

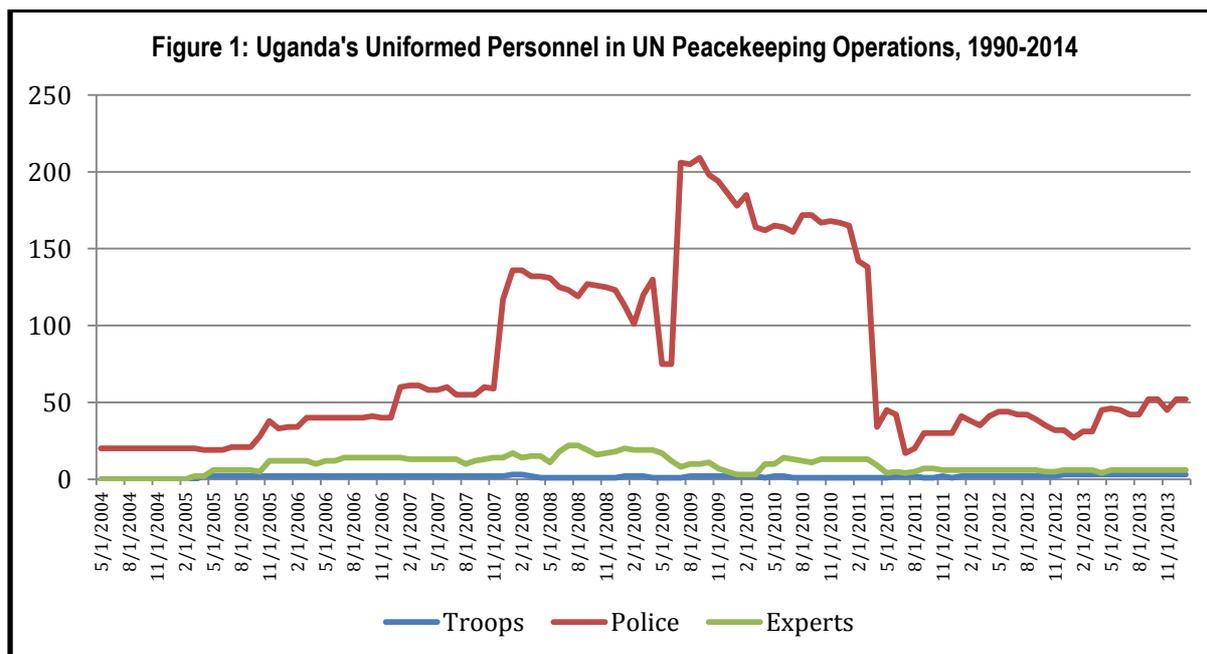
Country Profile: Uganda

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Active Armed Force ¹	Helicopters	Defense Budget	Uniformed UN Peacekeepers	UN Contribution Breakdown	Other Significant/Official Deployments
45,000	10	2010: US\$230m (1.42% of GDP)	61 (13 women) (31 Jan. 2014)	UNMIL 14 police	AMISOM: 6,700 troops, Deputy Force Commander
World Ranking (size): 68th	Attack: 1 (2 more non-op)	2011: US\$181m (1.04% of GDP)	Ranking: 76 th (29 th African contributor)	UNMISS 40 (1 troop, 38 police, 1 expert)	UN-AU RTF anti- LRA: 2,000 troops
Army: 45,000 Air force: n/a	Multirole: 5	2012: US\$211m (1.03% of GDP)		UNOCI: 7 (2 troops, 5 experts)	South Sudan: 850 troops (January 2014)
Para-military: 1,800	Multirole / Transport: 4 (incl. 1 VIP)				
Defense Spending/ Active troop: ² US\$7,600 (compared to global average of approx. US\$70,300)					

Part 1: Recent Trends

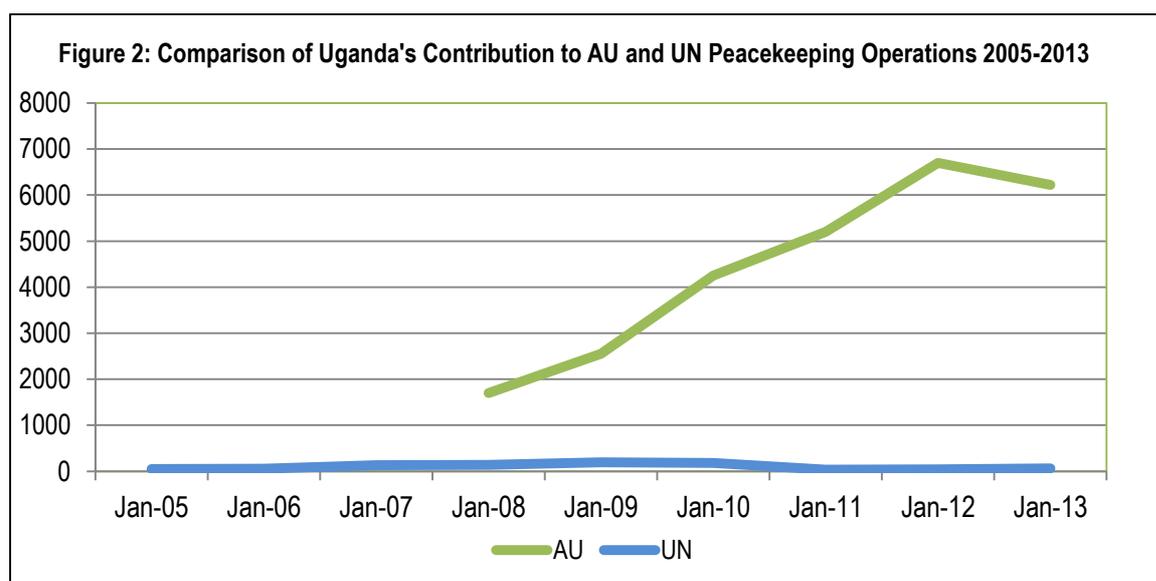
Uganda is a relative newcomer to peacekeeping. In part, this is due to its history of civil and regional conflict that only really subsided in 2006. Since coming to power in 1986 the National Resistance Movement (NRM) was engaged in combat in northern Uganda until 2006 and in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) until 2003. Uganda has participated in some peacekeeping operations in the 1990s, including providing some troops and the Deputy Force Commander Brigadier (now Lt-Gen) Ivan Koreta to the UN Mission in Liberia. However it was only after national deployments post-2003 were drawn down that peacekeeping has become a major option for the Ugandan military.



In the last 10 years Ugandan contributions to UN peacekeeping have mainly been in the form of staff officers, police, prison officers and civilian experts, deployed on missions since 2005. Of 61 Ugandans currently deployed in UN peacekeeping operations 52 are police.

Uganda hosts the UN [Regional Service Centre Entebbe \(RSCE\)](#) and a training hub also at Entebbe, providing logistics support, but also peacekeeping training courses to peacekeeping missions and related offices in the region. The RSCE currently provides logistics support to the UN Stabilization Mission in Congo (MONUSCO), United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA), the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), and there are [plans to expand support](#) to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and missions in the Central African Republic (CAR).

At the same time Uganda is a leading troop contributor to African Union peace operations (see figure 2), partly explaining why recent contributions to UN missions are much lower. Uganda was the first country to deploy troops to Somalia as part of [AMISOM](#) in early 2007. Although other states have joined AMISOM, Uganda remains the lead contributor, providing over 6,000 troops and police officers, mostly in Sector 1 around Mogadishu, Sector 3 around Baidoa and in the Multinational Force Headquarters also in Mogadishu. Four consecutive AMISOM Force Commanders were also Ugandan before the current commander was appointed from Burundi. In addition, around 2,000 Ugandan soldiers, along with troops from CAR, DRC and South Sudan, are part of a [UN-AU Regional Task Force \(RTF\)](#) targeting the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). Although not a peacekeeping operation, the RTF is authorized by the African Union and recognized by the UN Security Council. Due to the varying capabilities of other national forces in the RTF, Uganda is the lead state. The RTF is also supported by approximately 100 United States Special Forces in non-combat advisory roles. As well as a leading contributor to the AU's current deployments Uganda is also instrumental in the development of the East African Standby Force (EASF) and other AU affiliated conflict management initiatives. Uganda has provided the director for EASFCOM, participated in several joint multinational military exercises in the region, and is developing a Rapid Deployment Capability (RDC) for future AU missions.



Peacekeeping reflects Uganda's broader international relations in dealing with the UN and other bodies. It is based on a pragmatic strategy driven by national interests underscored by Pan-Africanism. Although Uganda has consistently contributed peacekeepers to UN missions, the numbers are far lower than neighboring states and other countries with similar defense capabilities and budgets. However, Uganda has been at the forefront of developing AU peacekeeping capabilities and contributes large numbers of troops to AMISOM and the RTF, reflecting a commitment on the part of the leadership to implement African-led initiatives. This trend is likely to continue with Uganda seeing mainly AU peace operations as serving its regional priorities and security concerns, but also as an invaluable bargaining chip with international donors. This is partly explained by the ethos of the Ugandan leadership, which has typically been distrustful of UN missions and the UN in general. AU peace operations on the other hand are seen as part of a [Pan-African project](#) where African states can make decisions about their own continent without being dictated to from outside. In practical terms, the AU serves Uganda's interests far better than the UN given the influence Kampala can wield within the continental body.

Part 2: Decision-making process

Ugandan military deployments and activities, including peacekeeping, are enshrined in the [Ugandan People's Defense Force \(UPDF\) Act of 2005](#). The President of Uganda as Commander in Chief, in collaboration with the military High Command and Defense Forces Council, determines UPDF peacekeeping deployments. The Defense Council comprises the Minister of Defense, Chief of Defense Forces (CDF), Deputy CDS, Joint Chief of Staff, Service Commanders, Divisional Commanders and a few select others. Security advisers, the Chief Political Commissar, Inspector General of Police and other senior NRM security figures are also involved. Once deployed, the CDF has strategic oversight of UPDF forces in theatre. After the initial decision to deploy has been made, forces are trained at Singo peacekeeping training camp on either a collective or individual basis depending on the mission. Collective training is paid for by the US, UK, France and EU.

Peace operations, as with other deployments, should in theory also be approved by parliament. Parliament is supposed to regulate and oversee UPDF activity as stipulated in the constitution and the [Defense White Paper of 2004](#). In practice parliament has limited oversight of and accountability for UPDF deployments and tends to accept the decisions of the UPDF high command on military matters. The President, security advisers, and UPDF high command are the key decision-makers for peace operations, although approval from parliament is sought.³

Part 3: Rationales for Contributing

Political Rationales: Ugandan peace operations are driven by several political imperatives.⁴ First, addressing African security concerns, especially perceived threats to Uganda, is an important motivation for contributing forces to peace operations. Kampala has only deployed significant peacekeepers within Africa, reflecting a commitment on the part of the leadership to address some of the continent's security concerns.⁵ Furthermore these missions have all been AU-authorized and not UN-led indicating a preference for African-led initiatives.

Uganda also sees peace operations as key foreign policy tools when engaging with international actors and other African states. Consistent contributions to UN missions, albeit limited in number and mainly police officers, is part of Uganda's diplomatic engagement with the UN. However the small number of peacekeepers contributed to UN missions has a limited effect in terms of political bargaining power. More significant is Uganda's

contribution to AU operations and specifically AMISOM. Deploying the UPDF to Somalia is part of Uganda's diplomatic and foreign policy strategy with donors and regional states. Uganda deployed to AMISOM in 2007, a year after President Museveni was elected for a second time, having abolished presidential term limits. Furthermore there was growing international criticism over the closing of domestic political space and Ugandan military involvement in DR Congo. Since deploying to AMISOM some international actors have been more hesitant to criticize Uganda's domestic politics. Museveni, for his part, threatened to pull troops from Somalia in both [2010](#) and [2012](#) when under fire from international donors.⁶

Economic Rationales: Peace operations also inform part of Uganda's economic strategy, although not nearly as decisively as its political, normative and institutional rationales. Peace operations have provided the Ugandan government with some reimbursements for troops, kit and equipment and other supplies, which are either compensated or provided by the UN or donors. However, it was until only recently that AU compensation rates mirrored those of the UN. Before 2011 AMISOM rates were initially \$500/month per troop and then \$750, and often went unpaid. Since then, AMISOM benefits and compensation rates have been brought up to UN scales. More lucrative have been the massive international engagement with Uganda's assistance to AMISOM and UN mission support activities. The US, UK, France, EU and UN have provided significant financial and political support to AMISOM, but also to Uganda directly, such as fully funding training centers, non-combat equipment and various other support activities (including the Logistics Hub in Entebbe). Individuals also have financial incentives to deploy to AMISOM as they receive high pay scales and benefits as well as training and career opportunities. Uganda's regional peacekeeping role is also part of its longer term regional economic strategy, including future oil production, regional integration and trade with neighbors. [Significant oil deposits](#) have been found in almost all of AMISOM's TCC's, [including Uganda](#), with plans for pipelines across East Africa. Integration in security such as AMISOM compliments growing economic integration by bringing neighboring political elites closer together in addressing the regions issues.

Security Rationales: Given the small number of Ugandan peacekeepers on UN missions, security imperatives are not a consideration and other motivations dictate UN deployments. AU missions have been different, with security concerns invoked as one of the principal motivations for deployment, if in practice other interests are equally important. UPDF deployment in Somalia is also legitimized as part of the "Global War on Terror" with Uganda positioning itself as a frontline state against Islamic fundamentalism in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel. Deployments to the UN-AU RTF against the LRA have also been legitimized as a security threat against a terrorist outfit, although the LRA had been pushed out of Uganda since 2006. Other regional security concerns are also an incentive for peacekeeping such as helping to curb the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) in the region, which has affected Uganda directly, especially in Karamoja. The influx of refugees from regional conflict hot spots such as DRC, Somalia, South Sudan and elsewhere is a further motivating factor to effectively deal with regional conflict issues.

Institutional Rationales: Participating in peace operations has been identified by the UPDF leadership as helping to professionalize the military but also providing activities to occupy troops. Although highly capable, the UPDF is still transitioning from a liberation guerrilla movement to a professional armed force. Access to training (both collective and individual) and multinational experiences are seen as serious benefits to aid in the professionalization of the military. Providing operational and battle experience for the military is a further institutional rationale. Uganda's increased commitment to (AU) peace operations followed

the period of withdrawal from combat operations in DRC and Northern Uganda. This would suggest that AMISOM provides an avenue for occupying the armed forces, especially those that could be a potential threat such as newly integrated forces from demobilized armed groups and potentially dissenting officers. Notions of professionalization also apply to the Uganda National Police, which has recently been placed under the stewardship of NRM stalwart and Museveni's confidant General Kale Kayihura. General Kayihura has been tasked with professionalizing the police force. Significant police contributions to peacekeeping missions would suggest that peacekeeping is part of Uganda's strategy in training and developing, but also controlling the police.

Normative Rationales: Uganda's contribution to UN peacekeeping is framed in terms of playing its role as a "good international citizen" and as part of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). AU peace operations are slightly different, informed, in part, by the "Global War on Terror" but also by the ideology of Pan-Africanism and "African Solutions to African Problems." Senior defense officials have stated that "helping our African brothers in Somalia"⁷ was part of the motivation to intervene there. Indeed the significant contributions to AU initiatives as opposed to piecemeal contributions to UN missions would support this. President Museveni himself and many of the senior leadership are heavily influenced by Pan-Africanist ideals and philosophy that should not be discounted.⁸ In addition, AU peace operations are also seen to serve national interests in regional and international policy priorities. As one of the AU's largest TCC's Uganda is able to wield disproportionate influence within the continental body and with its regional diplomatic relations.

Part 4: Barriers to Contributing

Alternative institutional preferences for crisis management: Uganda prefers to work through either the AU, regional mechanisms such as the East African Community (EAC), through a coalition of likeminded regional states and often through unilateral intervention. Participating in UN peacekeeping is low on the priority list of crisis management activities. The UN is broadly mistrusted and seen as a last resort, reflecting perceptions of North-South power dynamics by the Ugandan leadership but also recognition of some of the UN's failures. Museveni himself has been [openly critical of UN peacekeeping](#) seeing it as a "Euro-centric" approach and has gone as far as calling UN peacekeepers in DRC "[military tourists.](#)" Uganda's role in the DRC and intervention in South Sudan in December 2013 in support of President Salva Kiir demonstrates Uganda's preferences for crisis management. Museveni has chosen to engage with the DRC unilaterally, as part of a coalition of forces, through local armed groups, through the regional mechanism of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and the AU Joint Verification Mechanism. Furthermore, in 2013 Uganda tried to deter the deployment of a robust intervention brigade to support the UN stabilization mission in the Congo, preferring an African-led initiative under the ICGLR (which, at the time, was under Museveni's chairmanship).

Alternative political or strategic priorities: UN peacekeeping is seen as a low priority given the ideological issues outlined above. As a result foreign policy priorities, regional security, and national interests are of far more immediate concern than peacekeeping. However, UN peacekeeping can become a tool for Kampala when serving these interests. For instance, UN operations against the ADF insurgents in eastern Congo have been encouraged by Uganda as have UN logistical support and financial support to AMISOM and the AU RTF.

Resistance in the Military: There is limited resistance in the military for peacekeeping at all levels. The senior leadership sees peacekeeping as a policy tool but also as career

development for senior officers, an enhancer of professionalization of the military and police, and crucially, a way of providing experience to, and preoccupying, the armed forces. The majority of the troops are keen to deploy to peace operations given the financial benefits and career opportunities.

Part 5: Current Challenges and Issues

There are several challenges and issues that could constrain Ugandan peacekeeping efforts. Regional security threats could occupy the UPDF for national defense purposes to the detriment of regional and international peacekeeping. Uganda [declined to deploy to Mali](#), claiming that the UPDF is over stretched. Escalating conflict in South Sudan led to a UPDF unilateral intervention in December 2013. Various anti-Kampala armed groups still operate in neighboring countries such as the LRA, but also ADF/NALU in DRC. [Instability in CAR, DRC, and South Sudan](#) has meant that UPDF has either intervened directly or been deployed along the borders with these states. Further regional instability could impact on Uganda's security and mean that domestic or unilateral deployments would be prioritized over peace operations.

Growing terrorism in East Africa from *al-Shabaab*, *al-Qa-ida*, the ADF and affiliates along with future terrorist attacks within Uganda could hinder future peace operations, especially to missions such as AMISOM that are seen to be part of the "Global War on Terror." Although the Kampala bombs detonated by *al-Shabaab* in 2010 only strengthened the resolve of the government to support AMISOM, future attacks could lead government officials and the public to question Ugandan presence in Somalia and future peacekeeping deployments generally. In a similar vein, national issues such as a growing and more violently active opposition and public order management could constrain police deployments to peacekeeping in the future although this is unlikely in the short term.

Part 6: Key champions and opponents

The military leadership, including the President, is extremely proud of UPDF peacekeepers and peace operations have become part of the role of the military. Some senior military and police officials have occupied Force Commander, Contingent Commander and other senior roles and have seen the benefits in terms of their own career development. However these same officials are more hesitant to deploy large numbers of peacekeepers to UN missions, which are seen as bureaucratic, ineffective, "Euro-centric," and serving Western interests.

Part 7: Capabilities and Caveats

As a former guerilla liberation movement still transitioning to a national armed force, the UPDF is extremely capable in the areas of infantry, intelligence and Special Forces. Deemed one of the best by donors in terms of African peacekeeping capability, the UPDF is highly regarded within and outside of Africa, and justifiably so given the successful operations conducted in Somalia and elsewhere. At the same time, donors also have concerns over a small number of [corruption scandals](#) involving UPDF in mission environments. Other areas of capability include Senior Mission Leadership, mission planning, logistics, CIMIC and police (Uganda for instance deployed the first Formed Police Unit to AMISOM in 2012). Although [there are far fewer women than men in uniform](#) they are not discriminated against in terms of deploying to peace operations. Both the UPDF and the national police have capable women in uniform at all levels. The Ministry of Defence is also staffed with capable civilian civil servants in support of defense priorities. A major shortcoming is the lack of attack helicopters (only 1 is operational out of 3). This is partly due to an accident where

[three Ugandan helicopters crashed](#) around the Mt Kenya area en route to Somalia in August 2012. Lack of strategic lift is also a major shortcoming.

Part 8: Further Reading

- Fisher, Jonathan, "Managing Donor Perceptions: Contextualizing Uganda's 2007 Intervention in Somalia," *African Affairs*, 111/444 (2012): 404-23.
- Stefan Lindemann, "Just another change of guard? Broad-based politics and civil war in Museveni's Uganda," *African Affairs* 110, 440 (2011): 387-416.
- Koen Vlassenroot, Sandrine Perrot & Jeroen Cuvelier, "Doing business out of war. An analysis of the UPDF's presence in the Democratic Republic of Congo," *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 6:1 (2012): 2-21.
- Mwenda, Andrew and Roger Tangri, "Military Corruption & Ugandan Politics since the late 1990s," *Review of African Political Economy*, 30:98, (2003): 539-552.
- Williams, Paul, D. "Fighting for Peace in Somalia: AMISOM's Seven Strategic Challenges," *Journal of International Peacekeeping*, 17:3-4 (2013): 222-247.

Notes

¹ Unless otherwise stated, data is drawn from IISS, *The Military Balance 2014* (London: IISS/Routledge, 2014).

² Armed Forces Spending is a country's annual defense budget (in US dollars) divided by the total number of active armed forces. Using figures from IISS, *The Military Balance 2014*.

³ Author's communication with Member of Parliament, Kampala, January 2014

⁴ For an analysis of African states motivations for PSO see Victor, Jonah (2010) African peacekeeping in Africa: Warlord politics, defense economics, and state legitimacy. *Journal of Peace Research* 47(2): 217-229.

⁵ Author's communication with senior UPDF officer, Kampala, January 2014

⁶ Author's communication with Senior Political Affairs Officer, Security Council Affairs Division, UN, New York, November 2012 & Diplomat, UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office, London, July 2012

⁷ Fisher, "Managing Donor Perceptions," p.15

⁸ Yoweri Museveni, *Sowing the Mustard Seed* (London: McMillan, 1997).