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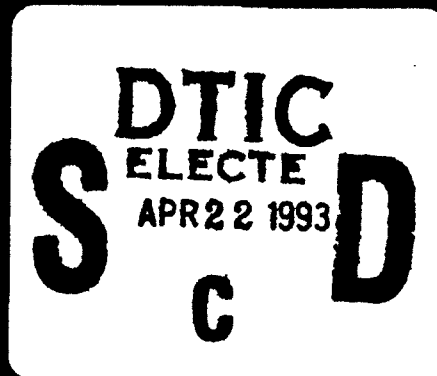
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**THE UNITED NATIONS  
AND COLLECTIVE SECURITY  
IN THE 21st CENTURY**

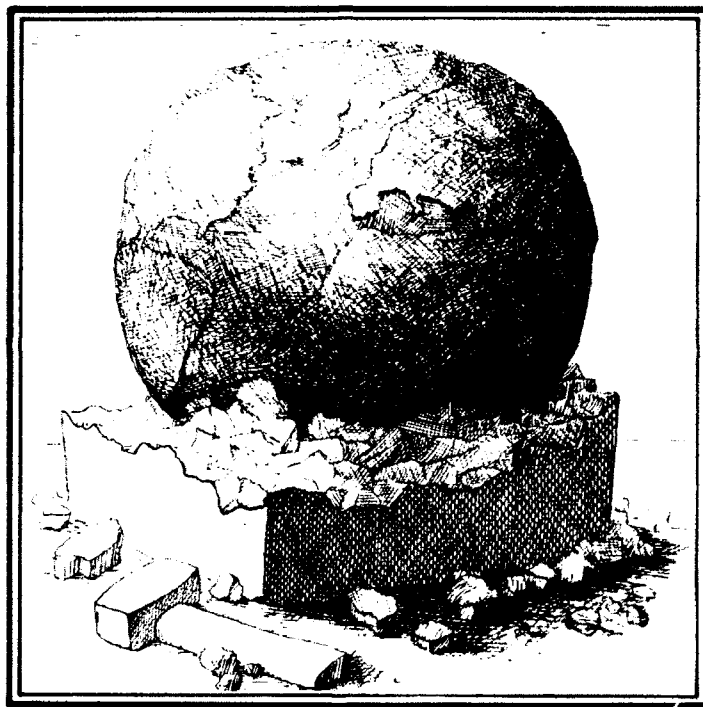
**William J. Durch**



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# THE UNITED NATIONS AND COLLECTIVE SECURITY IN THE 21st CENTURY

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William J. Durch

February 1993

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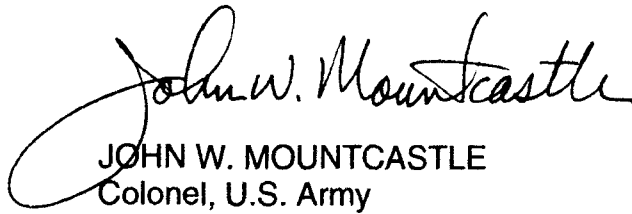
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## FOREWORD

The author of this report examines the contributions that the United Nations might make to international security and stability in the years ahead. He highlights the shortcomings of the U.N., as well as its potential in areas ranging from preventive diplomacy and confidence-building measures to the creation of international military forces. The author concludes that opportunities exist for enhancing the U.N.'s abilities in preventive diplomacy; there is little chance for the successful creation of international forces; yet much can be done to improve prospects for future multinational military operations in between.

The Strategic Studies Institute is pleased to publish this report as a companion piece to its recent study, *Peacekeeping, Peacemaking and Peace-Enforcement: The U.S. Role in the New International Order*.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John W. Mountcastle". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" and last name "Mountcastle" clearly legible. The middle initial "W." is smaller and less distinct. The signature is positioned above the printed name and title.

JOHN W. MOUNTCASTLE  
Colonel, U.S. Army  
Director, Strategic Studies Institute

## **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR**

WILLIAM J. DURCH is a Senior Associate at the Henry L. Stimson Center. A former Assistant Director of the Defense and Arms Control Program at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, he has taught at Georgetown University and held research appointments at Harvard University and the Center for Naval Analysis, in addition to a stint at the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. He is widely published on a broad range of topics. He holds a doctorate in Political Science from MIT, and a BSFS from the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown.



# **THE UNITED NATIONS AND COLLECTIVE SECURITY IN THE 21st CENTURY**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The United Nations was founded to be a collective security organization. During the cold war, it could not fulfill that function. Its membership grew and changed significantly in political focus and economic status over time, such that, by the mid-1970s, the tone and level of rhetoric in the world body put off many in the West, and certainly in the United States. Since the end of the cold war, however, the organization and its members have both exhibited greater realism and the U.N. has come to be seen once again as a potentially significant contributor to international security and stability.

This study is about the contributions that the United Nations might make in that arena in coming decades. It is an incomplete survey, intended to promote discussion and debate, that highlights the shortcomings of the organization as well as its potential in areas ranging from preventive diplomacy and confidence-building measures to the creation of international military forces. It concludes that there are clear opportunities for improving the U.N.'s abilities in the former area, little chance of the latter, and much that can be done to improve future prospects for multinational military operations, in between.

Representatives of the U.N. Secretary General already engage in conflict mediation, what the U.N. has traditionally dubbed "*peacemaking*." U.N.-sponsored mediation helped produce the so-far successful peace settlement in El Salvador, for example. The U.N. also carries out a variety of "*peacekeeping*" missions, which entail the dispatch of military and civilian contingents in situations of recent conflict, under conditions in which all parties to the dispute, in theory, welcome such a U.N. presence.

Military forces assigned by nation-states to enforce U.N. mandates have been used in more threatening situations as well, as in the Gulf War. In principle, national military forces could be assigned to operate directly under U.N. command. The use of international military forces to sustain or to re-establish peace in the face of at least some local opposition is, in U.N. parlance, known as "peace-enforcement."

All of the above activities are undertaken at various times by nations individually, and could in principle be undertaken by multinational regional organizations. That is, even if it is Americans' clear preference to rely on a multilateral organization to promote regional stability in a particular instance, it is not clear that the United Nations will always be our first choice. However, with the possible exception of Europe in coming years, region-wide security organizations are uniformly weak in terms of money, organization, and mandate. The following section outlines the current limitations of regional organizations and some basic, structural reasons why these are unlikely to be remedied soon, so that readers will have the regional alternatives already in mind when I turn to the potential contributions and shortcomings of the United Nations itself.

## **THE LIMITED CAPABILITIES OF REGIONAL SECURITY ORGANIZATIONS**

Although it is often suggested that regional organizations in principle are better suited than the United Nations to maintain regional collective security, and although the U.N.'s own Secretary General (SG) has called on regional bodies to play a larger role in the security affairs of their regions, the U.N. is in some ways better suited to such a role. Several factors conspire to pass the bulk of responsibility for regional stability to the U.N.<sup>1</sup>

### **A Quick Survey of Regional Security Organizations.**

NATO is the best known regional security alliance, although with the end of the cold war and the demise of the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union, NATO's membership now includes

fewer than one-third of the states in Europe. A second regional organization in Europe, the European Community (EC), which began as an economic organization but is edging toward a coordinated foreign and security policy, similarly includes only a fraction of the countries in Europe. A third organization, the West European Union, devoted exclusively to security matters, contains only a subset of the members of the EC, but aspires to be the EC's security arm.

The one European organization that includes all relevant countries and has an explicit security purpose, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), is hampered by a weak organizational structure and by the rule of unanimity which governs its activities.<sup>2</sup> Limitations in all the European security organizations were demonstrated repeatedly over the past year as they grappled inadequately with the problems in the former Yugoslavia.

The United States and all the independent states of Latin America belong to the Organization of American States (OAS), founded in 1951, but perceptions of the independence of that organization have suffered from the heavy political and military influence of the United States in the Hemisphere. The United States has encouraged the OAS to take a more independent role in security matters in recent years, and the organization has taken the lead in attempting to deal with the situation in Haiti. The continuing problem in that country testifies to the OAS' inability to act decisively.

In Africa, all nations but Morocco and South Africa are members of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), founded in 1963 to promote the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and independence of African states. Although proposals have been made periodically that the OAU take on a pan-African security role, these proposals all have foundered because of the continent's overwhelming political and economic problems. The OAU's inability to deal with regional insecurities is blatant, and was demonstrated pointedly some years ago by a failed effort to contain Libyan aggression against Chad, and by its conspicuous inattention to a number of civil wars (in Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, Rwanda, and Liberia) that have claimed large numbers of lives in the last few years.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was founded in 1967 to promote economic cooperation among the non-Communist states of the region, and has been inching toward security functions for several years, but among the region's major military and political powers, only Indonesia is a member. Asia's most populous states (Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, and China), and its richest states (Japan, Korea, Singapore, and Taiwan), belong to no regional security organization. Many of these countries instead maintain bilateral security ties to the United States. Until ASEAN's membership is expanded, or a new Asian security organization is formed, there will be no effective local multinational forum for discussing or acting on regional security issues.

### **Limits on Regional Organizations.**

The rudimentary level of development of regional security organizations prevents them from playing a larger role in international security affairs. Reflecting this limited political development, regional organizations are virtually always starved for funds and can muster the sometimes substantial resources necessary for security operations only in very special circumstances.

Moreover, when more highly developed regional organizations exist, they sometimes are dominated by a single regional power. Two clear examples are the Organization of American States and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), an association of most of the former republics of the USSR.

The one armed peacekeeping action of the OAS followed U.S. intervention in the Dominican Republic in 1965. Wary of appearing to be a mere cover for Washington's decisions, the organization since has tended toward more neutral tasks, such as election monitoring in Nicaragua and Haiti.

The CIS has been doing something with military forces that it calls peacekeeping in the troubled republic of Georgia and on the borders of fractious Tajikistan. However, the looming dominance of Russia within the CIS and the presence of large Russian minorities in many CIS member states lead some to

worry that peacekeeping might be used as a pretext by Moscow to intervene on behalf of Russian expatriate communities and to circumscribe the independence of these new nations. President Boris Yeltsin's assertions of a special security role for Russia in the region tends to reinforce these concerns.<sup>3</sup>

The problem of the dominant state, or hegemon, also occurs in sub-Saharan Africa and in Asia. When African multinational forces to promote greater regional stability have been assembled, to help stabilize Chad in 1979 and 1981, for example, or to intervene in Liberia's civil war in 1990, they have been dominated by one or two powers—in these three cases, by Nigeria—and that dominance makes Nigeria's neighbors rather leery. A South African presence in an African multinational security regime could counterbalance Nigeria's, but the day when South Africa sorts out its own problems and is welcomed as a partner by the rest of Africa is still a long way off.

It would be difficult to construct a peacekeeping force in South Asia that would not be similarly dominated by India. China or Japan would likely similarly overshadow their neighbors in any regional security framework in East Asia.

The most ambitious peacekeeping operation in Asia today is in Cambodia, where, under U.N. leadership, most of the members of ASEAN have contributed infantry or other military or civilian personnel to the effort to rebuild the war-ravaged country. Japan has committed substantial sums of money and an engineer battalion (its first overseas military deployment since World War II) to the effort. The U.N. operation is also headed by a Japanese national, another first. Because it is run by the U.N., however, this major Japanese role has not caused concern among other countries. The U.N.'s Cambodia mission has been far less tainted by regional squabbling and jockeying for position than it likely would have been had it been organized by a regional organization. Placing the operation in the global context, even if local nations are the primary contributors, helps to ease the memories which might otherwise make it difficult for these countries to work together.

As a result of regional organizations' shortcomings and reluctance to take action with respect to local conflicts, the U.N. finds itself called upon to flag the need for, to legitimize, and sometimes to carry out a variety of tasks intended to promote more stable regional relations, even within Europe, which has the best-developed regional organizations. Indeed, the need for the countries of Europe to turn to the United Nations in the case of the former Yugoslavia is perhaps the best evidence that regional organizations suffer not only from limits on their military capacity and economic resources, but from a collective lack of vision on how best to use what they have.

The attractiveness of NATO as a model organization, especially to non-members, lies not just in its political structure and military muscle, but in the participation of the United States as an extra-regional balancer or "great organizer."<sup>4</sup> Other regional organizations lack such a balancer (although the United States can be said to play such a role informally in East and Southeast Asia today). As of this writing, NATO has decided to become involved militarily in the Balkans crisis in two ways, on the ground and at sea, but both actions have been taken under mandates from the U.N. Security Council, not the CSCE, the North Atlantic Council, or the expanded North Atlantic Cooperation Council. Small ground force contingents have moved into Bosnia to safeguard the shipment of humanitarian relief, and a small naval contingent in the Adriatic Sea helps to implement the U.N.'s recently tightened blockade.

It seems clear, however, that if Europe is unable to establish an effective post-cold war collective security organization despite its substantial resources—military, political, and economic—other regions are unlikely to do much better. Thus, if any multinational organization is going to take on a larger military role in promoting regional stability and peaceful relations around the world, it seems likely to be the United Nations. This is not to say that the U.N. should by any means be viewed as a panacea for the world's problems. It has problems of its own, as well as potential, as the following sections on preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping, and peace-enforcement attest.

## **COLLECTIVE SECURITY AND PREVENTIVE DIPLOMACY**

Potentially, the timely collection and dissemination of information about political events and military activities can facilitate early international action to head off political crises and perhaps prevent the outbreak of conflict. Such activities fall under the SG's "good offices" function, and currently include preventive diplomacy and fact-finding missions.<sup>5</sup> The concept of fact-finding might be expanded in time to encompass the pre-crisis deployment of U.N. teams equipped with ground- or air-based local monitoring technologies intended to improve military transparency between wary neighbors, and the crisis deployment of U.N. rapid response teams equipped with a wider range of surveillance technologies able to ascertain regional military dispositions in some detail and to gather data in support of potential Security Council action.

Before the U.N. moves to do very much in preventive diplomacy, however, it needs better eyes and ears. The U.N. Secretariat has very little capability at present to gather or process political-military information. In principle, the information gathered by the U.N.'s various operating agencies (dealing with climate and weather, food, health, economic development, and refugees) could be sent to a central office, analyzed, and used to give the organization strategic early warning of impending conflict situations—not warnings of troop movements but information on resource shortages, population shifts, or ethnic tensions that can be the precursors to conflict.<sup>6</sup> The U.N. took a promising step in the right direction when a new entity, the Office for Research and the Collection of Information (ORCI), was created in 1987. It was supposed to assist the Secretary General gather, disseminate, and store open-source information. The office never received adequate funding, however, and was disbanded during the reorganization of U.N. Headquarters in early 1992. At present, the U.N. is studying alternatives to fill the void.

The political culture of the organization shies away from "intelligence," perhaps because, during the cold war, espionage used to be a preoccupation of the people that some

countries seconded to the U.N., and to be associated with intelligence may suggest association with those subrosa enterprises. Some member states, including the USSR, also objected vigorously to the U.N. having any intelligence capacity of its own. An organization without its own eyes and ears is less capable of developing policy independently. Having its own sources of data and analysis would give the U.N. Secretariat a degree of sentience undesired by some.

To fill this data gap, the major powers, including the United States, sometimes provide intelligence data to the U.N. when it is relevant to activities that the donor supports. In the case of the Special Commission for Iraq, the United States loaned a U-2 reconnaissance aircraft to the organization and is said to apprise Commission staff of information relevant to their mission.<sup>7</sup> Reliance on major powers for data could fail the U.N., however, when an issue or a region important to the organization had not routinely received attention from the major powers' intelligence agencies; that is, when its priorities failed to mesh with those of its most powerful members. This is unlikely with respect to major military engagements, which will not go forward without the support of the major powers and which tend to attract their attention. But with respect to lesser issues where the SG's good offices and early U.N. action might help to head off later, larger troubles, what the U.N. needs and what it can get from member states may not be a good match.

As a first step toward remedying this situation and improving the Secretary General's capacity to engage in preventive diplomacy, the U.N. should recreate ORCI and place it within the Department of Political Affairs. With a dedicated staff assessing daily information flows and partially devoted to anticipating crises, the Secretary General would be in a better position to fulfill his good offices functions with dispatch.

If the U.N. were permitted to develop such an in-house capacity, it might prove useful to give it some modest operational capacity as well, beyond the press and the reporting of U.N. employees in the field. Two capacities come to mind: "open skies" aerial surveillance for peacetime and



quick-response, high-tech observation teams for times of crisis.

### **Open Skies.**

President Dwight Eisenhower proposed "open skies" in 1955 as a cold war confidence-building measure. The Soviet Union rejected the proposal, which the United States went on to implement unilaterally, as it were, when the first U-2 flights commenced in 1956. President George Bush revived the proposal in May 1989 to "increase the transparency" of NATO and Warsaw Pact military activities. In late March 1992, after nearly 3 years of talks that spanned the breakup of the Warsaw Pact and of the Soviet Union itself, a multilateral Open Skies Treaty was signed by members of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, in Helsinki, Finland.<sup>8</sup> The agreement provides for cooperative aerial overflights that will allow states to monitor military movements and deployments by their neighbors, to allay suspicions and reduce misperceptions that can raise international tensions.

An open skies capability under U.N. command could include a variety of helicopters and fixed wing aircraft equipped with a mix of off-the-shelf cameras and sensors, subject to the constraints of the Open Skies Treaty and relevant protocols.<sup>9</sup> Aerial platforms and imaging packages (including cameras, sensors, and processing/analysis facilities) could be acquired by member countries and provided to the U.N. for permanent use or be loaned to the U.N. as situations requiring their use emerged. Multi-sensor aircraft could be time-shared among several different mission areas as needed, reducing the cost per mission. Moreover, as more countries in Europe develop their own capabilities for implementing open skies, more aircraft will be available for lease by the U.N., which could then concentrate more of its own resources to processing the data gathered and distributing it to the local parties who are participating in an open skies arrangement. This capability could be particularly important for poorer countries, who might prefer to enter into such arrangements with the U.N. rather than with a private or governmental provider of open skies services. Because such countries are unlikely to have photo and data

interpretation capabilities of their own, the costs of a U.N. open skies operation could increase rapidly unless strict criteria were established for eligibility.

### **Crisis-Related Diplomacy and Monitoring.**

If the United Nations were equipped, politically and technically, to undertake intensive preventive diplomacy at the onset of a political-military crisis, it is argued, its active presence might defuse at least those crises based on mutual misunderstandings and might help to deter war in other cases where baser motivations are at work. To be useful, such preventive diplomatic action would require timely early warning as well as diplomatic talent and perhaps military monitoring resources. Diplomatic intervention is based on the Secretary General's good offices function found in the U.N. Charter and is not predicated on the prior consent of the parties involved. Further action, involving deployment of fact-finding missions or more sophisticated surveillance teams would obviously require the consent of the party on whose territory they deployed. But if such capabilities were available to the U.N., it could possibly play a stronger role in resolving potential conflicts and maintaining regional stability.

To respond in a timely manner to threatened cross-border incursions and other kinds of aggression, the U.N. might arrange to have access to monitoring teams equipped with the technical systems necessary to obtain unassailable evidence of the local "ground truth" and to report back their findings to the international community, through official channels and, where the Secretary General believes it helpful, through commercial television (to stimulate or to enhance the "CNN factor" by which modern public opinion is brought to bear on an issue).

Such U.N. response teams, although military, would have no explicit deterrent function, except insofar as their exposure of aggressive maneuvers might give pause to a would-be attacker. The teams would not be equipped or expected to resist an invasion and would place their members at minimal personal risk, to encourage U.N. member states to contribute

well-equipped units willingly and repeatedly on such missions to regions of tension. They would rely heavily on remote surveillance technology to monitor the field situation, ideally including both short-range and long-endurance drones with multispectral cameras and data links back to portable ground stations situated well back from the border. The relatively low observability of small remotely-piloted aircraft would also make them suitable for overflights that might be dangerous for a piloted open skies flight. Drones might also be equipped to drop lines of inexpensive, radio-equipped acoustic sensors designed to detect the movement of heavy equipment on the far side of the border. Their transmissions could be relayed through the long-endurance drones and could be used, especially at night, to cue shorter-range vehicles toward potential troop and armor movements. In other situations, there may be reason to deploy radar surveillance aircraft, if not the full capabilities of a U.S. JSTARS (Joint Surveillance and Target Attack Radar System), then one of the smaller systems now available from a number of countries and manufacturers.

The more variety and the greater the power of the surveillance technologies brought to bear, however, the greater the burden of intelligence "fusion" and the greater the potential for information overload. Thus, each deployment of a monitoring team would need to be tailored to provide just enough information to verify the objective military situation, generate the necessary transparency to defuse tensions, or assign responsibility for aggression.

Because its audience would be broader than the local parties, a monitoring team and its live data lines to the outside world might not just untwist local interpretations of the ground truth, but unhinge planning for cross-border aggression, or expose systematic genocide, or life-threatening "ethnic cleansing" to global scrutiny. In an information age, the ability of the U.N. to reach out and illuminate such activities, which thrive on isolation and secrecy, would be a service of relatively high order. The world community would not take action in every such instance, but neither would it be able to say that it had no way of knowing.<sup>10</sup>

A U.N. crisis monitoring team, not intended as a deterrent or combat unit, should have sufficient organic airlift to quickly transport personnel and equipment to a safe distance from combat should fighting break out. Military backup, particularly air cover, might prove crucial to the safety of the team in such situations. Should that not be feasible, the team should carry its own limited air defenses, on the order of Stinger shoulder-fired or vehicle-mounted missiles (for example, the Army/Marine Corps Avenger).

The notion of U.N. preventive diplomacy, fact-finding, and crisis monitoring is a logical extension of the U.N.'s current peacekeeping philosophy to pre-crisis, pre-conflict situations, and could be relatively easily accommodated within the current financial and political constraints on the world organization (assuming that relatively few missions would be operating at once). The United States could play a key role both in leading the United Nations to establish such capabilities and in helping to design, structure, and equip the new units. To keep crisis-prone regions from using such units instead of working to resolve their political problems, the U.N. could adopt a policy of gradually transferring the cost of operating a surveillance mission to the local parties. The idea of preventive diplomacy and monitoring is to promote regional stability, not to make the U.N. into the world's border nanny.

## **U.N. MILITARY FORCES**

For the duration of the cold war, East-West politics relegated the United Nations to the periphery of international military affairs, limiting its use to a relative handful of special situations in which U.N. peacekeeping troops were called upon to monitor cease-fires and, occasionally, to help preserve law and order. Operations of the first type continue on borders between Arabs and Israelis (in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Palestine, and Israel), between Hindus and Muslims (in Kashmir), between Greeks and Turks (on Cyprus), and between Croats and Serbs (in Croatia). Operations of the second type include restoring government and ending secession (in the Congo, 1960-64), mitigating ethnic strife (on Cyprus, until 1974), and establishing zones of relative sanity

in times of civil disorder (in southern Lebanon since 1978). The most recent law-and-order mission, begun as humanitarian intervention, is in Somalia; it may soon be joined by an effort to separate Croats, Serbs, and Slavic Muslims in Bosnia.

In addition to peacekeeping, the United Nations might engage in something that was called "preventive peacekeeping" in Secretary General Boutros-Ghali's June 1992 report, *An Agenda for Peace*. The concept was first put into practice recently when the U.N. Security Council agreed to send several hundred U.N. observers to Macedonia, in hopes that their presence might deter attacks from Serbia. The idea is that relatively small U.N. military forces, deployed to a region of potential conflict, could deter war by threatening to draw the wider international community into opposing any aggression that subsequently occurred.

The U.N. has sanctioned two large peace-enforcement operations, in Korea and the Persian Gulf. In the first instance, the United States led the effort as the U.N.'s force commander; in the second instance, the United States and its coalition partners received the U.N.'s blessing, but not its flag. In neither case did the U.N. Charter's formal military mechanism for confronting aggression come into play. Article 43 provides for the earmarking of forces for dispatch to U.N. command when needed, but member states have been quite reluctant to sign the necessary agreements.

The following sections discuss each of these U.N. security functions in turn.

### **Peacekeeping.<sup>11</sup>**

Originally confined to monitoring uneasy border buffer zones in the aftermath of regional wars, the concept of U.N. peacekeeping has been expanded since the end of the cold war to include implementation or oversight of agreements that have settled long and bitter civil wars, as in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Angola, and Cambodia; and the implementation of political transitions to independence, as in Namibia. U.N. peacekeepers have also been used to maintain security conditions essential to the conduct of free and fair elections, to

demobilize fighting forces, and to investigate abuses of human rights. A complete list of U.N. peacekeeping operations is included in Tables 1 and 2.

Name	Description
U.N. Special Committee on the Balkans (UNSCOB), 1947-51	Investigate guerrilla border crossings into Greece
U.N. Truce Supervisory Organization (UNTSO), 1948-present	Monitor cease-fires along Israeli borders
U.N. Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP), 1949-present	Monitor cease-fire in Cashmere
U.N. Emergency Force (UNEF I), 1959-67	Separate Egyptian & Israeli forces in Sinai.
U.N. Observer Group in Lebanon (UNOGIL), 1958	Monitor infiltration of arms & troops into Lebanon from Syria
U.N. Operation in the Congo (ONUC), 1960-64	Render military assistance, restore civil order
U.N. Temporary Executive Authority (UNTEA), 1962-63	Keep order, administer W. New Guinea in transfer to Indonesia
U.N. Yemen Observer Mission (UNYOM), 1963	Monitor arms infiltration into Yemen.
U.N. Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), 1964-present	Maintain order, separate Greek/Turk Cypriots.
U.N. India Pakistan Observer Mission (UNIPOM), 1965-66	Monitor cease-fire in 1965 India-Pakistan War
U.N. Emergency Force II (UNEF II), 1974-79	Separate Egyptian & Israeli forces in Sinai.
U.N. Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), 1974-present	Monitor separation of Syrian & Israeli forces on Golan Heights
U.N. Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), 1978-present	Establish buffer zone between Israel & Lebanon

**Source:** William J. Durch and Barry M. Blechman, *Keeping the Peace: The United Nations in the Emerging World Order*, Washington, D.C.: The Henry L. Stimson Center, March 1992.

**Table 1. U.N. Peacekeeping Operations  
During the Cold War, 1945-85.**

Name	Description
U.N. Good Offices Mission to Afghanistan and Pakistan (UNGOMAP), 1988-89	Monitor withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan.
U.N. Iran-Iraq Observer Group (UNIIMOG), 1988-91	Monitor cease-fire in Iran-Iraq War.
U.N. Angola Verification Mission I (UNAVEM I), 1988-91	Monitor withdrawal of Cuban forces from Angola.
U.N. Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG), 1989-90	Supervise Namibia's transition to independence.
U.N. Mission in Central America (ONUCA), 1989-91	Monitor compliance with peace accords; demobilize Contras.
U.N. Angola Verification Mission II (UNAVEM II), 1991-present	Monitor cease-fire and creation of new army.
U.N. Iraq-Kuwait Observer Mission (UNIKOM), 1991-present	Monitor buffer zone after Gulf War.
U.N. Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), 1991-present	Conduct referendum on independence from Morocco.
U.N. Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL), 1991-present	Monitor human rights elections, national reconciliation.
U.N. Advance Mission in Cambodia (UNAMIC), 1991-92 U.N. Temporary Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), 1992-present	Supervise govt., run elections; demobilize armed factions.
U.N. Protection Force in Yugoslavia (UNPROFOR), 1992-present	Replace Yugoslav forces in Serbian areas of Croatia. Humanitarian relief escort units in Bosnia.
U.N. Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM I & II), 1992, 1993 U.N. International Task Force (UNITAF), 1992-93	Security for humanitarian aid shipments. U.S.-led from December 1992 through spring 1993.
U.N. Operation in Mozambique (UNOMOZ), 1993-	Implement peace settlement in civil war.

**Source:** Durch and Blechman, *Keeping the Peace*, updated by U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, *Worldwide Peacekeeping Operations*, 1993, EUR 92-10027, December 1992.

**Table 2. U.N. Peacekeeping Operations  
in the New Era, 1985-92.**

By tradition and, really, by necessity, any U.N. peacekeeping force performs these functions only with the consent of all the affected local parties. U.N. peacekeeping forces function as referees, not enforcers. Although many U.N. troops are equipped with light infantry weapons, they are used only in self-defense (and rarely even then). The weapons' more important function is often psychological: to retain the respect of what are frequently, in the immediate aftermath of conflict, heavily-armed societies. If they lose the respect of local elements, peacekeepers can lose all ability to keep a cease-fire under control, find themselves ignored, and even become targets of factional violence, as has happened frequently in southern Lebanon in the past, and is now happening in Bosnia.

Although it has developed a set of procedures and a respectable amount of institutional memory for establishing and running peacekeeping operations, the U.N. still goes about the process of planning and supporting peacekeeping in a fundamentally ad hoc manner. The actions of the General Assembly and Security Council reflect the national interests of those bodies' members and, in the case of the Council, the specific interests and views of the five veto-wielding Permanent Members (Britain, China, France, Russia, and the United States). The U.N.'s own institutional interests and its image as an independent operating entity are vested solely in the organization's permanent Secretariat and its far-flung operating agencies, all of which depend on the largesse of national governments for their operating budgets. Much of the Secretariat has evolved to support the creation and distribution of rhetoric on paper—transcripts, proceedings, and hortatory reports—and its bureaucratic culture is not given to decisive, toe-treading action. That could be changed, but would require the concerted efforts of U.N. member states.

Several groups within the Secretariat, all of them small, have responsibility for various bits of the U.N.'s activities in conflict mediation and resolution, including the planning of new peacekeeping missions, the drafting of budgets and recruiting of personnel, and contracting for transport and supplies. Just as there is, as yet, neither a standing U.N. diplomatic corps nor an intelligence staff, there has been only a small operational



planning capability, no peacekeeping operations center (although that is said to be changing), and no military chief of staff. A small staff of military officers seconded from member states assists the U.N.'s Military Advisor, currently a Canadian general officer who is double-hatted to the Secretary General and to the Under-Secretary for Peacekeeping Operations. This staff of five or six is responsible for military mission planning, while an equal number of seconded officers in the U.N.'s administrative offices help to plan mission logistics and transport.

Initial troop lift and long-term logistical support are frequent problems for U.N. peacekeeping operations. The United States has often airlifted the first units of troops into new operations. Other powers have sometimes contributed airlift capability (mostly transporting troops and their personal gear), most recently in support of the U.N.'s airlift of supplies into Sarajevo.

Logistics for most U.N. operations after the initial period of deployment are the responsibility of the U.N.'s civilian Field Operations Division, which also furnishes the communicators who set up, operate, and maintain the links between the operation and U.N. Headquarters in New York. The U.N. logistics system has a poor reputation for responsiveness. Communications for recent missions have required many weeks to establish, often because the U.N. must first purchase the needed satellite communications equipment. These delays may shorten as the equipment becomes more portable and the number of recent missions expands the pool of equipment available to the U.N.<sup>12</sup>

Although the U.N. asks that all "formed units" recruited for U.N. duty bring full field kits, including organic transport, units from poorer countries in particular have been known to arrive in the area of operations with little more than rifles and rucksacks. Although U.N. mission planning has been criticized in some quarters as extravagant, even the best-supplied U.N. operations are typically not designed with the kind of reserve capacity that is built into most national armies. When battalions arrive in a mission area unequipped, the U.N. seeks donations

of equipment from wealthier states, buys new equipment, or scrapes something together on the local market.

The U.N.'s member states, in classically short-sighted fashion, refuse to fund a revolving stockpile of essential equipment, the existence of which could reduce the U.N.'s operational response time. More reserve capacity of this sort would likely make peacekeeping a more cost effective endeavor by making it more responsive to crises and better able to exploit the often short-lived euphoria that may accompany a peace accord or political settlement. Had the U.N. been prepared to march in force into Cambodia in the fall of 1991, for example, only weeks after the Paris Accords, some subsequent problems might have been reduced, including a blossoming of official corruption and an increase in rural banditry as fighting factions disintegrated.<sup>13</sup> The recent political settlement in Mozambique may be placed at risk for similar reasons.

U.N. peacekeeping has succeeded in many instances despite considerable organizational, material, and operational shortcomings, in part because troops and commanders on the ground have worked hard to overcome the limitations, sometimes supplying through national channels what was not available through the U.N. But U.N. peacekeeping has succeeded primarily where local peoples and political factions have both needed and supported the U.N.'s presence. Any operation designed to intervene in situations in which there is only partial local consent is not peacekeeping, but something else, and it usually runs into a whole string of problems, as the trials of U.N. forces in Angola, Bosnia, and Western Sahara currently attest. If the U.N.'s member states continue to send the organization's peacekeepers into politically unstable situations, they risk the political and financial collapse of what has been to date one of the international community's most useful tools for containing and seeking to resolve regional conflicts.

If the U.N. is to play a military role in containing regional conflicts in situations where the parties to a dispute are not yet ready to cooperate with a peacekeeping mission, then the world organization must devise means of making available

military forces prepared to fight to enforce the peace. That is much harder to do than peacekeeping.

### **Deterrent Deployments.**

Recognizing the limitations of U.N. peacekeeping as practiced traditionally, some observers have suggested that the United Nations should be prepared to inject forces into situations in which not all the parties to a conflict (or budding crisis) would welcome a U.N. presence.<sup>14</sup> This concept has become known in some quarters as "preventive peacekeeping." I prefer to call it "deterrent deployment," because that is its function, and to distinguish it clearly from peacekeeping. The forces discussed by proponents of such operations are typically of brigade strength.

A common scenario used to illustrate the concept of a U.N. deterrent deployment begins in Kuwait around the end of July 1990. As spelled out in the scenario, Kuwait would have called for international assistance as Iraq maneuvered its forces closer to the Kuwaiti border, and a brigade-sized multinational force would have been dispatched to help deter Iraqi aggression. The U.N. deterrent force would have been deployed only on Kuwait's territory and would have symbolized the willingness of the international community to intervene in large numbers if necessary on Kuwait's behalf in the event of war. By deploying the force, the U.N. would have denied the legitimacy of Iraq's claim to the territory. If it had been deployed rapidly, such a symbolic U.N. force in Kuwait might have deterred Iraq from invading.

Deterrent deployments might be of value in certain circumstances if they clearly represented the will of the international community to oppose aggression, and could call upon substantial military backup in a pinch. Such deployments — the tripwire force together with its backup — might affect an aggressor's calculations about the prospects for successful surprise attack and for the ultimate success of the enterprise.

On the other hand, the U.N. should not contemplate deploying such limited forces if they would face the unpleasant alternatives of decimation or summary retreat should conflict

break out. Were the former to occur, the U.N. would have a hard time recruiting contributors to subsequent deterrent forces. Were the U.N. too quick to withdraw a "deterrent" force in the face of attack, the concept would have little credibility beyond its first use. A savvy aggressor also might attempt to circumvent or brush aside such a force, perhaps in the process making it hostage to further U.N. restraint.

To avoid such outcomes, a U.N. tripwire or deterrent force would need to be sufficiently mobile to avoid encirclement by superior forces. Thus it would need to be fully motorized (or mechanized, depending on the level of threat), with good organic air defense capability and the ability to call upon substantial air support, if needed. All of these requirements suggest a force that ranges upwards in capability from an airmobile infantry brigade with scout helicopters, to an armored cavalry regiment backed by an expeditionary air wing or several aircraft carriers. It would be a serious and costly matter to deploy it, and long-term support requirements might realistically constrain such deployments to locales with ready access to the sea.

In some parts of the world, such a unit would be as capable as the armed forces of an entire country. In other places, it would be swallowed up by the terrain alone. In the former case, the U.N. could of course deploy smaller forces; in the latter case, it should probably deploy none at all. There would be a range of contingencies, in other words, where the concept might be applicable, but these would not include contingencies involving the world's more populous countries or its larger military powers.

A deterrent (preventive) threat is difficult to evaluate, because when it succeeds, nothing happens. Should deterrent deployments of serious size and capability be undertaken by the U.N., it would not be difficult for a would-be aggressor to feign preparations for attack, attract a U.N. force, pull back while making indignant noises, and then begin the cycle again, playing the U.N. like a violin until it fails to respond and the attack succeeds. Saddam Hussein has attempted such tactics with respect to the no-fly zones in northern and southern Iraq and the U.N. Special Commission charged with dismantling

Iraqi mass destruction weapon capabilities. Thus far, neither the U.N., nor Britain, France, or the United States, have lost interest in pressing Iraq, but if deterrent operations were underway in three or four locales simultaneously, under various U.N. security mandates, the ability and interest of the international community to sustain an active military response could begin to wane.

### **Peace-Enforcement.**

Decisions to take action are more readily made and more easily implemented when the tools needed for effective action are already in place. In the case of forceful U.N. military action, the necessary tools include criteria for judging when to intervene, a responsible political authority to which U.N. forces would be accountable and from which they would receive their orders, and the forces themselves. None exist at this time, nor is there any political consensus that they should be created within the Secretariat to give either the SG or the Security Council direct command of military force. Nonetheless, given the increasing involvement of national forces in difficult situations under United Nations' mandates, and the increasing attention being paid to formalizing U.N. enforcement capabilities, these concepts deserve careful attention and critique.

*Criteria for Intervention.* There are no clear criteria for U.N. enforcement actions. Explicit criteria may be difficult to draw in advance, given the endless varieties of human conflict, and many member states are in any case wary of defining criteria for U.N. action that reach beyond cases of clear, cross-border aggression. U.N. intervention in internal conflict cuts across traditional concepts of state sovereignty and nominally contravenes the Charter. However, the prohibition on U.N. intervention in countries' domestic affairs also states that "this principle shall not prejudice the application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII" of the Charter. In practice, whenever the Security Council decides that certain events constitute a "threat to international peace and security," its decision to intervene, by force if necessary, cannot be overridden by claims of domestic jurisdiction. Any matter that

a voting majority of the Security Council agrees to define as a threat to international peace and security automatically becomes actionable unless vetoed by one of the Council's Permanent Members.<sup>15</sup>

In short, the Security Council takes action based on what the political traffic will bear, and that changes with the times. Twenty years ago, gross human rights violations and internal conflicts generating massive hunger and displacement of people were not considered internationally actionable; today, in some cases, they are. Additional causes of international action may arise in the future (perhaps gross and wilful damage to the environment?). The U.N. is likely to continue dealing with them on a case-by-case basis, so as not to get ahead of the political consensus of its members. That consensus is unlikely for some time to support a wide-ranging interventionist mandate for the organization, but as events in Somalia and the former Yugoslavia attest, the willingness of the Security Council to involve the U.N. in messy situations within the borders of one country is much greater now than at any time since the intervention in the Congo more than 30 years ago.

The ability of the Secretariat to plan, support, or command such operations, on the other hand, is barely greater now than it was then, which is to say that it barely exists. The work of the Military Advisor's staff was sketched earlier; the Military Staff Committee, which under the Charter is to give "strategic direction" to U.N. enforcement actions, operates at low level in a pro-forma fashion. There is general agreement that the U.N. plays a crucial political role as the legitimizer of international military actions in support of Charter principles, and may have a role to play as the locus of international efforts to improve, during peacetime, the ability of potential troop contributors to function together in multinational operations. There is far less agreement, however, that the U.N.'s military capacity should be sufficiently enhanced that it could command wartime forces, or that the U.N. should possess standing forces of its own during peacetime. The following sections discuss each of these management models for U.N. peace-enforcement, in turn.

*The U.N. as Legitimater of National Military Actions.*<sup>16</sup> The Gulf Crisis is the most clear-cut example of this type of U.N.

action to enforce regional stability. The United States had good reasons of its own to oppose the Iraqi intervention, but found it important politically to carry out the enforcement action under the aegis of the United Nations, and within the ground rules dictated by the U.N. Security Council. If nothing else, carrying out the operation under the authority of the United Nations made it possible to put together the broad coalition that contributed to the war effort, as well as to gain the support of the wide domestic audience that eventually backed the war. Since the Gulf crisis, the Security Council has assumed the role played formerly by the world's dominant military powers, judging the degree of insult to international norms implied by various situations, and choosing where and when to sanction military intervention.

Other international crises are unlikely to be as clear-cut as the invasion of Kuwait. The disintegration of Yugoslavia may be a better example of the mix of conflicting claims to self-determination, violations of human rights, and large flows of refugees threatening regional stability that will constitute many future situations in which the United States might wish to take action—with or without the U.N.'s legitimation. Yugoslavia is also an example of how pressures build in various quarters to "do something" about conflict situations. These pressures can galvanize nations to act despite the understanding of their defense officials as to the paucity of viable military alternatives. The ambivalence of national leaders, torn between their political need to take action and their understanding of the limited possibilities for action, can lead them to the U.N. to seek legitimacy and the comfort of numbers. No country wants to respond alone to such conflicts and to risk being stuck there paying the political price, and perhaps the blood price, alone.

If there are to be multinational responses to regional crises, moreover, the Security Council is probably the most efficient means of generating it. Council resolutions confer *prima facie* international legitimacy upon whatever actions they command or countenance. Turning to the United Nations in these difficult situations gives the appearance of responding to a political demand for action, while gaining the comforts of multilateral

sponsorship and the extra legitimacy conferred by conforming one's national actions to international norms and procedures.

Under this model, the U.N. would not directly recruit military forces nor play a direct role in organizing or supporting the operation. Since it is far easier to cast votes than to deploy and pay for troops, such Security Council resolutions do not guarantee international action. However, Council resolutions do not arise in political vacuums; an enforcement resolution is unlikely to pass unless at least one of the permanent members, who still possess much of the world's military power, is prepared to prosecute the enforcement action or assemble the coalition that will do so. That was the case with the Gulf crisis.

The legitimator model also worked well in the Gulf because Iraqi forces faced such overwhelmingly superior forces that the actual fighting ended before the coalition's shortcomings could manifest themselves seriously. Had the coalition required the help of Soviet-equipped Syrians to dislodge Soviet-equipped Iraqis, for example, or had Iraqi forces fought better, the number of friendly casualties could have been much higher.

Finally, the legitimator model worked in the Gulf because the United States played by the rules of the game. Once Iraqi forces had been pushed out of Kuwait, the United States called a halt to the war. If the United States had sought more ambitious objectives than the Security Council was prepared to sanction, this model of cooperative international military action under the aegis of the United Nations might well have broken down in an embarrassing storm of recriminations.

In future enforcement actions legitimated by the Security Council, there may not be shared military experience, state-of-the-art port and air base facilities in the host country, open terrain suited to armored warfare and air attack, only one enemy, and 6 months free of enemy fire for the enforcement forces to adapt to local conditions. Thus, the U.N. and its members may want to take further steps, in peacetime, to increase the readiness and compatibility of the forces that they might call upon in the future to enforce regional stability and promote international peace. Two additional models of more aggressive U.N. roles in enforcement actions are available.



*The U.N. as Broker For Military Actions.* Moving one step beyond the legitimator model, the U.N. could become an "enforcement broker," not only authorizing military action but establishing procedures and standards in peacetime that would coordinate the recruitment, equipment, and command of forces to be used in future U.N.-sanctioned military operations. In this model, the U.N. would still not command an enforcement action, but would take a more active role to make sure all the pieces for such actions were available to be brought together when needed, including the advance earmarking of national forces for participation in U.N. operations.

Earmarked Forces. National forces might be earmarked informally for use in U.N. operations, or be formally designated for U.N. operations by the type of agreement provided for in Article 43 of the U.N. Charter. Although elements of earmarked forces should be kept ready to deploy on a few days' notice, most states would insist on a right to refuse participation in specific situations. The nature of the current international system is such that the U.N. could never command nations to make military contingents available, no matter how solemnly they had been pledged prior to the demand.

Some nations have already earmarked forces for U.N. enforcement actions. Canada, for example, has an airborne regiment, part of its brigade-sized Special Service Force, that is earmarked for U.N. action. It can deploy reconnaissance teams overseas on 24-hours' notice, other advance elements in 72 hours, and the entire unit in about a week.<sup>17</sup>

A country the size of the United States might earmark a brigade or two of ground forces, a tactical air wing, or an amphibious ready group for service in U.N. operations. The United States might actually prefer to earmark a number of brigades trained in various climates and terrain conditions, but plan only on contributing one brigade to any specific operation (plus, perhaps, division- and corps-level headquarters units).<sup>18</sup>

Two operational considerations suggest that the United States earmark brigade-equivalent units if it decides to contribute forces to U.N. enforcement operations. First, if the U.N. is contemplating intervention in a shooting war, the United

States would want to contribute a unit incorporating heavy weapons (artillery, armor, attack helicopters, and surface-to-air missile units), capable of holding a defensible amount of territory without necessarily having to rely on international allies to do so. Second, if the United States were asked to contribute much more than a brigade to a U.N.-sanctioned operation, by implication the whole operation—including other nations' contributions—would range upwards of 50,000 troops with support forces included. The logistical requirements alone would mandate heavy U.S. involvement in support functions and, as U.S. forces are currently structured, the calling up of reserve units. In all probability, the United States would seek to command any operation including so many U.S. troops, not merely to contribute to it.

International Military Standards. To coordinate preparations for future enforcement actions, the United Nations, perhaps acting through an arm of the Military Staff Committee, might devise basic requirements that earmarked forces should meet in order to participate in U.N. operations. These should include communications standards, procedures and technologies for communications security, common logistical requirements, ammunition standards, training standards, and minimum equipment standards for various types of units to be contributed. The U.N. should also develop and maintain an inventory of units available for call-up, their capabilities, and some indication of which units were compatible with, or had trained with, which others. Periodic U.N.-coordinated command post exercises for command echelons of earmarked national units would help to build familiarity with multinational operations and their unique problems, and among the officers involved.<sup>19</sup>

Ideally, the various national forces earmarked for U.N. operations would share inter-operable equipment, common training, operational doctrine, rules of engagement, and language. Such a high degree of commonality is probably unaffordable, however, especially for the smaller countries that would give U.N. operations an appropriately wide "geographic distribution."<sup>20</sup> The best to be hoped for may be basic compatibility of critical communications nodes, of IFF

(identification, friend or foe) protocols and technologies, and of fighting doctrine (in broad outline).

Global Positioning System (GPS) technology distributed throughout such a force could be absolutely critical to maintaining integrity of operations. In addition to helping unit commanders maneuver in unfamiliar country, the widespread availability of GPS would facilitate the continual reporting of unit positions to headquarters and thus help to keep the U.N.'s disparate national units from tangling with one another as they engage the opponent.

Specific air missions (for example, close air support, air superiority, interdiction) might be assigned to specific countries, again to minimize confusion. Since electronic data links and electronic countermeasures play a central role in modern air operations, a slip-up in either could prove tragic in a fast-moving air campaign. Compatible fueling hardware and aerial refueling capabilities could be crucial to a U.N. air campaign as well, as it was in the Gulf War. To improve the effectiveness of air operations, the U.N. may wish to recruit all of its air components from just a handful of countries. Of these, perhaps only one or two should be asked to contribute combat forces to any one enforcement operation.

Except for aircraft carriers, naval forces supporting a peace-enforcement operation are likely to be engaged primarily in implementing blockades or quarantines, or in clearing mines, as was the case in the Persian Gulf, rather than in battling for control of the open sea. If so, the naval component of a peace-enforcement operation could be drawn from a large number of U.N. member states, including those with primarily coastal navies, and countries in the local region. Nonetheless, a clear chain of command, pre-defined communications protocols, and common rules of engagement would be important. Logistical support for a wide variety of ships would be complex, and states contributing ships to the force should anticipate having to provide their own maintenance and spare parts; such requirements could limit the staying power of smaller countries' forces.

If the deployment of U.N. forces required opposed entry into a territory, or an aggressor had substantial naval forces at its disposal, then the U.N. naval component would need to be drawn from countries that have blue water navies and air power afloat. Only the United States and France operate attack aircraft carriers, but a number of countries, including Britain, India, Italy, Russia, and Spain, as well as the United States, operate ships embarking vertical/short take off and landing (V/STOL) combat aircraft. Most of these hold no more than one squadron of aircraft, but the fact that most share a common type of aircraft could make for flexible joint operations.

Command and Control. Operational control of all U.N. forces in this model might best be given to a specific country, which would act as agent for the Security Council, much as the United States did during the Korean War, even if forces operated formally under the U.N. flag. The lead country would be invited by the Secretary General to take on this role, but of course could not be forced to do so. Command of specialized components (air and naval forces) might best be vested in the principal contributor of air wings or ships to a particular operation. For naval forces, that is likely to be the United States in most cases, but the air boss might vary, as tactical air power is somewhat more widespread among the world's major military powers, especially in NATO.

Once the lead country has agreed to take on the role, it might recruit others to join the operation, much as the United States did in building the military coalition for Operations DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM, or recruiting could be done by the U.N. itself, in close consultation with the leader. Having the support of the Security Council, the lead country would benefit from greater international legitimacy and probably greater domestic support than would be the case if it set out to do the same job without U.N. blessing.

Selecting the leader of such a U.N. operation, however, presents something of a dilemma. If American lives were lost in an operation not commanded by an American, there could be a significant backlash against the President who sent those troops abroad, suggesting that U.S. participation will at all times require U.S. control. Yet, if U.N.-authorized forces were

consistently led by the United States, the United Nations would soon look to much of the world like a stalking horse for U.S. foreign policy, and suffer significant loss of political credibility and effectiveness as a result.

One way out of this dilemma for the United States would be seek overall command only when contributing ground combat units to an operation. The United States could contribute to other operations by providing intelligence, lift, logistical support, and perhaps even air power. Subordinating such functions to others' command on occasion may indeed prove necessary to keep others willing to subordinate themselves to us.

*The U.N. as Operator of Military Forces.* Although the United Nations is not now structured, equipped, or inclined to conduct military operations, one can at least imagine it growing into the role. In this third model of U.N. peace-enforcement, the organization would take on responsibility for establishing and operating military forces. Concepts for such forces range from units maintained nationally but chopped to U.N. command when called up, to small standing forces recruited on an individual basis and responsible operationally only to the U.N. itself.<sup>21</sup>

NATO as a Potential Model. If the U.N. is to command military forces, it would need to acquire a permanent military staff of some size, a command center, and probably a chain of command separate from the one now used for peacekeeping operations.<sup>22</sup> NATO's political-military command structure might serve as a useful model of a U.N. military command, and NATO members' experience in alliance military operations might be at least partially transferrable to the world body: For the North Atlantic Council at NATO's apex, substitute the Security Council; for the Defense Planning Committee, substitute a direct U.N. analog which does not yet exist: a meeting of the Defense Ministers of serving Security Council member states. NATO's Secretary General has a direct analog in the U.N. Secretary General, and the NATO Military Committee has an analog in the U.N.'s Military Staff Committee (MSC). The latter could be expanded to include all presently serving Security Council member states by the simple device

of declaring such a step to be necessary to the "efficient discharge" of the MSC's duties (U.N. Charter 47, paragraph 2). International military staff personnel could serve under the expanded MSC.

Below the international staff level, the analogy between NATO and the U.N. becomes weaker. The U.N.'s scope is global, while NATO's is Eurocentric. NATO members participate in the military side of the alliance because, at least until very recently, they shared a perception of threat to their own national territories from Soviet conventional and nuclear forces. A similar sense of intrinsic national interest is harder to generate for U.N. military forces, even though most countries generally appreciate that a stable international political climate is in their best interest.

Standing U.N. Forces. Some, including the French President, Francois Mitterand, have suggested that the U.N. create a standing brigade of its own, a "U.N. legion."<sup>23</sup> It might be handy to have such a force available for immediate deployment when the Security Council authorizes U.N. military action, as U.N. operations have been seriously hampered in the past by delays in finding and fielding forces, and by delays in finding the money to pay for them. A standing force would be pre-recruited and pre-funded. It could be used to give the U.N. an immediate ground presence when peacekeepers were called for on short notice, and could hand off to national units as they were recruited and deployed, much as the United States is doing in Somalia. The standing U.N. unit also might be the leading edge of any U.N. peace-enforcement action, sent early to the scene of a conflict to deter or defuse impending hostilities.

A brigade-sized standing U.N. force would be able to take on some coercive tasks alone, especially on behalf of small countries suffering from border banditry, or in countries like Somalia where civil strife had destroyed governmental functions. Such a force would not be able to take on large, sophisticated adversaries; a brigade's worth of capability is a lot for the U.N., but not much for most of the countries where that brigade might be called to serve. A U.N. brigade could therefore come to be seen as a tool for use not only on behalf

of, but also against, the interests of small and weak states, who may not, on balance, appreciate the implications.

One risk of maintaining a standing U.N. force might be its dissipation over several crises at a time, or its use in situations that call for much bigger forces, to spare member states the cost and risk of using national forces. Although often accused of extravagance, the members of the U.N. have been notoriously cheap when using military units, and they would be tempted to be cheap in supporting a standing force. But the level of support that such a force received routinely from member states would suggest the level of backup that it could be expected to receive when engaged in deterrent or combat operations; the level of support in peacetime would establish its credibility in more trying times. Thus, U.N. member states, in their own interest and the interest of the organization, should ensure that any standing U.N. force is supported not in the manner of a Third World army, but in the manner of a Western industrial power, not just in terms of weapons and training, but in terms of logistic support and transportation that would be made available as circumstances required. For member states, it would be a question of "pay now, or pay later," in terms of reduced effectiveness and respect for the force. In situations in which it is likely to be engaged, respect from local parties may be a significant advantage, much as it is in peacekeeping. Thus a standing U.N. force would be a costly proposition for the organization to maintain.

All of the issues and problems of coordination and interoperability mentioned in the previous section would pertain to standing U.N. military forces as well. In addition, there is the question of the subordination of command to the international body itself. In practice, the choice of a Force Commander and relevant senior component commanders is likely to be made by consensus of at least the permanent five members of the Security Council, ideally a consensus developed well before a crisis forced a choice, so that all parties had a chance to be comfortable with the decision. Commanders of earmarked national forces would then also have a chance to interact with the Force Commander-designate and to participate in command post exercises and,

further down the road, in simulations or field exercises stressing doctrinal synthesis and tests of interoperability.

The number of places in which U.N. military forces, particularly a brigade-sized "legion," might contribute to regional stability is large and growing. Yet, a military command role for the United Nations is far from likely at the present time. U.N. member states have not yet seen fit to give the world body a serious capability to plan for and carry out peacekeeping operations, and they are unhappy with the mounting cost of the current peacekeeping agenda. The costs of U.N. combat operations—and their political risks—would be far higher than the costs of peacekeeping.

States are likely to husband their prerogatives over military forces and agree to U.N. command of a military force only when such a step appears to be the only way in which a force could be assembled to deal with a particular situation seen to pose a direct and serious threat to the interests of the major powers. One must stretch the imagination to conceive of such a situation, suggesting that the two looser models of U.N. peace-enforcement—"legitimator" or "enforcement broker"—are the more realistic.

### **THE U.N.'s LIKELY FUTURE ROLE IN COLLECTIVE SECURITY**

If the United Nations is to play a growing role in crisis prevention and preventive diplomacy—a role that in some instances it could be better equipped to play than any one state—the U.N. Secretariat needs a much better, independent capability to generate early warning and policy options for the Secretary General. U.N. peacekeeping operations, for which the organization is now perhaps most widely known, have been growing far faster than the U.N.'s ability to plan, manage, or fund them. At the same time, member states have been pressing the organization to involve itself on the ground in growing numbers of situations where conflicts, particularly internal conflicts, are still heated. The U.N. has neither the resources nor the temperament for conflict suppression, and one suspects that it has been getting so many hard jobs of late



from its members because they haven't the resources or the temperament for it, either. However, feeling pressure to make some tangible gesture of commitment, they dispatch a quasi-peacekeeping mission for which the circumstances are not yet ripe. Such gestures may, before long, irreparably dull a very useful tool of international conflict management.

Impatience with peacekeeping has led to calls for greater U.N. involvement in peace-enforcement. U.N. blessing for a military operation does give it the greatest legitimacy international law can currently convey, and the backing of a General Assembly resolution gives it the broadest possible international political support. But all proposals that suggest that the U.N. should go further and either develop its own military forces or actively command forces seconded to it from member states will sooner or later run up against the basic resistance of national sovereignty, even eroded as it has been over past decades. The nation-state has been the highest political unit with a monopoly of legitimate military power for the better part of five centuries. The acquisition of military power traditionally has been the first step toward establishing governance over a territory, and states are wary of taking any step that appears to begin a process that could result in the ceding of such power to the U.N. To invest the organization with the power to recruit, command, and pay for military forces of its own, however minimal to begin with, would be seen to start a process of establishing a higher, global power above the nation-state, which invokes deep-seated government opposition in virtually all parts of the globe. Thus, although the U.N. can play military roles in helping to promote more stable and peaceful international relations, it will most likely do so using national armed forces and not forces of its own.

## ENDNOTES

1. For discussion of regional peacekeeping efforts in Latin America and Africa, see Virginia Page Fortna, *Peacekeeping by Regional Organizations*, The Henry L. Stimson Center, Occasional Paper No. 11, March 1993. See also Mona M. Ghali, *The Multinational Forces: Non-UN Peacekeeping in the Middle East*, The Henry L. Stimson Center, Occasional Paper No. 12, March 1993, for discussion of the Multinational Force in Beirut and the Multinational Force and Observers in the Sinai. On

European peacekeeping, see "European Security and the New Arc of Crisis," papers by George Joffe and Curt Gasteyger in, *New Dimensions in International Security*, Adelphi Paper No. 265, London: Brassey's for the International Institute for Strategic Studies, Winter 1991/92, pages 53-81; and James B. Steinberg, *The Role of European Institutions in Security after the Cold War: Some Lessons from Yugoslavia*, The RAND Corporation, Note N-3445-FF, 1992.

2. Although the CSCE has established a small Conflict Prevention Center (CPC), the unit has a budget of just \$1 million a year, and fewer than ten staffers. Ironically, CSCE's popularity among smaller European states may derive not from the distant prospect of its coming to their rescue in a future crisis, but from the ability of one state with a seconding vote to block organizational action. Unless voting rules are changed, it will be very difficult for CSCE to evolve into a more action-oriented regional security entity. Whether CSCE follows that path will depend in turn upon an evolving sense of the importance and feasibility of collective security within "greater Europe"—a sense that must first eclipse the current obsession with individual national security that grips most of the newly independent states of the region.

3. For a lucid discussion of peacekeeping in the CIS, see Suzanne Crow, "The Theory and Practice of Peacekeeping in the Former USSR," and "Russian Peacekeeping: Defense, Diplomacy, or Imperialism," *RFE/RL Research Report*, Vol. 1, No. 37, September 3, 1992, pp. 31-40. An agreement on peacekeeping signed by ten of eleven CIS member states on March 20, 1992, in Kiev, specified that peacekeepers be used only in situations where conflict had ebbed, and that only those members of the Commonwealth not directly involved in disputes should contribute units to help keep the peace. Both stipulations have been ignored in practice (p. 3f).

4. Josef Joffe, "Collective Security and the Future of Europe: Failed Dreams and Dead Ends," *Survival*, Spring 1992, p. 40.

5. For an extensive survey of U.N. fact-finding missions to areas of tension or conflict from 1945 through 1991, see Walter Dorn, "Keeping Watch for Peace: Fact-Finding by the UN Secretary-General," mimeo, Parliamentarians for Global Action, New York, December 1992.

6. The United Nations Development Program maintains resident representatives in the capitals of most developing states. The U.N. Children's Emergency Fund, World Food Program, and High Commissioner for Refugees together have several thousand staffers in the field in the most disaster- and crisis-prone parts of the world. They report regularly to their respective organizations and in theory U.N. Headquarters has access to much of this data, but theory has not been translated into practice due to funding shortfalls and the U.N.'s tenuous system of

coordination among these various functional agencies. The current system could not be transformed into a U.N. diplomatic service, however. To do so would be like trying to conduct American diplomacy with just the representatives of AID and the Peace Corps; the U.N. system at present lacks a cadre of political officers. Under the previous Secretary General, small quasi-diplomatic missions were left behind in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran and Iraq when larger peacekeeping missions there ended, to give the Secretary General independent eyes and ears in what are continuing regions of tension. These missions are thus far the exception, however, and the major powers generally tend to frown on them, pointing to the cost but worrying more about the incremental growth of autonomy on the part of the Secretary General.

7. Melissa Healy, "UN Sleuth Credits Allied Data on Iraq," *Los Angeles Times*, October 18, 1992, p. 12. International Atomic Energy Agency official David Kay testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that U.S. intelligence tips helped the U.N. cope with Iraq's campaign to deceive U.N. inspectors about its nuclear weapons program. An American U-2 reconnaissance aircraft made available to the U.N., flying U.N. insignia, and based in Saudi Arabia has regularly overflown Iraq since August 1991, often in conjunction with ground inspections. Authorized by Security Council Resolutions 707 (July 1991), the flights take place during a 48-hour window following 72 hours' pre-notification to Iraq and Iraqi acknowledgement of that notice. Johan Molander, "Mandated Aerial Inspections: The Iraqi Case," in Michael Krepon and Amy E. Smithson, *Open Skies, Arms Control, and Cooperative Security*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992, pp. 150-156.

8. Jonathan Tucker, "Negotiating Open Skies: A Diplomatic History," in Krepon and Smithson, *Open Skies*, pp. 5, 43.

9. For an analysis on the types of sensors available for such overflights, see Jeffrey P. Tracey and Amy E. Smithson, "Sensors and Platforms for Aerial Overflights," in Krepon and Smithson, *Open Skies*, pp. 69-92; and Allen V. Banner, "Overhead Imaging for Verification and Peacekeeping: Three Studies," Ontario: Canadian Ministry of External Affairs and International Trade, March 1991.

10. On the other hand, it might be argued that the international crises receiving the most international attention today are the ones that received the most intensive television coverage last week. One reason for the U.N. to have its own information processing capability is to avoid being whipsawed into action in some places by media coverage alone, while other crises receive relatively little attention. One might contrast attention paid to the Balkans with attention paid to Armenia and Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, or Sri Lanka.

11. For a more detailed discussion of this topic, see William J. Durch and Barry M. Blechman, *Keeping the Peace: The United Nations in the Emerging World Order*, The Henry L. Stimson Center, March 1992.

12. The U.N. tends to be in better shape with respect to communications gear than with respect other equipment because of a long-standing relationship with Motorola as its basic equipment supplier. Specialized military communications companies may deploy with a force initially, until U.N.-provided equipment facilitates communications from field units to Force Headquarters. But national units that participate in U.N. operations also bring their own communications gear with them, and the U.N. cannot afford to buy the gear needed to enable cross-communications at the battalion level. To minimize such problems of interoperability, U.N. peacekeeping forces patrol fixed areas subdivided into separate jurisdictions for each nation contributing a battalion.

13. See, for example, *Washington Times*, September 6, 1991, p. 8; *The Washington Post*, April 22, 1992, p. A24 and June 14, 1992, p. A30; and *The New York Times*, February 5, 1992, p. A3, and April 12, 1992, p. 22.

14. See, for example, Sir Brian Urquhart, "The United Nations: From Peacekeeping to a Collective Security System?" in *Adelphi Paper* No. 265, London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, Winter 1991-92, pp. 18-29.

15. It is important to recognize that it is not "the U.N.," a supranational organism, that makes such decisions, but 15 of its member states. If the Permanent Five are agreed on a course of action, they need the support of just four other Council members, although practical political considerations make it desirable to forge a consensus, if possible, on controversial actions, and particularly to gain the support of Council members from the region where action is contemplated. It would be very risky, for example, to attempt intervention in a region if most of the U.N. caucus from that region were dead set against it. In practical terms, then the decisions of the Security Council reflect the net national interests of its members, as well as interests of the regions in which they are located.

16. For especially good discussions of the U.N.'s role as legitimator, see Lori Fisler Damrosch and David J. Scheffer, eds., *Law and Force in the New International Order*, Westview Press for the American Society of International Law, 1991.

17. Brigadier General Ian Douglas, "Improved Peacekeeping Operations, United Nations Mobile Force (UNMF)—An Option," Service paper, mimeo, Ottawa, Ontario: January 1991, and interviews.

18. One battalion in each earmarked U.S. brigade might be designated as the ready unit on a rotating basis; the ready unit might be prepared to ship out on 24-hours' notice for peacekeeping duty, and on somewhat longer notice for enforcement operations.

19. Such standards for enforcement operations would need to be more vigorously implemented than they are for peacekeeping. The U.N. asks for peacekeeping battalions that are fully equipped with their own communications and transport, for example, but often receives battalions consisting of troops with personal weapons and little else. Such surprises would be unacceptable for enforcement operations. To date, the U.N. has experienced difficulty in getting member states to tell it what sorts of units they would be willing to contribute to peacekeeping operations. Clearly, states would need to be less coy if even a brokerage approach to peace-enforcement were to be viable.

20. There is a dissipating opportunity to create a standardized military stockpile for the use of the smaller nations that might participate in U.N. enforcement actions, using the equipment being discarded by NATO and former members of the Warsaw Pact under the Conventional Forces in Europe agreements. However, "pre-positioning" such equipment may invite its use for other purposes, while the continuing, global spread of military technology suggests that members of a U.N. coalition who were equipped with 1980s-vintage European discards could find themselves outgunned by a future aggressor serious enough to attract the U.N.'s attention. Moreover, the stockpile would gradually become incompatible with the equipment inventories of the major powers likely to lead an enforcement action, defeating the purpose of having it, unless the stockpile itself were subject to periodic capability upgrades, which would drive up the cost. (Such obsolescence would be a much less important factor for peacekeeping purposes, however, and the useful size of the stockpile and the cost of maintaining it could be much lower.)

21. For discussions and proposals on U.N. forces, see David Cox, ed., *The Use of Force by the Security Council for Enforcement and Deterrent Purposes: A Conference Report*, Ottawa: The Canadian Centre for Arms Control and Disarmament, 1991; Sir Brian Urquhart, "The United Nations: From Peace-keeping to a Collective System?", in *New Dimensions in International Security*, Adelphi Paper No. 265, London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, Winter 1991-92, pp. 18-30; William H. Lewis, ed., *The Security Roles of the United Nations*, proceedings of a conference sponsored by the Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, and the Strategic Plans and Policy Directorate, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Washington, DC, October 9-10, 1991; John M. Lee, Robert von Pagenhardt, and Timothy W. Stanley, *Strengthening United Nations Peacekeeping and Peacemaking: A Summary*, Washington, DC: International Economic Studies Institute, April 1992; and "Deploying Force in the Name of Peace," Ch. 3 in Jeffrey Laurenti, comp., *The Common*

*Defense: Peace and Security in a Changing World*, Washington, DC: United Nations Association of the USA, June 9, 1992.

22. Such separation is desirable to maintain the conceptual and operational distinction between peacekeeping—which is neutral, consensual, non-coercive—and peace-enforcement—which is none of those things. It may be, however, that all military functions within the Secretariat might best be consolidated in a single staff that is clear about the distinctions, while consolidating the civilian elements of contemporary peacekeeping operations—human rights and election monitors, police, civil administrators—as well as basic political planning, in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

23. Lee, *et al.*, present a good discussion of the notion of an independent “U.N. Legion.”

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