessed 20 April 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/2Lc5fwz>; GLATZ, Rainer L. - HANSEN, Wibke - KAIM, Markus - VORRATH, Judith. *Die Auslandseinsätze der Bundeswehr im Wandel*. SWP-Studie, No. 7, 2018 [accessed 20 April 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/2Laerlj>.

¹³ ANSORG - HAAS, ref. 10, p. 4; ASMUS, ref. 5.

1994 that permitted foreign deployments, including combat troops, under the conditions that stemmed from the constitution.¹⁴

Most of German contributions to UN peacekeeping have consisted of limited number of military observers (e.g. UN Observer Mission in Georgia - UNOMIG, UN-African Union Mission in Darfur - UNAMID, UN Mission in the Sudan - UNMIS, or UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea - UNMEE) or police units (e.g. UN Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina - UNMIBH, UN Mission in Kosovo - UNMIK, or UN Mission in Liberia - UNMIL). Other contributions have focused on specialist units such as medics, engineers, or transport capability. An exception to this pattern has been the German contribution to the maritime component of UNIFIL in Lebanon.¹⁵ Overall, emphasis has been put on capacity building, non-combat military contributions and the civilian dimension of UN peacekeeping.

Alongside personnel contributions, Germany has always heavily supported UN peacekeeping through financial assets. In the long term, Germany has been the most significant European financial contributor to the UN peacekeeping budget. In 2018, Germany contributed 6.39% of assessed contributions to UN peacekeeping operations. This makes Germany the fourth largest financial contributor after the United States (28.47%), China (1025%) and Japan (9.68%).¹⁶

As of April 2019, Germany provided 540 persons in total (23 police officers, 13 military observers, 482 troops and 22 staff officers) to ongoing UN peacekeeping operations.¹⁷ These numbers mean that Germany occupies the 38th position in the ranking of countries contributing personnel to UN peacekeeping operations (which includes police, military experts on mission, staff officers and troops) out of 122 participating countries.¹⁸ A year earlier, Germany even occupied the 28th position in the ranking of police and troop contributors, which made the country the second largest EU and second largest NATO contributor to UN peacekeeping.¹⁹

When we compare German contributions to UN peacekeeping with contributions of other European countries, we can see that Germany is the fifth largest European contributor to UN peacekeeping, after Italy, France, Spain, Ireland and the United Kingdom.²⁰

¹⁴ STEIN, ref. 8; EHRHART, ref. 6, p. 39-41.

¹⁵ ANSORG - HAAS, ref. 5, p. 1-2.

¹⁶ UN DPKO. How we are funded, 2019 [accessed 15 May 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/2XVI2Vl>.

¹⁷ UN DPKO. Contributors to UN Peacekeeping Operations by Country and Post, 30 April 2019 [accessed 15 May 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/2xDTQg6>.

¹⁸ UN DPKO. Summary of Troop Contributing Countries by Ranking, 30 April 2019 [accessed 15 May 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/2XEjT1x>.

¹⁹ UN DPKO. Summary of Troop Contributing Countries by Ranking, 31 May 2018 [accessed 15 May 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/2JBFO4a>.

²⁰ UN DPKO, ref. 9.

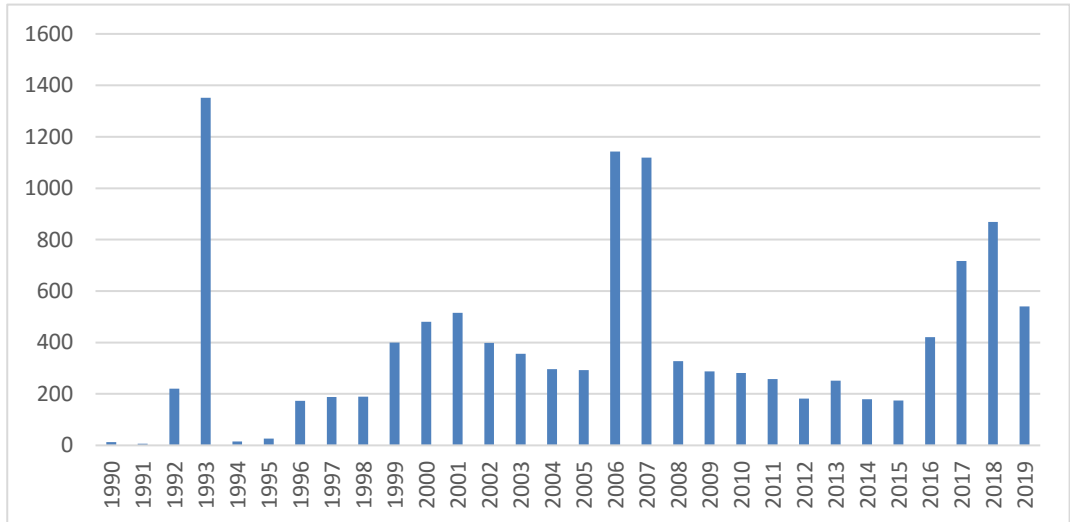
Table 1: Selected European contributions of uniformed personnel to UN peacekeeping operations as of April 2019

	Police	UNMEM	Troops	Staff officers	Total
Italy	4	4	1,149	27	1,184
France	29	2	671	51	753
Spain	11	5	617	15	648
Ireland	12	15	573	18	618
United Kingdom	0	4	556	25	585
Germany	23	13	482	22	540
World-wide contributions to UN PKO	10,385	1,341	75,079	1,991	88,796

Source: Figures taken from UN DPKO. Troop and Police Contributors, 2019 [accessed 15 May 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/2XDHGU8>.

The following chart shows the development of German participation in UN peacekeeping operations in the period from 1990 until present. Three peaks are clearly visible, owing to exceptionally high German contributions to UN Operation in Somalia II in 1993, UN Interim Force in Lebanon in 2006-2007 and MINUSMA since 2016.

Chart 1: Development of German participation in UN peacekeeping 1990-2019



Source: Figures taken from UN DPKO. Troop and Police Contributors, 2019 [accessed 15 May 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/2XDHGU8>.

Currently, Germany is represented in more than half of the ongoing UN peacekeeping operations. The geographical distribution of German contributions is relatively broad, reaching from Latin America through Africa and Europe to the Middle East. This rules out any clear selectivity of German deployments based on the area of deployment.

Table 2: Ongoing German UN peacekeeping deployments as of April 2019

Mission	Mission title	Start of German deployment	Number of German soldiers
MINURSO	UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara	6/1993-7/1996; 5/2003; 11/2013-	3 EoM ²¹
UNMIK	UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo	6/1999-	1 p ²²
UNIFIL	UN Interim Force in Lebanon	10/2006-	126 T ²³ + 2 SO ²⁴
UNAMID	African Union/UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur	11/2007-	6 P + 3 SO
UNMISS	UN Mission in the Republic of South Sudan	8/2011-	10 EoM + 3 SO
MINUSMA	UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali	7/2013-	356 T + 12 P + 14 SO
UNSOM ²⁵	UN Assistance Mission in Somalia	2/2016-	3 P
MINUJUSTH	UN Mission for Justice Support in Haiti	10/2017-	1 P

²¹ EoM = expert on mission

²² P = police officer

²³ T = troops

²⁴ SO = staff officer

²⁵ Political mission

Source: Figures taken from Bundeswehr. Einsatzzahlen - die Stärke der deutschen Kontingente, 5 July 2019 [accessed 9 July 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/32hulzC>; Federal Foreign Office. UN peace missions and Germany's engagement, 2019 [accessed 10 May 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/2G5czWN>; UN DPKO. Summary of Contributions to UN Peacekeeping by Country, Mission and Post, 30 April 2019 [accessed 10 May 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/30zWGO3>.

MINUSMA as a flagship deployment of German peacekeepers

A flagship of German deployments in the field of UN peacekeeping has recently been the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali. Currently, it is by far the largest German deployment under the UN flag. It deserves our attention because it has illustrated a growing German engagement in UN peacekeeping.²⁶

The operation was established in April 2013 with the goal to restore state authority in Mali after the coup in 2012, to support the stabilization of the country, to foster a process of reconciliation, to protect civilians and to ensure access to humanitarian help.²⁷

In March 2019, MINUSMA consisted of 16,453 personnel²⁸ which has made it the third largest UN peacekeeping operation after UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (20,486)²⁹ and UN Mission in South Sudan (19,402)³⁰. At the same time, due to the continuing escalation of the conflict in Mali, MINUSMA has turned out to be the UN's deadliest deployment, with 195 fatalities as of March 2019.³¹

²⁶ GLATZ et al., ref. 12, p. 27.

²⁷ UN DPKO. MINUSMA Fact Sheet, 2019 [accessed 17 May 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/2NHh4Np>. For recent details on MINUSMA and the fragile situation in Mali, see for example CHANDLER, Allison - ZOGG, Benno. *Mali's Fragile Peace*. CSS Analyses in Security Policy, No. 215, 2017 [accessed 23 April 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/2XYjuuV>; TULL, Denis M. *Mali, the G5 and Security Sector Assistance: Political Obstacles to Effective Cooperation*. SWP Comments, No. 52, 2017 [accessed 23 April 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/2Lg13Mb>; WEIBEZAHN, Tinko. An African Afghanistan? On the German Troop Deployment in Mali. *Global (In-)Security*. International Reports, 2018, No. 2, pp. 23-32; TULL, Denis M. *UN Peacekeeping in Mali*. SWP Comments, No. 23, 2019 [accessed 23 April 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/2LKh2Sn>.

²⁸ UN DPKO, ref. 19.

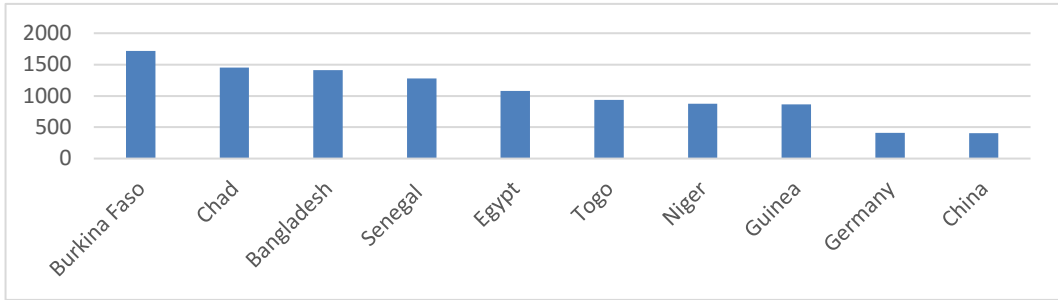
²⁹ UN DPKO. MONUSCO Fact Sheet, 2019 [accessed 17 May 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/30um9dE>.

³⁰ UN DPKO. UNMISS Fact Sheet, 2019 [accessed 17 May 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/2JxOhFR>.

³¹ UN DPKO, ref. 19; LEBOVICH, Andrew - MANN, Gregory. *Sahel or high water: Mali's political fatalism*. ECFR Commentary, 2018 [accessed 23 April 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/2xPLYNL>.

As the following chart shows, Germany belongs to the top ten troop contributing countries to the mission.

Chart 2: Top ten troop contributors to MINUSMA as of March 2019



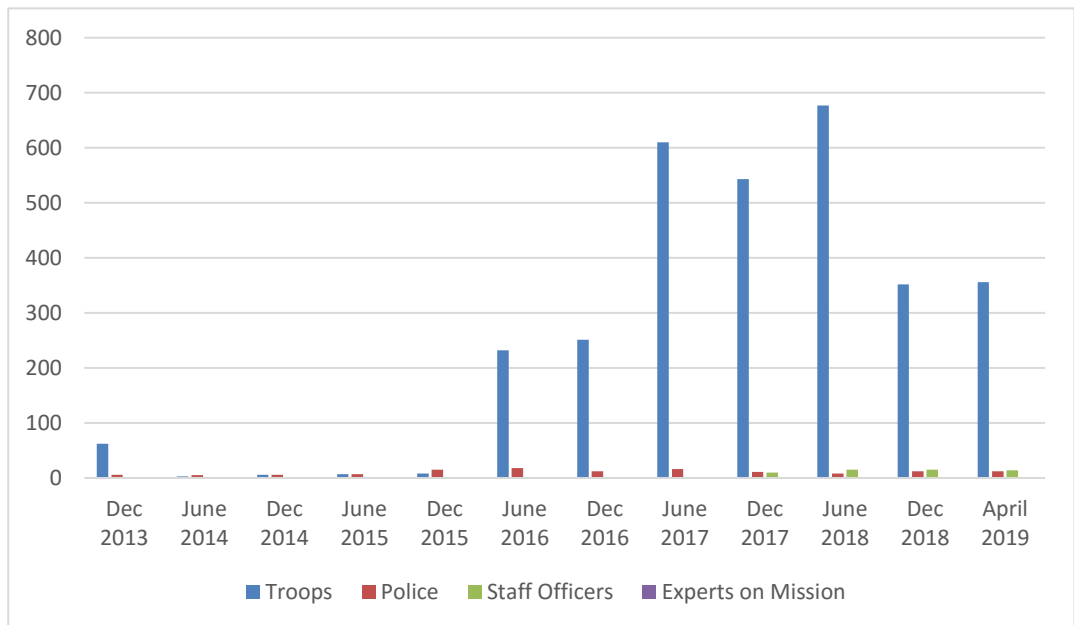
Source: Figures taken from UN DPKO. MINUSMA Fact Sheet, 2019 [accessed 17 May 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/2NHh4Np>.

The beginning of German participation in MINUSMA dates back to July 2013. German engagement in MINUSMA rose steadily, starting with several dozens of police and soldiers in 2013 and reaching a peak of 700 in mid-2018.³²

With the decision from April 2018 of the German Bundestag to continue the Bundeswehr's mission in Mali, the troop ceiling has been increased to 1,100. This has made the Mali mission - alongside Afghanistan - the Bundeswehr's largest foreign military engagement.³³

In early April 2019, the German government has decided to extend the mandate for Bundeswehr's participation in MINUSMA until 31 May 2020.³⁴ The decision was subsequently adopted by the German Bundestag.³⁵

Chart 3: Development of German contributions to MINUSMA



Source: Figures taken from UN DPKO. Troop and Police Contributors, 2019 [accessed 17 May 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/2XDHGU8>.

³² UN DPKO. Troop and Police Contributors, 2019 [accessed 17 May 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/2XDHGU8>.

³³ WEIBEZAHN, ref. 19, p. 24.

³⁴ The Federal Government of Germany. *German government extends missions in Mali*, 3 April 2019 [accessed 20 May 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/2XzbZv3>.

³⁵ The Federal Government of Germany. *Extension of Bundeswehr foreign missions*, 10 May 2019 [accessed 20 May 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/2S9rpQW>. For more details, see: Deutscher Bundestag. *Stenografischer Bericht - 98. Sitzung*, 9 May 2019 [accessed 20 May 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/2XSgAb7>.

Discussing German motives for participation in MINUSMA

The stabilization of Mali is a central part of German engagement in the Sahel region and a crucial task of the German government's policy towards Africa. Naturally, Germany is interested in fighting terrorism, organized crime, poverty and illegal migration in the Sahel region, which all have negative consequences for the security and stability in Europe. Through its participation in MINUSMA, Germany hopes to contribute to the mitigation of effects of these problems in Mali and the Sahel region.³⁶ In the current globalized world, peace and stability in distant places are connected to the security and well-being of Europe. For Germany, as the biggest economy in Europe and a globally important export country, stability in other regions of the world is vitally important.³⁷

Beyond the desire to mitigate the root causes of threats that have a potential spill over effect impacting Europe, there is a whole array of other, no less significant motives for German participation in MINUSMA. Firstly, German motivation to provide contributions to UN peacekeeping is closely connected to the "responsibility discourse". This discourse is, to be sure, nothing new. The rhetoric of "taking on more global responsibility" and being a "good international citizen" has been a permanent feature of German foreign and security policy since the early 1990s. The commitment to exercise increased international responsibility, particularly with regard to international peace and security, is - not surprisingly - derived from the German experience with its own past, mainly as a consequence of its role in two world wars and the wrongdoings of the Nazi regime.

In the case of Mali, the "responsibility discourse" resonates especially strongly. The stepping up of German contributions to MINUSMA is associated with the most recent wave of the debate on increased international responsibility which was launched by the seminal speeches of Federal President Joachim Gauck, Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier and Defence Minister Ursula von der Leyen at the Munich Security Conference in 2014. These top German political representatives unanimously called for Germany to take on more responsibility in the world. One dimension of this postulate was that Germany would become more actively involved with the UN than it had before.³⁸ As Markus Kaim and Lena Strauß point out, German deployment in Mali appears to be exemplary in meeting international responsibilities.³⁹

The commitment to a more active role in world affairs has been confirmed in the latest White Paper on German Security Policy and the Future of the Bundeswehr (2016). Here the German government once again stressed its willingness to assume more responsibility

³⁶ Auswärtiges Amt. *Bericht der Bundesregierung zur Zusammenarbeit zwischen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und den Vereinten Nationen und einzelnen, global agierenden, internationalen Organisationen und Institutionen im Rahmen des VN-Systems in den Jahren 2014 und 2015*, p. 16 [accessed 20 May 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/2Jndp33>.

³⁷ GRIEP, ref. 12, p. 1-2.

³⁸ KAIM - STRAUß, ref. 12, p. 2.

³⁹ Ibid. p. 3.

in matters of peace and security, to strengthen the UN and to enable it to perform its tasks more efficiently.⁴⁰

Solidarity, partnerships and commitment to multilateralism are other motives that explain German participation in MINUSMA. It was solidarity with France and a positive response to calls for burden-sharing which played an important role in the legitimization process leading to German contributions to MINUSMA, especially at the beginning of Germany's deployment.⁴¹

Generally speaking, the perceived need to fulfil the expectations of partners and international institutions (NATO, UN, EU) is a significant issue for Germany. In fact, these expectations heavily influence decision-making processes in the field of German military deployments.⁴² In the scholarly literature, this phenomenon has been identified as a "multilateralism trap" which expresses the way external pressures to act in the name of multilateralism limit German foreign policy options. The pressure is sometimes so strong that it becomes almost impossible for Germany to refuse to participate. Otherwise, Germany would risk losing its image and reputation as a reliable, responsible ally that is committed to multilateralism.⁴³

Next to the Franco-German relationship, another important rationale for German participation in Mali has been to strengthen the German-Dutch partnership. There is a strong link between Germany's intensive cooperation with Dutch forces in the NATO-led ISAF operation in Afghanistan and its commitment in MINUSMA. One of the lessons of the Afghanistan deployment was the importance of having NATO allies as co-participants. When Germany considered increasing its contributions to MINUSMA at the beginning of 2016, the Dutch-German bilateral partnership along with the ongoing process of deepening their integration and cooperation in the fields of security and defence proved to be the crucial incentive for an expanded German deployment. So, while the initial and rather modest German contribution to MINUSMA in 2013 was a response to a French request, the increased role of the Bundeswehr in Mali during 2016 was a result of the Dutch-German partnership.⁴⁴

Last but not least, what has also proved helpful was the previous engagement of Germany in the region, albeit in a different institutional context. Strong contributions of Germany to the EU Training Mission in Mali (EUTM Mali) as well as a leading role in the civilian crisis management mission EUCAP Sahel Mali set a path for German engagement in MINUSMA.⁴⁵

⁴⁰ The Federal Government. *White Paper on German Security Policy and the Future of the Bundeswehr*. 2016, p. 62-63 [accessed 21 May 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/2Jpk1hj>.

⁴¹ KOOPS, ref. 9, p. 670-671.

⁴² KAIM, Markus. Deutsches Interesse versus Bündnisverpflichtungen: Zur Frage nationaler Handlungsspielräume bei Auslandseinsätzen der Bundeswehr. GIEßMANN, Hans J. - WAGNER, Armin (eds.). *Armee im Einsatz*. Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2009, pp. 176-185.

⁴³ Ibid. p. 181.

⁴⁴ KOOPS, ref. 9, p. 669-671.

⁴⁵ Ibid. p. 668.

Is Germany a rising peacekeeper?

Especially in association with MINUSMA, there has been a lot of discussion in recent years about the so called European return to UN peacekeeping.⁴⁶ For sure, MINUSMA has provided Germany with an important opportunity to re-engage with the UN peacekeeping system.⁴⁷ The political pressure on Germany to become a leading European power in this area (in cooperation with others) has been on the rise. Experts - and German ones in particular - have expressed opinion that due to growing military integration within the EU, Germany as a partner and a coordinator is becoming more and more indispensable in UN peacekeeping.⁴⁸ The German government itself has stimulated these expectations by stressing German willingness and readiness to assume greater responsibility in the world.

Indeed, since the start of its engagement in MINUSMA, Germany gradually grew into the position of the largest European troop contributor to MINUSMA. At the same time, MINUSMA has become Bundeswehr's second largest deployment, with a ceiling of up to 1,100 soldiers as determined by the mandate of the German Bundestag.⁴⁹ (By the way, the ceiling for German deployment in the Resolute Support mission in Afghanistan is very close - 1,300 soldiers.⁵⁰) At the peak of German deployment in MINUSMA in mid-2018, Germany was the second largest European contributor to UN peacekeeping operations in general, leaving behind powers like France, Great Britain, Spain, or traditional peacekeepers such as Ireland.⁵¹

Does this mean that we are witnessing a larger trend of increased German participation in UN peacekeeping? Looking at the participation of Germany from a long-term perspective, such a conclusion seems premature. During the period since 1990, when Germany started participating in UN peacekeeping, there have been few deviations from otherwise token, symbolic contributions - such as Germany's contribution to the UNOSOM mission in Somalia in 1993 or to the UNIFIL mission in Lebanon in 2006-2007 - and none of them meant a long-term shift towards greater participation. Also, while Germany's contribution to MINUSMA has risen, the country's participation in other UN peacekeeping operations has remained limited. Whereas in mid-2018, Germany occupied the 28th position in the ranking of troop contributors, by April 2019 it has fallen to the 38th position

⁴⁶ KARLSRUD, John - SMITH, Adam C. *Europe's Return to UN Peacekeeping in Africa? Lessons from Mali*. International Peace Institute, 2015 [accessed 3 April 2019]. Available from:

<http://bit.ly/2YJKgUX>; Daniel, Jan - Wittichová, Markéta. *European Re-Engagement in UN Peacekeeping?* Institute of International Relations Prague, 2006 [accessed 3 April 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/2XCie17>; WECKEMANN, Max. *German Return to UN Peacekeeping?* Global Public Policy Institute, 2016 [accessed 3 April 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/30qQ2ve>; KOOPS, Joachim A. - TERCOVICH, Giulia. *European approaches to United Nations peacekeeping: towards a stronger re-engagement?* London: Routledge, 2018.

⁴⁷ KOOPS, ref. 9, p. 673.

⁴⁸ KAIM - STRAUß, ref. 12, p. 2.

⁴⁹ Bundeswehr. Einsatzzahlen - die Stärke der deutschen Kontingente, 5 July 2019 [accessed 9 July 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/32hulzC>.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ UN DPKO, ref. 32.

in the same ranking, becoming the sixth largest European contributor to UN peacekeeping at the moment.⁵²

Despite its rhetoric of “assuming more global responsibility”, including in the field of UN peacekeeping, we do not have enough empirical evidence to claim that MINUSMA represents a long lasting trend of Germany’s increased engagement within UN peacekeeping. So far, it seems more appropriate to understand it as yet another exception in otherwise limited German involvement in UN peacekeeping.

⁵² Ibid.

Conclusion

To sum up, the commitment to take on more responsibility in international affairs - as reflected by German participation in UN peacekeeping - seems to be more of an exercise in rhetoric than a serious attempt to become a significant UN peacekeeper. Two key challenges persist that make it difficult for the German government to turn the commitments into reality. Firstly, German public opinion is more sceptical of military operations than ever before. As a recent poll of the Körber Stiftung has shown, 52% of German citizens prefer that Germany stays away from an increased engagement in world affairs, in comparison to 43% German citizens who want their country to be more active.⁵³ So, despite the rhetoric of German political elites of being ready to assume greater international responsibility, the general public still needs to be convinced that Germany should do more on the international level. Secondly, in spite of recent decisions to increase defence spending and personnel, there are still large gaps in the readiness of the Bundeswehr to become a significant actor in international crisis management.⁵⁴ Bundeswehr's shortcomings and its limited deployability in out-of-area military operations have been criticized in the latest report by Hans-Peter Bartels, Germany's parliamentary commissioner for the armed forces.⁵⁵ To put it simply, Germany needs to narrow the gap between rhetoric and practice. Until then, we will keep waiting for Germany to deliver.

⁵³ Körber-Stiftung. *Einmischen oder zurückhalten? Eine repräsentative Umfrage im Auftrag der Körber-Stiftung zur Sicht der Deutschen auf die Außenpolitik*. 2017 [accessed 8 July 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/2LcXCG9>.

⁵⁴ KOOPS, ref. 9, p. 676.

⁵⁵ Deutscher Bundestag. *Unterrichtung durch den Wehrbeauftragten. Jahresbericht 2018*. 29 January 2019 [accessed 8 July 2019]. Available from: <http://bit.ly/2LetV7A>. See also: KŘÍŽ, Zdeněk. German Military Transformation - the Never-Ending Quest for Appropriate Military Capacities. *Vojenské rozhledy*, 2018, Vol. 27, No. 3, pp. 47-62.