



Highlights of [GAO-07-998T](#), a testimony before the Subcommittee on International Organizations, Human Rights, and Oversight, Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives

### Why GAO Did This Study

As of June 2007, more than 100,000 military and civilian personnel are engaged in UN peacekeeping operations in 15 locations in Africa, Europe, Asia, the Americas, and the Middle East. In 2006, the United States provided the UN with about \$1 billion to support peacekeeping operations. Given that thousands of U.S. troops are intensively deployed in combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, UN peacekeeping operations are an important element in maintaining a secure international environment.

As requested, this testimony discusses (1) the costs of the current UN mission in Haiti compared with the estimated cost of a hypothetical U.S. operation and (2) the strengths and limitations of the United States and the UN in leading peace operations.

This testimony is based on our prior report and information we updated for this hearing. To estimate U.S. costs, we developed parameters for a U.S. mission similar to the UN mission in Haiti, which the Joint Staff validated as reasonable. We then applied DOD's official cost estimating model. However, it is uncertain whether the United States would implement an operation in Haiti in the same way as the UN.

[www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-07-998T](http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-07-998T).

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

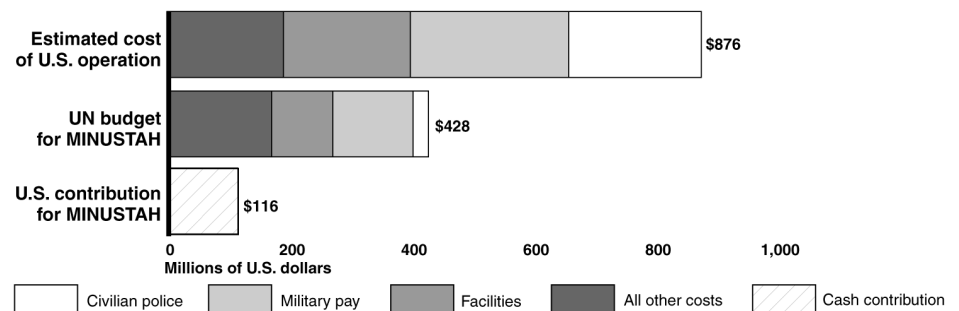
### Observations on Costs, Strengths, and Limitations of U.S. and UN Operations

#### What GAO Found

We estimate that it would cost the United States about twice as much as it would the UN to conduct a peacekeeping operation similar to the UN mission in Haiti. The UN budgeted \$428 million for the first 14 months of the mission. A similar U.S. operation would have cost an estimated \$876 million. Virtually the entire cost difference can be attributed to cost of civilian police, military pay and support, and facilities. First, civilian police costs are less in a UN operation because the UN pays police a standard daily allowance, while U.S. police are given salaries, special pay, and training. Second, U.S. military pay and support reflect higher salaries and higher standards for equipment, ammunition, and rations. Third, U.S. facilities-related costs would be twice those of the UN and reflect the cost of posting U.S. civilian personnel in a secure embassy compound. When we varied specific factors, such as increasing the number of reserve troops deployed, the estimated cost for a U.S. operation increased.

Cost is not the sole factor in determining whether the United States or the UN should lead a peacekeeping operation. Each offers strengths and limitations. Traditionally, the United States' strengths have included rapid deployment, strong command and control, and well-trained and equipped personnel. However, ongoing operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have reduced personnel and equipment readiness levels and resulted in shortfalls for military police, engineers, and civil affairs experts. The UN provides broad multinational support for its missions, with a UN Security Council mandate and direction for its operations. The UN also has access to international civil servants, police, and senior officials who have nation-building experience and diverse language skills. Finally, the UN has fostered a network of agencies and development banks to coordinate international assistance with peacekeeping missions. However, the UN has traditionally had difficulties in rapidly deploying its forces and ensuring unified command and control over its peacekeeping forces.

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



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