

Contributor Profile: New Zealand

Dr. B.K. Greener
Massey University

Active armed forces ¹	Helicopters	Defense Budget	Uniformed Peacekeepers	UN Contribution Breakdown	Other Significant Deployments
Global Rank (size): 123rd Total: 9,249 Army 4,647 Navy 2,149 AirForce 2,453 <u>Reserves:</u> Army: 1,722 Navy: 459 Air Force: 237 <u>Civilians</u> 2,865	31 Maritime: 5 Transport: 26 (8 Medium; 18 light)	2016: US\$2.58bn (1.4% of GDP) 2015: US\$2.42bn (1.2% of GDP) 2014: US\$3.19bn (1.59% of GDP) 2013: US\$2.71bn (1.48% of GDP) Global Rank (Budget): 47th	11 (0 women) (31 Dec. 2017) Ranking: 101st	UNTSO: 7 experts UNMISS: 4 (3 experts, 1 staff officer)	Afghanistan: 10 trainers CMF (Djibouti): up to 60 personnel MFO (Middle East): 28; 1 training unit; 1 transport unit UNCMAC (Korea): 3 observers Antarctica: 6xyear support flights. Iraq: approximately 140 trainers.
Defense spending/troop: \$278,949					

Part 1: Recent Trends

New Zealand's contribution to UN peace operations peaked in 2001 in Timor-Leste. Military personnel contributed to the multi-national International Force for East Timor (INTERFET), the UN Mission in Timor (UNMIT) peacekeeping force, and later to the non-UN-led International Security Force (ISF). Naval assets, C-130 Hercules aircraft, Iroquois helicopters, an infantry battalion, military observers and training advisers were deployed. New Zealand Police (NZPOL) also contributed to UNTAET and UNMIT and bilateral community policing arrangements. Outside of the Timor context, however, New Zealand's recent contributions to UN missions have been minor. Small scale contributions to Iraq, Afghanistan, Korea, Sudan/South Sudan and the Middle East have typically involved military observers sent in ones or twos. Larger deployments have instead been sent to non-UN-led missions that have taken precedence.

Gaining a UNSC seat in 2015 raised expectations of an increased engagement in UN peace operations but instead then-Prime Minister John Key expressly said that the small contributions currently made were 'about right' and numbers have indeed remained static – with New Zealand's Foreign Minister Murray McCully at the time in 2017 stating that New Zealand had 'avoided' UN missions because the UN had failed to implement recommendations from Jose Ramos Horta's Review of Peace operations and therefore did not have "the sort of professionalism and the sort of safety mechanisms we would expect with regard to New Zealand service people". The election of a new Labour-led coalition government in late 2017 may see this trend change, as Labour has emphasised that it will seek to reinvalidate New Zealand's commitment to multilateralism.



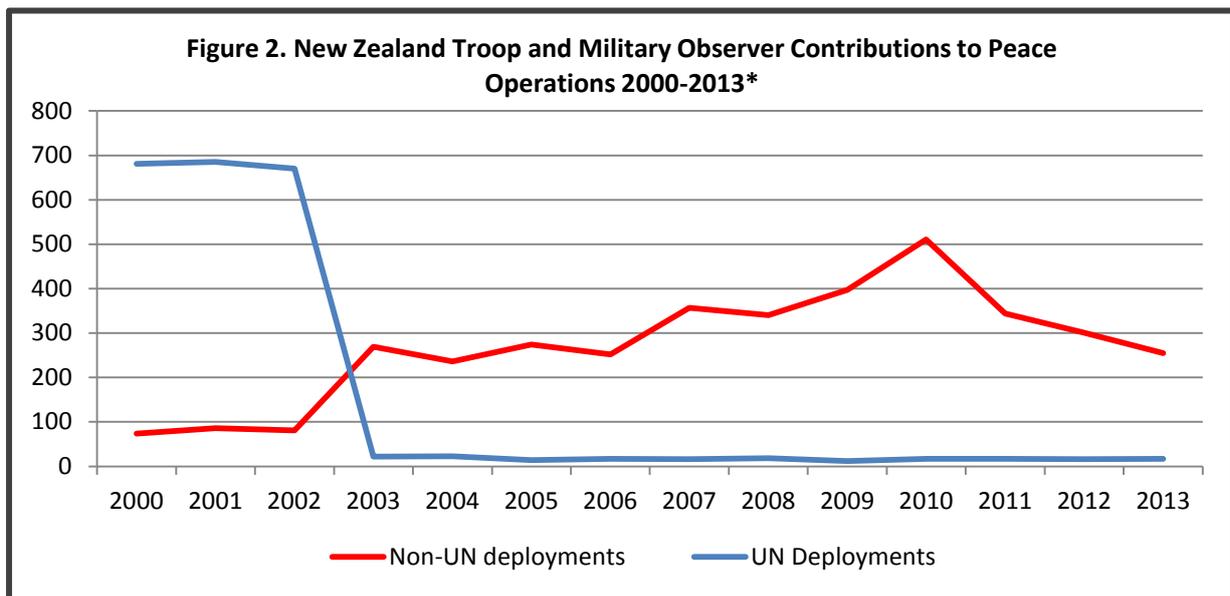
In terms of peacekeeping efforts since Timor, numerically the Regional Assistance Mission Solomon Islands (RAMSI) has been New Zealand's most significant recent mission. The initial contribution consisted of 35 NZPOL personnel, an Army Infantry company, support personnel, engineers, a medical, civil and humanitarian assistance element and four RNZAF Bell UH-1 Iroquois helicopters. Another rifle company and 30 more police were deployed for a few months in 2006 when riots flared after Parliamentary elections, though for the most part NZDF engagement hovered between 30 and 50 personnel. In mid-2013 the last military contingents left the country, leaving a few civilian and police personnel in advisory positions. Other relevant missions in the region include ongoing engagement in Bougainville through Community Policing Programmes (typically involving 7 NZPOL personnel) after unarmed NZDF personnel had deployed to Bougainville in helping restore peace in the late 1990s. 72 NZDF and two NZPOL personnel also deployed in response to riots and civil disorder in Tonga from 18 November to 2 December 2006.

New Zealand also contributed to reconstruction efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan on the basis of UN Security Council resolutions. The New Zealand government contributed a small (approximately 60 strong) engineering and support force for reconstruction purposes under UN Security Council Resolution 1483, and liaison and staff officers remained in Baghdad working with coalition forces. More recently, New Zealand began to send military trainers to work alongside Australian counterparts in Camp Taji in May 2015 in a two-year [Building Partner Capacity mission](#) to aid in the fight against ISIL at the direct behest of the Iraqi Foreign Minister. Part of the rationale for engagement was that it reflected the NZDF's commitment to serving the national security interest (NZDF 2016: 6) but it was also important that the UNSC had urged member states to help as ISIL was deemed "[an unprecedented threat to international peace and security](#)". As of late 2017 New Zealand personnel had been involved in the training of more than 28,000 Iraqi troops and the mission has been [extended](#) until at least November 2018.

In Afghanistan, in April 2013 the last of New Zealand's main military contribution was withdrawn. This had been a significant mission, with 21 rotations of approximately 140

personnel occurring over the years 2003-13, and with over 3,500 personnel serving in Afghanistan over the course of that decade (around a third of all personnel). In 2013 a three-person logistical support team, five additional transport and human resources personnel, bespoke transport and freight support by the RNZAF, and four staff officers and a driver remained in Kabul at NATO HQ with one NZDF officer working with UNAMA as a Military Liaison Officer (MLO). This has been drawn down to ten NZDF trainers remaining at the National Afghan Training Academy in Kabul, where, [as of late 2017](#), an estimated 3000 Afghan National Army cadets had graduated. New Zealand police from the [International Services Group](#) also helped provide advice to senior ANP officers and undertook ‘train the trainers’ programmes at the Regional Training Centre from 2005 until 2012, involving a total of 53 personnel. Significantly, civilian personnel are also increasingly engaged in peace and stability operations. The Deputy Special Coordinator of RAMSI was typically seconded from the Ministry of Defence (MoD) or Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT), a civilian took over the PRT in Bamiyan in 2010, and [recent exercises](#) have emphasised a whole-of-government approach to future peace operations.

Most recently the NZDF has begun to engage with the [Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre](#), providing trainers for the first time in 2015. Anti-piracy efforts through contributions to the Combined Maritime Force in the Middle East also continue constitute a fairly significant effort – utilising air assets (particularly the P-3K2 Orion aircraft) as well as more than 60 staff. Again, though, these sit outside mainstream, traditional UN peace operations and in 2017 New Zealand ranked a lowly [101st](#) in terms of contributions to UN missions despite holding a UN Security Council seat from 2015-16.



Part 2: Decision-Making Process

Ultimate decision-making authority sits with the Prime Minister with approval by Cabinet. On November 19, 2011, in recognition of the increasingly multi-agent nature of complex peace operations, the New Zealand Cabinet approved a more systematic whole-of-government approach to engaging in peace support operations. Coordination is provided through the [Officials Committee for Defence and External Security Coordination \(ODESC\)](#) which is charged with providing cross-ministerial strategic policy advice on security and intelligence matters. ODESC consists of: Chief Executives from Foreign Affairs and Trade; the Defence Force; the Ministry of Defence and the New Zealand Secret Intelligence Service;

the Government Communications Security Bureau; NZPOL; the Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management; Treasury, and others when required.

In response to its deployments to the Solomon Islands, Timor Leste and Afghanistan, the New Zealand Government developed four criteria on which to base decisions about future deployments to peace operations:

- strategic implications of the operation, including its effect on security, the humanitarian situation and New Zealand's relationships with other countries;
- the nature of the mission – the legality of the proposed mission and mandate under international law;
- repercussions for New Zealand agencies involved in the proposed peace support operation; and
- whether New Zealand can assist the fragile or post-conflict state in other ways.

A [2014 review](#) of Peacekeeping Operations by the Cabinet External Relations and Defence Committee mulled over previous lessons learned and called for either the status quo to continue or for a more targeted approach by the New Zealand government whereby New Zealand could actively seek out missions that align with New Zealand's strategic directives. In this document, the South Pacific remained a priority for action, and the document called for Cabinet to consider whether or not UN missions represented "a useful contribution to New Zealand's foreign policy goals" and/or contributed to "New Zealand's broader national or international strategic interests and objectives" (p4). Since this review, and since engagement on the UNSC, New Zealand's contributions have remained static.

In processing UN requests for contributions where New Zealand has the capability to respond an interdepartmental process is initiated whereby a joint MFAT/Defence and sometimes Police paper (formulated with input from the Permanent Mission) is to put to relevant Ministers, together with the Prime Minister. This paper provides advice as to how the request measures up against the agreed criteria for such missions. Once the Government has decided to engage in a peace support operation it then informs Parliament, and has often requested and received a formal parliamentary vote for support in undertaking a peace operation. If the Government commands a majority in Parliament, however, there is no requirement for formal Parliamentary approval.

Part 3: Rationales for Contributing

Political Rationales: UN and non-UN peacekeeping contributions are believed by all political sides to strengthen New Zealand's international influence and help build relationships with like-minded countries. It is also seen as a way for New Zealand to maintain a tradition of being a "good international citizen." New Zealand's 2016 Defence White paper discusses New Zealand's 'longstanding support' for the UN and asserts that "New Zealand actively supports the rules based international order through its support for institutions and arrangements that reinforce global stability, including the United Nations" ([2016: 4](#)). However this is weaker than the preceding White Paper of 2010 which emphasised that "New Zealand will continue to be looked to by the UN as a troop-contributing nation," and that the UN "is the principal source of legitimacy for the use of force in international affairs, either through UN led operations or through operations authorised by the UN but led by others" ([2010: 18](#)). Recent years have seen more of an emphasis on rebuilding relationships with the USA, with strengthening long-standing relationships with countries such as Australia,

Singapore and Malaysia, and with seeking to engage with newer partners such as China ([Defence White Paper 2016](#)).

Economic Rationales: These are not significant. UN reimbursements do not cover the full costs to New Zealand of contributing personnel and equipment.

Security Rationales: Security rationales do not play a significant role. Given New Zealand's geographical isolation there is little risk of refugee flows or other threats at times associated with armed conflict overseas. However, New Zealand's reliance on trade and secure trade routes for export is held up as a reason for ensuring peace and stability at a regional and international level.

Institutional Rationales: Institutional considerations play some part in New Zealand's decisions to contribute to peace operations but only in the sense that previous governments, particularly the Clark government (1990-1999), sought to emphasize the centrality of peacekeeping to the *raison d'être* of New Zealand's armed forces. This emphasis on peacekeeping in part continues as it presents a palatable picture to the New Zealand population in helping justify military budgets and capabilities. However, this does not restrict the NZDF to engagement only in UN missions. The apparent success of some non-UN-led missions such as that undertaken in the Solomon Islands does underscore the belief that other vehicles – albeit those consistent with the UN framework – may be just as legitimate and arguably more efficient. This latter concern has been reinforced recently by the 2017 statements by then-Foreign Minister McCully noted at the start of this brief.

Normative Rationales: These are the most significant reasons for New Zealand's engagement in UN operations. New Zealand has long viewed itself as a “good international citizen,” and its politicians have touted stronger roles for the UN within international society since its inception. Support for the UN is a key element of foreign policy for all New Zealand political parties, and is accepted among the population at large. The gaining of a UNSC seat in 2015 was [widely publicised](#) and touted as a great achievement for New Zealand, and a number of [commentators](#) in New Zealand have advocated for increased engagement in UN operations. Declared priorities included UN reform and a desire to overcome institutional paralysis, with some [claimed success](#). However, increasing engagement UN peacekeeping has not occurred.

Part 4: Barriers to Contributing

Alternative political or strategic priorities: Some politicians and military officers view bilateral relations with Australia, renewed relations with the US after a twenty-year hiatus in most defence and intelligence cooperation, and strengthening relations with other Asia-Pacific powers as more important priorities than peacekeeping. The contribution to Afghanistan reflected a political decision to help further the thawing of relations with the US and placed limitations on other possible deployments at the time. However, the UN retains an important position in public opinion which is reflected in publically stated political priorities. Moreover, apart from trans-Tasman relations, other bilateral relations can be contentious, with remaining wariness about overly-close relations with either the US (particularly under Trump) or China evident, although efforts are increasing made to engage more with both countries.

Alternative institutional preferences for crisis management: The UN is still perceived as a potential vehicle for action and it would be difficult for New Zealand to make contributions to actions that lack a UN mandate. However, particularly if they are UN-mandated,

alternative institutional options for action may be preferred because they are perceived by some within the NZDF to be more efficient and effective. Due to size and resource constraints, New Zealand is unlikely to operate unilaterally, although there are suggestions that New Zealand could provide the lead in smaller Pacific deployments as outlined in key defence documents.

Financial costs: For decades New Zealand's defense documents have highlighted the lack of direct threat to New Zealand, limiting New Zealand's capacity to contribute to peacekeeping in part because of the small defense budget and size of its armed forces. Defense issues as a whole do not elicit significant public interest, and other issues gain political priority, thereby impacting upon budget allocation and the ability to contribute to all peace operations. Modest increases have occurred in recent years, and, although a recent pledge by an outgoing government to [provide \\$20billion dollars](#) for renewing obsolete equipment is unlikely to eventuate, there will be some significant investments made in the near future.

Discomfort with the expanding UN peacekeeping agenda: This is less of a relevant factor because the values that underpin the contemporary UN peacekeeping agenda, in particular the move towards a more robust and comprehensive approach, are commensurate with New Zealand's approach. Although New Zealand's current contributions have remained small in number this is not necessarily due to the expanding of the UN's peace and security agenda though could potentially be in an indirect manner if that broadening of approach has not been met with increased safety mechanisms as per McCully's statements.

Difficult domestic politics: There is little discussion about defense and security matters within the public domain, as demonstrated by the fact that such matters [did not feature](#) as major policy issues in the recent 2017 general elections. UN peacekeeping is generally viewed in a positive light by all sides in domestic politics. It is unclear, however, as to how much that goodwill would last if New Zealand sustained significant casualties in a UN peacekeeping operation.

Resistance in the military: The Clark government of the 1990s reoriented much of the NZDF's capabilities towards peacekeeping priorities. The NZDF as an institution is not resistant to taking on UN peacekeeping duties, and many of its "principal tasks" refer obliquely to this. There is, however, some scepticism about the efficiency and quality of the UN as an operational manager, born largely from experience in Timor Leste. Exercises have tended to focus on coalition-type arrangements.

Logistical obstacles: New Zealand currently relies heavily on its partners, such as Australia, in terms of the provision of logistical assistance, particularly when working outside of the South Pacific. This is unlikely to change in the near future in terms of projected capabilities, although a recent emphasis on jointness may ease some of these difficulties.

Part 5: Current Challenges and Issues

The outgoing National government continued to express continued support for UN missions. This was given fresh impetus by New Zealand's seat on the Security Council and prior to admittance of concerns about professionalism and safety, Foreign Minister Murray McCully [has particularly emphasized](#) the role New Zealand has played, and can play, in the Pacific in providing for security and development, and "strongly supported" the reform of UN peacekeeping. However the National government tended to suggest that enough was being done, and that New Zealand would focus on [filling specialist roles](#). The new Labour-New

Zealand First-Greens government is potentially more likely to engage in UN missions. In pre-election manifestos: 1) Labour emphasised a focus on rule of law, human rights (including an emphasis on gender rights) disaster relief, and peacebuilding; 2) NZ First emphasised rebuilding relationships with old allies, HADR and combat roles, whilst, 3) the Greens strongly support the UN and peacekeeping. However, no official policy directives have as of yet indicated what the new government is likely to do in the face of UN requests for any new contributions to missions.

One factor still likely to impinge upon contributions to UN peacekeeping is finances. In 2010 a [Value For Money](#) report required the NZDF to make significant savings (two hundred million dollars annually), but some pressures have since eased. The new Government is likely to have to make significant choices to help replace a number of the NZDF's major assets: strategic lift aircraft (Hercules), long-range maritime patrol (Orions) and the New Zealand Navy's ANZAC frigates, to name a few. In terms of other agencies, NZPOL too has a limited budget for international activity and, in particular, does not have a set budget stream for international peacekeeping deployments, but Labour has indicated an interest in creating a new [ready reaction disaster response](#) capability which may add relevant capabilities.

New Zealand has had three major deployments wind down fairly recently. A 2014 review of peace operations not only emphasised the possibilities for a more proactive response, but it also asks Cabinet to ensure missions are compatible with international law, that mandates are achievable, that New Zealand has an exit strategy, to ask if there is a chance to build relationships with current or potentially new defence partners, and to ascertain whether or not there is a chance to consider an increased use of non-NZDF assets for use in peace operations. A whole of government approach is an ideal represented by the notion of 'NZInc'. Although the ideal of seamless coordination has not as of yet been achieved, there have been relevant efforts ongoing such as those to improve police-military-civilian cooperation through Civil Military Interactive Workshops initiated in [2011](#) and repeated in [2013](#) and through engagement with the NGO community, including regular instances of MFAT outreach about UNSC priorities throughout 2015 and 2016. Military exercises such as New Zealand's largest, Southern Katipo, have also seen the NZDF work alongside agencies such as Health, MFAT, Customs and Police as well as local and international NGOs.

Part 6: Key Champions and Opponents

New Zealand has very small academic and policy communities. Within these communities many are UN advocates, including regular public commentators such as Terence O'Brien and Colin Keating, former Ambassadors to the UN when New Zealand last held a Security Council seat in 1993-94. [The New Zealand UN Association](#) is active, with a presence even in smaller cities, and most high schools run model United Nations Assemblies. Political parties including National, Labour, the Greens, and even the relatively-nationalistic NZ First party all support engagement in UN peace operations. Public debate on UN peace operations is somewhat limited, but this is perhaps reflective of this bipartisan approach as well as the general lack of discussions about international peace and security issues more broadly construed. The main think tanks that provide commentary on relevant issues are: the [Centre for Strategic Studies at Victoria University](#), Wellington; the University of Otago's [National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies](#); and Massey University's [Centre for Defence and Security Studies](#), which typically support engagement in UN operations, as noted in various submissions to the Defence White Paper process of 2010. A 2015 addition in the form of Victoria University's [Incline blog](#) has provided a useful new venue for timely public

commentary on defence and security matters, whilst Massey's new Security, Politics and Development Network (SPDN) will seek to facilitate collaboration and to disseminate research.

There are no consistently outspoken opponents to making contributions to UN peacekeeping, although some minor political parties, such as the libertarian ACT Party, may be more sceptical about UN engagement if such engagement is considered too costly or not in the national interest.

Part 7: Capabilities and Caveats

The most useful NZDF assets for mobility include helicopters, five Hercules C-130s, two B757s, 105 LAVs (some fitted with additional armor for deployment to Afghanistan) and 300-plus Pinzgauers as well as a range of vessels for the Navy – a multi-role vessel (MPV) and 2 Offshore Patrol Vessels (OPVs) adding utility in the Pacific in addition to the Navy's two ANZAC class frigates. The Joint Amphibious Task Force concept was, until fairly recently, a key focus. It was intended to allow for the simultaneous deployment of a network-enabled Light Task Group and Combined Arms Task group with sealift, airlift, land transport, and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance. However, the JATF concept has been overtaken somewhat by a broader interest in and emphasis on jointness across the three services in general.

One of the units with a very high operational tempo in the NZDF is the engineering corps. Frequently deployed in mine clearance operations and to the Pacific for reconstruction work, as well as to a variety of tasks in contemporary peace operations, these personnel are also often joined by logistical experts and medical teams (particularly dentistry, again in the Pacific). The NZSAS is similarly in high demand for its reconnaissance capabilities. Military Police (MPs) are small in number but have provided useful skills in close protection and investigation work when deployed offshore and are relatively "civilianised", whilst New Zealand also prides itself on the work of its Military Observers.

The NZPOL International Service Group (ISG) is the point of contact for international police deployments. Lacking a standing pool of personnel, NZPOL must rotate police officers out of their home districts to use offshore. This does mean, however, that the community policing role advocated by NZPOL is consistently practiced in a home environment by those sent to train the trainers in PSOs. NZPOL has also been particularly engaged in victim identification (such as in Aceh after the Tsunami).

The NZDF is comprised of [approximately 17% females](#) (when civilians are excluded); NZPOL almost 20%. There is an effort within NZPOL in particular to look to deploy female police officers in response to calls from the UN to address gender imbalances in contributions to peace operations, and the NZDF is [currently emphasising](#) the need to increase its intake of female recruits. Army, in particular, has faced problems with recruiting and retaining women over the last few years. All government institutions may be impacted by the October 2015 formulation of a [National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security](#). However this has also been criticised as a somewhat [belated effort](#) from New Zealand given its claimed emphasis on addressing inequalities. [Recent reports](#) of sexual assault shine a light on the need to continue to address issues of SEA, and the NZDF's [Operation RESPECT](#) seeks to tackle both SEA and domestic violence issues within the organisation.

Part 8: Further Reading

- Ayson, R. (2004), “New Zealand: Armed to Make a Difference?” in L. Elliott & G. Cheeseman (eds.), *Forces for Good: Cosmopolitan Militaries in the Twenty-First Century* (Manchester University Press), pp.250-262.
- Cabinet External and Defence Relations Committee of New Zealand (2014) [Peace Support Operations Review](#).
- Capie, C. (2012), “[Peacekeeping, Te Ara – The Encyclopedia of New Zealand](#)”, updated 9 November.
- Greener, B.K. ed. (2017), [Army Fundamentals: From Making Soldiers to the Limits of the Military Instrument](#). Auckland: Massey University Press.
- Greener, P. (2009), [Timing is Everything: The Politics and Processes of New Zealand Defence Acquisition Decision Making](#) (ANU SDSC).
- NZDF (2016), Defence Capability Plan. As found at <http://www.nzdf.mil.nz/downloads/pdf/public-docs/2016/defence-capability-plan-2016.pdf> accessed 12/11/2017.
- New Zealand Government. (2010). [Defence White Paper](#).
- New Zealand Government. (2015). [National Action Plan on Women Peace and Security](#).
- New Zealand Government. (2016). [Defence White Paper](#).
- Rolfe, J. (2007). [Cutting their Cloth: New Zealand's Defence Strategy](#) (Australian Strategic Policy Institute).

Notes

¹ NZDF data from 2017 in the first and last column are available at <http://www.nzdf.mil.nz/what-we-do/personnel-composition.htm>. Unless otherwise stated, all other data is drawn from the IISS, *The Military Balance 2017* (London: IISS/Routledge, 2017) or preceding volumes of *The Military Balance*.

*Data for Figure 2 is drawn from *The Military Balance 2000-2015*, with incomplete information on contributions to the Regional Assistance Mission Solomon Islands for the years 2004-6 and for missing information on contributions to the UNCMAC in Korea supplemented from publically available NZDF numbers (such as those provided in the “Output Expense 16: Operationally Deployed Forces” in *NZDF Annual Reports*). These non-UN figures include “peace support” in Iraq from 2004-6 (mainly in the form of army engineers); Cambodian mine clearing and contributions to the Afghanistan PRT, amongst others.