

Japan's Contributions to UN Peacekeeping Operations in Southern Africa. The Quest for Peace or Prestige?

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This paper aims

- To provide an assessment of Japan's engagement and contributions to UN PKO in Southern Africa
- Explain how the promotion of peace-related policies in Africa may improve the states' level of influence, attraction, and reputation within the international community.

The need for Engagement with Peace and Security in Africa

- Heritage of Colonialism
- Collapse of State Institutions
- Disputes over natural resources (armed conflict, mercenaries, warlords, militias, child soldiers).
- Influx of Weapons from Eastern Europe and other regions.
- Response by international community is by sending in peacekeeping troops

The importance of UN Peacekeeping in Africa

- The unipolar structure of the international system provides significant incentives for conflict.
- Unipolar disengagement with Africa, current Asia Pivot reaffirms that.
- 53 countries in Africa are home to an active conflict or a recently ended one.
- Key role of international institutions such as UN, in terms of promoting peace and security in Africa

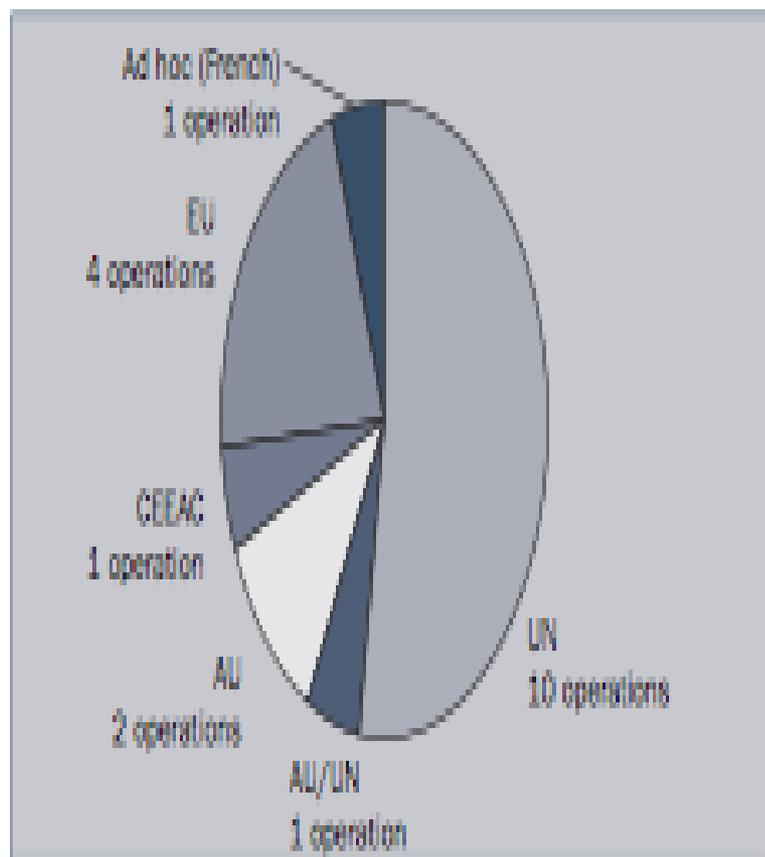


Figure 1. Number of peace operations in Africa, by conducting organization, 2008

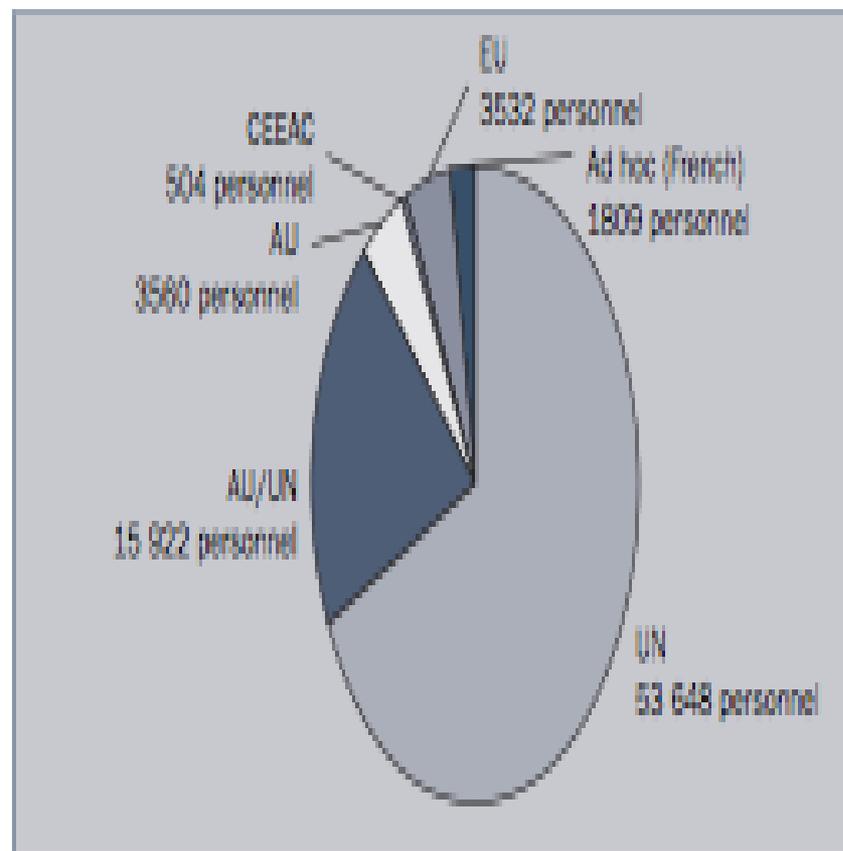
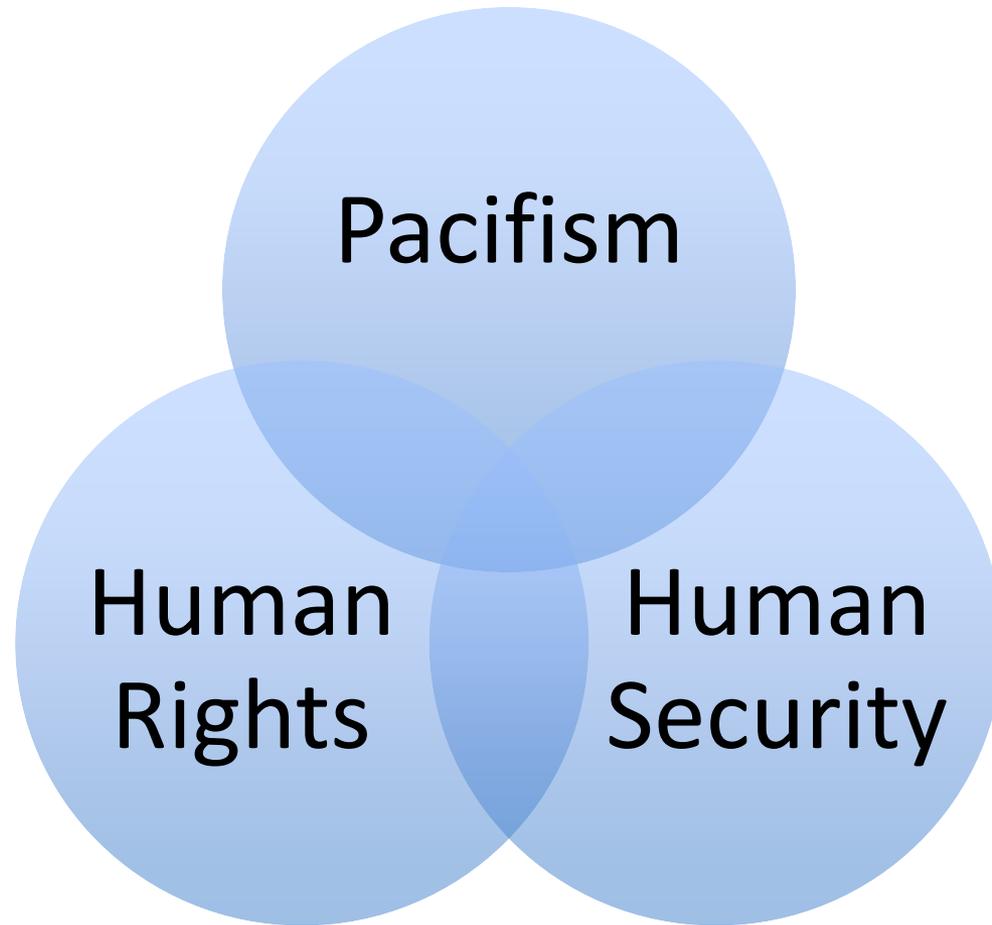


Figure 2. Number of personnel deployed to peace operations in Africa, by conducting organization, 2008

Why the promotion of international peace and security in states' foreign policies agendas?

- Soft Power and Nation Branding– Promoting Peace and Human Rights strongly affects the preference of others, benefitting from the trends of the new global information age. Promoting a unique ideology which confers a National brand.
- Relative advantages on negotiations and voting in multilateral institutions.
- Promotion of Peace – key words “Engagement” and “Effectiveness”

The uniqueness of Japan's political values



Japanese Constitution

“We, the Japanese people, desire **peace** for all time (...), and we have determined to preserve our security and existence, trusting in the justice and faith of the peace-loving peoples of the world. **We desire to occupy an honored place in an international society striving for the preservation of peace, and the banishment of tyranny and slavery, oppression and intolerance** for all time from the earth. We recognize that **all peoples of the world have the right to live in peace, free from fear and want.**”

Japanese Constitution and Policymaking

- Article 9: *“Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes. In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized.”*
- Security and Defense Policy: 3 Non-nuclear Principles (Not to Possess, Manufacture or Introduce Nuclear Weapons).
- Prohibition of Collective Defense, ban on arms exports.
1% GDP Limit on Defense spending.

International Peace Cooperation Structure

- 1992 Law – Controversy due to the possible use of force.
- 3 Pillars: UN PKO, Humanitarian Op., Election Observation Op.
- 5 Principles: 1) Agreement on cease-fire, 2) Consent, 3) Impartiality, 4) Suspension if the criteria are not respected, 5) limitation on the use of weapons.
- Unique Decision making process – Creation of the Peace Cooperation HQ and Secretariat under direct supervision of the PM. Outside the structure of the Mo Defense.

2011 Interim Report Study Group on Japan's PKO

“With the further strengthening of international interdependency (...) even a country geographically far removed from Japan has substantial political and economic impacts on Japan's national interests. (...) if the situation becomes unstable in the Middle East or Africa, (...) will have an enormous adverse effects on Japan”

Japan initial engagement with PKO

- Southern Africa: Angola, Mozambique, Rwanda.
- 1992: Cambodia 600 SDF.
- 1992: Angola - 3 elections observers.
- UNAVEM II observed and verified the presidential and legislative elections held in Angola on September 29 and 30, 1992

ONUMOZ - Mozambique

- More than 144 SDF – 3 Movement Control Units.
- Staff officers in Maputo, Matola, and Beira HQ, to plan and coordinate transport operations, etc.
- 15 election observers.
- The mission was largely ignored in Japan.

Rwandan Refugee Relief Mission

- 283 members of the Ground SDF.
- Medical activities, helped building roads at refugee camps and provided logistic support.
- Air SDF unit transported Japanese, UNHCR, NGO personnel and supplies, between Nairobi in Kenya and Goma in the former Zaire.
- **2006** – at the request of the UN, Japan sent to the **DRC** 13 election observers, that mainly worked in Kinshasa. This was the last Peace Cooperation engagement of Japan with the Southern African region.

2011 Diplomatic Bluebook Japan

“Japan provided election support and dispatched election observation teams to support the democratization process in such countries as Burundi and Tanzania. In addition, Japan continued to provide support for peacekeeping operations (PKO) training centers in Africa, to increase the peacekeeping capability of African countries”.

Conclusion I

- UN peacekeeping operations continue to be undertaken with caution and deliberation.
- Southern African Region – Japan’s Lack of commitment and engagement – DRC – MONUSCO.
- Africa is not a priority for Japanese National Interest. “Africa is the last continent we have to concentrate in. Other actors are giving more resources to Africa and it is increasingly difficult to compete with them” (Japanese Official).

Conclusion II

- Japanese society doesn't have enough information about Africa.
- Japanese Media - "Sakoku (Isolation) Syndrome".
Marginalization of Africa.
- Political Science and International Relations Scholars also don't focus on Africa.
- Considerable lack of assertiveness and effective commitment with peace and security within the Southern African region and Africa in general.

Conclusion III

- The need for Japan to seek more international prestige and reputation, needs to be accompanied by an effective engagement and assertiveness – active role in the DRC.
- The neo-isolationist trends in the Japanese society need to be eliminated, while promoting an engagement with international affairs and African issues.
- Engaging with Peace and Security in Africa, it's essential for Japan to reaffirm its unique set of principles.