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Active Armed Forces <sup>1</sup>	Helicopters	Defense budget	Uniformed UN peacekeepers	UN contribution breakdown	Other significant deployments
25,800 World Ranking (size): <b>26<sup>th</sup></b>  Army: 9,350 Navy: 4,500 Air: 3,950 Support: 7,500 Home Guard: 500	Multirole: 18 (Bell 412)  ASW: 3 (NH90) <sup>2</sup>  Search and rescue: 12 (Sea King) <sup>3</sup>	2013: \$7.24bn (1.35% of GDP)  2014: \$6.98bn (1.28% of GDP)  2015: \$5.04bn <sup>4</sup> (1.43% of GDP)	87 (15 female) (31 Dec. 2015)  Ranking: 72 <sup>nd</sup>	UNMISS 25 (9 police, 5 experts, 11 troops) MINUSMA 23 troops UNMIL 19 police UNTSO 12 experts MINUSTAH 6 police UNFICYP 2 troops	Afghanistan: Special Forces
Defense spending / active troop: <sup>5</sup> <b>US\$268,346</b> (compared to global average of approx. US\$65,905)					

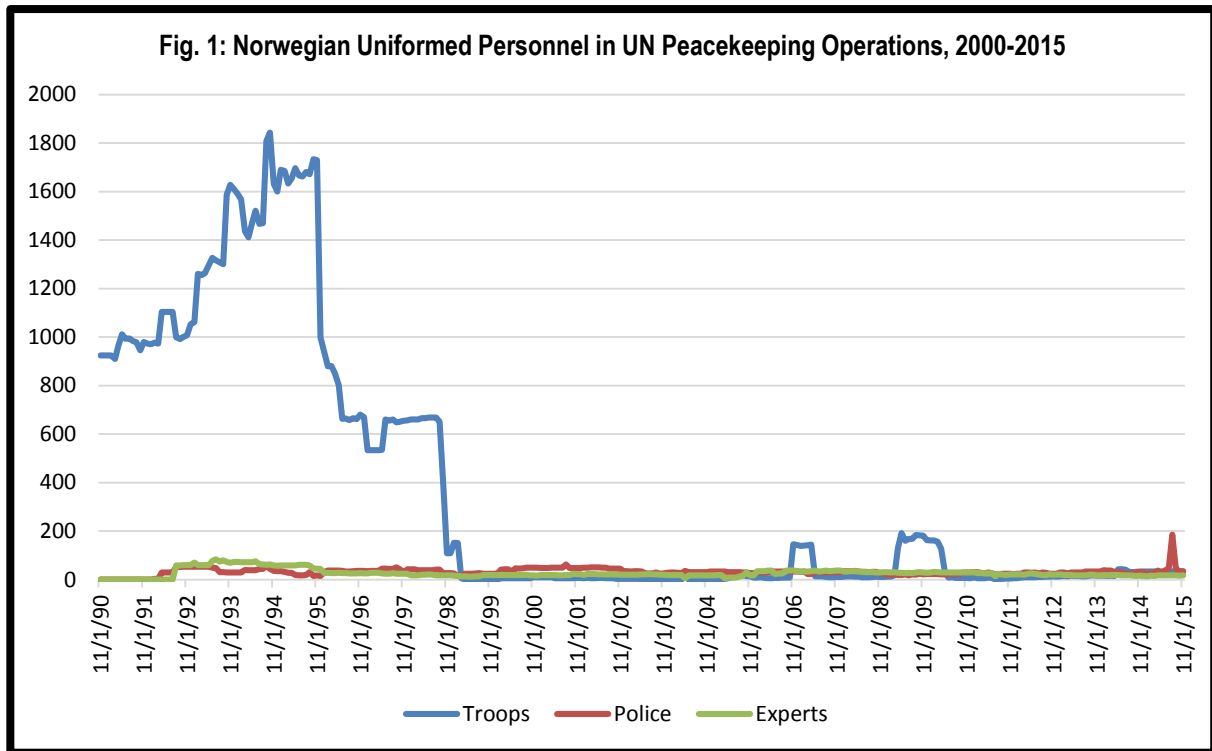
**Part 1: Recent Trends**

At the Leader's Summit on Peacekeeping in September 2015, Norway pledged to deploy one Hercules C-130 Transport Aircraft to Mali (MINUSMA) for 10 months in 2016. Norway also pledged to consider deploying a Combat Engineering Unit with Counter-Improvised Explosive Device (C-IED) capabilities in 2017, most likely also to Mali. It will also provide a team of police experts on criminal investigation, intelligence or transnational organized crime. Norway's niche contribution of intelligence analysts and staff officers to the All Sources Information Fusion Unit (ASIFU) in MINUSMA ended in 2015, but some analysts remained in the mission for a few months to facilitate the transition to a new contributor. In 2016, Norway will provide personnel to manage the ASIFU-camp and soldiers to run camp security.

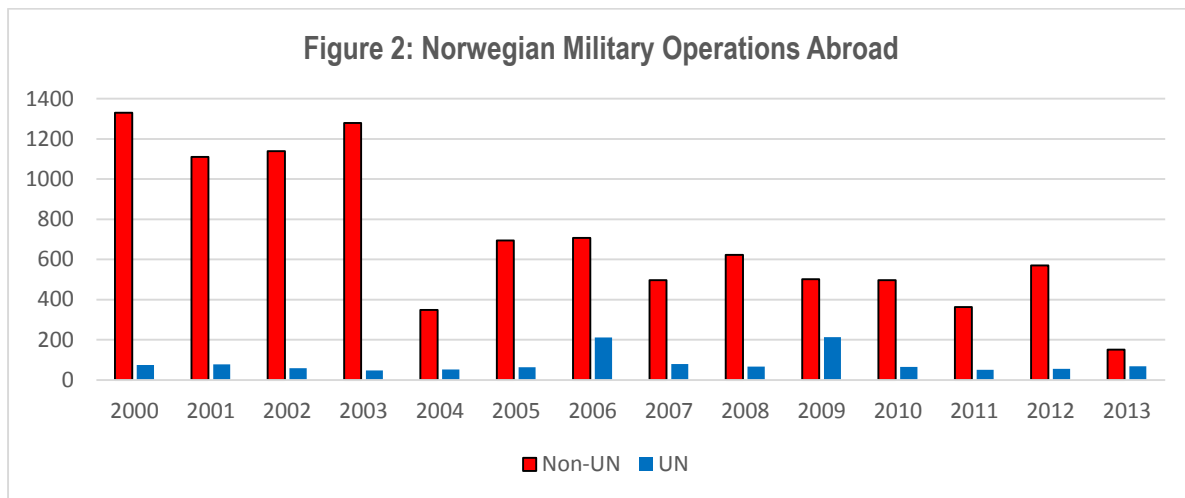
Earlier, in late 2013, as a result of a meeting between Nordic countries' ministers of foreign affairs, an official statement seemingly paved the way for a possible joint Nordic contribution to a future UN peace operation in Syria. As the situation in Syria remains non-permissive for a UN deployment, no further discussions were conducted. More recently, in November 2015, Norway, UK, Denmark, the Netherlands, and the three Baltic countries recommitted to a [framework agreement](#) providing a Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF), first established in September 2014. The rapid reaction force is meant to be capable of conducting the full spectrum of operations, but has no standing forces on high readiness. Interestingly, in the founding letter of intention, the countries also agree to make the force available to the UN, in addition to other organizations or coalitions.

Still, the number of Norwegian uniformed personnel in UN-led peacekeeping operations has remained limited since their exit from UNIFIL in 1998. Between 1978 and 1998, the Norwegian Armed Forces deployed an infantry battalion to Southern-Lebanon, in addition to staff officers, support elements and a rapid reaction platoon. At its peak, Norway had

approximately 900 personnel deployed to Lebanon – representing one of the largest troop contributors to UNIFIL at that time. Norway returned to UNIFIL II in 2006, this time with maritime resources and CIMIC-expertise. Norwegian uniformed personnel have also participated in many of the UN engagements in the Balkans, from the early 1990s. Between spring 2009 and spring 2010, Norway deployed a field hospital and a well-drilling team to MINURCAT in Chad, comprising approximately 150 personnel.



Despite limited troop contributions over the past two decades, Norway is among the top financial contributors to the UN system. Norway has also been highly involved in the early development of the [UN's approach to integrated missions](#). In addition, it recently (2014) provided the first female UN Force Commander, Major-General Kristin Lund, to Cyprus (UNFICYP). Further, former Special Representative of the Secretary-General in South-Sudan, Hilde Frafjord Johnson, was a member of the High-level Independent Panel on UN Peace Operations (2014-2015). The ambition of the former Center-Left government (September 2005 – September 2013) was to be more visible as a troop contributor in UN-led operations, especially in Africa, as outlined in the [strategic concept for the Norwegian Armed Forces](#) (2009). This ambition was not fulfilled, despite the abovementioned contributions to UNIFIL, MINURCAT and MINUSMA, in addition to an attempted Nordic contribution to UNAMID which failed to materialize, mostly due to the unwillingness of the Sudanese Government to allow for Western troops on the ground. The current Government (elected in September 2013), consisting of the Conservative Party and the Progress Party, has stated that Norway will contribute to international operations led by the UN, NATO, and the EU. Potential contributions will be decided dependent on Norwegian “comparative advantages and specific needs” and “what may best serve the mission” ([Political Platform, Norwegian Government, 2013](#) [Norwegian only]). Compared to the political platform of the former Government, the current administration has adopted a less pronounced emphasis on potential UN contributions. However, in light of recent events, it does seem committed to strengthening UN peace operations, supporting the UN reform process and the 2015 US-led initiative on peacekeeping through relevant contributions, as illustrated by the niche contributions to Mali.



The main reason why few Norwegian uniformed personnel have participated in UN-led peacekeeping in recent years is the country's engagement in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan (see figure 2). In addition, the potential number of available uniformed personnel has dropped dramatically during the last two decades. During the Cold War, the Norwegian Army consisted of up to 165,000 personnel. By 1997 that number had dropped to approximately 80,000; by 2001 it was approximately 33,000; and today there are around 9,000.<sup>6</sup> Additionally the Norwegian armed forces have until recently been in a constant mode of transformation since the end of the Cold War, a process which has increased its technological capacity but reduced the need for personnel. As of late 2015, Norway still deployed Special Forces to Afghanistan to mentor the Afghan Crisis Response Unit (CRU). The Norwegian Air Force was also involved in the UN-authorized intervention to protect civilians in Libya in 2011.

NATO remains the most important pillar of the Norwegian security architecture. [NATO's strategic concept](#) (2010) led to a renewed focus on the High North and a general reorientation of Norway's attention towards the Arctic. However, Norway will most likely balance this shift towards the northern regions with continued strong economic and political support to the UN, in addition to niche military contributions. For Norway, it is not a question of either supporting NATO or the UN – as a small nation it remains vital to work for the progress of both organizations. Whether this balancing act will lead Norway to contribute a more substantial number of troops to UN-led operations remains unclear.

## **Part 2: Decision-Making process**

The Norwegian constitution stipulates that any decision to deploy troops abroad is made by royal prerogative – in practice exercised by the government. Currently, Norway is governed by a two-party coalition, which together does not hold the majority of the members of Parliament. However, the two governing parties have established an agreement of cooperation with the Liberal Party (*Venstre*) and the Christian Democrats (*KrF*). Together with either one of these two parties, the Government will have majority in Parliament. The agreement does not address specific contributions to international operations, although it does state that Norway will be “an active contributor to the UN, NATO Nordic Council and other international organizations” ([Agreement of cooperation, 2013](#) [Norwegian only]). Government ministries remain responsible to Parliament for their decisions, and the Parliament has influence over the

budgeting process. On most occasions, the deployment of Norwegian forces abroad has achieved a consensus beyond the Government. Also, decision-making usually includes consultations with officials from the ministries involved, military advice from the Chief of Defense and the National Defense Staff, as well as advice from other subject matter experts. The case of Libya in 2011, however, highlighted that the government can make *ad hoc* decisions to deploy quickly when necessary. Traditionally, due to Norway's financial and political commitment to UN peacekeeping, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs maintains close links with DPKO in the UN Secretariat in New York.

### **Part 3: Rationales for Contributing**

*Political Rationales:* Norway's foreign and security policy is influenced by its self-image as a "peace-nation," which has endured across various political coalitions and administrations. Political support to the UN is seen as supporting an idealistic worldview where international cooperation, mediation and dialogue are valuable. Norway is consistently among the top financial contributors to the UN despite having only 5 million inhabitants. UN peacekeeping has historically been important to Norway. In the past, Norway provided a substantial number of troops to the Congo (approximately 1,200 uniformed personnel), Lebanon (approximately 22,000 personnel) as well as to various operations in the Balkans. The UN still is an important feature in strategic documents. For example, [the strategic concept of the Armed Forces](#) lists among the top five priorities of Norwegian security policy: "contribute to peace, stability, and the further development of a global UN-led legal system."

Over the past decade, however, NATO operations have become the most important arena for Norwegian international military deployments. Strong support to NATO has long historic roots in Norway, but recent trends also point towards a development towards a more interest-based foreign policy, in particular related to securing Norwegian interests and resources in the High North. Maintaining close trans-Atlantic relations with the United States and supporting the further development of a strong Atlantic alliance, which can provide security guarantees, are cornerstones of this policy. The current Government places even more emphasis than its predecessor on NATO as the main pillar for Norwegian security and defense policy.

*Economic Rationales:* Economic factors are not a major influence on Norway's decisions to contribute to UN peacekeeping. Norway's economy has so far remained an exception to the cuts in military spending seen in many European countries as a consequence of the global financial crisis. However, current long-term plan for the Norwegian Defense aims to cut the budget allocated to international operations in half by 2016. Also, a technical budgeting mechanism leads to smaller contributions being covered by the regular budget of the specific branches that provide troops, not by additional finances that would be allocated to larger contributions. This could produce an incentive for the Armed Forces to wish for larger engagements abroad that will not tap into their own budget.

*Security Rationales:* Norway is a small country with relatively few strategic interests besides protecting core national interests in its immediate neighborhood and securing access to resources in the north. In order to achieve its goal, however, Norway is highly dependent on assistance from NATO. Consequently, providing support and troops to NATO operations is a cornerstone of Norway's national security rationale. In addition, Norway promotes international peace and security through the UN framework, and when asked to protect civilians in Libya in 2011, Norway was quick to deploy military forces. On this occasion, Norway's image as a peace-nation, always supportive of the UN, aligned well with its need to support the UN-authorized but NATO and U.S.-led coalitions. The decision to deploy

specialists and niche capabilities to MINUSMA also serves this dual approach, since Mali has become an arena for both counter-terrorism efforts as well as a robust peacekeeping mission.

*Institutional Rationales:* After ten years of conducting counter-insurgency operations in Afghanistan and a high-tech air campaign in Libya with highly capable allies, the Norwegian military establishment may see a growing gap between the current approach to UN peacekeeping and how NATO conducts operations. Despite efforts to reform UN peace operations, many military practitioners remain skeptical about the command and control structure and the ambiguous approach to the use of force in multidimensional UN operations. In addition, within the Norwegian armed forces much of the “know-how” related to UN peacekeeping has been lost due to their relative absence from UN-led operations in the last decade. Another, less pronounced, consequence of operating in Afghanistan, is a lack of appetite for deploying major troop contributions to any complex conflict scenario in the near future. Maintaining Norway’s ISAF deployments for almost ten years has been particularly difficult, in part because the available number of troops is quite limited and many officers have had to perform several tours of duty. The absence of core personnel has made it more difficult to train and maintain the national defense structure. In addition, as the security situation in the north of Afghanistan deteriorated over the past few years, Norwegian troops performed tasks closer to war fighting than stabilization operations. This put additional strain on the already overstretched structure, although there is a general national consensus that Norwegian forces performed their tasks well.

*Normative Rationales:* The dominant worldview among the Norwegian political elite is one where international cooperation, mediation and dialogue are seen as essential to promoting peace, stability and prosperity. This often leads to situations where the “soft” humanitarian aspects of international military operations are promoted, while the “hard” security rationales are played down, even though they clearly make up an essential part of the logic behind Norway’s decisions on when and where to send troops. In theory, the UN’s profile, including its peace operations, should therefore be a good match for Norway’s foreign and security policy. In practice, however, the current Government largely mirrors its predecessor and contributes only a limited number of troops to UN operations. Still, recent niche contributions to MINUSMA may signal a slight shift towards more political interest in UN peace operations.

#### **Part 4: Barriers to Contributing**

*Alternative institutional preferences for crisis management:* NATO remains the most important pillar of the Norwegian national security architecture, balanced by the view that the UN must remain the primary actor responsible for international peace and security. Since Norway has pulled out of ISAF, there are more troops available for deployments elsewhere. Despite providing a limited number of troops overall, the current government has recently pledged additional niche capabilities to MINUSMA.

*Alternative political or strategic priorities:* NATO remains the most important pillar of Norway’s security strategy

*Financial costs:* Financial costs do not influence Norway’s decisions to contribute to UN peacekeeping in any major way, but due to very high domestic costs, the UN reimbursement system is not very lucrative for Norway relative to other countries. Larger UN contributions, however, as mentioned above, might become more “lucrative” for the armed forces for technical reasons. With budgets for international operations expected to shrink post-ISAF,

larger deployments will be covered by additional financial means and not through the specific budget of each branch of the armed forces.

*Discomfort with the expanding UN peacekeeping agenda:* Not applicable. Norway has actively promoted expansions of UN peacekeeping's agenda on several occasions.

*Exceptionalism:* Not relevant in this case.

*Absence of pressure to contribute:* The current administration has already applied some pressure on itself by stating its willingness to provide troops to a potential UN operation in Syria together with its Nordic neighbors.

*Difficult domestic politics:* Not currently relevant. Over the last decade, the engagement in Afghanistan has been the focus of attention. Only occasionally have there been calls for Norway to contribute more to UN peacekeeping, but there have not been any major debates at the national level.

*Damage to national reputation:* Not very relevant in the case of Norway. It is notable, however, that there has been a debate of potential negative consequences of an emerging "warrior-culture" in the Norwegian Armed Forces following the demanding combat operations in Afghanistan. However, many view combat experience as one of the main drivers for the ongoing professionalization of the Norwegian Armed Forces. At the national level, these discussions have not led to any changes in Norway's approach to operations abroad, and will not be a barrier to sending peacekeepers to UN operations.

*Resistance in the military:* Many military practitioners remain skeptical about the command and control structure and the ambiguous approach to the use of force in multidimensional UN operations. This skepticism is not often voiced openly, but will probably play a part of professional advice coming from the military establishment to the political leadership if Norway is to consider contributing more to UN peacekeeping.

*Lack of fit with legislative, procurement and operational timelines:* Norway, similar to many other European states, has been reluctant to deploy troops to the UN without the presence of other European partners in the missions. Several efforts to deploy joint Nordic contributions have stalled in the past. This has been due both to the cumbersome and sometimes dysfunctional force generation process in the UN and the challenges of synchronizing troop contributions from more than one country. The decision of the Netherlands to deploy a more substantial number of troops to MINUSMA in late 2013 have influenced Norway to deploy more capabilities to that mission, as this solved some of the partnership concerns that still exist. Finally, in the case of the Norwegian Level-II Field Hospital deployment to MINURCAT (see part 5), one of the official explanations for Norway pulling out after one year, despite calls from the UN to extend its operations, is that the official UN request calling for an extension came too late for Norway to be able to continue the contribution.

*Legal obstacles:* Not relevant in the case of Norway.

## **Part 5: Current Challenges and Issues**

Despite the withdrawal from ISAF, Norway continues to deploy only a limited number of troops to UN peace operations. Historically, different Norwegian governments have followed similar foreign policy directions. The current coalition government has not made any radical

changes to Norway's approach. However, if a UN-operation materializes in Syria with a substantial Nordic contribution, this will indeed signal a new direction.

In 2007, Norway attempted to provide a company of engineers to UNAMID, but due to political obstacles laid out by Khartoum, the unit was never deployed. Norway attempted to divert this deployment to another UN operation – MINUSTAH was one of the options mentioned – but for reasons that remain unclear, the deployment never materialized. In May 2009, Norway deployed a Level-II field hospital and a well-drilling team to MINURCAT in Chad. The hospital was operational for one year, despite UN calls for prolonging the deployment beyond May 2010. The official reason given was that Norway had committed to run the hospital for one year only. Russia was supposed to take over the hospital but this proved impossible. In addition, Norway was overstretched in the field of military medicine and the official UN request calling for an extension came too late for Norway to comply. Norway also performed a fact-finding mission to South Sudan in October 2011 together with Serbia, to investigate if it was possible to deploy Serbia's Role 2-hospital (donated by Norway) to UNMISS. This initiative stalled when the task was given to another troop contributor. Since then Serbia has maintained a wish to deploy its field-hospital, most preferably to an EU-mission, although UN-missions are not off the table. Norway continues to cooperate and train with Serbia in this field, and any future deployment of the Serbian field-hospital will probably include Norwegian administrative and logistics support. The Golan Heights have been discussed as a potential place to deploy this capability.

Norway deployed 15 analysts and 5 staff officers to the All Sources Information Fusion Unit in MINUSMA until the end of 2015. In September 2015 it pledged to deploy a transport aircraft to Mali in 2016, and possibly army engineers with C-IED capability, in 2017. As Norway has a small army, providing large generalist infantry units from the current structure is very challenging. In terms of ground forces, Norway is in the process of establishing a second professionalized infantry battalion, similar in structure to *Telemark Bataljon*. The new battalion is meant to be fully operational in 2017. *Telemark Bataljon* is currently the only professional unit in the otherwise conscription-based Norwegian army, and a highly mobile and capable unit, not least because it has operational experience from Afghanistan.<sup>7</sup> Still, despite this increase in the army structure, the available number of ground troops is very limited when compared to most other states.

## **Part 6: Key Champions and Opponents**

There are several key actors that support UN peacekeeping in Norway, both individuals and institutions. Former Minister of Foreign Affairs Espen Barth Eide is well-known both as a politician and academic, and has played a central role in developing the UN's approach to integrated missions. In addition, heads of mission with recent and/or current experience from operations, Hilde Frafjord Johnson (UNMISS/High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations), Major General Robert Mood (UNSMIS) and Kai Eide (UNAMA) are all valuable assets for the UN.

In terms of institutional resources, the [Peace Research Institute Oslo](#) (PRIO) is the most well-known academic institution outside Norway. PRIO conducts research on the conditions for peaceful relations between states, groups and people. Further, the [Norwegian Institute of International Affairs](#) (NUPI) runs the "[Training for Peace in Africa](#)" program, a capacity-building and policy development initiative which contributes towards building of civilian and police capacities for the UN and AU. The [Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre](#) (NOREF) is a recently established institution that supports Norwegian peacebuilding policy and practice,

often through projects financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Finally, the [Norwegian Defence Research Establishment](#) (FFI), the official think-tank of the Ministry of Defense, provides research on a wide array of contemporary military challenges, including military operational challenges of protecting civilians in armed conflict in UN and non-UN operations.

### **Part 7: Capabilities and Caveats**

*Capabilities:* Norway maintains a low number of active forces comprised of conscripts and professionals. Several major transition initiatives over the last decade have made them capable and well-equipped, as demonstrated in Afghanistan and in Libya. Recently, there has been a reorientation back towards the core task of territorial defense and operations in the High North. This has gone hand in hand with the development of high-technology weapons platforms, both maritime and airborne, which has taken a toll on available resources to invest in, train and retain a more capable army. Meanwhile, the Army has been hard-pressed by the operations in Afghanistan. During spring 2016, the government will present a new long-term defense plan for Parliament for the period 2016–2019. In preparation for this process, the Chief of Defense has provided his advice through a [Strategic Defense Review](#) [Norwegian only] in late 2015. His suggested force structure is meant to increase Norway's independent ability to defend against threats, military strikes and attacks, although as always within a NATO-framework. Contributions to international military operations are mentioned as the fifth (of five) dimensioning tasks for the national armed forces.

Norway does not possess major national strategic airlift capabilities, besides one squadron of Hercules C130-J transport airplanes. Norway also has a limited pool of multipurpose helicopters, although it has managed to sustain a medical evacuation unit (Norwegian Aeromedical Detachment) in Afghanistan, based on Bell 412 helicopters staffed with very experienced personnel. In terms of enabling units, the Army has one engineering battalion. In addition, it holds one Combat Service Support Battalion.

The Norwegian Police consists of about 12,000 personnel, of which approximately 8,000 are police officers. Currently, some 60 Norwegian police personnel are deployed to advise, educate or perform police duties in nine international missions, of which three are UN operations (MINUSTAH, UNMIL, and UNMISS). A Norwegian provision allows a [maximum of 1% of the standing police force to be deployed internationally](#) [Norwegian only]. Currently, there is no specific debate related to increasing Norway's police contributions. Norway has a very limited number of staff officers and police personnel that have French language skills.

*Caveats:* There are no official caveats that would limit the ability of Norwegian forces to operate in UN operations. Recent experience from Afghanistan has highlighted that Norwegian forces are capable of operating robustly in highly non-permissive environments.

### **Part 8: Further Reading**

[Political Platform](#) (The Conservative Party and The Progress Party, (7 October 2013) [Norwegian only].

[Agreement of cooperation – The Liberal Party, The Christian Democrats, The Progress Party and The Conservative Party](#) (30 September 2013).

[Capable Force – Strategic Concept for the Norwegian Armed Forces](#) (Ministry of Defense, September 2009). [Concept subject to change under the new government]

[Norway and the UN](#): shared future, common solutions (2011–2012) [Norwegian only].

(Norwegian Government white paper on Norway's UN policy (21 September 2012). [Policy subject to change under the current government].



[Letter of Intention: Joint Expeditionary Force \(2014\).](#)  
[Strategic Defense Review – Chief of Defense \(October 2015\)](#)

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**Notes**

<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise stated, data is drawn from IISS, *The Military Balance 2015* (London: IISS/Routledge, 2015).

<sup>2</sup> The Lynx was phased out in 2014 and will be replaced by 14 NH90 (Norwegian Helicopter 90). The acquisition has been delayed, but the first three helicopters had been delivered by late 2015.

<sup>3</sup> The first of 16 AW101 search-and-rescue helicopters will enter service in 2017, and the Sea King Mk43B is to be withdrawn from service by 2020.

<sup>4</sup> Exchange rate (NOK to USD) as of 8 December 2015.

<sup>5</sup> Armed Forces Spending is a country's annual total defense budget (in US dollars) divided by the total number of *active* armed forces. Using figures from IISS, *The Military Balance 2015*.

<sup>6</sup> These numbers are not comparable to the data found in Figure 1, as Cold War numbers included a high number of reserve forces.

<sup>7</sup> This battalion consists of approximately 450 troops (including officers) and includes a battle tank squadron (Leopard II), mechanized infantry companies (CV 90), and support elements.