



Highlights of [GAO-06-331](#), a report to the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, Committee on International Relations, House of Representatives

### Why GAO Did This Study

The UN employs about 85,000 military and civilian personnel in peacekeeping operations in 16 countries. The United States has provided about \$1 billion annually to support UN peacekeeping operations. In addition, the United States has led and participated in many such operations. UN reports and congressional hearings have raised concerns about accountability for UN peacekeeping operations and the need for reforms.

We were asked to provide information relating to the cost and relative strengths of UN and U.S. peacekeeping. In particular, we have (1) compared the cost of the ongoing UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti with the cost that the United States would have incurred had an operation been deemed in the U.S. national interest and undertaken without UN involvement; (2) analyzed factors that could materially affect the estimated costs of a U.S. operation; and (3) identified the strengths of the United States and the UN for leading the operation.

We developed our cost estimate of a U.S.-led operation using cost models from the Departments of Defense and State. The estimate is based on various military assumptions, such as the use of primarily active duty troops. It includes only those costs directly attributable to the operation that would not otherwise be incurred.

[www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-06-331](http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-06-331).

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact Joseph A. Christoff at (202) 512-8979 or [christoffj@gao.gov](mailto:christoffj@gao.gov).

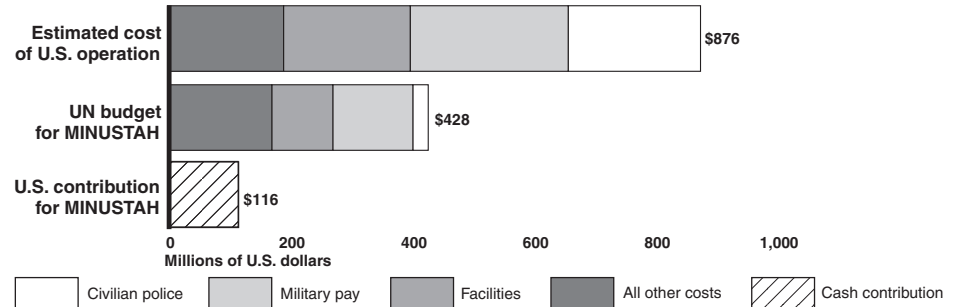
## PEACEKEEPING

# Cost Comparison of Actual UN and Hypothetical U.S. Operations in Haiti

### What GAO Found

We estimate that it would cost the United States about twice as much as the United Nations (UN) to conduct a peacekeeping operation similar to the current UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (designated "MINUSTAH"). The UN budgeted \$428 million for the first 14 months of this mission. A U.S. operation in Haiti of the same size and duration would cost an estimated \$876 million, far exceeding the U.S. contribution for MINUSTAH of \$116 million. Virtually all of the cost difference is attributable to (1) civilian police, (2) military pay and support, and (3) facilities, and reflects high U.S. standards for police training, troop welfare, and security.

Comparison of Cost Estimate for a U.S. Operation and UN MINUSTAH Budget



Source: GAO analysis of Department of Defense and State Department cost data.

Various military and nonmilitary factors can substantially affect the estimated costs of a U.S. operation. We analyzed three military factors: the mix of reserve and active duty troops, the rate of deployment, and the operational tempo. Deploying all reserve troops would increase the cost estimate by \$477 million, since it would require paying more reservists a full salary. Deploying troops at a faster rate than the UN—within the first 60 days instead of 180—would cost an additional \$60 million. Conducting the operation at a higher tempo—with more intensive use of vehicles and equipment—would increase estimated costs by \$23 million. In addition to military considerations, including nation-building and development assistance activities in the scope of the operation would increase the cost significantly. Official donors, including the United States, distributed \$382 million for these activities during the first year of MINUSTAH.

Cost is not the sole factor in determining whether the United States or the UN should lead an operation, and each offers strengths for this responsibility. U.S.-led operations in Haiti between 1994 and 2004 benefited from a vast military infrastructure, which provided strong communications, command and control, readiness to deploy, tactical intelligence, and public information. The UN's strengths include multinational participation, extensive peacekeeping experience, and an existing structure for coordinating nation-building activities. Complex political considerations are likely to influence decisions about the role of the United States and the UN in peacekeeping.