

Study Report

# Discussion Paper on the Opportunity of Establishing a Pacific Region Cooperation Network in the Field of Peacekeeping

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the **LIGHT**  
**COORDINATION**  
**MECHANISM**



United Nations Peacekeeping  
Integrated Training Service

The views expressed in this study do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations.

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# Abbreviations

ANU	Australian National University
APG	Association of Pacific Island FIUs within the Asia/Pacific Group
ASF	African Standby Force
ASPI	Australian Strategic Policy Institute
CROP	Council of Regional Organizations in the Pacific
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EEZ	exclusive economic zones
ESF	ECOWAS Standby Force
FFA	Forum Fisheries Agency
FIU	Financial Intelligence Units
FLNKS	Kanak and Socialist National Liberation Front
FOC	Forum Officials Committee
FSRS	Forum Officials Subcommittee on Regional Security
HADR	humanitarian assistance and disaster relief
IU	illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing
INDOPACOM	Indo-Pacific Command
INTERFET	International Force East Timor
LCM	Light Coordination Mechanism
MCES	Micronesian Chief Executives Summit
MFO	Multinational Force and Observers
MINUSCA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in the Central African Republic
MINUSMA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
MONUSCO	United Nations Organisation Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
MPS	Micronesian President's Summit
MSG	Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG)
NMAP	New Zealand Mutual Assistance Program
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OCO	Oceania Customs Organisation
PDR	Pacific Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management Framework for Action
PFC	Pacific Fusion Centre
PHP-C	Pacific Humanitarian Pathway on COVID-19
PHT	Pacific Humanitarian Team
PICP	Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police
PICTs	Pacific Island Countries and Territories
PIDC	Pacific Immigration Development Community
PIDF	Pacific Islands Development Forum
PFP	Partnership for Peace
PIF	Pacific Island Forum
PILON	Pacific Islands Law Officers' Network
PIROP	Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy
PKOCB-TWG	Peacekeeping Operations Coordination Board – Technical Working Group
PLG	Polynesian Leaders Group
PMSP	Australia's Pacific Maritime Security Program

PPBP	Pacific Patrol Boat Program
PNA	Parties to the Nauru Agreement
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PRP	Pacific Resilience Partnership
PTCCC	Pacific Transnational Crime Coordination Centre
PTCN	Pacific Transnational Crime Network
QUAD	Quadrilateral Defence Coordination Group
RELACOPAZ	The Latin American and Caribbean Network for Cooperation in Peacekeeping Operations
RMIT	Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology
SPC	Pacific Community
SPDMM	South Pacific Defence Ministers Meeting
SPREP	Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Programme
TCU	transnational crime units
TMG	Truce Monitoring Group Bougainville
UN	United Nations
UNIFIL	UN Interim Force in Lebanon
UNTAET	United Nations Transitional Administration East Timor

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# Executive Summary

The Pacific region<sup>i</sup> boasts a rich history of contributing military and police personnel to United Nations (UN) peace operations. Motivations for participation in peacekeeping vary, encompassing a desire to support conflict-affected nations, gain operational experience, and strengthen political and cultural ties. Despite these motivations, barriers such as financial constraints persist. These barriers underscore the need for effective partnerships and innovative approaches to optimize Pacific States' contributions to UN peacekeeping efforts.

Regional peacekeeping cooperation networks are crucial in enhancing international peace and security by fostering collaboration among neighbouring countries to support UN peacekeeping. These networks facilitate pooling resources, sharing expertise, and coordinating efforts to respond effectively to complex security challenges. The networks aim to be instrumental in addressing global and region-specific security threats.

The 2018 Boe Declaration on Regional Security highlighted the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) leaders' recognition of the increasingly complex security landscape in the Pacific region, prompting ongoing discussions on addressing diverse yet interconnected challenges through regional security cooperation. This acknowledgment reflects a broader international understanding of 'security', encompassing multidimensional and transnational issues like pandemics, climate change, and transnational crime. Given the region's own conflict experiences, the international community would benefit from a greater '*Pacific voice*'

and representation in peacekeeping discussions. Conversely, the Pacific regional security framework stands to gain from an improved complementary peacekeeping agenda.

Despite the region's diversity in terms of population, political systems, and economic development levels, Pacific Island States and Territories are united in their recognition of the importance of security cooperation in confronting shared threats. Cooperation networks in various thematic areas such as maritime security, law enforcement, military, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) facilitate collective action, resource pooling, and capacity-building efforts to respond to security challenges effectively. This extensive patchwork of existing networks involve bilateral and multilateral agreements, regional organizations, and international partnerships, reflecting the region's unique geopolitical dynamics and resource constraints. Through collaboration and coordination, Pacific Island nations strive to promote regional stability, resilience, and prosperity, ultimately contributing to international peace and security.

The Pacific region's contributions to UN peace operations have declined over recent years. In October 2020, the Pacific had 1,837 deployed military and police on UN peace operations. As of 30 May 2024, this contribution decreased to 1,531 uniformed personnel.<sup>ii</sup> In parallel, its contribution to regional deployments had grown and evolved.

UN peacekeeping contributions are pivotal to upholding the principles enshrined in the UN Charter, emphasizing the collective responsibility to maintain international peace and security. By deploying peacekeeping missions, Member States demonstrate their commitment to the UN charter and multilateral system, resolving conflicts through peaceful means. Such commitments bolster the UN's legitimacy as a global arbiter of justice and stability. These missions are tangible

manifestations of international cooperation and solidarity, fostering trust among nations and reinforcing the credibility of the UN's mandate. Ultimately, UN peacekeeping efforts exemplify the collective resolve of the international community to mitigate conflicts and promote a safer, more peaceful world.

The Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) initiative, launched in 2018, aims to enhance the effectiveness of UN peacekeeping operations by focusing on key areas such as performance, accountability, and the protection of civilians. It emphasizes the need for shared responsibility among Member States, troop-contributing countries, and the UN Secretariat to ensure peacekeeping missions deliver tangible results. Building on the A4P, the Action for Peacekeeping + (A4P+) initiative seeks to further strengthen peacekeeping efforts by enhancing political engagement, improving the safety and security of peacekeepers, and promoting gender equality and the meaningful participation of women in peace processes. Through these initiatives, the UN endeavours to adapt and evolve its peacekeeping strategies to meet the evolving challenges of contemporary conflicts and uphold its commitment to maintaining international peace and security. Both require active engagement by UN Member States and new partnership models.

The Declaration of Shared Commitments on UN Peacekeeping Operations underscores the collective determination of Member States to strengthen UN peace operations for the future. It reaffirms the fundamental principles of the UN Charter, emphasizing respect for human rights, equality, and international law. Over 150 Member States and four supporting organisations have endorsed the A4P Declaration of Shared Commitments.

The UN Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace outlines a comprehensive framework for preventing and resolving conflicts, emphasizing prevention as a

priority. It underscores the importance of addressing root causes such as poverty, inequality, and climate change to build sustainable peace. Member States are urged to prioritize diplomacy, mediation, and dialogue while also investing in conflict prevention efforts and supporting sustainable development initiatives. The agenda calls for greater collaboration among nations, regional organizations, civil society, and the private sector to tackle the complex challenges to global peace and security collectively.

Despite all of the Pacific region's security arrangements, including the network of security cooperation networks, the existing regional security architecture does not present a clear mechanism for cooperation in raising, training and sustaining contributions to UN peacekeeping. This paper proposes four potential options for consideration.

While the Pacific region generally enjoys peace, establishing a peacekeeping cooperation network could help strengthen and diversify its participation in UN peacekeeping operations. An expanded and equitable Pacific peacekeeping knowledge base could provide valuable support in addressing internal conflicts and promoting stability through mediation, peacekeeping operations, and conflict resolution mechanisms. Such a network could contribute to regional stability, enhance capacity-building efforts, promote women's participation, and strengthen partnerships with international organizations. However, careful consideration of funding mechanisms and the role of external partners is essential to ensure inclusivity, transparency, and responsiveness to the needs of Pacific nations.

Ultimately, the decision to establish a peacekeeping cooperation network would need to be established in the 'Pacific Way' and depends on various factors, including each country's specific security challenges, historical experiences, resource constraints, and attitudes toward regional



cooperation. Inclusivity, collaboration, and consensus-building are crucial in navigating the complexities of security cooperation in the Pacific.

The research findings highlight the rich tradition of peacekeeping contributions among Member States of the Pacific region despite demographic limitations on their military, law enforcement, and disaster relief capacities. While there is some interest in regional co-deployment contributions, there is no unanimous agreement on the need for a *Pacific Region Cooperation Network in the Field of Peacekeeping*, with some participants citing a lack of understanding of the opportunities presented by such a network.

The region's existing framework for Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster

Relief (HADR) is robust and effective, with no apparent gaps that a new network could fill. While these HADR arrangements reflect the unique needs of the Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs),<sup>iii</sup> they do not offer a framework that the region could use to support UN peacekeeping contributions.

Based on the recommendations provided by respondents, four options for a *Pacific Region Cooperation Network in the Field of Peacekeeping* are proposed, including diplomatic, operational, informal, and ad hoc military/law enforcement approaches. These options align with principles of regional relevance, integration with existing structures, and capacity development, emphasizing collaboration and consensus-building for future initiatives.

# Recommendations

This research report presents four options for a *Pacific Region Cooperation Network in the Field of Peacekeeping* (see pages 36 and 37), and makes the following recommendations:

1. If a *Pacific Region Cooperation Network in the Field of Peacekeeping* is to be developed, its scope should not include humanitarian assistance or disaster relief.
2. The network should be regionally relevant and be consistent with the '*Pacific Way*'.
3. The *Pacific Region Cooperation Network in the Field of Peacekeeping* should focus on capacity-building relevant to UN peacekeeping operations and Member States' needs, for instance, by promoting partnerships on training, information sharing, knowledge management, equipment, funding, infrastructure and logistics.
4. The *Pacific Region Cooperation Network in the Field of Peacekeeping* should complement the existing and emerging bilateral and multilateral capacity development undertaken by Member States of the Pacific region and their regional and global partners.
5. Collaboration and consensus would be essential in shaping future initiatives in this area.
6. The *Pacific Region Cooperation Network in the Field of Peacekeeping* should be integrated with the region's existing multilateral security architecture wherever possible.

# Background

Through its Light Coordination Mechanism (LCM), the United Nations (UN) Secretariat supports Member States in establishing regional cooperation networks to promote collaboration in preparation, financing, equipment, deployment, and sustainment in peacekeeping. The first network, *“The Latin American and Caribbean Network for Cooperation in Peacekeeping Operations (RELACOPAZ)”*, was launched in 2022 in Latin America and the Caribbean.<sup>iv</sup>

In its 2024 report, the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations welcomed efforts undertaken by Member States to establish regional cooperation networks to promote collaboration on preparation, financing, equipment, deployment and sustainment in the field of peacekeeping, carried out with the support of the Secretariat through its light coordination mechanism, and welcomes the first Latin American and Caribbean conference on United Nations peacekeeping operations, which was held in Lima, Peru, in September 2022. Additionally, the Special Committee encouraged the Secretariat to work with Member States, including interested troop- and police-contributing countries, to continue efforts to promote the establishment of regional cooperation networks in other regions, such as Asia and the Pacific.<sup>v</sup> To this end, the LCM has supported Member States in developing a *‘Pacific Region Network for Peace and Disaster Relief Operations’* concept.

This report will analyze existing Pacific security cooperation frameworks and their gaps for multilateral and bilateral cooperation on law enforcement, military, and disaster relief matters. It will specifically identify the advantages of a *Pacific Region Cooperation Network in the Field of Peacekeeping* and make recommendations.

# Aim

This report aims to provide:

- An overview of Pacific Islands bilateral and multilateral frameworks for law enforcement, military and disaster relief cooperation; and
- An assessment of the relevance of establishing a *‘Pacific Region Cooperation Network in the Field of Peacekeeping’*.

# Methodology

This report used a mixed-method qualitative research methodology. The research process involved the following phases:

- **Phase 1** of this research project involved extensive primary and secondary analysis of literature, data and policy reports on the Pacific Islands' bilateral and multilateral frameworks for law enforcement, military, and disaster relief cooperation and security. Content and discourse analysis techniques were used.
- **Phase 2** involved collecting and analyzing primary and secondary literature, data, and policy reports on the Pacific regions' peacekeeping contributions. Again, Content and discourse analysis techniques were used.
- **Phase 3** involved conducting semi-structured virtual meetings with representatives and partners of the Pacific region. The questions are contained in Appendix 1.

# Pacific Region and Peacekeeping

UN peacekeeping contributions are vital in upholding the principles enshrined in the UN Charter, which emphasize collective responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. Through the deployment of peacekeeping missions, Member States demonstrate their commitment to resolving conflicts through peaceful means, thus reinforcing the legitimacy of the UN as a global arbiter of justice and stability. These missions serve as tangible manifestations of international cooperation and solidarity, fostering trust among nations and reinforcing the credibility of the UN's mandate to mitigate conflicts and promote a safer, more harmonious world.

The Declaration of Shared Commitments underscores Member States' collective determination to address global challenges through cooperation and solidarity, reaffirming fundamental principles such as respect for human rights, equality, and international law. Endorsed regionally, including by Australia, Fiji, France, Japan, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea (PNG), Republic of Korea, Samoa, and Solomon Islands, the Declaration highlights the importance of inclusive multilateralism in addressing issues like poverty, inequality, climate change, and conflict, serving as a guiding framework for concerted action towards common goals.

Launched in 2018, the Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) initiative aims to bolster the effectiveness of UN peacekeeping operations by prioritizing areas such as performance, accountability, and civilian protection. Its successor, the Action for Peacekeeping + (A4P+), seeks to further strengthen peacekeeping efforts by enhancing political engagement, ensuring

the safety and security of peacekeepers, and promoting gender equality and women's participation in peace processes. Both initiatives necessitate active engagement by UN Member States to adapt and evolve peacekeeping strategies in addressing contemporary conflicts while upholding the commitment to maintaining international peace and security.

The UN Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace outlines a comprehensive framework for conflict prevention and resolution, emphasizing the need to address root causes such as poverty, inequality, and climate change. Member States are urged to prioritize diplomacy, mediation, and dialogue while investing in conflict prevention efforts and supporting sustainable development initiatives. Collaboration among nations, regional organizations, civil society, and the private sector is crucial to effectively tackling the global peace and security challenges outlined in the agenda. The Pacific region has a rich history of contributing uniformed personnel (military and police) to UN peace operations for over 40 years. For instance, Fiji, Vanuatu, Samoa, Palau, PNG, Solomon Islands and Timor-Leste have collectively participated in 30 UN peace operations since 1978.<sup>vi</sup> Although some deployments have occurred within the Pacific, Pacific nations have a significant history of contributing to UN peacekeeping missions. This extensive engagement underscores the Pacific's commitment to maintaining international peace and security.

Fiji stands out as the most significant peacekeeping contributor of the PICTs. In 1978, it was the first such country to make UN peacekeeping contributions by deploying to the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).<sup>vii</sup> Since then, Fiji has proudly identified itself as a "peacekeeping nation".<sup>viii</sup>

Although the PICTs have yet to deploy to complex missions like the United Nations Organisation Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

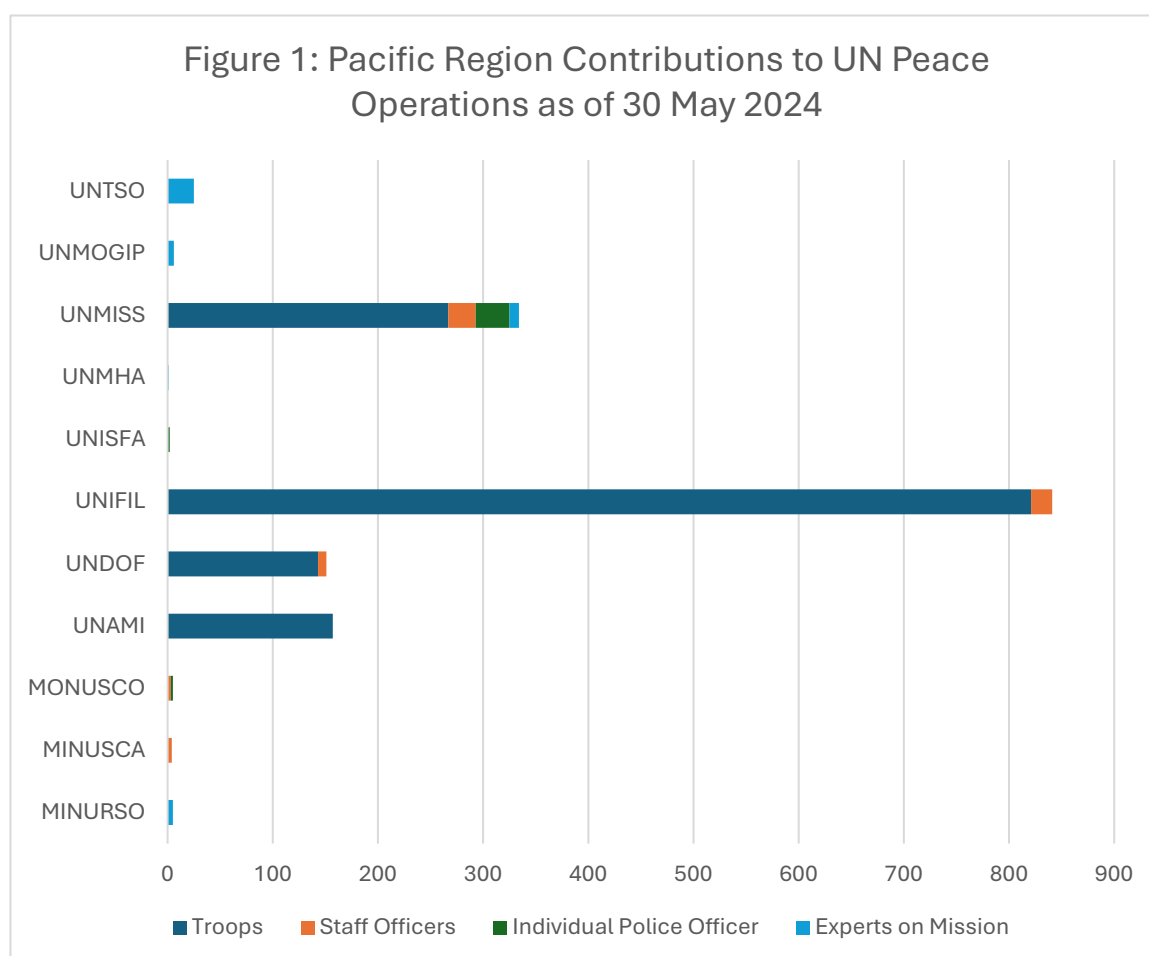
(MONUSCO), United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), or United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA, which has now been closed), they have operated in environments with significant risks, including Sudan and South Sudan, particularly Darfur. Some countries have faced security threats during deployments, and tragically, personnel from the region have lost their lives in the pursuit of peace.

The Pacific region's contributions to UN peace operations have declined over recent years. In October 2020, it had 1,837 deployed military and police. As of 30 May 2024, this contribution decreased to 1,531 uniformed personnel.<sup>ix</sup>

Several PICTs have shown an interest in deploying police officers on UN peacekeeping operations. As of 30 May

2024, Fiji (26) and Kiribati (8) are contributing individual police officers to UN missions. PNG has deployed two experts on mission. However, Kiribati, Samoa, Nauru, Tuvalu, Palau, the Solomons and Vanuatu have either expressed interest in or pledges to deploying police on UN missions. These small Island States depend on regional approaches or support to conduct pre-deployment training and the United Nations Selection Assistance and Assessment Team clearance. In April 2024, a regional pre-deployment training exercise took place in Fiji. This example illustrates the opportunity for establishing a structured regional approach to Selection Assistance and Assessment Team clearance testing and pre-deployment training.

The Pacific region and its neighbouring areas have a history of striving for peace through various mechanisms, including outside the UN framework. The legacies of



colonialism and past interventions have left lingering tensions in countries like Solomon Islands and PNG. However, regional and international efforts have been instrumental in addressing these conflicts and instabilities.

Since 1980, regional initiatives have been deployed to manage political unrest. For instance, the PNG Defence Force's first international deployment was in response to the 1980 Santo crisis in Vanuatu.<sup>x</sup> In the late 1990s, regional groups like the Truce Monitoring Group (TMG) and later the Peace Monitoring Group (PMG), involving Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, and Vanuatu, played crucial roles in monitoring the situation in Bougainville. At the same time, the UN had concurrent political missions.

Following the 1999 intervention of the International Force East Timor (INTERFET) in Timor-Leste, a series of UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions were launched to establish peace in the newly independent country. Many Pacific nations contributed to these efforts, gaining valuable expertise in peacekeeping and peacebuilding processes.

The deployment of UN peacekeeping missions to Timor-Leste from 2000

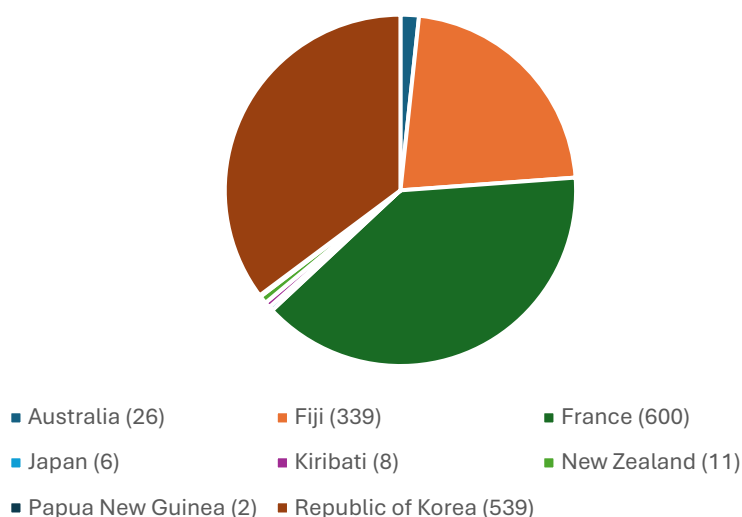
onwards marked a turning point for many Pacific countries, inspiring them to join global peacekeeping efforts. Samoa, for instance, has consistently deployed personnel since its first mission in Timor-Leste in 2000. Similarly, Vanuatu deployed police officers between 2000 and 2017, while PNG sent military personnel.

Similarly, the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) from 2003 to 2017, led by regional actors, was a source of pride for many nations.<sup>xi</sup> The experience gained from missions in Bougainville and Timor-Leste contributed to RAMSI's success.

The regional contributions to Bougainville and RAMSI affirmed the value of a Pacific-led approach to conflict resolution facilitated by cultural ties and significant regional investment. These peacekeeping missions have served as a gateway for Pacific countries to engage in broader peacekeeping initiatives.

Participation in these missions has been transformative for Pacific security forces, enhancing their capabilities and advancing their professional development. The commitment to peacebuilding and peacekeeping in the region and hosting

Figure 2: Total Pacific Region Uniformed Personnel Deployed to UN Peace Operations as of 30 May 2024



peacekeeping missions have equipped countries with valuable experiences and skills to share with other conflict-affected nations as part of UN peacekeeping efforts.

The decision-making process behind Pacific countries contributing to UN peacekeeping missions is a complex interplay of various factors. These factors not only motivate contributions but also act as barriers that deter countries from participating. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for optimizing the effectiveness of Pacific region's peacekeeping efforts.

Five key rationales influence Pacific countries' decisions to contribute to UN peacekeeping missions: political, economic, security, institutional, and normative. These rationales provide insights into why some countries are motivated to contribute while others may be reluctant.

- One significant motivation for countries in the Pacific region to contribute to UN peacekeeping missions is the desire to support conflict-affected countries. This sense of giving back to the international community and upholding the rules-based global order is powerful among nations such as Solomon Islands, which has itself benefited from a regional peacekeeping mission in the past. These countries demonstrate their commitment to multilateral institutions and peacebuilding efforts by deploying personnel to UN missions.
- Additionally, peacekeeping operations allow countries to gain valuable military and law enforcement operational experience in diverse and challenging environments. This experience enhances the skills and expertise of military and police personnel, which can be applied domestically upon their return.
- In some cases, financial incentives associated with peacekeeping may

also play a role. Peacekeeping deployments can provide economic benefits to individuals and contribute to socio-economic development.

- Political and cultural links influence countries' decisions to contribute to peacekeeping missions. Partnerships with nations such as Australia, New Zealand and France, can lead to support for deployments to UN missions or other coalition-led operations. Shared language, history, and cultural ties also influence deployment decisions.
- Contributing to UN peacekeeping missions often evokes a sense of national pride in many countries in the Pacific. Peacekeeping efforts become ingrained in their political and military cultures, contributing to their reputation as peacekeeping nations. Despite challenges or setbacks, such as the kidnapping of peacekeepers in the Golan Heights, countries like Fiji remain committed to supporting UN peacekeeping, driven by a strong sense of national pride and duty.

While these rationales and motivations encourage contributions to UN peacekeeping, barriers to participation also exist for Pacific region Member States. These barriers include financial and capacity constraints, logistical challenges, and competing national priorities that may limit a country's ability to contribute effectively.

Understanding the rationales and motivations behind Pacific countries' decisions to contribute to UN peacekeeping missions is essential for fostering effective partnerships, optimizing contributions, and addressing barriers to participation. By recognizing and addressing these factors, the international community can work towards enhancing the effectiveness and impact of Pacific states' UN peacekeeping contributions.

Interviews conducted during this project indicate a continued interest among Pacific countries in initiating, resuming,

and continuing engagement in UN peacekeeping. However, bureaucratic hurdles and limited resources hinder ongoing participation, with some countries needing help to navigate these challenges effectively.

Partnerships are crucial for the successful participation of Pacific States in peacekeeping missions. Australia, Fiji, France, Japan, New Zealand, Palau, Papua

New Guinea (PNG), Republic of Korea, Samoa, and Solomon Islands have expressed political support for the UN's Action for Peacekeeping agenda.<sup>xii</sup> Opportunities for deeper engagement exist but rely on innovative approaches, triangular partnerships, and co-deployments. Given the region's conflict experiences, the international community would benefit from a greater '*Pacific voice*' in peacekeeping discussions.



# Regional peacekeeping cooperation networks

Regional peacekeeping networks are crucial in addressing conflicts and promoting stability within specific geographic regions. These networks often arise from shared security concerns among neighbouring states. They are characterized by cooperative efforts to maintain peace and security. There are various types of regional peacekeeping.

## 1. Subregional Organizations:

Subregional peacekeeping alliances are formed among neighbouring countries within a specific subregion to address common security challenges. One notable example is the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in Africa. ECOWAS has established the ECOWAS Standby Force (ESF) to respond to regional conflicts and crises. For instance, ESF has been deployed in Liberia and Sierra Leone to restore peace and stability during times of unrest.

## 2. Bilateral Peacekeeping Partnerships:

Bilateral peacekeeping partnerships involve two countries collaborating to contribute troops or resources to peacekeeping missions. An example is the longstanding partnership between Bangladesh and Nepal in UN peacekeeping operations. Both countries have consistently contributed significant numbers of troops to various missions, such as those in Haiti, South Sudan, and Lebanon, demonstrating their

commitment to global peacekeeping efforts.

## 3. Multinational Peacekeeping Coalitions:

Multinational peacekeeping coalitions involve multiple countries from different regions coming together to address conflicts or crises. One prominent example is the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), which has conducted peacekeeping operations in areas such as the Balkans and Afghanistan. NATO's involvement has been instrumental in stabilizing conflict-affected areas and promoting peacebuilding efforts.

## 4. Interregional Peacekeeping Partnerships:

Interregional peacekeeping partnerships involve collaboration between countries from different regions to address conflicts that have transnational implications. The Partnership for Peace (PfP), initiated by NATO, exemplifies this type of partnership. PfP involves NATO Member States and non-member countries from Europe and Central Asia in joint peacekeeping exercises and capacity-building initiatives to enhance collective security and stability.

## 5. Ad Hoc Peacekeeping Initiatives:

Ad hoc peacekeeping initiatives are formed in response to specific crises or conflicts, often involving a temporary coalition of willing countries. One example is the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) in the Sinai Peninsula. Established following the Camp David Accords, the MFO comprises troops from various countries, including the United States, Australia, and Canada, tasked with monitoring compliance with the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel.

## 6. Regional Organizations with Peacekeeping Mandates:

Some regional organizations have mandates that include peacekeeping and conflict resolution within their respective regions. The African Union (AU) is a prominent example, with its African Standby Force (ASF) dedicated to peacekeeping operations on the continent. The AU has deployed peacekeepers to conflict zones such as Darfur, Somalia, and Mali, demonstrating its commitment to maintaining African peace and security.

Each type of regional peacekeeping network has its strengths and limitations. However, collectively, they contribute to global efforts to prevent conflicts and promote peace and stability. These networks leverage regional expertise, resources, and relationships to address security challenges effectively, complementing the broader efforts of the United Nations and other international actors in maintaining international peace and security.

The UN Secretariat, through its LCM, facilitates the establishment of regional cooperation networks among Member States aimed at fostering collaboration in various aspects of UN peacekeeping endeavours, including preparation, financing, equipment procurement, deployment, and ongoing support. Notably, the inaugural network, known as RELACOPAZ, was inaugurated in 2022, focusing on the Latin American and Caribbean regions.

In its 2024 report, the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations commended the initiatives undertaken by Member States to forge regional cooperation networks, acknowledging their role in enhancing collaboration concerning peacekeeping activities. These efforts, undertaken with the backing of the UN Secretariat's Light Coordination

Mechanism, were noted. Furthermore, the report highlighted the significance of the first Latin American and Caribbean conference on United Nations peacekeeping operations, convened in Lima, Peru, in September 2022.

Moreover, the Special Committee encouraged the Secretariat to continue collaborating with Member States, including those contributing troops and police personnel, to further promote the establishment of regional cooperation networks in additional regions, such as Asia and the Pacific.

Regional peacekeeping cooperation networks will likely become crucial in enhancing international peace and security by fostering collaboration among neighbouring countries to support UN peacekeeping. These cooperative networks facilitate pooling resources, sharing expertise, and coordinating efforts to respond effectively to complex security challenges.

Regional peacekeeping cooperation networks aim to be instrumental in raising UN peacekeeping contributions. They can potentially allow neighbouring countries to work together to raise, train and sustain peacekeeping contributions.

Furthermore, regional cooperation enhances the legitimacy and ownership of peacekeeping efforts. When countries within a region collaborate on peacekeeping missions, it sends a powerful message of solidarity and commitment to resolving conflicts peacefully. This can foster trust among conflicting parties and increase the likelihood of successful peace negotiations and reconciliation processes.

The structure of regional peacekeeping cooperation networks will vary globally. However, common features will likely include:

- **Member States:** These networks consist of countries within a particular

geographical region that agree to cooperate on peacekeeping and security matters. Member States contribute personnel, resources, and expertise to collective peacekeeping efforts.

- **Secretariat or Coordination Mechanism:** A dedicated secretariat or coordination mechanism for facilitating communication, planning operations, and coordinating joint initiatives among Member States. This central body is crucial in ensuring smooth cooperation and effective implementation of peacekeeping activities.
- **Operational Units:** Some networks, like the African Union, may establish operational units or task forces composed of military, police, and civilian personnel from Member States. These units are deployed for peacekeeping operations within the region and work under a unified command structure to achieve common objectives.
- **Partnerships:** Regional peacekeeping networks often forge partnerships with international organizations, such as the United Nations, African Union, or European Union, to leverage additional resources, expertise, and logistical support for their peacekeeping efforts. These partnerships enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of regional peacekeeping operations.

Regional peacekeeping cooperation networks perform various functions to promote peace and security within their respective regions:

- **Peacekeeping Operations:** Regional networks deploy peacekeeping forces to manage conflicts, protect civilians, and support peace processes. These operations often address intra-state conflicts, ethnic tensions, and post-

conflict stabilization efforts within the region.

- **Capacity Building:** These networks invest in capacity-building initiatives to strengthen Member States' peacekeeping capabilities. This includes training programs for military, police, and civilian personnel and enhancing logistical and operational readiness for peacekeeping missions.
- **Humanitarian Assistance:** In conflict-affected areas, these networks provide humanitarian assistance, such as food, shelter, and medical aid, to affected populations. This humanitarian support complements peacekeeping efforts and helps alleviate the suffering of civilians caught in conflict zones.

Despite their importance, regional peacekeeping cooperation networks face several challenges that can hinder their effectiveness:

- **Political Divisions:** Regional conflicts and political rivalries among Member States can impede cooperation and consensus-building within peacekeeping networks. Overcoming these divisions requires strong leadership, trust-building measures, and inclusive decision-making processes.
- **Resource Constraints:** Many regional networks need more resources, including funding, equipment, and trained personnel, which can affect their ability to sustain long-term peacekeeping operations.
- **Capacity Gaps:** Not all Member States possess the same peacekeeping capabilities, leading to capacity gaps within regional networks. Addressing these gaps requires targeted capacity-building efforts, knowledge sharing, and technical assistance from more experienced Member States or external partners.

- **Coordination and Communication:** Effective coordination and communication among Member States, operational units, and external partners are essential for successful peacekeeping operations. Language barriers, interoperability issues, and information-sharing constraints can hinder coordination efforts.

Despite the challenges, regional peacekeeping cooperation networks have significant potential to contribute to global peace and security. The literature suggests that the following factors should be considered when building network effectiveness and sustainability:

- Investment in comprehensive capacity-building programs to enhance the peacekeeping capabilities of Member States, focusing on training, equipment provision, and strategic planning, is a critical success factor.
- Forging strategic partnerships with international organizations, neighbouring regions, and non-state actors to leverage additional resources, expertise, and diplomatic support for

peacekeeping efforts is a force multiplier.

- Promoting gender mainstreaming and increasing Pacific women's participation in peacekeeping operations, recognizing the unique contributions of women peacekeepers, and the importance of gender-sensitive approaches to conflict resolution is both an enabler and a force multiplier.
- Sustainable funding mechanisms for regional peacekeeping networks, including contributions from Member States, international donors, and innovative financing mechanisms, are critical.

Regional peacekeeping cooperation networks promote peace and stability within their respective regions. By overcoming challenges, building capacity, fostering partnerships, and embracing innovative approaches, these networks can contribute significantly to global peacekeeping efforts and enhance the prospects for lasting peace and security worldwide.

# Existing Pacific Islands security cooperation frameworks

The 2018 Boe Declaration on Regional Security underscored the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) leaders' acknowledgment of the increasingly intricate security landscape in the Pacific Region.<sup>xiii</sup> This acknowledgment prompted ongoing dialogues on how Pacific Island States and Territories will confront these diverse yet interconnected challenges and the role of regional security cooperation therein.<sup>xiv</sup> Like other regions, Pacific Island States have recognized the value of security cooperation in tackling transnational and global threats such as pandemics, climate change, and transnational crime, which defy individual state responses.<sup>xv</sup> This recognition reflects a broader international understanding of 'security', transcending conventional military concerns to encompass multidimensional and transnational issues.<sup>xvi</sup>

The Pacific Region's States and Territories exhibit diversity in terms of population, ranging from densely populated PNG to the sparsely populated Niue, political systems and economic development levels. Moreover, Pacific States and Territories vary in status, ranging from sovereign States to Territories, dependencies, or overseas territories, each maintaining distinct constitutional relationships with

metropolitan states and diverse international connections.

This report defines security cooperation as "common action between two or more states to advance a common security goal," focusing primarily on state interactions for analytical clarity.<sup>xvii</sup>

Security cooperation entails amalgamating state, bilateral, and multilateral initiatives, including formal institutions and dialogues where state officials engage in security discussions. While some initiatives are ongoing, others emerge in response to specific crises. Notably, there's no formal, region-wide collective security agreement in the Pacific; instead, security cooperation comprises a patchwork of agreements reflecting diverse priorities and geopolitical dynamics.<sup>xviii</sup> Resource constraints prevalent among Pacific Island States render their partners pivotal in security cooperation efforts. These partners exhibit varying roles, focuses, and policy commitments, influencing the impact and effectiveness of cooperation.

## Regional Security Actors

### ***Pacific Islands Forum (PIF)***

Established in 1971, the PIF is the primary regional organization focusing on politics and security in the Pacific Islands region.<sup>xix</sup> It currently has 18 members, with Tokelau as an associate member. Traditionally, Australia and New Zealand have been major funders of the PIF Secretariat. However, a 2018 agreement aims to balance funding contributions from island Member States starting from 2021.

The PIF established the Forum Officials Subcommittee on Regional Security (FSRS) in 2019 to address regional security issues. The FSRS operates under the Forum Officials Committee (FOC).<sup>xx</sup> The FSRS coordinates security discussions, monitors the implementation of security declarations, and formulates actions to manage regional security challenges. It also includes representation from regional technical bodies, such as the Council of Regional Organizations in the Pacific (CROP) agencies.<sup>xxi</sup>

### ***Pacific Community (SPC)***

As the region's principal scientific and technical institution, the SPC is crucial in managing human and resource security in the Pacific Islands.<sup>xxii</sup> Its membership is broader than that of the PIF. With a focus on addressing the unique challenges Pacific Island Countries and Territories face, SPC engages in various activities spanning areas such as climate change adaptation, fisheries management, public health, education, and economic development. Through collaborative efforts with its Member States and partners, SPC provides technical expertise, policy advice, and capacity-building initiatives tailored to the specific needs of Pacific communities. By fostering cooperation and knowledge exchange,

SPC contributes significantly to advancing the Pacific region's social, environmental, and economic well-being, ultimately working towards a more prosperous and resilient future for its people.

### ***Pacific Islands Development Forum (PIDF)***

The Pacific Islands Development Forum (PIDF) is a unique platform for fostering sustainable development and regional cooperation among Pacific Island Countries, including independent nations and territories.<sup>xxiii</sup> Established in 2013, PIDF emphasizes inclusivity, bringing together governments, civil society organizations, private sector representatives, and development partners to address the region's complex challenges. Through dialogue, advocacy, and partnership-building, PIDF strives to promote innovative solutions to climate change, environmental degradation, poverty alleviation, and sustainable economic growth. By amplifying the voices of Pacific Island nations on the global stage and facilitating South-South cooperation, PIDF plays a pivotal role in advancing Pacific peoples' collective interests and aspirations, ultimately contributing to a more resilient and prosperous Pacific region.

### ***Subregional Groupings***

- Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG)

Established in 1988, MSG includes Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and Kanak and Socialist National Liberation Front (FLNKS). The Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) is a pivotal regional organization, primarily comprising Melanesian countries such as PNG, Fiji, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and FLNKS-led New Caledonia.<sup>xxiv</sup> Established in 1986, the MSG aims to foster political dialogue, economic cooperation, and cultural exchange among its Member States. One of its key functions is to promote trade,

investment, and economic integration within Melanesia, facilitating the growth of local industries and improving livelihoods. Additionally, the MSG addresses regional security challenges, cultural preservation, and political solidarity, advocating for the rights and interests of Melanesian peoples on the global stage. Through collaborative initiatives and policy coordination, the MSG is crucial in advancing regional stability, prosperity, and solidarity among Melanesian nations, thereby shaping the region's collective future.

- Polynesian Leaders Group (PLG)

Established in 2011, PLG includes various Polynesian societies and maintains a working relationship with the PIF. The PLG is a significant forum for cooperation and collaboration among Polynesian nations, including Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau. Established in 2011, the PLG aims to address common challenges its Member States face while promoting Polynesia's shared interests, values, and cultures. Key focus areas for the PLG include sustainable development, environmental conservation, climate change mitigation, and cultural preservation. The PLG seeks to harness collective strengths and resources to advance socio-economic development and resilience across Polynesia by facilitating dialogue and information sharing among its members. Through its advocacy efforts and regional initiatives, the PLG plays a crucial role in amplifying the voices of Polynesian nations on issues of global significance while fostering greater solidarity and cooperation within the region.

- Micronesian President's Summit and Micronesian Chief Executives Summit

Established in 2001 and 2003, these summits involve discussions on Micronesian solidarity among leaders from Palau, Kiribati, Nauru, FSM, RMI, and US

territories. The Micronesian President's Summit (MPS) and Micronesian Chief Executives Summit (MCES) are pivotal gatherings that bring together leaders from Micronesian nations to address common challenges and opportunities facing the region. These summits serve as platforms for dialogue, cooperation, and collaboration among Micronesian countries, including the Federated States of Micronesia, Palau, Marshall Islands, and Kiribati. Key objectives of these summits include fostering regional unity, advancing socio-economic development, and addressing issues such as climate change, environmental conservation, and sustainable resource management. Through joint initiatives, policy coordination, and information sharing, the MPS and MCES play vital roles in promoting Micronesian peoples' interests and well-being while enhancing the region's visibility and influence on the global stage.

## ***Major Regional Partners on police, military and security matters***

Over the past decade, enhanced diplomatic engagement in the Pacific has been notable for its increased frequency of high-level visits and the establishment of new diplomatic missions, signalling a heightened commitment by nations to the region. Notably, Germany's recent inauguration of an embassy in Fiji, alongside the United States' presence in the Solomon Islands and Tonga and Australia's establishment of an embassy in Palau, underscores a diversification of diplomatic ties and an expansion of engagement strategies. These initiatives reflect a strategic recognition of the Pacific's growing geopolitical significance and the desire to strengthen bilateral relations with Pacific Island nations. Furthermore, the establishment of consulates and other diplomatic outposts enhances the accessibility and responsiveness of diplomatic services,

facilitating more direct communication and collaboration. Through sustained diplomatic efforts, nations are demonstrating their commitment to fostering enduring partnerships, promoting stability, and addressing shared challenges in the Pacific region. This increased diplomatic presence underscores a concerted effort to engage with Pacific Island nations on a broader scale to advance mutual interests and bolster regional cooperation and prosperity.

The increased financial aid for security and development programs in the Pacific reflects a growing recognition of the region's strategic importance and the need for concerted efforts to address its unique challenges. Nations and international organizations have bolstered their financial commitments to support initiatives to enhance security, promote economic development, and address climate change impacts in the Pacific. This heightened priority is underscored by allocating substantial resources to fund infrastructure development, capacity-building, and disaster resilience projects. Furthermore, increased financial aid strengthens partnerships between donor countries and Pacific Island nations, fostering mutual trust and cooperation. This surge in financial assistance contributes to advancing regional stability, prosperity, and sustainability by addressing critical security and development needs. Such investments signal a collective commitment to supporting the Pacific's long-term growth and resilience in the face of evolving geopolitical dynamics and global challenges.

Over the past few years, partners in the Pacific have significantly expanded their activities, particularly in the realms of military and police training programs. These initiatives have been launched focusing on critical areas such as cybersecurity, maritime security, and counterterrorism. Through tailored training sessions and capacity-building exercises, partner nations aim to address emerging

security threats and enhance the capabilities of Pacific Island nations in safeguarding their territorial waters and borders. Additionally, the expansion of activities underscores a commitment to fostering regional stability and resilience against a backdrop of evolving security challenges. By providing specialized training and support, partners contribute to strengthening the security architecture of the Pacific region while promoting cooperation and collaboration among nations. Such efforts align with broader objectives of maintaining peace and security in the Indo-Pacific and ensuring the prosperity and well-being of all nations in the region.

Australia, New Zealand, the United States, France, Japan, China, Indonesia, the United Kingdom, and India engage with PICTs for various reasons, including colonial legacy, geographical proximity, and geopolitical interests. They provide development assistance and engage in security cooperation with initiatives such as Australia's Pacific Step-Up, New Zealand's Pacific Reset, the US Pacific Partnership, United States Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM) and the UK's Conflict, Stability and Security Fund.

The following global UK and US policy measures have particular relevance to the PICTs:

- Formed in 2014, the Peacekeeping Operations Coordination Board – Technical Working Group (PKOCB-TWG) serves as a pivotal entity within international peacekeeping endeavours, directly relevant to the PICTs and any future network. Its membership encompasses representatives from diverse stakeholders, including but not limited to the United Nations Secretariat, regional organizations, troop-contributing countries, and pertinent governmental and non-governmental bodies. The fundamental objective of the PKOCB-TWG is to foster enhanced coordination and collaboration among



these entities, thereby bolstering the efficacy and efficiency of peacekeeping operations globally. The PKOCB-TWG endeavours to address multifaceted challenges encountered in peacekeeping missions and cultivate sustainable solutions through strategic consultations, operational planning sessions, and exchanging expertise and insights. Its efforts are geared towards advancing the cause of peace, stability, and conflict resolution in regions afflicted by strife and insecurity.

- Established in 2015, the UK's Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) represents a vital instrument of the British government's foreign policy and international development strategies. This multifaceted fund is designed to address complex challenges related to conflict, instability, and security threats worldwide. Its overarching objective is to promote peace, stability, and prosperity in regions affected by conflict and fragility through a comprehensive approach encompassing diplomatic, developmental, and security initiatives. The CSSF allocates resources to a diverse array of projects and programs, ranging from conflict prevention and

resolution to counter-terrorism, humanitarian assistance, and peacebuilding efforts. The CSSF endeavours to mitigate risks, build resilience, and foster sustainable peace and security in fragile and conflict-affected contexts by leveraging partnerships with governments, civil society organizations, and international institutions.

## ***Development Assistance***

Bilateral and multilateral development assistance programs are crucial in addressing security challenges in the Pacific Islands region. From 2010 to 2018, donors and multilateral institutions spent an estimated US\$20.44 billion in aid in the region.<sup>xxv</sup> These programs cover various security issues, including policing, disaster response, environmental protection, health, and biosecurity.

These regional security actors, partnerships, and development assistance programs collectively address security challenges and promote stability in the Pacific Islands region.

# Thematic Security Cooperation

## ***Maritime Security***

Fisheries are paramount to maritime security in the Pacific Islands due to their significant contributions to government revenue, employment, nutrition, and economic development. Consequently, a long-standing history of regional cooperation exists in this domain, with deep-rooted relations between Pacific Island Countries and their security partners.

The Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), headquartered in the Solomon Islands, is a regional agency with seventeen Pacific state members. It provides policy and regulatory support for fisheries management and coordinates aerial and satellite surveillance to combat illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing.

The Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) is the only legally binding regional agreement on fisheries management. It implements the Vessel Day Scheme to regulate fishing activities.

Australia's Pacific Maritime Security Program (PMSP) provides Guardian-class patrol boats to Pacific Island nations to patrol their exclusive economic zones (EEZs) and combat IUU fishing. With a commitment of AU\$2 billion over 30 years, this program is Australia's largest regional defence cooperation initiative.

The Quadrilateral Defense Coordination Group (QDCG), consisting of Australia, New Zealand, France, and the United States, is a strategic alliance to enhance security and stability in the Pacific region. Formed to address shared security challenges and promote regional cooperation, the QDCG focuses on strengthening maritime security, disaster response capabilities, and humanitarian assistance efforts. The

QDCG aims to bolster defence capabilities and deter potential threats to peace and stability in the Pacific through joint military exercises, information sharing, and capacity-building initiatives. By fostering collaboration among its Member States and leveraging their respective strengths and resources, the QDCG plays a crucial role in upholding a rules-based order and promoting the prosperity and security of nations in the Pacific.

Beyond fisheries, Pacific Island States face environmental and resource security challenges, particularly from climate change and the sustainability of natural resources. Various regional bodies, such as the Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner and the Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), work on scientific research, policy support, and advocacy.

## ***Law enforcement frameworks***

Law enforcement cooperation networks in the Pacific Islands region are intricate and multifaceted, comprising various agreements, arrangements, and activities among Pacific Island States and Territories and their security partners. These networks address a diverse range of security challenges, including maritime security, environmental protection, humanitarian aid, transnational crime, and cybersecurity. Despite the absence of a formal, region-wide collective security agreement, cooperation occurs through a combination of state, bilateral, and multilateral initiatives, reflecting the region's unique geopolitical dynamics and resource constraints.

At the state level, individual Pacific Island nations develop bilateral agreements with other countries to address specific security concerns. These agreements often focus on areas such as information sharing, joint patrols, and capacity building to combat transnational crime, including drug

trafficking, human trafficking, and illegal fishing. Additionally, states may engage in joint exercises and training programs to enhance their law enforcement capabilities and response to emergencies.

Multilateral cooperation in law enforcement is facilitated through regional organizations such as the PIF and the SPC. The PIF, in particular, is central in coordinating security-related activities among its Member States. The 2018 Boe Declaration on Regional Security, adopted by PIF leaders, emphasizes the importance of collective action to address emerging security challenges in the region.<sup>xxvi</sup> It serves as a guiding framework for enhancing cooperation on issues such as climate change, cybercrime, and disaster relief.

The Pacific Islands grapple with various transnational crimes, including drug trafficking, human trafficking, small arms trafficking, money laundering, and environmental offences like illegal trading in endangered species, IUU fishing, and logging. Regional cooperation in tackling these issues is robust.

The Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police (PICP), Oceania Customs Organisation (OCO), and Pacific Immigration Development Community (PIDC) collaborate closely under a 2018 Declaration of Partnership. This partnership emphasizes the necessity for border control agencies to collaborate effectively to address security challenges in the Pacific region.

The Australian-led Joint Heads of Pacific Security, established in 2019, brings together heads of immigration, customs, policing, and defence agencies from 14 nations to discuss shared security concerns. Additionally, the Southwest Pacific Heads of Maritime Forces have convened annually since 2017 to address security issues, including transnational crime and climate change.

The Pacific Islands Law Officers' Network (PILON) facilitates the exchange of

legislative challenges and initiatives among Pacific Island States. Moreover, the Pacific Judicial Development Programme, funded by Australia and New Zealand, supports strengthening judicial systems across several Pacific Island nations.

There are 28 transnational crime units (TCU) distributed across Pacific Island States and Territories. These units share intelligence and collaborate on investigations, with some countries, such as Kiribati, hosting multiple TCUs to address geographical challenges.

Based in New Zealand, the Pacific Transnational Crime Network (PTCN) operates under the PICP and coordinates intelligence sharing and joint investigations among Pacific Island States. The Pacific Transnational Crime Coordination Centre (PTCCC) in Samoa is the physical center for PTCN activities.

Activities like Operation Kuru Kuru illustrate how well the PICTs work together operational. Since 2005, Operation Kuru Kuru, an annual joint exercise of PIF nations, has focused on enhancing cooperation, sharing best practices, and addressing illegal fishing. The exercise also brings together regional partners such as Australia, New Zealand, and the US.

Financial Intelligence Units (FIUs) in the Pacific region focus on researching and analyzing money laundering and financial crimes. They collaborate through the Association of Pacific Island FIUs within the Asia/Pacific Group (APG) on Money Laundering and the Egmont Group, an international organization combatting money laundering.

Australian Federal Police and New Zealand Police advisors support regional networks and assist Pacific Island States in capacity-building efforts. Ad hoc groups, like the Transnational, Serious, and Organized Crime Pacific Taskforce, address specific criminal security challenges.

Interpol, the International Organization for Migration, and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime provide intelligence and training on transnational crime issues. Pacific Island States are active members of regional groupings like the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons, and Related Transnational Crime.

Within the PIF framework, specialized agencies such as the PTCN and the Pacific Immigration Development Community (PIDC) facilitate collaboration on specific law enforcement issues. The PTCN, for example, supports Member States in combating transnational crime through information sharing, joint operations, and capacity-building initiatives. Similarly, the PIDC promotes cooperation on immigration and border security matters, including exchanging best practices and developing regional policies.

Environmental protection is another area of cooperation, with Pacific Island nations facing challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and disasters. Regional agreements such as the Noumea Declaration on Regional Environmental Responsibility and the Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy (PIROP) promote sustainable management of natural resources and strengthen environmental governance through collaboration on monitoring, enforcement, and capacity building.

Transnational crime, including drug trafficking, human trafficking, and cybercrime, poses significant challenges to law enforcement in the Pacific Islands region. Regional initiatives such as the PILON and the Pacific Fusion Centre (PFC) support Member States in combating these threats through information sharing, joint operations, and capacity-building activities. Law enforcement cooperation networks in the Pacific Islands region encompass various agreements, arrangements, and initiatives to address diverse security challenges. While the absence of a formal collective security agreement presents challenges,

collaboration at the state, bilateral, and multilateral levels enables Pacific Island nations to enhance their law enforcement capabilities and respond effectively to emerging threats.

## ***Military focused frameworks***

Military cooperation networks in the Pacific Islands region are vital for addressing shared security challenges and promoting regional stability. These networks encompass a variety of agreements, arrangements, and initiatives among Pacific Island States, external partners, and regional organizations. Military cooperation in the region is characterized by efforts to enhance interoperability, build capacity, and respond to emerging security threats, including maritime security, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR), and transnational crime.

At the state level, individual Pacific Island nations engage in bilateral military cooperation with external partners to bolster their defence capabilities and strengthen regional security. These agreements often involve joint training exercises, military assistance programs, and the exchange of personnel to promote mutual understanding and interoperability. For example, countries like Australia, New Zealand, and the United States provide training and equipment to PICTs' militaries to enhance their maritime surveillance, search and rescue capabilities, and disaster response capabilities.

The PIF serves as a platform for dialogue and cooperation on security issues among its Member States. The 2000 Biketawa Declaration and the 2018 Boe Declaration on Regional Security, adopted by PIF leaders, emphasizes the importance of collective action to address emerging security challenges, including climate change, cyber threats, and illegal fishing. Additionally, PIF members participate in joint military exercises and capacity-building initiatives to enhance regional security cooperation.

The South Pacific Defence Ministers Meeting (SPDMM) is a crucial forum for defence ministers and officials from Pacific Islands nations to address shared security challenges and promote regional cooperation. Established to enhance security and stability in the South Pacific, SPDMM focuses on various issues, including maritime security, disaster response, humanitarian assistance, and peacekeeping operations. SPDMM aims to strengthen defence capabilities and coordination among its Member States through dialogue, information sharing, and capacity-building initiatives. By fostering partnerships and collaboration among defence forces in the region, SPDMM contributes to maintaining peace, security, and resilience in the South Pacific, ultimately ensuring the safety and well-being of its people.

The Pacific QUAD, comprising Australia, New Zealand, France, and the United States, significantly promotes military cooperation in the Pacific Islands region. The group conducts joint patrols, exercises, and training programs to strengthen maritime security, counter illegal fishing and transnational crime, and respond to humanitarian crises. Through initiatives such as the Quadrilateral Defence Ministers' Meeting (Quad Plus), Pacific QUAD members coordinate military assistance and support to Pacific Island States in times of need.

Maritime security is a primary focus of military cooperation in the Pacific Islands region, given the vast expanse of ocean territory and the proliferation of maritime threats, including piracy, illegal fishing, and transnational crime. Regional initiatives such as the PMSP and the Pacific Patrol Boat Program (PPBP) aim to enhance maritime surveillance, enforcement, and governance. These initiatives involve cooperation among Pacific Island States, regional partners, and international organizations to safeguard marine resources and promote maritime safety and security.

The French Armed Forces, including the *Forces Armées en Nouvelle-Calédonie* and *Forces Armées en Polynésie Française*, play a role in providing military training and capacity-building support in the Pacific region. These forces offer training programs encompassing a wide range of military disciplines, including infantry tactics, maritime security, disaster response, and search and rescue operations. Through joint exercises and collaboration with regional partners, such as Australia, New Zealand, and Pacific Island nations, the French Armed Forces enhance the operational readiness and capabilities of both their own personnel and those of allied forces. Additionally, New Caledonia and French Polynesia benefit from specialized training initiatives tailored to address local security challenges and support national defence efforts. This provision of military training and capacity-building support fosters regional cooperation, strengthens defence partnerships, and contributes to the overall security and stability of the Pacific region.

Exercise Koa Moana is a recurring joint training exercise conducted by the United States Marine Corps (USMC) with partner nations in the Pacific region. The primary aim of this exercise is to enhance interoperability, build military capacity, and strengthen bilateral relationships among participating countries. Exercise Koa Moana facilitates the exchange of expertise, tactics, and best practices in areas such as amphibious operations, humanitarian assistance, and disaster relief through a series of combined land and maritime training activities. The exercise typically involves deploying USMC forces alongside military personnel from partner nations, fostering mutual understanding and trust through shared training objectives and experiences. By promoting regional security cooperation and readiness, Exercise Koa Moana maintains stability and addresses common security challenges in the Indo-Pacific region.

The New Zealand Mutual Assistance Program (NMAP) is a cornerstone of New Zealand's commitment to enhancing partner nations' defence and security capabilities. Through training, advisory support, and equipment provision, NMAP facilitates capacity-building initiatives tailored to recipient countries' specific needs and priorities. Drawing on New Zealand's expertise and experience in peacekeeping, maritime security, and disaster response, NMAP offers comprehensive assistance to bolster the operational readiness and effectiveness of partner nations' armed forces and security agencies. By fostering collaboration and cooperation among regional partners, NMAP strengthens collective security arrangements and promotes stability in the Asia-Pacific region. Through sustained engagement and partnership, NMAP reinforces New Zealand's commitment to upholding international peace and security while supporting the development aspirations of its neighbours.

The Australian Pacific Defence Cooperation Program (PDCP) is a key initiative to enhance defence and security cooperation between Australia and its Pacific Island neighbours. Established in 1988, the PDCP focuses on building partner nations' capabilities and resilience through various activities, including training, advisory support, and infrastructure development. By providing assistance in areas such as maritime surveillance, disaster response, and peacekeeping operations, the PDCP aims to address shared security challenges and promote stability in the region. The program strengthens bilateral relationships and fosters mutual trust and understanding through collaborative efforts with Pacific Island governments and defence forces. The PDCP underscores Australia's commitment to supporting the sovereignty and security of its Pacific neighbours while promoting regional peace and prosperity.

In summary, military cooperation networks in the Pacific Islands region encompass

various arrangements and initiatives to enhance regional security and promote stability. Pacific Island nations collaborate with external partners and regional organizations through bilateral and multilateral cooperation to address shared security challenges, including maritime security, HADR, and transnational crime. These efforts contribute to developing a more secure and resilient Pacific Islands region.

## ***Humanitarian assistance and disaster relief frameworks***

HADR cooperation networks in the Pacific Islands region are critical for effectively managing and responding to disasters and humanitarian crises. These networks comprise various agreements, arrangements, and initiatives among Pacific Island States, regional organizations, and international partners. Cooperation in this domain aims to enhance preparedness, coordination, and response mechanisms to mitigate the impact of disasters and provide timely assistance to affected populations.

At the State level, individual Pacific Island nations develop bilateral agreements and partnerships with external actors to strengthen their disaster response capabilities and ensure timely assistance during emergencies. These agreements often involve mutual aid arrangements, technical assistance programs, and capacity-building initiatives to improve disaster preparedness, response planning, and infrastructure resilience. Additionally, states may engage in joint exercises and training programs with external partners to enhance coordination and interoperability in disaster response operations.

Multilateral cooperation in HADR is facilitated through regional organizations such as the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), the Pacific Community (SPC), and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). PIF serves

as a platform for dialogue and collaboration among its Member States on disaster risk reduction and emergency response. The 2018 Boe Declaration on Regional Security emphasizes the importance of strengthening resilience and preparedness to address the region's growing threat of climate change and disasters.

Within the framework of PIF, specialized agencies such as the Pacific Humanitarian Team (PHT) and the Pacific Humanitarian Pathway on COVID-19 (PHP-C) facilitate coordination and cooperation in disaster response efforts. The PHT brings together governments, aid agencies, and humanitarian actors to coordinate assistance and support affected communities during emergencies. Similarly, the PHP-C provides a platform for sharing information, coordinating logistics, and mobilizing resources to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic in the Pacific Islands region.

Regional initiatives such as the Pacific Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management Framework for Action (Pacific DRR Framework) and the Pacific Resilience Partnership (PRP) promote collaboration on disaster risk reduction and resilience-building efforts. These initiatives aim to strengthen national and regional capacities for early warning, disaster preparedness, and risk management through training, capacity-building programs, and knowledge sharing.

International partners, including donor countries, development agencies, and non-governmental organizations, play a crucial role in supporting humanitarian aid and disaster response efforts in the Pacific Islands region. These partners provide financial assistance, technical expertise, and in-kind donations to support emergency relief operations, reconstruction efforts, and long-term recovery initiatives following disasters.

HADR cooperation networks in the Pacific Islands region encompass a range of

agreements, arrangements, and initiatives to enhance preparedness, coordination, and response mechanisms to address disasters and humanitarian crises. Through bilateral and multilateral cooperation, Pacific Island nations collaborate with regional and international partners to strengthen resilience, mitigate risks, and provide timely assistance to affected populations during emergencies. These efforts contribute to building a more resilient and disaster-resilient Pacific Islands region.

# Pacific perspectives – what works and where are the gaps

The '*Pacific Way*' embodies a set of values, principles, and practices deeply rooted in the cultures and traditions of the Pacific Island nations. It emphasizes consensus-building, mutual respect, and collective decision-making as fundamental governance and social interaction pillars. The Pacific Islands Forum operates on principles that align with the "Pacific Way," as expressed in the PIF 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent and regional declarations which promote consensus and regional cooperation.

Central to the '*Pacific Way*' is the notion of inclusivity, where diverse perspectives are welcomed and valued, and conflicts are resolved through 'talanoa' or dialogue and reconciliation rather than confrontation. Respect for nature and sustainable living are also integral aspects of the '*Pacific Way*', reflecting a deep connection to the environment and a commitment to preserving its resources for future generations.

Ultimately, the '*Pacific Way*' represents a holistic approach to life that prioritizes community well-being, harmony, and resilience. It guides the actions and aspirations of Pacific peoples towards a brighter and more sustainable future.

Security cooperation in the Pacific Islands, against the '*Pacific Way*' backdrop, presents a complex landscape characterized by a patchwork of agreements (bi and multilateral), arrangements, and institutions to address

various security priorities. While these endeavours are intended to align with the security needs identified by Pacific Island nations and their partners, their effectiveness remains to be determined.

Pacific Island governments and their partners influence the nature of security cooperation and resource allocation. Resource limitations in Pacific Island States necessitate reliance on external support, with partners directing assistance based on constitutional relationships, historical ties, and strategic considerations.

Pacific Island governments are not passive recipients of security assistance. Initiatives like the Boe Declaration and the development of national security strategies demonstrate active engagement in defining security priorities.

Distinguishing between announced initiatives and their implementation poses challenges in evaluating the effectiveness of security cooperation efforts. The allocation of resources only sometimes correlates with outcomes, emphasizing the need for in-depth analysis of program implementation and practical outcomes. Despite all of the region's security arrangements, the existing regional security architecture does not present a clear mechanism for cooperation in peacekeeping.

Increased support from external partners may strain the capacity of Pacific Island States and regional institutions to absorb assistance effectively. Coordinated assistance and addressing challenges like targeting overcrowding and absorptive capacity are crucial considerations.

While regional solidarity persists, there are inherent tensions between national, regional, and bilateral approaches to security management. Geostrategic competition is seeing the instrumentalisation of security agreements on cooperation. Recent events, such as Micronesian States' declaration of



intention to withdrawal from the PIF, underscore the diversity of interests within the region and the limitations of regionalism.

Beyond interstate cooperation, intrastate local and community initiatives significantly address security challenges. Facilitating meaningful cooperation across local, national, and regional levels is

essential for comprehensive security management.

Navigating security cooperation in the Pacific Islands requires careful consideration of diverse interests, effective coordination mechanisms, and meaningful engagement across all levels of governance and society.

# Does the Pacific Region need a peacekeeping cooperation network?

Some Pacific nations are interested in commencing, recommencing, and perpetuating their involvement in UN peacekeeping efforts. Nonetheless, bureaucratic impediments and resource constraints pose obstacles to sustained participation, prompting the necessity for certain countries to receive support in adeptly managing these challenges.

The Pacific Islands' security architecture encounters notable limitations in effectively supporting United Nations Peacekeeping Operations. These constraints stem from various factors, including limited financial resources and capacity, logistical challenges, and a lack of specialized training and equipment. Additionally, the geographic dispersion of the Pacific nations poses difficulties in deploying personnel and resources swiftly to global conflict zones. Furthermore, the comparatively small number of personnel in some Pacific nations may hinder their ability to contribute significantly to large-scale peacekeeping missions. Given these constraints, enhancing collaboration, capacity-building efforts, and resource allocation among nations of the Pacific Region and their international partners is imperative to effectively address the challenges in supporting UN Peacekeeping Operations.

Establishing a peacekeeping cooperation network in the Pacific Region could provide valuable support in addressing the various

challenges, including providing success to specialized training programs and equipment tailored for peacekeeping missions.

This research project indicates that a peacekeeping network could:

- Provide valuable support, first and foremost, in strengthening and diversifying the participation of Member States of the Pacific region in UN peacekeeping.
- Facilitate capacity-building (equipment, infrastructure, logistics, technical and financial support) and training programs for military, police, and civilian personnel in conflict resolution, peacekeeping operations, and post-conflict reconstruction.
- Specifically develop a regional approach for PICTs to prepare and certify individual police officers and police units for UN peacekeeping deployments.
- Foster enhanced information sharing and mutual acknowledgment among Member States regarding peacekeeping efforts. Such a network could facilitate the exchange of best practices, lessons learned, and strategic insights, thereby bolstering collective understanding and cooperation in peacekeeping endeavours. By promoting dialogue and collaboration, this network could contribute to building regional capacity and strengthening the collective ability of Pacific nations to contribute meaningfully to global peacekeeping operations. This network could assist with the deployment of military and police personnel to UN peacekeeping mission headquarters providing them with staff officer experience.
- Catalyze innovation among Member States in peacekeeping operations through collaborative platforms and forums, Member States could share innovative approaches, technologies, and strategies for addressing common challenges in peacekeeping. This

exchange of ideas could lead to developing and adopting novel solutions tailored to the unique contexts and needs of Pacific nations, thereby enhancing their effectiveness and efficiency in contributing to global peacekeeping efforts.

- Foster bilateral and multilateral partnerships among Member States through collaborative agreements and frameworks, Member States could coordinate co-deployments of peacekeeping personnel and resources, leveraging collective strengths and resources to enhance operational effectiveness. This model could, for example, facilitate the co-deployment PICTs police in regional force protection units. For the military it could allow the co-deployment of PICTs military personnel with Fijian units deployed on UN peacekeeping missions. Such partnerships deepen regional cooperation and contribute to global peace and security by amplifying the impact of the Pacific region's contributions to United Nations Peacekeeping Operations.
- Facilitate the participation of new Member States, particularly in police deployments for peacekeeping missions. The network can empower aspiring Member States to contribute effectively to international peacekeeping efforts by providing a supportive platform for capacity-building initiatives and knowledge-sharing. Through targeted training programs and mentorship opportunities, the network can enhance the readiness and professionalism of police forces, enabling them to make valuable contributions to United Nations Peacekeeping Operations.
- Strengthen partnerships with international organizations such as the United Nations and regional bodies like the Pacific Islands Forum. This would enable coordinated responses to security challenges and enhance the

region's influence in global peacekeeping efforts.

- In addition, by fostering cooperation among Pacific nations and their partners, the network contribute to regional stability and security. Collaborative efforts in peacekeeping and conflict prevention could build trust and solidarity among countries, reducing the likelihood of interstate tensions and conflicts.

A Pacific region peacekeeping network could significantly contribute to advancing the women, peace, and security agenda within the region. By promoting gender mainstreaming and prioritizing the meaningful participation of women in peacekeeping operations, the network can help address gender disparities and amplify women's voices in conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts. The network can foster greater inclusivity and effectiveness in promoting peace and security across the Pacific region through targeted initiatives such as gender-sensitive training, recruitment, and leadership development. However, establishing a peacekeeping cooperation network would require careful consideration of several factors, including funding mechanisms, legal frameworks, and the role of external partners. Moreover, any peacekeeping initiatives must be inclusive, transparent, and responsive to the needs and aspirations of Pacific nations and their populations.

The desire for a peacekeeping cooperation network in the Pacific region varies depending on several factors, including the specific security challenges each country faces, their historical experiences, and their perceptions of external threats.

This research indicates the following factors may influence the Pacific region' attitudes toward a peacekeeping cooperation network:

- The Pacific region is generally committed to maintaining peace and

stability in the region. However, security concerns differ, ranging from internal conflicts and governance issues to transnational crimes and disasters. States facing heightened security challenges may be more inclined to support a peacekeeping cooperation network to address these issues collectively.

- There appears to be limited PICTs' interest in making contributions to current or future UN peacekeeping operations.
- While some Member States of the Pacific region may be interested in establishing a peacekeeping cooperation network to address regional security challenges, deciding to do so would require careful consideration of all stakeholders' diverse perspectives and interests.
- Many Pacific Region States and Territories face resource constraints, including limited budgets and capacity constraints in their security institutions. Participating in a peacekeeping cooperation network would require financial and human

resources, which may require more work for some countries to allocate, given competing priorities such as healthcare, education, and infrastructure development.

- Pacific Islands have already engaged in various forms of regional cooperation through organizations such as the PIF, the MSG, and the PICP. Some States prefer to strengthen existing mechanisms rather than establish a new peacekeeping network, especially if they perceive these mechanisms as effective in addressing security challenges.
- External partners play a significant role in supporting security initiatives in the Pacific region. The attitudes of Pacific Region States and Territories toward a peacekeeping cooperation network may be influenced by the preferences and priorities of these external partners and the extent of their involvement in such initiatives.

Collaboration, consensus-building, and respect for sovereignty would be essential in shaping future initiatives in this area.

# Potential frameworks

The Pacific Region encompasses a vast expanse of ocean dotted with diverse archipelagos. This dynamic region is home to a rich tapestry of cultures, languages, and traditions, with influences ranging from Melanesian, Micronesian, and Polynesian heritage to colonial legacies left by European powers. Each island group boasts its unique political landscape, from independent nations like Fiji and PNG to territories under the governance of more considerable powers such as France and the United States. Despite the geographical isolation of many islands, trade, migration, and cultural exchange have interconnected these communities for centuries, shaping a vibrant and resilient Pacific identity rooted in shared histories and environmental stewardship. All these factors have contributed to the evolution of a complex framework of patchwork bilateral and multilateral security cooperation arrangements underpinned by the 'Pacific Way'.

Several States and Territories of the Pacific region have a proud tradition of contributing to peacekeeping regionally and globally. However, the demographics of most Member States limit their capacity to make substantial (in military terms above company-level military units) military, law enforcement, or disaster relief contributions. However, a few countries are interested in developing regional composite contributions.

This research revealed no universal agreement across the Pacific Region on the need for a *Pacific Region Cooperation Network in the Field of Peacekeeping*. However, several participants recognized that there was often a lack of understanding of the opportunities presented by such a network.

This research reveals that a robust and effective framework for HADR operates in the Pacific Islands region. While it is also a patchwork arrangement, the current framework is effective, with significant local and national coordination. Moreover, many bilateral and multilateral coordination and capacity development arrangements are in place. At present, there are no apparent gaps in these arrangements.

Based on this report's research, the following four options for a *Pacific Region Cooperation Network in the Field of Peacekeeping* have been identified:

1. **Diplomatic Option.** A partnership could be put in place with the PIF, at the initiative of one or more Member States of the region, with the support of the LCM, to establish a voluntary membership PIF sub-committee to scope, develop and operationalize the *Pacific Region Cooperation Network in the Field of Peacekeeping*. This approach would ensure high-level network integration with the region's security architecture. Furthermore, this approach would reduce the resource implications of creating a stand-alone new arrangement. PIFs are already busy, and the diverse scope of work, meeting agendas, and the region's finite diplomatic resources could result in slow implementation.
2. **Operational Option.** The second option involves establishing two new Pacific region Member State mechanisms focused specifically on peacekeeping: one for military and a second for law enforcement. It seems appropriate that the military peacekeeping group be established under the auspices of the SPDMM, with the law enforcement grouping established under the PICP. Member State membership for both would be, of course, voluntary. By splitting the network this way, SPDMM and the PICP could ensure alignment with broader bi and multilateral security architecture. Given the SPDMM's focus

on enhancing and promoting regional security cooperation and its intent to establish a Pacific Response Group, there are several synergies with the interest in a *Pacific Region Cooperation Network in the Field of Peacekeeping*. Aligning the network with SPDMM has several benefits, including avoiding duplication of effort. For law enforcement, a similar model could be adopted with the PICP. Such an approach would avoid the creation of new security architecture and leverage the existing cooperation undertaken between Member States. A potential start for this option is the development of a regional approach to the pre-deployment training for individual police officers for UN peacekeeping operations.

3. **Informal Option.** Some members suggested that the initial steps for establishing a *Pacific Region Cooperation Network in the Field of Peacekeeping* should involve forming a more informal mechanism. Those supporting this approach suggested that a working-level subject matter experts meeting should be held quarterly. Such a meeting could improve the information flow between the UN and Member States at a working level. A number of participants suggested Option Three. The focus here was on avoiding the creation of a new mechanism or arrangement in a region with a complex and multi-layered security architecture. It is important to note that this option would also be necessary to create any of the three other options. Unfortunately, this approach seems unlikely to contribute to additional UN peacekeeping contributions.
4. **Adhoc Voluntary Network for Military and Law Enforcement Peacekeeping Option.** The final option involves establishing an ad-hoc military and law enforcement network. Membership in such an ad-hoc arrangement would, of

course, be voluntary. Establishing a Pacific Region Adhoc Voluntary Network for Military and Law Enforcement Peacekeeping Cooperation could facilitate streamlined coordination and collaboration among Member States in contributing to United Nations peacekeeping missions. Through this network, participating nations could share resources, expertise, and best practices, thereby enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of their contributions to UN peacekeeping efforts. By pooling together their capacities and resources, Member States can collectively address common challenges, promote regional stability, and support the broader objectives of international peace and security.

This research revealed that if a *Pacific Region Cooperation Network in the Field of Peacekeeping* is to be developed, the following broad principles should be considered:

1. If a *Pacific Region Cooperation Network in the Field of Peacekeeping* is to be developed, its scope should not include humanitarian assistance or disaster relief.
2. The network should be regionally relevant and be consistent with the 'Pacific Way'.
3. The *Pacific Region Cooperation Network in the Field of Peacekeeping* should focus on capacity-building relevant to UN peacekeeping operations and Member States' needs, for instance, by promoting partnerships on training, information sharing, knowledge management, equipment, funding, infrastructure, and logistics.
4. The *Pacific Region Cooperation Network in the Field of Peacekeeping* should complement the existing and emerging bilateral and multilateral capacity development undertaken by Pacific Member States and their regional and global partners.

5. Collaboration would be essential in shaping future initiatives in this area.
6. The *Pacific Region Cooperation Network in the Field of Peacekeeping* should be integrated with the region's existing multilateral security architecture wherever possible.

# Conclusion

The Pacific region has a rich history of contributing military and police personnel to UN peace operations. Initiatives such as the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands, interventions in Timor-Leste, and regional Member States' contributions to UN peacekeeping missions showcase the region's commitment to international peace and security. Regardless, financial and capacity constraints and the challenges of scaling peacekeeping contributions have inhibited Pacific Member States from making further contributions.

Despite the challenges, Pacific countries are continuing to be interested in initiating, resuming, and continuing engagement in UN peacekeeping. However, bureaucratic hurdles and limited resources hinder ongoing participation, with some countries needing help to navigate these challenges effectively. Opportunities for deeper

engagement in peacekeeping exist but rely on innovative approaches, triangular partnerships, and co-deployments. A *Pacific Region Cooperation Network in the Field of Peacekeeping* could achieve this outcome by facilitating co-deployments and developing a regional peacekeeping force. Moreover, the network would provide greater opportunities for Pacific women to participate in UN peacekeeping operations. The added benefit of such a network is that it can facilitate leveraging existing regional investments such as the Blackrock Peacekeeping, Humanitarian and Disaster Relief Camp in Fiji.

While there is yet to be universal agreement among the Member States of the Pacific region on the need for a *Pacific Region Cooperation Network in the Field of Peacekeeping*, like-minded nations have sufficient interest in discussing such a network.



# Appendix 1 - Pacific Region Network for Peace and Disaster Relief Operations Project – Research Interview Guide

## Instructions

This project will utilize the semi-structured research interview method. This approach combines a pre-determined set of open questions (questions that prompt discussion) with the opportunity for the interviewer to explore particular themes or responses further.

The consultant used a purposive sampling method to select interview participants. The consultant selected participants to ensure maximum coverage of stakeholders. Participant selection also focused on identifying respondents most likely able to provide appropriate and valuable information.

The consultant will conduct each interview virtually for 30-45 minutes via the 'Teams' platform.

The consultant or his administrative assistant will email each participant to secure an interview time and provide an outline of the project's terms of reference.

## Interview sequence

1. Welcome, and background:
  - a. The consultant will advise each participant that the interview will be undertaken under the "Chatham House Rule".
  - b. The consultant will provide each participant with the following background information:

"The UN Secretariat, through its Light Coordination Mechanism (LCM), supports Member States in establishing regional cooperation networks to promote collaboration in preparation, financing, equipment, deployment, and sustainment in the field of peacekeeping. The first such network was launched in 2022 in Latin America and the Caribbean. The Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, in its 2023 report, encouraged the establishment of regional cooperation networks in other regions, such as Asia and the Pacific. To this end, the LCM has supported Member States in developing "The Pacific Peace Operations Association" concept. This project aims to collect data and liaise with relevant authorities to independently analyze existing Pacific frameworks and their gaps for multilateral and bilateral cooperation on law enforcement, military and disaster relief matters. This study will identify the comparative advantages of a Pacific Islands Network for Peace and Disaster Relief Operations and make recommendations."

2. Questions:
  - Is a Pacific Islands network for peace and disaster relief operations, like that found in Latin America and the Caribbean, relevant to the countries in the region considering making United Nations peacekeeping contributions?
  - What frameworks for law enforcement, military and disaster relief cooperation already exist in the Pacific Islands region?
  - What elements of these frameworks have worked well?

- What have been the challenges with the adoption of these frameworks?
- What are the key lessons learned from previous efforts to coordinate cooperation on law enforcement, military and disaster relief in the Pacific Islands region
- What are the gaps in the current regional frameworks, and which impact on countries seeking to make United Nations peacekeeping contributions?
- How could a peace and disaster relief operations network be developed to address these gaps?
- How could a peace and disaster relief operations network be integrated with the existing regional framework?
- What do Pacific Island nations want from a network for peace and disaster relief operations?

# Footnotes

<sup>i</sup> Pacific Region States and Territories included in this study are Pacific Islands Forum Members (Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu) and Associate Members (Tokelau, Wallis and Futuna), as well as Japan and the Republic of Korea.

<sup>ii</sup> Data provided includes troop- and police-contributing countries of the Pacific Region, as defined in footnote “i”, namely: Australia, France, Papua New Guinea, Japan, New Zealand, Fiji, Kiribati, Republic of Korea, Samoa.

<sup>iii</sup> The Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs) included here are the 14 countries with which the United Nations system works together in the Pacific to develop an overarching Cooperation Framework in line with regional strategies, including the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent: Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu. United Nations Pacific, *United Nations Pacific Development Cooperation Framework 2023-2027*, P.11. See:

[https://pacific.un.org/sites/default/files/2023-07/9669\\_UNSDP\\_pacific\\_A4\\_5.7.23\\_SHORT\\_FINAL\\_version\\_low\\_res\\_0.pdf](https://pacific.un.org/sites/default/files/2023-07/9669_UNSDP_pacific_A4_5.7.23_SHORT_FINAL_version_low_res_0.pdf).

<sup>iv</sup> Declaration of Lima "Living in Peace" September 7 2022.

<sup>v</sup> UN Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (2024), *Report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations*, A/78/19.

<sup>vi</sup> Sharland, L. and Feely, G. (2020), *Mapping Pacific contributions to UN Peacekeeping*, Australian Strategic Policy Institute, Canberra, December 17. See here: <https://www.aspi.org.au/report/mapping-pacific-peacekeeping>.

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<sup>ix</sup> Data provided includes troop- and police-contributing countries of the Pacific Region, as defined in footnote “i”, namely: Australia, France, Papua New Guinea, Japan, New Zealand, Fiji, Kiribati, Republic of Korea, Samoa.

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<sup>xiii</sup> Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Boe Declaration on Regional Security 2018.

<sup>xiv</sup> Wallis, J. McNeill, H. Batley, J. Powles, A (2023) ‘Security cooperation in the Pacific Islands: architecture, complex, community, or something else?’, *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, Volume 23, Issue 2, May 2023, Pages 263–296, <https://doi.org/10.1093/irap/lcac005>.

<sup>xv</sup> Carpenter, W. M., Wiencek, D. G., & Lilley, J. R. (2019). *Asian Security Handbook: Assessment of Political-security Issues in the Asia-Pacific Region*. Routledge.

<sup>xvi</sup> Bruni, J., Olney, D. J., Jain, P. C., Ludwig, J. Z., & OBE, C. P. J. T. (2020). The Strategic Implications of Changing Dynamics & Regional Partnerships on Major Power Competition in the Indo-Pacific.

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<sup>xviii</sup> Wallis, J., McNeill, H., Batley, J., & Powles, A. (2023). Security cooperation in the Pacific Islands: architecture, complex, community, or something else? *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, 23(2), 263-296.

<sup>xix</sup> PIF (Pacific Islands Forum) 2018. Boe Declaration on Regional Security.

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- <sup>xx</sup> PIF (Pacific Islands Forum) 2019b. Draft Terms of Reference for the Proposed Forum Officials Committee Sub-committee on Regional Security Cooperation.
- <sup>xxi</sup> PIF (Pacific Islands Forum) 2020. Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP) Strategic Work Agenda 2019–2020.
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- <sup>xxiii</sup> PIDF, (2015) Charter of the Pacific Islands Development Forum.
- <sup>xxiv</sup> MSG (Melanesian Spearhead Group) 2013. MSG Leaders Endorse the Establishment of the MSG Humanitarian and Emergency Response Coordination Centre (HERCC).
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