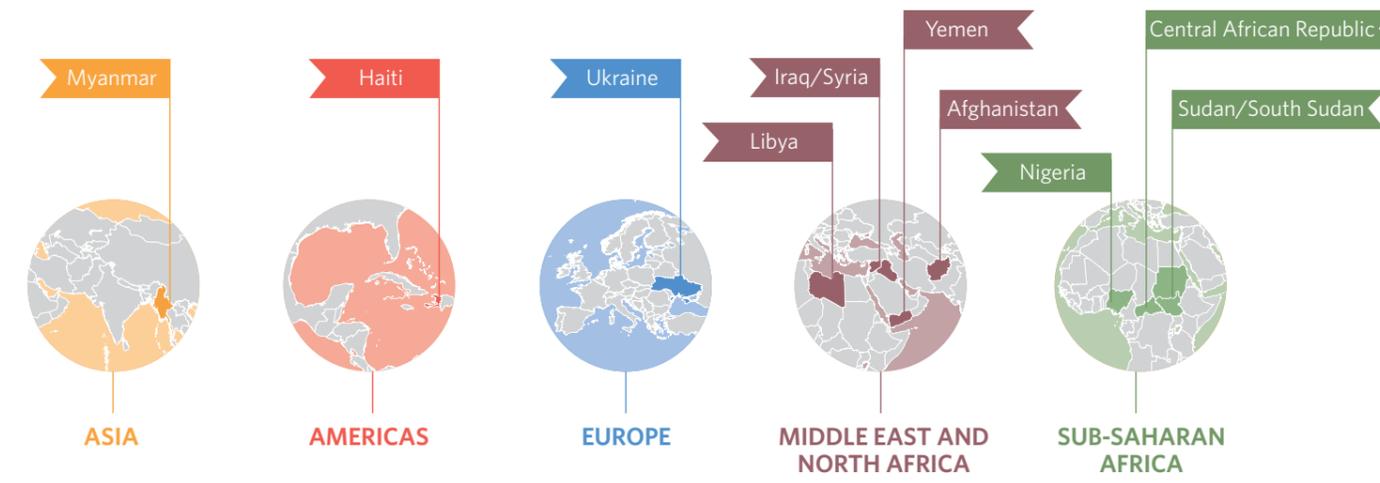


Keeping the peace

From Russia's annexation of Crimea to near-state collapse in Libya, over the last year the UN has needed to utilise every peacekeeping tool at its disposal. New World takes a closer look at 10 situations that will continue to command the UN's attention in 2015



N.B. budget figures for 2014 unless otherwise stated

Afghanistan

Though NATO combat operations have now ended, a resurgent Taliban continues to unleash violence across Afghanistan. Since the final withdrawal of Western forces at the end of 2014, the Afghan Army will be solely responsible for facing this threat (supported by a small NATO support mission of 12,000 personnel).

Fears that 2014's disputed election between Ashraf Ghani and Abdullah Abdullah would render Afghanistan unable to conclude a political transition were ultimately unfounded. But a key test will be the consolidation of a new unity government, formed in January, more than three months after a power-sharing deal was agreed.

- ★ Human Development Index 169/187
- 👤 Population 32 million

UN ENGAGEMENT: Established by the UN Security Council in 2002, the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) is a political mission mandated to support conflict resolution and political reconciliation efforts. It also oversees all UN relief, recovery and reconstruction activities in the country – in recent years over 30 different UN agencies and programmes have operated in Afghanistan.

During the 2014 election crisis, UNAMA was requested to assist in the audit of the contested June election results. The UN transported nearly 23,000 ballot boxes to the Kabul headquarters of the Independent Election Commission of Afghanistan and independently supervised the auditing of eight million ballot forms. This unprecedented process was planned with senior UN experts in accordance with international best practice in order to be comprehensive, meticulous and credible.

- UN UNAMA size 1,500 civilian staff, 14 military advisors, 2 police advisors
- 💰 UNAMA budget \$191m (the largest of the UN's political missions)
- 🗨️ Security Council statements in 2014 15

Central African Republic (CAR)

CAR has been blighted by various coups since gaining independence from France in 1960. The most recent of these occurred in March 2013 when Séléka rebels took over the capital, throwing the country into turmoil and displacing a fifth of the population.

Despite the eventual signing of a ceasefire agreement in July last year, sporadic violence has continued. 2015 looks set to be a crucial year for CAR's recovery, with a constitutional referendum and presidential and parliamentary elections all expected to take place by the deadline of August.

- ★ Human Development Index 185/187
- 👤 Population 5 million

UN ENGAGEMENT: In April 2014, the UN Security Council approved the creation of the Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in CAR (MINUSCA), with a peacekeeping force largely composed of "re-hatted" African Union (AU) troops from a pre-existing AU mission. The mission also subsumed the UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic, and is mandated to protect civilians, support the peace process and restore state authority.

The Security Council has recently renewed sanctions against all individuals in undermining the security situation in CAR, including travel bans and asset freezes. The UN mission has so far played a supporting role in the ceasefire talks, led by the Economic Community of Central African States, while the UN Development Programme has been tasked with coordinating the upcoming elections.

- UN MINUSCA size 7,400 troops, 1,125 police officers, 371 civilian staff
- 💰 MINUSCA budget \$250m over six months
- 🗨️ Security Council statements in 2014 15

Haiti

Dictatorships, poor infrastructure and severe natural disasters – most recently the 2010 earthquake and Hurricane Sandy in 2012 – have devastated Haiti since the 1950s. Promised but long-delayed elections have raised fears over a return to autocratic rule and sparked nationwide, violent protests in recent months. The political crisis has already resulted in the resignation of the Prime Minister, the dissolution of Parliament and the President ruling by decree, and the elections remain unscheduled.

- ★ Human Development Index 168/187
- 👤 Population 10 million

UN ENGAGEMENT: The UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) was created in 2004 to maintain stability when President Jean Bertrand Aristide was ousted in a coup. Though its mandate and troop numbers expanded in the aftermath of the earthquake to include reconstruction activities, troop numbers are now at their lowest-ever levels, and are due to be reduced by a further 50 per cent in 2015. Reflecting MINUSTAH's growing focus on training the Haitian National Police, this would be the first time a peacekeeping operation will have more police officers than military personnel. In January, the Security Council held its first visiting mission to Haiti since 2012, where they assessed MINUSTAH troop levels in light of the recent instability.

The mission has faced widespread criticism over its alleged involvement in a cholera outbreak which has killed over 8,500 people. In 2012, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon launched a 10-year cholera elimination campaign and appointed a Senior Coordinator for the Response to Cholera in Haiti to oversee the UN's response.

- UN MINUSTAH size 5,000 troops, 2,300 police, 1,600 civilian staff
- 💰 MINUSTAH budget \$500m
- 🗨️ Security Council statements in 2014 0

Iraq Syria

Beset by civil wars, sectarian strife and sharing a 600km border, it is difficult to consider Iraq and Syria in isolation from one another. In the last year, Iraq has seen the fall of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's government and a return to US-led air strikes. In Syria, the death toll from the four-year struggle between rebels and President Bashar al-Assad has surpassed 200,000, with no resolution in sight. Meanwhile the self-proclaimed Islamic State (IS) is seeking to establish a caliphate straddling the two countries. Signs are that IS will continue its violent campaign in 2015.

IRAQ	SYRIA
★ Human Development Index 120/187	★ Human Development Index 118/187
👤 Population 32 million	👤 Population 17 million

UN ENGAGEMENT: In both countries, the UN's political teams and humanitarian agencies have acted as a safety net for at-risk populations. The UN Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI) recently announced that the crisis in 2014 precipitated the highest casualty figures for over five years, with over 12,000 Iraqis killed. In Syria, the UN's Special Envoy, Staffan de Mistura, has been negotiating with both sides for a "freeze" in fighting in Aleppo to allow access for aid and to act as a starting point for a de-escalation of the conflict.

Both Iraq and Syria have garnered attention from the UN Security Council. While largely hamstrung by vetoes from Russia and China, it has taken action on some crucial issues, such as preventing foreign fighters from entering the region and removing Syria's chemical weapons.

- UN UNAMI size 900 civilian staff
- UN Syrian team size 80 civilian staff
- 💰 UNAMI budget \$138m
- 💰 Syrian team budget \$11m
- 🗨️ Security Council statements in 2014 21

Libya

During the UN-sanctioned intervention in 2011, many hoped that Libya would become a promising new democracy for the region. However, a proliferation of militia groups and weak interim governments have taken Libya to the brink of civil war. Unprecedented levels of violence have led to the closure of embassies and the suspension of flights to the country. Elections held in June 2014 (where turnout was just 18 per cent) resulted in rival parliaments and governments in Tripoli and Tobruk, with both claiming legitimacy. The involvement of neighbouring countries could have far-reaching consequences for the region in 2015.

- ★ Human Development Index 55/187
- 👤 Population 6 million

UN ENGAGEMENT: The UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) is mandated to oversee the country's transition to democracy, promote the rule of law, control unsecured arms and build the Government's capacity. The situation, however, at one point necessitated the temporary evacuation of UN staff when their base came under fire. The Security Council has threatened further sanctions should the unrest continue. As head of this political mission, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Bernardino León, has been acting as mediator between the rival factions. Talks convened by the UN in Geneva in January proposed steps for the formation of a unity government but were shunned by key members of the Tripoli faction, who demanded that the talks be held in Libya instead. The group did participate in a related ceasefire agreement with Libya's armed forces, however there has so far been little sign of an improvement in security on the ground. The next round of talks in February were due to be held inside the country.

- UN UNSMIL size 200 civilian staff
- 💰 UNSMIL budget \$63m
- 🗨️ Security Council statements in 2014 7

Myanmar

Signs that Myanmar is transforming itself from the militarised state of recent decades have been encouraging. Major reforms, the lifting of sanctions and the release of Aung San Suu Kyi from house arrest has undoubtedly marked the start of a new era, but concerns remain. A general election due this year will be run under a constitution which still retains a quarter of parliamentary seats and a number of key ministerial posts for the military. And attacks against the country's ethnic minorities have continued to take place with impunity, causing the prolonged displacement of up to 500,000 people and a major humanitarian crisis.

- ★ Human Development Index 150/187
- 👤 Population 55 million

UN ENGAGEMENT: During a joint summit of the UN and the Association of South-East Asian Nations, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon discussed with senior Government officials his concern over the treatment of ethnic minorities, notably the Rohingya population which is denied legal status in the country.

This issue has also been raised by two other UN officials in recent months: Yanghee Lee, Special Rapporteur on Myanmar, has visited Rakhine state where the displaced have taken refuge. She found that the situation there was seriously exacerbating existing tensions.

Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) Vijay Nambiar attended a cross party dialogue meeting as part of the country's ongoing peace process. The ceasefire talks between the army and over a dozen rebel groups are part of nationwide negotiations. Confidence in the process is low as talks have been marred by repeated outbreaks of violence, particularly in Kachin state, jeopardising the proposed 12 February 2015 deadline.

- UN SRSG office size 5 international staff
- 💰 SRSG office budget \$11m
- 🗨️ Security Council statements in 2014 0

Nigeria

For years Nigeria has attempted to maintain a delicate balance between the predominantly Muslim north and Christian south, which have both seen spates of violence. But this has been badly threatened in recent years by the insurgency of Boko Haram, a terrorist group which has declared the north-east an Islamic state under its rule.

President Goodluck Jonathan, running for a second term in elections this year, has been strongly criticised for his handling of the crisis. This situation could be further exacerbated by falling oil prices – oil profits account for 70 per cent of Nigeria's total revenues.

★ Human Development Index [152/187](#)

👤 Population [177 million](#)

UN ENGAGEMENT: Reports in January 2015 alleged that up to 2,000 had been killed and 20,000 displaced by Boko Haram in an attack on the north-eastern town of Baga. Just days earlier, Mohammed Ibn Chambas, Head of the UN Office for West Africa (UNOWA), had warned the Security Council that pre-emptive action be taken to avoid an expected rise in violence as Nigeria prepared to go to the polls. Elections due in February have since been postponed.

In a recent BBC interview, Nigeria's national security adviser reportedly stated that the country did not need the assistance of UN or AU troops, but that they would instead seek UN backing for a multinational force to be formed with Cameroon, Chad and Niger. As the situation worsens, the Security Council has urged Nigeria to accelerate plans for the group.

Mr Chambas has also called for greater support for neighbouring countries as they struggle to cope with the influx of hundreds of thousands of Nigerians fleeing violence in the north. Chad, which ranks 184th out of 187 states on the UN's Human Development Index, is currently host to 10,000 Nigerian refugees.

UN UNOWA size [46 civilian staff across the West Africa region](#)

💰 UNOWA budget [\\$10.2m](#)

🗨️ Security Council statements in 2014 [4](#)

Sudan South Sudan

Sudan and South Sudan is another situation where the fates of two countries appear intertwined. Just a few short years after a referendum split Sudan into two sovereign entities (save for the disputed territory of Abyei), both countries face major turmoil. Violence between the Sudanese Government and rebel groups continues to take place across the country. South Sudan is trying to emerge from its own internal conflict after rival political factions sparked a year of intense fighting in 2014. Elections due in both countries this year will be closely watched for signs of further bloodshed.

SUDAN

★ Human Development Index [166/187](#)

👤 Population [35 million](#)

SOUTH SUDAN

★ Human Development Index [n/a](#)

👤 Population [12 million](#)

UN ENGAGEMENT: Three peacekeeping operations are currently active in the two countries (a UN/AU Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei and the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)). UNAMID has recently faced controversy over allegations that it failed to report knowledge of rebel crimes committed against civilians. The Sudanese Government has called for the Mission to cease operations and has expelled two senior UN officials from the country. Meanwhile, peace talks in South Sudan, led by a regional grouping and supported by the UN, appear to have resulted in a ceasefire but further discussions around the formulation of a possible unity government have been delayed.

UN UNAMID size [15,800 uniformed, 4,200 civilian](#)

💰 UNAMID budget [\\$639 for 6 months](#)

🗨️ Security Council statements in 2014 [16](#)

UN UNMISS size [11,400 uniformed, 2,600 civilian](#)

💰 UNMISS budget [\\$580m for 18 months](#)

Ukraine

After months of turmoil, the decision by former Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich to reject an association agreement with the European Union threw the country into chaos at the end of 2013. The crisis has split the country in two, with Russia illegally annexing Crimea and supporting separatists who have seized territory in the east. This still unpredictable conflict has become a flashpoint for tensions between Russia and the West, and a major test for the UN system. Prospects for Ukraine in 2015 will hinge on a new ceasefire negotiated between Russia, Ukraine, France and Germany in February.

★ Human Development Index [83/187](#)

👤 Population [44 million](#)

UN ENGAGEMENT: The UN's primary involvement in the Ukraine crisis has been through its deployment of a human rights monitoring mission, headed by Ivan Šimonović, the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights. The mission has published eight reports documenting a range of human rights violations and breaches of international humanitarian law. The mission has also assisted the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), which is coordinating peace negotiations and monitoring tensions in the region.

In a briefing to the Security Council in January, Jeffrey Feltman, head of the UN's Department of Political Affairs, called for a cessation of the violence, which appears to have increased in recent months. Of the more than 5,300 deaths from the conflict, 1,000 of those deaths have taken place since a ceasefire was signed last September.

The Security Council's consideration of the situation has, unsurprisingly, been influenced by tensions between Russia and other permanent members. As such, the engagement of the OSCE in this crisis has most likely been a useful alternative channel for mediation.

UN Monitoring mission size [35 civilian staff](#)

💰 Monitoring mission budget [\\$2.6m over two years](#)

🗨️ Security Council statements in 2014 [4](#)

Yemen

A fragile political transition which began when Yemen joined the "Arab Spring" protests descended into fresh conflict when Houthi rebels took over the capital in September last year. A new government, formed in November 2014, must secure reconciliation and tackle two further problems: the growth of international terrorist groups based in the country and a worsening humanitarian crisis affecting over half the population.

★ Human Development Index [154/187](#)

👤 Population [26 million](#)

UN ENGAGEMENT: Until just last month, power-sharing negotiations between the Houthis and the Yemeni Government, brokered by Jamal Benomar, the Secretary-General's Special Adviser for Yemen, appeared to have been making modest progress. However the security situation remained tense, breaking down into renewed fighting in the capital, Sanaa, the abduction and house arrest of key members of the Government and the dissolution of Parliament.

Mr Benomar has been continuing to convene daily consultations with all parties under the auspices of Yemen's Peace and National Partnership Agreement. The Security

Council has expressed its grave concern over the breakdown of the political process; however it has so far held back from taking any further action. Sanctions passed in 2014 against two rebel leaders and former president Ali Abdullah Saleh, accused of orchestrating the country's current crisis, have been criticised for being largely ineffectual.

UN Special Adviser's office size [34 civilian staff](#)

💰 Special Adviser's budget [\\$3m](#)

🗨️ Security Council statements in 2014 [8](#)