



# **Keeping the Peace**

## **Regional Organizations and Peacekeeping**

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## Abstract

During the cold war, the United Nations (UN) developed the mission termed peacekeeping to help manage conflict. These peace operations helped save millions of lives, prevented conflicts from escalating, and provided an environment for the political settlement of disputes despite the superpower conflict. In the aftermath of the cold war, the UN found itself freer to act than at any time in its history, and the demands placed on the organization quickly outstripped its ability to cope. This study examines the role of regional organizations in the conduct of peacekeeping. It asks if the international community's singular focus on the UN as the vehicle for peacekeeping prevented the regional organizations from contributing more to international security. Furthermore, if the regional organizations could contribute significantly to international peace, then what role should the Department of Defense (DOD) play in supporting these efforts?

Regional organizations have conducted peacekeeping operations in the past with mixed results. This study examines the intervention by the Organization of American States (OAS) into the Dominican Republic in 1965, the OAS role in the Central American peace process in the late 1980s, and the intervention by the Economic Community of West African States into Liberia in 1990. These operations illustrate several salient features of regional organizations conducting peacekeeping.

This study concludes that in order for peacekeepers to achieve their mandate, it is critical to possess strong political will and a minimum of operational support. Furthermore, regional organizations run the gamut in both political will and operational capability. Their performance indicates that when their national interests are at stake, the regionals demonstrate the required political will to persevere in a mission. Furthermore, they indicate an increasingly strong determination to participate in peacekeeping missions. They understand that a positive correlation exists between regional political stability and economic growth, and they appear ready to build an environment that fosters such growth. However, a gap exists between their political will and operational capability. This gap should be remedied by a United States (US) strategy that recognizes regional organizations as the second tier in an international community that may contribute to international peace.

This study recommends that the DOD and other US agencies support and encourage regional organizations to bear more of the peacekeeping burden, either independently or as a partner with the UN. DOD should actively support the improvement of these organizations' capabilities to conduct peacekeeping operations through a comprehensive strategy that builds on the activities taking place on the bilateral level and within the combatant commands. Strengthening regional organizations can ameliorate the burden of being the world's remaining superpower, leverage the US leadership position, and further US national interests.



## About the Author

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## Chapter 1

# Introduction

We stand today at a unique and extraordinary moment. . . . Out of these troubled times, . . . a new world order can emerge: a new era, freer from the threat of terror, stronger in the pursuit of justice, and more secure in the quest for peace. . . . Today that new world is struggling to be born, a world quite different from the one we've known. A world where the rule of law supplants the rule of the jungle.

—President George W. Bush

As long as man has fought wars, he has sought the means to preserve peace. The Athenian League, the Treaty of Westphalia, and the League of Nations exemplify past efforts to secure peace and stability. Likewise, in the aftermath of World War II, the representatives of 50 nations established the United Nations (UN). Fresh in their minds was the destruction wrought by the global conflagration that claimed over 50 million lives. Thus, the representatives resolved to create a robust international security forum in order to “save succeeding generations from the scourge of war.”<sup>1</sup> While the UN achieved success in several areas, such as humanitarian assistance and economic development, the polarizing effect of the superpower confrontation hampered the organization’s ability to act on security issues. For example, between 1945–90, members of the UN Security Council vetoed 279 measures involving matters of international security.<sup>2</sup>

Despite the limitations imposed on the UN by the cold war, the organization developed the mission termed peacekeeping to help manage conflict. During the cold war, the UN established 14 peacekeeping operations. The superpowers perceived that these operations did not negatively affect their vital national interests; thus, they allowed their establishment. These operations tended to involve the mediation of isolated and idiosyncratic conflicts, the monitoring of cease-fire agreements, and the establishment of buffer zones.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, these peace operations helped save millions of lives, prevented conflict from escalating, and provided an environment for the political settlement of disputes.<sup>4</sup>

The end of the cold war presented both opportunities and challenges for the international community: opportunities in the sense that the UN found itself freer to act than at anytime in its history; challenges in the sense that the cold war and communism had suppressed many long simmering economic and ethnic conflicts that were now unleashed. The UN attempted to answer the challenge and established 17 new peace operations, many of which were larger in scope and more expensive than peace operations during the cold war. While there have been some notable setbacks in peacekeeping, such as the failure of the

operation in Somalia to bring stability to that country, peacekeeping has garnered some worthwhile successes over the years, notably in the Sinai and Central America, and will continue to be a part of the post-cold-war landscape.

While the UN has conducted the majority of peacekeeping missions, regional organizations also have worked to keep the peace. The fundamental question examined in this study concerns the role of regional organizations in the conduct of peacekeeping. Has the international community's singular focus on the UN as the vehicle for peacekeeping prevented the regional organizations from contributing more to international security? If regional organizations could contribute significantly to international peace, then what role should the Department of Defense (DOD) play in supporting their efforts? Chapter 2 lays a theoretical basis for understanding the nature of peace operations. It offers a common lexicon for discussing peacekeeping, identifies the functions of peacekeeping, and establishes the influencing factors by which to measure the success of a peacekeeping operation. Chapter 3 examines the role of regional organizations in peacekeeping. It explores the legal basis for regional organizations conducting peacekeeping and discusses the various advantages and disadvantages of regional organizations intervening in that capacity.

Chapter 4 examines the performance and potential of regional organizations conducting peacekeeping. Regional organizations have been involved in several peace operations with mixed results. For example, in 1961, the Arab League replaced a British force along the border separating Iraq and Kuwait and successfully kept the peace until a treaty was signed. This chapter explores two peacekeeping operations by the Organization of American States (OAS). The first operation concerns the intervention into the Dominican Republic in 1965, and the second operation is the implementation of the Central American peace process in the late 1980s. This chapter also examines the efforts of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to keep the peace in Liberia and explores the current efforts of the regional organizations to improve their peacekeeping capabilities. Chapter 5 examines the strategy of the United States regarding peacekeeping operations and more specifically, how DOD could enhance the capability of the regional organizations. Chapter 6 offers specific recommendations geared towards enhancing the regional organization's ability to conduct peacekeeping operations. Today, the United States remains committed to a strategy of engagement and enlargement. The United States has military forces engaged in peace operations in Haiti, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, northern Iraq, and the Sinai. Furthermore, the United States supports numerous UN peace operations through financial and material support. This study examines whether a tool for regional peace and stability in the form of regional organizations has been underutilized and whether the United States should place greater emphasis on these organizations. If the United States maintains its support for peacekeeping, then the regional organizations should be considered for their potential contribution to peace operations.

### **Notes**

1. **United Nations**, United Nation's Charter, 1.
2. **Victoria K. Holt**, The US Role in United Nations Peace Operations (Washington, D.C.: Council for a Livable World Education Fund, 1995), 1.
3. **William J. Durch and Barry M. Blechman**, Keeping the Peace: The United Nations in the Emerging World Order (Washington, D.C.: Henry L. Stimson Center, 1992), 1.
4. **Holt**, 1.

## Chapter 2

# The Nature of Peacekeeping

Peacekeeping is a useful and highly visible element of the efforts of the United Nations to maintain international peace and security. . . . Peacekeeping, properly conceived, directed, and financed, could become an important and effective symbol of a new determination to relieve the peoples of the world of unnecessary conflict, excessive armaments and the constant threat of war.

—Sir Brian Urquhart

In early 1956, tension over the Suez Canal erupted into open hostility when forces from Great Britain, France, and Israel attacked Egypt in order to secure control of the waterway. Under international diplomatic and economic pressure, the belligerents agreed to allow the establishment of a buffer zone patrolled by an armed UN truce-monitoring force.<sup>1</sup> This first-ever armed intervention by the UN gave birth to the term peacekeeping and culminated in the establishment of the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) I, which remained in place until Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser requested its withdrawal in 1967.

This chapter discusses the nature of peacekeeping. It examines the characteristics of peacekeeping since the establishment of UNEF I, in both a cold war and post-cold-war context. It offers a common lexicon for analyzing peacekeeping and identifies the factors that influence the success of such operations. It also examines the functions and the principles of peacekeeping. An understanding of these fundamental peacekeeping concepts will allow one to judge the peacekeeping capability of the regional organizations.

## Peace Operations Defined

Peacekeeping is found nowhere in the UN Charter. Paul Lewis notes in his study of UN peacekeeping that “. . . its invention is often credited to Secretary-General Hammarskjold, who jokingly called it ‘chapter six and a half’ of the Charter, meaning that it fell between chapter six, which calls for the peaceful resolution of disputes, and chapter seven, which empowers the Security Council to reverse aggression by military might if negotiations fail.”<sup>2</sup> While much has been written on peacekeeping in the last few years, there are still definitional disconnects between the DOD’s Joint Publication (Joint Pub) 3-07.3, Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Peacekeeping Operations, and the UN’s white paper *An Agenda for Peace* usage.<sup>3</sup> For

instance, the term peace enforcement has multiple interpretations. In An Agenda for Peace, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali uses peace enforcement to describe cases in which an established cease-fire has been agreed to, but not complied with, and peace enforcement units are called in to restore and maintain the cease-fire. The US definition describes a chapter 7 situation to breaches of the peace such as Desert Storm.<sup>4</sup> Clearly, in coalition operations, it is necessary to establish common definitional understanding of the nature of the conflict and the explicit tasks to be accomplished. The following definitions are offered as point of departure for this study.

**Peace.** What is meant by the term peace? It can be described in the negative sense as the absence of war. This may be sufficient as a goal of the peacekeeper in maintaining a cease-fire. However, in the positive sense, peace connotes a long term period of tranquillity between governments. This should be the ultimate objective of a peace process.

**Preventive Diplomacy.** Preventive diplomacy is an “action to prevent disputes from arising between parties, to prevent existing disputes from escalating into conflicts and to limit the spread of the latter when they occur.”<sup>5</sup> Preventive diplomacy serves as the most desirable and cost effective mechanism for easing tension. It can include a host of initiatives including confidence building measures, fact finding missions, and preventive deployments, such as Operation ABLE SENTRY in Macedonia.

**Peacemaking.** According to the UN, peacemaking “is an action to bring hostile parties to agreement, essentially through such peaceful means as those foreseen in chapter 7 of the UN Charter.”<sup>6</sup> Peacemaking includes diplomatic actions such as mediation and negotiation.

**Peace Building.** Civil-military actions and support structures that will tend to strengthen and solidify peace and avoid a relapse into conflict. This term includes humanitarian actions that may alleviate or ameliorate the conditions leading to conflict.

**Peace Operations.** According to Joint Pub 3-07.3, peace operations is “the umbrella term encompassing peacekeeping, peace enforcement, and any other military, paramilitary, or nonmilitary action taken in support of a diplomatic peacemaking process.”<sup>7</sup>

**Peacekeeping.** According to the unofficial UN definition as described in The Blue Helmets, peacekeeping is “an operation involving military personnel, but without enforcement powers, established by the United Nations to help maintain or restore peace in areas of conflict.”<sup>8</sup> The Pentagon offers a more comprehensive definition in Joint Pub 3-07.3, “military or paramilitary operations that are undertaken with the consent of all major belligerents, designed to monitor and facilitate implementation of an existing truce and support diplomatic efforts to reach a long term political settlement.”<sup>9</sup>

**Peace Enforcement.** According to the DOD, peace enforcement involves “military operations using appropriate force to separate belligerents, with or without their consent, at any time after a dispute has erupted and prior to a peaceful settlement.”<sup>10</sup>

## **Peacekeeping versus Peace Enforcement**

According to Carl von Clausewitz “the first, the supreme, the most far-reaching act of judgment that the statesman and commander have to make is to establish by that test the kind of war on which they are embarking; neither mistaking it for, nor trying to turn it into, something that is alien to its nature.”<sup>11</sup> Traditionally, US military doctrine has described conflict along a spectrum of war. This spectrum can be defined by the type of war, level of intensity, or type of weapons employed. This author suggests that the difference between peacekeeping operations and peace enforcement operations represents more than a simple increase in intensity along the spectrum of war. The two operations are of a very different nature and require distinct solutions. It is beyond the scope of this study to examine the intricacies of these two mission types. It is sufficient for this study to state that the distinction exists, the international community does not agree on the degree of distinction, and the results of mistaking peace enforcement for peacekeeping could be catastrophic as the events in Somalia proved.

## **Measuring Success of a Peacekeeping Operation**

Air Force Manual (AFM) 1-1, Basic Aerospace Doctrine of the United States Air Force, states that “success in war is not determined solely by military defeat of the enemy, casualties inflicted, or territory occupied. Success is determined by whether or not political objectives are met.”<sup>12</sup> Likewise, judging success in peace operations requires an understanding of the desired political objectives. Importantly, peacekeeping creates a suitable environment to allow peacebuilding to work. For example, the UN has patrolled the Green Line in Cyprus since 1964. Is this long-term peace operation a success? For most of the operation, peace, defined here as the absence of war, has reigned. Further, the fact that Greece and Turkey almost went to war recently over the possession of two barren rocks in the Aegean Sea would indicate that the UN forces have helped prevent further hostilities on Cyprus. While the success of the peacemaking process is arguable, it remains undeniable that the peacekeepers have succeeded in avoiding open conflict.

Marjorie Ann Browne, a specialist in international relations, offers a choice of three measures to judge the success of a mission. Was the mandate set forth by the establishing organization met?<sup>13</sup> Did the operation lead to a resolution of the underlying dispute? Did the operation lead to international peace and stability? Within the narrow confines of the first criterion, UNEF I, the interposition force placed between Egypt and Israel in 1956, was a success because it achieved the mandate until it was removed at Nasser’s request. Under the more comprehensive criterion, UNEF I was unsuccessful because it only provided an 11-year pause between hostilities. The main point is that peacekeeping is essentially a diplomatic action using military forces. It is the

great enabler that sets the conditions for peacebuilding, a diplomatic and political process, to take place.<sup>14</sup> And the ultimate success or failure of a peacekeeping operation may not be manifest for years, or perhaps even decades.

## **Cold War Peacekeeping**

The cold war dashed the hopes of those who wished for a world body with the capability to provide for the world's peace and security through a robust collective security system. The structure of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), with veto provisions for the five permanent members, helped assure that the cold war adversaries could block the UN enforcement mechanisms on matters any one of the five deemed vital to its interests.<sup>15</sup> In fact, the cold war caused UN officials to tiptoe around the superpower confrontation that permeated many of the salient decisions at the organization. For example, the famous image of Ambassador Adlai E. Stevenson confronting the Soviet representative over the installation of ballistic missile launch facilities in Cuba belies the fact that no resolution condemning the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was passed.<sup>16</sup> While no state would agree to compromise on an issue of vital interest during the cold war, that conflict made every area of the globe a potential flash point and impeded the UN's ability to act.

Despite the constraints placed on the UN by the cold war, a mechanism for enhancing the prospects of peace developed. Thirteen peacekeeping operations were undertaken from 1956 to 1988. Twelve of these operations could be characterized as traditional peacekeeping, while the mission in the Congo represented a peace enforcement operation. The following types of missions are included under traditional peacekeeping: observe cease-fires, interpose forces along a buffer zone, provide early warning, and monitor and verify truce agreements. From these traditional missions, a set of principles were developed that was articulated by UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld as early as 1958.

Hammarskjöld, who died while traveling to the UN peace operation in the Congo in 1961, stated that the peacekeepers must have the consent of the parties involved. Second, the troops should not come from the great powers. Third, the troops must maintain a strict impartiality. Fourth, the troops must retain the capability to defend themselves. These principles were abided by in 12 of the 13 operations embarked on by the UN, with the Congo failure representing the exception.

## **Influencing Factors**

With this in mind, a broad study of peacekeeping operations reveals several salient factors that this author suggests play significant roles in their success

or failure. The first of these factors is international support. Positive international support confers legitimacy upon an operation. This support may be derived from the UN, regional organizations, or a coalition. The responsible organization also decides upon the mandate, or objective, of the operation.<sup>17</sup> A second factor, domestic support, involves the will of the nations participating. In the United States, this centers on the Congress, media, intellectuals, and public opinion. This support translates into the third factor, financial support, which provides the resources to turn strategy into action. The fourth factor is consent, which addresses the degree to which the antagonists agree to third party intervention. The fifth factor under examination is force application, the extent to which force must be applied to preserve the peace. Because peacekeepers operate under the dual principles of restraint and security, they are normally armed with light weapons for personal defense and refrain from using force unless absolutely necessary. While political factors determine to a large extent the degree of success for a mission, a final factor, operational support, also influences the outcome.

The peacekeeper requires a certain degree of operational capability in order to succeed. In fact, there exists no shortage of well-trained infantry worldwide. However, logistical capability has been a significant problem in conducting peace operations. Peacekeepers in Cambodia, for instance, deployed without maps of the country.<sup>18</sup> The organization chartering a peace operation must provide the resources necessary to deploy, sustain, and redeploy the peacekeepers. A common complaint among peacekeepers is that they deploy with inadequate support and must fend for themselves.

Peacekeeping evolved under the political realities of the cold war. It conducted several types of missions under a clear set of well-defined principles and achieved some notable success. Today's political reality forces one to ponder the question posed by former UN Secretary-General Brian Urquhart: "Does the end of the cold war alter these principles?"<sup>19</sup>

## **Post-Cold-War Peace Operations: The Promise and the Challenge**

At the 1988 Nobel prize ceremony, Sir Brian Urquhart said, "the rigors of the Cold War no longer paralyze the UN. It even seems possible humanity could take the great step forward towards a community of nations."<sup>20</sup> The fall of the Soviet Union caused seismic shifts in the international order that continue to reverberate. While the nature of the international order remains ambiguous, it appears that the end of the cold war has resulted in profound changes in the environment into which the peacekeeper may be sent. The post-cold-war peacekeeping environment is characterized by greater size, complexity, and cost relative to its cold war counterpart. For example, the peace operation in Cambodia known as UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) has over 23,000 peacekeepers employed at an estimated

cost of \$1.9 billion through the first 15 months of operation.<sup>21</sup> Today, both governmental and nongovernmental organizations play an increasing influential role in world affairs. In the Namibian peace process, for example, over 50 nations, and numerous nongovernmental organizations, participated in both negotiations and implementation. Other trends affecting the peacekeeping environment include the increasing globalization of the economy; increasing interdependence of national governments, as exemplified by the North American Free Trade Agreement and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade; and proliferation of weapons with longer range and greater destructive power than their predecessors. There is also a trend toward an increasing number of economic refugees and toward a more significant burden that the host-nations bear in supporting the refugee. The United States was so concerned about illegal immigrants attempting to reach America that it intervened in the sovereign state of Haiti largely to stem the tide of refugees to American shores. Finally, the contemporary environment includes the need for intervention based solely on humanitarian grounds.<sup>22</sup>

This environment creates a complicated situation for the peacekeepers that forces them to contend with new issues. While the US Army peacekeeper's main task in Haiti was to provide a stable environment to allow a smooth transition to the democratically elected government, it became clear that internal economic and political conditions had to be established to enhance the chances for mission success. Thus, peacekeepers in Haiti found themselves conducting humanitarian assistance, training a police force, establishing a judicial system, and restoring electricity.<sup>23</sup> The following is a partial list of wider peacekeeping functions that the peacekeeper is expected to perform in addition to the previously listed traditional peacekeeping functions:

- Assisting and verifying disarmament and demobilization.
- Controlling weapons of the belligerents.
- Clearing land mines.
- Protecting humanitarian convoys.
- Establishing and training new police forces.
- Supplying basic humanitarian needs.
- Investigating human rights violations.
- Observing, monitoring, and verifying elections.

The expansion of functions suggests that the post-cold-war environment is more complicated for the peacekeeper. Another reality of the post-cold-war environment is the realization that the UN, despite its best efforts, appears overwhelmed by the magnitude of the requirement.

The UN organization comprises over 184 nations and serves many purposes in fields such as economics, diplomacy, and humanitarian assistance. Peacekeeping is a relatively small part of the UN mission, and the Department of Peace Operations comprises only a small portion of the UN staff. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations, though recently expanded, still numbers only a few dozen people and has only recently

developed the capacity to monitor operations around-the-clock. Moreover, the post-cold-war environment has placed a great burden on the UN peacekeeping apparatus. "UN peace operations nearly doubled from ten in 1990 to seventeen in 1994. And the cost of UN operations exploded from less than \$500 million in 1990 to nearly \$4 billion in 1994."<sup>24</sup> These operations have expanded quantitatively and qualitatively.<sup>25</sup> Simply put, it is beyond reasonable expectations for one organization to conduct robust early warning, preventive diplomacy, and peacekeeping missions for the entire world.<sup>26</sup> For example, in December 1989, Charles Taylor launched an attack against the government of Samuel Doe in Liberia. This event and the subsequent civil war garnered little international attention, and the conflict was soon overshadowed by the Persian Gulf crisis.<sup>27</sup> According to Gerhard Kummel, the "UN is facing overstretch unless it comes to terms with the gap between problems and tasks with which it is burdened (or which it feels compelled to tackle) and the resources that it has at its disposal."<sup>28</sup> Further, UN Under Secretary-General Dick Thornburgh states "the UN's capacity to undertake additional responsibilities is dubious."<sup>29</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Under the shadow of the cold war, peacekeeping evolved as a tool to assist diplomats in keeping the peace. In the post-cold-war era, it remains to be seen to what extent the new environment alters the traditional peacekeeping principles and influencing factors. For instance, the reason that the great powers did not contribute troops directly in the cold war era stemmed from a fear of escalating the conflict into a cold war battleground. While this rationale is no longer operative, it is interesting to note that many nations still prefer not to have US peacekeepers directly involved. At a National Defense University (NDU) workshop on peacekeeping, participants from Latin America remarked that the US carries a lot of historic baggage in the hemisphere and that US soldiers tend to become targets for extremist groups.<sup>30</sup>

What is clear, however, is that peacekeeping remains a valuable tool to set the conditions for peace building. Also, more is expected of the peacekeeper in this environment; and the end of the cold war has not mitigated the importance of operational and political factors in achieving success. Finally, the UN appears too overwhelmed by the requirements of the new world order. The next chapter examines the performance and potential of regional organizations in peace operations. Can the regionals help to mitigate the UN's burden?

## **Notes**

1. Victoria K. Holt, *The US Role in United Nations Peace Operations* (Washington, D.C.: Council for a Livable World Education Fund, 1995), 4.

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5. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, *An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peacekeeping* (New York: United Nations, 1992), par. 20, 9.
6. *Ibid.*
7. Joint Pub 3-07.3, *Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Peacekeeping Operations*, 1996, GL-7.
8. *The Blue Helmets* (New York: United Nations Department of Public Information, 1990), 4-5.
9. Joint Pub 3-07.3, A-1.
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11. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. by Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989), 88.
12. AFM 1-1, *Basic Aerospace Doctrine of the United States Air Force*, vol. 2, March 1992, 1.
13. Marjorie Ann Browne, *The Future of International Peacekeeping: The UN/Non-UN Option* (Washington, D.C.: NDU, March 1984), 13.
14. International Peace Academy, *Peacekeeper's Handbook* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1984), 30-32.
15. The five permanent members of the UNSC are the United States, France, Great Britain, China, and Russia.
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21. Thomas G. Weiss, "New Challenges for UN Military Operations: Implementing an Agenda for Peace," *Washington Quarterly* 16, no. 1 (January 1993): 51-66.
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## Chapter 3

# Regional Organizations and Peacekeeping

There should be several regional councils, august, but subordinate; these should form the massive pillars upon which the world organization would be founded in majesty and calm.

—Sir Winston Churchill

In April 1994, the central African state of Rwanda erupted in violence and bloodshed. The UN Security Council faced the choice of reinforcing and empowering the United Nations Observer Mission Uganda-Rwanda (UNOMUR) or withdrawing the observers for their own security.<sup>1</sup> Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali opted for a pullout, but left a small contingent to act as intermediaries between the factions. Following the withdrawal, the Hutu majority embarked on a killing spree that targeted the minority Tutsi population and Hutu opposition leaders. Despite the scope and viciousness of the genocidal attacks, the UN and international community were slow to respond. As Dr. Margaret Vogt remarked, “After the April to July 1994 massacre in Rwanda, it took the expanded UN force to February 1995 to fully deploy its troops in Rwanda.”<sup>2</sup> This delay caused a refugee crisis in neighboring states and allowed ethnic violence to spread into Burundi. This episode highlights the UN’s inadequacies in dealing with a crisis in a timely manner. If it is beyond the UN’s capabilities to deal with the post-cold-war peacekeeping environment adequately, then what alternatives exist to meet the needs of international peacekeeping? Could regional organizations, based on both their peacekeeping performance and potential, contribute more to peacekeeping, either independently or through a UN partnership?

## Regional Organizations and Peacekeeping

First, what is a regional organization? A “region is a geographical identity, the components of which share attributes or interactions distinguishing them from entities beyond the boundaries of the region.”<sup>3</sup> Thus, these organizations may be cultural, economic, and/or political and are normally comprised of contiguous states. Examples of regional organizations include the Organization of American States, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Arab League, and the Western European Union (WEU). Furthermore, subregional organizations

play an important role in collective security and include organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States, and the South African Development Community (SADC).

The idea of a regional organization conducting peacekeeping operations is not new. Indeed, several regional organizations have conducted such operations with mixed results. The OAS had some success in the 1950s and 1960s, with the most notable operation in the Dominican crisis of 1965. The OAU's foray into Chad in 1981 was terminated in less than one year amid general failure. The OAU troops were simply overwhelmed by the task at hand, came under fire themselves, and lacked both a clear mandate and direction from the OAU.<sup>4</sup> For example, the field commander lacked communication with OAU headquarters, which limited his ability to respond to a rapidly deteriorating situation. The Arab League conducted a successful peacekeeping operation in 1961 when it replaced British troops and interposed itself between Iraq and the newly independent Kuwait. The Arab League's mission in Lebanon from 1979 to 1982 suffered from Syrian dominance and generally did no better than UN missions to that country.

## **Legal Basis for Regional Organizations Conducting Peacekeeping Operations**

Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali, in the UN white paper titled *An Agenda for Peace*, clearly articulates a desire for regional organizations to accept a greater role in security operations. "In this new era of opportunity, regional arrangements or agencies can render great service if their activities are undertaken in a manner consistent with the purposes and principles of the UN Charter. What is clear, however, is that regional arrangements or agencies in many cases possess a potential that should be utilized in serving the functions covered in this report: preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping, peacemaking and post-conflict peace building."<sup>5</sup>

The UN founders also envisioned a strong role for regional organizations and embodied this principle in chapter 8 of the UN Charter. For example, Articles 52 and 53 specifically call for regional organizations to conduct those operations that have come to be known as peace operations.<sup>6</sup>

Article 52. Nothing in the present Charter precludes the existence of regional arrangements or agencies for dealing with such matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security as are appropriate for regional action, provided that such arrangements or agencies and their activities are consistent with the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 53. The Security Council shall, where appropriate, utilize such regional arrangements or agencies for enforcement action under its authority. But no enforcement action shall be taken under regional arrangements or by regional agencies without the authorization of the Security Council.

Beyond the UN Charter, most regional organizations have mechanisms that provide for some degree of collective security. For instance, the OAS Charter addresses the pacific settlement of disputes in chapter 5, and collective security in chapter 6. Clearly, the OAS Charter focuses more on threats external to the hemisphere, but the Rio Treaty of 1948 does address intrahemispheric security. Article 6 of the Rio Treaty states that “if the inviolability or the integrity of the territory, or the sovereignty or political independence of any American State should be affected by an aggression which is not an armed attack or by an extra-continental or intra-continental conflict, or by any other fact or situation that might endanger the peace of America, the Organ of Consultation shall meet immediately in order to agree on the measures which must be taken in case of aggression to assist the victim of the aggression or, in any case, the measures which should be taken for the common defense and for the maintenance of the peace and security of the continent.”<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, the OAS maintains a relationship with the Inter-American Defense Board which is comprised of senior military officers from the member-nations and advises the OAS on military and security matters.<sup>8</sup>

While there exists the legal basis for conducting peacekeeping operations, the strongest basis for conducting the operations may be both moral and practical. A common theme among the regional organizations is a realization that in the post-cold-war world the nations with the most at stake should stand ready to solve their own problems. As Brig Gen Hendrik A. Potgieter, chief of Operations of the South African Air Force, said of the current problems of ethnic violence in Africa, “economic growth and stability go hand in hand. We can’t expect anyone else to solve southern Africa’s problems. We must look to ourselves.”<sup>9</sup>

### **Advantages of Regional Organizations in Peacekeeping**

Each regional organization maintains a unique structure, purpose, and identity. In general, regional organizations offer several advantages in conducting peacekeeping operations. First, the members of a regional organization are the ones who will suffer the consequences of instability in their region most directly. Their nations will bear the cost of providing for refugees, end up as sanctuaries for insurrectionist action, have to spend more on defense, and bear the cost of reduced economic growth when foreign corporations decide the area is too risky for investment. Therefore, the members of a regional organization have a vital interest at stake in preserving regional stability. This vital interest ought to translate into a greater political will to see the problem through to a solution.

Second, the members of a regional organization are likely to be more in tune with the conflict at hand as they share the same cultural background

and often speak the same language. In some cases, personal relationships have developed among the leaders which undoubtedly results in greater understanding of the situation and may result in fruitful dialogue based on personal trust.<sup>10</sup> Third, the regional organization, being more in tune with its own area of interest, may provide a timely response based on better intelligence of a looming crisis. As the UN Deputy Force commander in Rwanda, Brig Gen Henry Anyidoho noted that “the major handicap for the UN in achieving its assigned role is a lack of timely and positive response from member-states when a distress signal goes out. In crisis, time is of the essence. Often in the UN, help arrives too late owing to too much hesitation on the part of member-states. It is like the fire truck arriving after the market place has been consumed by fire. Its effectiveness is lost.”<sup>11</sup> Finally, the regional organization may have a more legitimate reason for intervention than a peacekeeping mission from a global source. While the advantages are many, there exist some serious drawbacks to regional organizations conducting peacekeeping operations.

### **Disadvantages of Regional Organizations in Peacekeeping**

Some regional organizations suffer from a dearth of financial resources. While NATO, WEU, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) maintain a solid financial base, the OAU, ECOWAS, SADC, and OAS suffer from financial shortages. However, it must be noted that the UN shares this trait with regional organizations, as it also suffers from severe fiscal constraints. According to UN Under Secretary-General Thornburgh, UN financing “is still much like a financial bungee jump, often undertaken strictly in blind faith that timely appropriations will be forthcoming.”<sup>12</sup>

The military structure for peacekeeping runs the gamut from a robust military and security structure to a very limited military security capability. For example, NATO has the military structure, doctrine, and training to conduct peacekeeping operations. Conversely, the OAS does not have a military security structure or a security council embodied in the OAS Charter. A loose connection exists between the Inter-American Defense Board as an advisor to the OAS, but it is not codified.<sup>13</sup>

The regional organizations may be perceived to lack impartiality in a dispute.<sup>14</sup> While a regional organization may be interested solely in ameliorating the human suffering in a neighboring country, or ensuring the conflict does not spread to their nations, clearly, a thin line exists between legitimate security interventions and hegemonic interventions.<sup>15</sup> The intervention of India into Sri Lanka was ostensibly a humanitarian mission. However, it smacked of ulterior motives and lost the consent of the disputants, resulting in failure. While this disadvantage remains a great concern, it should be noted that the intervention must occur under the

consent of the UN according to the UN Charter.<sup>16</sup> Finally, critics of regional organizations contend, with some justification, that these groups base their resolutions on consensus which results in feeble organizations that are simply not up to the task of conducting complicated peacekeeping operations. These disadvantages must be weighed when considering the option of regional organizations conducting peacekeeping operations.

In conclusion, regional organizations are an important component of the international order and have contributed to maintaining peace and security through peacekeeping operations. Clearly, regional organizations possess both advantages and disadvantages in conducting peacekeeping operations; however, a regional's main advantage stems from the fact that these organizations perceive it is in their interest to keep peace in their region. Conversely, their main disadvantage centers on an inadequate organization to conduct peacekeeping operations. With the political will present to conduct this type of operation, the main disadvantage can be minimized through a support effort by the developed world. The next chapter examines the performance and potential of regional organizations in conducting peacekeeping operations.

#### Notes

1. Margaret Vogt, PhD, senior associate, Africa Program, International Peacekeeping Institute, telephone interview with author, 18 March 1996.

2. Ibid.

3. Neil S. MacFarlane and Thomas G. Weiss, "The United Nations, Regional Organizations and Human Security: Building Theory in Central America," *Third World Quarterly* 15, no. 2 (June 1994): 280.

4. Vogt.

5. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, *An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peacekeeping* (New York: United Nations, 1992), A/47/277, S/24111.

6. Brig Gen Henry Kwani Anyidoho, "The Role of the United Nations," address to the Institute for Defence Policy and the South African Institute of International Affairs, 14 July 1995.

7. David W. Wainhouse, *International Peacekeeping at the Crossroads* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), 464.

8. Frank Mora, PhD, professor of international relations, Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa, interviewed by author, Maxwell Air Force Base (AFB), Ala., 7 March 1996.

9. Brig Gen Hendrik A. Potgieter, chief of Operations, SAAF, interviewed by author, Maxwell AFB, Ala., 6 March 1996.

10. W. Ofuately-Kodjoe, "Regional Organizations and the Resolution of Internal Conflict: The ECOWAS Intervention in Liberia," *International Peacekeeping* 1, no. 3 (Autumn 1994): 262.

11. Anyidoho, 40.

12. Victoria K. Holt, *The US Role in United Nations Peace Operations* (Washington, D.C.: Council for a Livable World Education Fund, 1995), 10.

13. Maj Antonio L. Palo, AFIT doctoral candidate, University of Miami, telephone interview with author, 18 March 1996.

14. Paul F. Diehl, "Institutional Alternatives to Traditional UN Peacekeeping: An Assessment of Regional and Multi-National Options," *Armed Forces and Society* 19, no. 2 (Winter 1993): 216.

15. Ibid., 218.

16. MacFarlane and Weiss, 283.

## **Chapter 4**

# **Performance and Potential of Regional Organizations**

In this new era of opportunity, regional arrangements or agencies can render great service if their activities are undertaken in a manner consistent with the purposes and principles of the Charter. . . . Regional action as a matter of decentralization, delegation, and cooperation with UN efforts could not only lighten the burden of the council but also contribute to a deeper sense of participation, consensus and democratization in international affairs.

—Boutros Boutros-Ghali

When the UN was founded at the San Francisco Conference of 1947, strong support emerged for a prominent role of regional organizations in maintaining peace. While the UN has accepted the dominant role in peacekeeping operations, many regional organizations have attempted to resolve regional disputes over the years. The success of regional organizations in conducting peacekeeping has been mixed. The OAS has shown some success over the years in the resolution of regional disputes without UN participation. “These include conflicts between Costa Rica and Nicaragua (1948–49, 1955–56, 1959), Honduras and Nicaragua (1957), Venezuela and the Dominican Republic (1960–61), Venezuela and Cuba (1963–64, 1967), the Dominican Republic and Haiti (1950, 1960–65), Panama and the US (1964), and El Salvador and Honduras (1960–70).”<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, the OAU’s limited efforts at peacekeeping have been unsuccessful, most notably in Chad during a civil war in 1981. The OAU, at that time, lacked the resources, force structure, and leadership necessary to conduct a large scale peace enforcement operation. This study examines the OAS and ECOWAS peacekeeping in detail.

## **The Organization of American States**

The OAS is the world’s oldest regional organization tracing its roots to the First International Conference of American States held in 1890. The OAS Charter was signed in Bogota, Colombia, in 1948, and it currently comprises 35 member-states and 33 states with permanent observer status. The basic purpose of the OAS is to:

Strengthen the peace and security of the continent; to promote and consolidate representative democracy, with due respect for the principle of nonintervention; to prevent possible causes of difficulties and to ensure the pacific settlement of disputes that may arise among the member states; to provide for common action on the part of those states in the event of aggression; to seek the solution of political, juridical and economic problems that may arise among them; to promote, by cooperative action, their economic, social, and cultural development, and to achieve an effective limitation of conventional weapons that will make it possible to devote the largest amount of resources to the economic and social development of the member states.<sup>2</sup>

As previously mentioned, the OAS had been active in peacekeeping missions in the late fifties and early sixties. The OAS discontinued taking part in this type of mission as a result of the relationship that had developed between the OAS and the United States. The reputation of the OAS was tarnished by its supporting role in the Dominican Republic intervention in 1965, where it functioned as an arm of US policy.<sup>3</sup>

This association with the United States highlights both a unique problem and a potential advantage for the OAS. On the one hand, the United States tends to dominate events in the Western Hemisphere and has a history of intervention in the affairs of Latin America, which makes Latin Americans wary of US military action in the region. On the other hand, the United States brings significant resources to the missions which the OAS participates in and takes a keen interest in the security of this hemisphere. With its participation in the Central American peace process and its pronouncements at the Miami summit indicate a willingness on the OAS's part to continue to participate in regional stability, the reputation of the OAS has improved in the 1980s. Two examples of OAS peacekeeping operations are those in the Dominican Republic in 1965 and the peace missions in Nicaragua in the 1980s. Both provide significant lessons regarding regional organization's performance in peacekeeping operations.

## **Dominican Republic and the Inter-American Peace Force (IAPF)**

**Historical Background.** The history of the Dominican Republic is one of political instability, often resulting in direct US intervention. The United States ruled the country from 1916 to 1924; and the commanding general of the army established under US occupation, Rafael Leonidas Trujillo Molina, became president in 1930.<sup>4</sup> Trujillo consolidated power and became a dictator who ruled ruthlessly for three decades.<sup>5</sup> His regime was characterized by "flagrant and widespread violations of human rights, the denial of assembly and free speech, arbitrary arrest, and cruel and inhumane treatment of political prisoners."<sup>6</sup> Until he was assassinated in 1961, Trujillo ruled directly or indirectly through his brother and through Joaquin Balaguer, the subsequent president.<sup>7</sup>

**The Crisis.** Following Balaguer's resignation on 6 January 1962, a civil-military junta took control of the government until elections could be held. On 20 December 1962, Juan D. Bosch, leader of the Dominican Revolutionary Party, was overwhelmingly elected president and served until 25 September 1963 when he was ousted in a bloodless military coup.<sup>8</sup> Donald J. Reid Cabral, the former foreign minister under the civil-military junta, became president. In April 1965, military supporters of Bosch initiated an uprising which thrust the nation into chaos. "In Santo Domingo, the pro-Bosch rebels handed out rifles and machine guns to several thousand civilians. . . . Looting and arson were widespread."<sup>9</sup>

**The Military Intervention.** With the danger to foreigners constantly increasing, and a number of US citizens fearing for their lives, President Lyndon B. Johnson received a request from the US ambassador to the Dominican Republic, Tapley Bennett, to evacuate American citizens from the US Embassy in Santo Domingo. Bennett suggested that US Marines secure evacuation routes and help remove US citizens. On the afternoon of 28 April, Bennett cabled Washington with news of a brewing crisis, and asked about the introduction of armed US forces to protect Americans who had not been evacuated the previous evening by the marines, and most importantly, to calm the situation in Santo Domingo.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, Bennett indicated that without intervention the communists would seize power in the Dominican Republic.<sup>11</sup>

And on 30 April President Johnson deployed the 82d Airborne Division to the Dominican Republic with the mission of preventing a communist takeover. Concurrent with the deployment, the Johnson administration worked to gain OAS approval for cooperation in the operation. Initially, the OAS was outraged over the intervention of US forces in violation of Dominican sovereignty.<sup>12</sup> However, when the United States presented the OAS with the facts, it became clear that the first part of the US mission, protecting and evacuating US citizens, was legitimate. The subsequent action, to prevent a communist takeover based on the fear of creating another Cuba in the hemisphere, was deemed by some OAS members to be on shaky ground, regardless of the consensus that another communist state was undesirable.<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, the OAS voted 14 to 5 with one abstention, to intervene in the Dominican Republic to restore peace and constitutional government.<sup>14</sup> On 6 May the OAS created the first Inter-American Peace Force made up of forces from several Latin American nations (table 1).

**Resolving the Conflict.** Gen Hugo Panasco Alvim of Brazil commanded the IAPF, with an American general, Bruce Palmer, as his deputy. The OAS, including US Ambassador to the OAS Ellsworth Bunker, assumed the main role of arbitration and negotiation.<sup>15</sup> These diplomats reached the conclusion that the best way to resolve the crisis was to conduct free and democratic elections. They proposed that elections would be held between six and nine months after June 1965. Further, the OAS would assist in preparing for and observing the elections for accuracy and fairness. Also, the IAPF would remain in the Dominican Republic through the election to assist in maintaining order. These and other peacekeeping tasks allowed the OAS to

**Table 1**  
**Approximate Strength of IAPF—30 June 1965**

<i>Nation</i>	<i>Officers</i>	<i>Enlisted</i>	<i>Total Personnel</i>
Brazil	145	1,007	1,152
Costa Rica	3	18	21
El Salvador	3	–	3
Honduras	10	240	250
Nicaragua	6	153	159
Paraguay	8	170	178
United States	–	–	11,935
<i>Total</i>	175	1,588	13,698

help restore stability to the nation.<sup>16</sup> On 1 June 1966 Balaguer of the Reformist Party won the presidency in a landslide election witnessed by an OAS observer force comprised of distinguished persons of several Western Hemisphere countries. On 21 September 1966, the last of the IAPF troops withdrew.

**Assessment.** Conventional wisdom maintains that the OAS acted as a front for the US during the intervention in the Dominican crisis and simply rubber-stamped the operation without careful consideration.<sup>17</sup> However, an examination of the facts reveals a more complicated situation. The Johnson administration's actions to evacuate US and other nationals appears justified. The subsequent intervention to thwart Communism was, however, a contravention of the OAS Charter, violating articles 15, 16, 17, and 19 regarding sovereignty.<sup>18</sup> The OAS legitimized this action to some degree when it voted to support the intervention during the Tenth Meeting of Foreign Ministers.<sup>19</sup> The OAS took an active role in the US-dominated IAPF and insisted, over the objections of the US military, on its being commanded by a Latin American.<sup>20</sup> Importantly, the perception that the OAS was kowtowing to the United States, and a long-standing fear of US intervention in Latin America, led to the OAS decision to abandon peacekeeping missions for the next 25 years.<sup>21</sup>

This OAS mission in the Dominican Republic was successful from the standpoint of meeting its mandate and establishing regional stability and peace. The mission benefited from political support in most OAS countries, especially the United States who contributed significant economic assistance to the operation. US military expenditures were \$38.2 million. Further, total US economic assistance totaled \$270 million from April 1965 to July 1966. Obviously, this commitment on Washington's part assured adequate financial and operational support for the mission. Significant to the success of the mission was the fact that the factions consented to the presence of the

peacekeepers and realized that the overwhelming force displayed by the IAPF precluded serious resistance and compelled them to find a diplomatic solution.

## **The OAS in Nicaragua 1989–92**

**Historical Background.** During the 1980s, Central America was the locale of several civil wars. The United States remained actively involved in supporting anti-Communist governments and achieving peace in the region became a torturous process. However, in the mid-1980s, according to Virginia Page Fortna of the Henry L. Stimson Center, “a joint UN-OAS effort in Central America came to be seen as a way to satisfy both the preference of Nicaragua’s Sandinista government for UN involvement in the peace process (the OAS being too U.S.-dominated for Nicaragua’s taste) and the preference of the United States, Costa Rica, El Salvador, and Honduras for OAS involvement (the UN being too ‘leftist’ for these countries’ taste).”<sup>22</sup>

As Robert Durch remarked in his study, *The Evolution of UN Peacekeeping*, “The popular uprisings and insurgencies in Central America of the 1970s and 1980s grew out of long-term economic and political disparities in those countries that were cast in sharp relief by the global competition for influence between Washington and Moscow.”<sup>23</sup> In July 1979 the Somoza government fell to the Sandinistas, who swiftly developed close ties to Cuba and moved to authoritarian single-party rule. In 1981 the new Reagan administration acted to help support a counterrevolutionary movement known as the contras. Nearby, the government of El Salvador was also engaged in suppressing a communist insurgency that grew in intensity during the early 1980s. “The threat of continuous regional instability and fear of active US military intervention led Mexico, Panama, Colombia and Venezuela to form the Contadora Group to seek a negotiated peace for the entire region.”<sup>24</sup>

On 7 September 1984 the Contadora program was proclaimed, calling for the cessation of hostilities and establishing provisions for settlement of the disputes. Because of the need for consensus among the belligerents and with the United States, the peace process stalled repeatedly. In May 1986 the foreign ministers of the Central American countries met in Esquipulas, Guatemala, and hammered out a new peace agreement that was rejected by Nicaragua.<sup>25</sup> Finally, in August 1987 Costa Rican president Oscar Arias put forth the plan called Esquipulas II, which was accepted by the participants. Specifically, Esquipulas II called to the participants to:

- Grant amnesty to political prisoners;
- Negotiate an end to hostilities, and achieve cease-fires;
- Support a democratic and pluralistic political process including free and fair elections;
- End support for irregular and insurrectionist forces; and
- Support the establishment and work of an International Commission for Verification and Follow-up (CIVS).

## **Implementation of the International Commission for Verification and Follow-up**

The first CIVS was comprised of a joint UN and OAS team. However, the commission was underrepresented by OAS members, and once its frank report on regional compliance with the human rights provisions of Esquipulas II painted Nicaragua in a better light than El Salvador, the Central American leaders withdrew support for the commission.<sup>26</sup> Following the 1988 US presidential election, and renewed skirmishes between Nicaragua and Honduras, the peace process began to move forward once more. A more balanced CIVS, jointly organized by the OAS and UN, was established. In March 1989, the Nicaraguan government invited the OAS to observe the entire election process in Nicaragua. The OAS maintained a presence in Nicaragua from August 1989 through April 1990, with the mandate of “verifying the legitimacy of the electoral process at every stage with the hope that this would improve the outlook for peace and reconciliation in Nicaragua and other countries of the region.”<sup>27</sup> OAS observers, in conjunction with UN observers, met with election officials, monitored media access, attended campaign events, investigated alleged violations and on election day, observers visited 70 percent of the polling stations.<sup>28</sup>

The election was not without problems such as isolated cases of voter fraud, and the week after the election was quite tense as the defeated Sandinista government settled into the transition period leading up to the inauguration of the opposition candidate, Violeta de Chamorro. “The presence [of the election observers] helped maintain order and stability in a potentially explosive situation. Impartial observers helped to convince the populace that they were safe to exercise their right to vote without intimidation and that the election would not be fraudulent.”<sup>29</sup>

## **International Commission of Support and Verification (CIAV)**

Another commission of the peace process comprised members of the UN and OAS in an effort to verify voluntary demobilization of the contras. It was established in September 1989 after the Tela Summit in Honduras but did not become operational until 23 March 1990 with the signing of the Tocontin agreement between the contras and President-elect Chamorro. Virginia Page Fortna notes that “as originally planned, CIAV was to be entirely responsible for the demobilization of the Nicaraguan Resistance, but it was soon decided that armed UN peacekeepers would be better equipped to secure demobilization areas and to dispose of weapons. . . . CIAV was left with responsibility for the civilian aspects of demobilization.”<sup>30</sup> CIAV-OAS was entirely responsible for Nicaragua, and in 1991 when CIAV-UN dissolved,

CIAV became entirely an OAS operation, continuing to moderate tensions within Nicaragua until its dissolution in 1992.

CIAV-OAS played a significant role in easing tensions and assisting the resistance fighters with their transition back into a peaceful society. The OAS provided financial assistance, infrastructure projects, security zones, and served to build confidence in the peace process during a tense period.

**Assessment.** The OAS performance in Nicaragua points to the patient and determined attitude necessary to conduct peacemaking in Latin America. The OAS, in partnership with the UN, was successful in reaching a resolution to the civil conflict in Central America. The belligerents consented to the peacekeepers in each case, and the participants to the peace process benefited from both international and domestic support. Financially, the UN and US commitment to the peace process allowed the OAS to support the observers in the field. While these missions are relatively small in scale, they also benefited from adequate operational support.

The implications of OAS intervention in Nicaragua bode well for the future of both Latin America and the OAS. Dr. Frank Mora, professor of international relations at Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa, points out that five border disputes in Latin America have a strong potential for conflict. He assesses the borders between Peru and Ecuador as capable of further conflict, with five other border disputes rating a low to moderate chance of conflict.<sup>31</sup> These potential conflicts indicate a need for peacekeepers in the region.

## **Regional Peacekeeping in Africa**

Regional organizations have conducted several peacekeeping operations independently of the UN in Africa. In 1980 the United Kingdom led a commonwealth mission to oversee the transition of Zimbabwe to majority rule. This mission, with a high degree of political will and financial commitment by the British government, was successful in achieving its mandate. The OAU foray into Chad in 1981–82 remains an example of a regional organization with an inadequate logistical, financial, or organizational structure attempting to accomplish a major peace operation. This mission met with resistance from the belligerents and was withdrawn without achieving its objectives. A third example of regional organizations conducting peacekeeping operations is ECOWAS in 1990. This mission will be examined in detail due to the fact that it highlights both the pitfalls and potential of regional organizations executing peace operations.

ECOWAS was established by the Treaty of Lagos in 1975 to promote trade, cooperation, and self-reliance in West Africa and is comprised of 16 states (table 2).

Although “primarily an economic organization, ECOWAS created a collective security system in 1981, and a standby mediation committee in May

**Table 2**  
**ECOWAS Nations**

Benin	Guinea	Mali	Senegal
Cape Verde	Guinea-Bissau	Mauritania	Sierra Leone
The Gambia	Ivory Coast	Niger	Togo
Ghana	Liberia	Nigeria	Upper Volta

1990.”<sup>32</sup> This collective security structure would be put to the test in the civil war brewing in Liberia.

The regime of Doe attempted to transform itself from a military dictatorship into an “elected” presidency sporting a democratic façade in order to ease international political pressure. This was construed as just one more maneuver by Doe to maintain his power base indefinitely. On Christmas eve, 1989, Charles Taylor and Prince Johnson led a group of Liberians in an attempt to overthrow Doe.<sup>33</sup> In response, forces loyal to Doe launched a campaign of terror designed to quell the rebellion and in the process committed a number of atrocities including the rape and massacre of innocent civilians. These actions initiated a civil war that would claim over 100,000 lives, cause 600,000 refugees, and displace one-half of the 3 million population who flooded into neighboring countries causing serious regional instability.<sup>34</sup> On 7 May 1990, Doe appealed to Nigeria and Togo for help leading to the ECOWAS intervention.<sup>35</sup>

During this period, the UN was unwilling to play a role since it was already actively engaged in several other peacekeeping missions, and the OAU was hamstrung by a lack of resources and political will reinforced by vivid images of the Chadian foray.<sup>36</sup> Thus, “the primacy of ECOWAS as the international organization most heavily involved in the Liberian conflict was due, in part, to the vacuum created by the unwillingness of the UN and the inability of the OAU to intervene in the conflict.”<sup>37</sup> According to Dr. Vogt of the International Peace Academy, “ECOWAS has been criticized as acting as an agent of Nigeria, but the fact remains that ECOWAS under Nigerian leadership stepped forward to stop the killing of innocents. ECOWAS was the last chance the Liberians had to end the bloodshed.”<sup>38</sup>

Undoubtedly, Nigeria had several objectives in mind when spearheading the Liberian intervention. It wished to establish itself as the most influential power in Sub-Saharan Africa. “Nigerian leaders saw the West African sub-region as their special preserve in which they had a special responsibility to maintain order.”<sup>39</sup> In July 1990 ECOWAS mediated a peace proposal that included a cease-fire agreement. Taylor, who already controlled 95 percent of the nation, refused to comply. Regardless, the Economic Community of West African States Military Operations Group (ECOMOG) deployed to Liberia in August under Ghanaian command (table 3).<sup>40</sup>

**Table 3**  
**The Composition of ECOMOG Troops**

<i>Country</i>	<i>Total National Forces</i>	<i>Troops in ECOMOG</i>
Nigeria	76,000	5,000
Senegal	9,700	1,200
Guinea	9,700	400
Ghana	7,200	1,500
Sierra Leone	6,150	400
Gambia	800	100
Guinea-Bissau	9,200	?
Mali	7,300	?
<i>Total</i>	<i>126,050</i>	<i>9,500</i>

ECOMOG's forces experienced problems in several areas. First, Johnson's forces captured Doe at ECOMOG headquarters under dubious circumstances that called into question ECOMOG's neutrality. Doe was subsequently killed on Johnson's orders. Next, ECOMOG clashed with Taylor's forces and began taking casualties. This clash caused ECOMOG forces to question their policy of fighting only in self-defense, and subsequently this policy shifted to limited offensive operations and retaliation when attacked.<sup>41</sup>

The situation in Liberia remained tense with sporadic fighting and setbacks in negotiations. In July 1993 a meeting held at Cotonou, Benin, under the cochairmanship of the OAU and ECOWAS resulted in a cease-fire agreement and a plan for subsequent demobilization, disarmament, as well as national elections.<sup>42</sup> This agreement led to the establishment of the UN Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL). This process has been marred by repeated acts of violence and breakdowns in negotiations, as evidenced by the outbreak of violence in April 1996. This setback highlights the protracted nature of peacekeeping and illustrates the importance of perseverance. Peace operations require a long-term commitment to be successful.

**Assessment.** The Liberian episode suggests there are lessons to be learned about the role of regional organizations conducting peacekeeping missions in the context of intrastate conflict. When no other international body cared, Nigeria and Ghana led ECOWAS in an effort to reach both a diplomatic and military solution in Liberia. The intervention highlights both the advantages and disadvantages of intercession by regional organizations. Questions concerning Nigeria's intentions demonstrate the gray area that exists between legitimate intervention and a quest for hegemony. On the one hand, Nigeria and the ECOWAS community were seeing the effects of the civil war in Liberia on their own borders, and the slaughter of innocent Africans was undeniable. Furthermore, Nigeria was

interested in enhancing its own role as the leading regional power. The fact is that Nigeria and ECOWAS states were the ones most affected by the war and their intervention, while by no means ideal, appeared to be the only practical choice short of doing nothing.

This case also substantiates the conclusion that consent among the belligerents remains the sine qua non of peacekeeping. It was only after the UN and ECOWAS teamed up and diplomatic pressure was brought to bear that the belligerents agreed to a cease-fire. Lacking the experience of the UN peacekeepers, the ECOMOG peacekeepers failed to remain impartial and may have caused the mission to become one of peace enforcement. ECOMOG benefited from domestic support for the intervention and received adequate financial support from the Nigerian government which was fully committed to the operation. The loss of consent once Taylor believed that ECOWAS and Nigeria were supporting Doe resulted in a more complicated mission and a transition to peace enforcement.

This mission demonstrates convincingly the importance of political will to the success of an operation. Would the United States have remained in Liberia once the peacekeepers suffered casualties? Without a vital interest at risk, it is doubtful that it would, considering the minuscule role that Liberian stability plays in US strategy. Further, this mission demonstrates that in a partnership with the UN, subregional organizations are viable organizations for peacekeeping that are worthy of greater support.

## **Potential of Regional Organizations in Peacekeeping**

The historic performance of regional organizations conducting peacekeeping has been mixed. As with the UN, there have been both successes and failures. Based solely on historical evidence, one would hesitate to endorse the capability of regional organizations to conduct peacekeeping operations; however, a closer examination paints a more optimistic picture. As Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali noted in a Supplement to An Agenda for Peace, "the capacity of regional organizations for peacemaking and peacekeeping varies considerably. None of them has yet developed a capacity which matches that of the United Nations, though some have accumulated important experience in the field and others are developing rapidly."<sup>43</sup> In fact, organizations such as NATO already possess the capability to conduct any peace operation, and others are attempting to improve their capability.

Members of regional organizations increasingly understand that economic progress is tied to global trade based on regional trading blocs. Further, it is understood that political stability at the regional and national level is an important factor in economic development.<sup>44</sup> In short, the political will exists among member-states of regional organizations to take a more active role in

peacekeeping operations. A recent RAND study found that 40 countries have the potential to be significant contributors to peacekeeping operations, and 26 of those are politically willing.<sup>45</sup> But, for most developing countries, it is not a question of will, but a question of logistics. In trying to cope with their own domestic problems of development, which are substantial, they have hardly anything left to be spent on equipment to be reserved solely for standby peacekeeping forces.<sup>46</sup>

Undoubtedly, regional organizations are making improvements in the area of peace operations. For example, the OAU has been able to observe 39 elections or referenda in 25 member-states. In most of these cases, potential conflict was diffused in nations such as Togo, Congo, and Ghana.<sup>47</sup> The point is that prior to 1990, nobody envisioned the OAU doing this. For the OAU to enter a sovereign state for any reason was unheard of. The OAU is establishing an early warning network centered in the Conflict Resolution Mechanism with a Crisis Management Room, 24 hour operations, and the ability to intervene politically to diffuse a situation before it becomes a crisis.<sup>48</sup>

At a summit in Zimbabwe's capital, Harare, eight southern African countries warned Mozambique to accept the fair election results and embrace the results of the democratic process. This seems to have had a positive effect in supporting the efforts at bringing peace to a war-ravaged nation. Furthermore, this exemplifies the potential of a regional network of nations working together for regional stability.<sup>49</sup>

In 1995 the South African Development Community intervened in Lesotho to diffuse a political situation that threatened to erupt into violence. Under the leadership of President Nelson Mandela, the SADC coordinated with the OAU and brought political pressure to bear, early in the crisis, to defuse the situation.<sup>50</sup>

The OAS continues to improve its conflict resolution mechanism and looks to partnerships with the UN as in the Nicaragua case. Further, the OAS is very interested in land mine removal.<sup>51</sup> With millions of mines left over from the wars in Central America, it behooves the OAS to help clear mines that maim or kill innocents, and damage the ability of a region to recover economically. It costs \$1,000 to locate and disable a mine that cost three dollars to procure, and the United States can assist the OAS in this effort.

The potential of regional and subregional organizations should be seen in the larger context of the global community. At the top of a pyramid stands the UN. On the second tier stands the regionals. The third tier contains the subregionals, and on the fourth, individual nations. Each builds on and cooperates with the other organizations. It is in this framework that regional organizations can contribute the most to international peace. The regionals have demonstrated a political willingness and the potential to contribute more to peacekeeping. Their efforts must be rewarded with support and encouragement.

## Conclusion

Based on the current environment and a realistic projection of the world in two decades, it is clear that conflict will continue to be a part of the landscape. Also, it is clear that neither the United States nor the UN possesses the political will or resources to provide collective security, or even peacekeeping services, for the entire globe. It is imperative that the regional organizations build their experience in peacekeeping and continue to develop the organization, resources, and doctrine necessary to successfully conduct those operations that will contribute to regional security. The history of peacekeeping shows that an intervening force must have the political will to see the mission through to conclusion and the operational capability to effect the mission. Both conditions are necessary for success. While a survey of the regional organizations indicate sufficient political will to conduct the operations, they are deficient in the support structure. The United States is encouraging and supporting the regional organizations' development of conflict resolution capability. Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott promised the OAU in 1994, that if they stood up to the challenge of peacekeeping, then the United States stood ready to assist.<sup>52</sup> The next chapter examines DOD's role in enhancing the regional organizations' capability.

## Notes

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## **Chapter 5**

# **The US Role in Support of Peacekeeping**

Multilateral peace operations are an important component of our strategy. From traditional peacekeeping to peace enforcement, multilateral peace operations are sometimes the best way to prevent, contain or resolve conflicts that could otherwise be far more costly and deadly.

—President William J. Clinton

Each and every day since 1982, American soldiers, along with 13 other national contingents, have patrolled the Sinai demilitarized zone between Egypt and Israel. This peacekeeping mission illustrates that successful peacekeeping garners little media interest, as this quiet, relatively inexpensive mission has assisted in keeping the peace between two traditional foes for 15 years. In fact, the United States has a long history of participation and support in peacekeeping, and a large percentage of these missions relied on American support in the form of equipment, funding, and transportation. This chapter examines the US role in support of peace operations.

## **US Commitment to Peacekeeping and Regional Organizations**

The national security strategy of the United States acknowledges that the United States no longer faces the threat of Communism; but, at the same time, it recognizes that the security environment remains challenging nonetheless. The strategy identifies the danger of regional instabilities caused by ethnic conflict, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, and drug trafficking.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, the strategy articulates a policy of strong support for peacekeeping, and extols the belief that regional organizations can share more of the burden with support from America. According to President Clinton “the United States recognizes that we have a special responsibility that goes along with being a great power and, at times, our global interests and ideals lead us to oppose those who would endanger the survival or well being of their peaceful neighbors.”<sup>2</sup> This assessment of the strategic environment led to the 1996 document titled A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement. This document places emphasis on preventive diplomacy in

order to help resolve problems, reduce tensions, and defuse conflicts before they become crises.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, it clearly states that the United States “must prepare our forces for peace operations to support democracy or conflict resolution.”<sup>4</sup> Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 25, US Policy on Reforming Multilateral Peace Operations, further elaborates on the peace operations identified in our national security strategy.

PDD 25 delineates the framework for US participation in peace operations. This document reinforces the US commitment to peace operations and also articulates the proposed role for regional organizations. PDD 25 states “in some cases, the appropriate way to perform peace operations will be to involve regional organizations. The United States will continue to emphasize the UN as the primary international body with the authority to conduct peacekeeping operations. At the same time, the United States will support efforts to improve regional organizations peacekeeping capabilities.”<sup>5</sup> It appears clear from national policy pronouncements that the United States is fully committed to peacekeeping and while reserving the right to act unilaterally or through alliances, the United States is “relying on regional organizations such as ECOWAS and CSCE [Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe] wherever appropriate.”<sup>6</sup>

### **The Rationale for US Involvement in Peacekeeping Operations**

While there may be valid altruistic reasons for supporting peace operations, the policy maker’s rationale for US involvement in peacekeeping rests on the fact that it is in the US interest to do so. First, the United States remains the sole superpower in a world that has been transformed by the end of the cold war, and US policy states that it will help shape a stable world order in which democracy and economic growth can flourish.<sup>7</sup> Second, if the United States intends to be the world’s leader, then its forces may be required to participate. Clearly, it is more difficult to persuade others to act if you are not committed yourself to some degree. Participation provides leverage to the United States and allows it to exercise influence without bearing the burden of unilateral action.<sup>8</sup> Third, Americans support peacekeeping operations because they contribute to a less violent, more stable, and more democratic world. According to Deputy Secretary of State Talbott, “In this increasingly interdependent world of ours—a world of shrinking distances, instant communication, growing international trade, and ever more porous borders—our own prosperity and our own security depend, to a significant extent, on whether people in lands far away are at peace with each other.”<sup>9</sup>

Fourth, the United States has economic reasons for supporting peace operations. The world spends about \$900 billion each year for defense. The UN spends \$3 billion on peacekeeping. The United States spends about 1

percent of its defense budget on peacekeeping related activities.<sup>10</sup> As former Secretary of State James Baker said, “We have spent trillions of dollars to win the Cold War, and should be willing to spend millions to secure the peace.”<sup>11</sup> Fifth, the United States has a reason for supporting regional organizations’ efforts to conduct peacekeeping. It is fundamentally in the US interests to support these operations and build the capabilities of international institutions and other countries to conduct peace operations effectively. As Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Peacekeeping and Peace Enforcement Policy Sarah B. Sewell said, “Failure to do so could mean increasing cost and risk to Americans, or countenancing the spread of violence to the detriment of U.S. interests.”<sup>12</sup>

Finally, the most persuasive reason for doing so may be to create the conditions for a more rigorous and consistent enforcement of international norms and behavior. As Robert Jervis has phrased it, “The world community’s choice today may be between ‘time’s cycle’ and ‘time’s arrow,’ time’s cycle, in which international relations slip back into the unstable patterns of history, the current amity among major powers collapses, and the supposed anarchy of the state system re-emerges; or time’s arrow, a progression beyond those old tendencies toward a new era of major power peace and increasingly robust international institutions capable of holding states to certain standards of conduct, both external and internal.”<sup>13</sup> While there exists a solid rationale for the United States to support peacekeeping, several constraints emerge when considering DOD support for these operations.

## **Constraints on the DOD Role in Peacekeeping**

While there are numerous benefits for the United States to conduct peacekeeping missions, it is important to note that several constraints limit the ability of the US military to conduct operations directly and unilaterally. DOD is reluctant to conduct peacekeeping operations for three reasons: mission, culture, and money.

First, the administration clearly has stated that the mission of the US armed forces is to fight and win the nation’s wars. Peace operations will continue to be an ancillary mission that should not detract from the primary mission. The two major regional contingencies strategy also conflicts with a desire to conduct peacekeeping missions. When a battalion of soldiers is committed to an operation, three battalions are really committed as one is preparing to deploy, a second is deployed, and a third is recovering to include retraining for the combat mission.<sup>14</sup>

Second, only a small percentage of the forces are trained for either peacekeeping type operations or low intensity conflict. For example, the special forces community has been severely tested by the operations in Bosnia and Haiti. Over 90 percent of the civil affairs functions resides in the Reserve and National Guard units and the president must utilize the presidential

selective reserve call-up in order to augment the active force. Switching more of these skills to the active force would conflict with the mission of being prepared to fight two major regional conflicts. "Peacekeeping operations do not play to any of the advantages of the U.S. armed forces. They are long term, low-tech, manpower intensive operations."<sup>15</sup> And they contradict a central tenet of US warfighting doctrine; the use of overwhelming and decisive force.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, the protracted nature of peacekeeping operations runs counter to the US desire for quick results when engaged militarily.

Third, peacekeeping is usually a contingency operation, which by its very definition is unplanned for and unbudgeted. These operations are expensive and tend to cost the services in readiness. Under the guidance of PDD 25, the State Department "will have lead responsibility for the oversight and management of those traditional peacekeeping operations (Chapter VI) in which U.S. combat units are not participating. The Administration will seek to fund the assessments for these operations through the existing State Contributions for International Peacekeeping Activities account."<sup>17</sup> DOD will have lead responsibility for the oversight and management of those chapter 6 operations which employ combat units and for all peace enforcement operations.<sup>18</sup> Currently, these operations are funded through operations and management funds and, in theory, DOD should receive reimbursement from the UN for contributions of goods, services, and troops to UN peace operations. In practice the UN reimbursement mechanism is so slow that often the reimbursement period exceeds 180 days and, by law, the funds are required to be returned to the US Treasury.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, Congress has been slow to approve supplemental appropriations resulting in the services having to readjust their operations. For example, the Navy in 1993 was forced to ground its aircraft in the last quarter, and fiscal constraints on training required the Army to lower the readiness status of its combat divisions.<sup>20</sup>

Based on these constraints, Sewell states that "DOD has a direct interest and a role to play in helping establish more capable institutions and procedures within which to participate, and in improving the capabilities of other nations with whom we will cooperate."<sup>21</sup> The United States should embrace a peacekeeping strategy that plays to US advantages and downplays the limitations. For example, no military in the world can match the US projection capability when it comes to airlift for deployment, sustainment, or redeployment. The United States can make the difference between peacekeepers arriving in time with a minimum of logistic support or arriving too late to stabilize the situation.

Since the US military is properly focused on the assigned mission of winning the nation's wars, and assuming that the US military is not going to reorient its reserve component and move those civil affairs and engineering skills to the active duty, it makes sense to orient our focus on enhancing regional organizations to conduct those skills valuable to a peacekeeping mission.

## **DOD Support for Regional Organizations and Peacekeeping**

Haiti serves to illustrate the differences between combat operations and peacekeeping. In Haiti the success of the mission depends as much on medical battalions, military police, civil engineers, and psychological operations as the presence of combat troops. Maj Joseph R. Fischer, serving as historian for the 3d Special Forces Group (SFG) in Haiti relates that “originally, U.S. military planners only envisioned the need for one of 3rd SFG’s three battalions as well as a sizable contingent of psychological operations and civil affairs soldiers.”<sup>22</sup> In actuality the mission involved all of the 3d group, and every special forces group currently in the active and reserve components provided support to some degree.<sup>23</sup> Additionally, rather than reinforcing the judicial and police institution in Haiti, the US military found itself providing the entire structure.<sup>24</sup> Another example of the tasks facing the peacekeepers in Haiti was a dysfunctional power system. Operation Light Switch was a project to restore electricity to Haiti. Over 94 civil affairs soldiers had supervised the delivery of 130,000 gallons of fuel to 14 cities. Two months later, the US military was still providing the electricity as President Jean-Bertrand Aristide’s government delayed accepting responsibility.<sup>25</sup>

While political will, consent, and a clear mandate are components of achieving success, there exists a requirement for supporting the operational art. Historically, “logistics has been the UN’s greatest operational problem.”<sup>26</sup> The mission in Cambodia, UNTAC, deployed without maps.<sup>27</sup> The troops in the field received a per diem allowance but no field rations and were told to fend for themselves.<sup>28</sup> The peacekeeper’s environment frequently contains a ruined infrastructure and social anarchy. “The destruction and disorder so often found when peacekeeping forces arrive also force military leaders to repair devastated infrastructure. Roads, ports, and airfields usually require repair or modification for mission accomplishment. This in turn forces planners to provide a larger than normal engineer contingent with deploying forces.”<sup>29</sup>

The United States can best support peacekeeping by playing to its operational and institutional strengths.<sup>30</sup> This includes deployment planning, logistics, and technology. Furthermore, Gen David Ramsbotham, a commander of UN forces in the former Yugoslavia, lists a number of areas that the military can best help peacekeeping: intelligence collection, analysis, and dissemination; communications; contingency planning; doctrine and training; lessons learned preparation and dissemination; logistics; and procurement are all important to a mission.<sup>31</sup> The next chapter recommends specific ways that DOD can enhance the peacekeeping capabilities of regional organizations.

### **Notes**

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## Chapter 6

# Recommendations

In today's unstable world, it is vital that the United States remain engaged and provide leadership to the international community. This includes working to advance our national security objectives through the United Nations when it is in our interest to do so, and it includes conducting contingency operations independently of the United Nations whenever necessary. Peace operations are a useful and necessary tool of United States national security that should continue to be improved, not abandoned.

—Edward L. Warner III

## Strategic Issues

The United States needs to develop a comprehensive peacekeeping strategy that maintains congruency with the current national security strategy and national military strategy. While PDD 25 frames the administration's policy on peacekeeping in general, and it assists policy makers in deciding the level of participation in peace operations, it falls short of articulating a clear strategy. According to a RAND study on peacekeeping, "there is no single programmatic focus on peace operations, and the efforts that have been made have been ad hoc responses to current operations."<sup>1</sup> Clearly, based on the importance of both military and diplomatic cooperation necessary for a peacekeeping success to occur, the Defense and State departments need to develop a unified strategy, and the Office of Secretary of Defense for Peacekeeping and Peace Enforcement should lead this effort. As Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy and Requirements Edward L. Warner III said in a statement to the Senate Armed Services Committee on 3 May 1995, "[the DOD] and many others have come to believe that the United Nations is not the best organization to direct the conduct of large-scale peace enforcement operations that may involve substantial risk of combat. Such operations can be conducted more effectively by coalitions of the willing, or by capable regional organizations."<sup>2</sup> Therefore, this strategy should focus attention on actions that enhance the regional organizations' ability to conduct peace operations. The following are recommendations that DOD should pursue to enhance their capability.

**Establish the US Center for Peace Operations.** DOD should establish the US Center for Peace Operations to serve as the focal point for peace operations. This center would include representatives of government agencies

with peacekeeping roles such as the Defense Department, the State Department, and the Justice Department. It would establish and maintain relationships with the UN and organizations that represent those interested in peacekeeping. This center would develop doctrine for peacekeeping, coordinate training for the regional organizations, and collect and disseminate lessons learned.<sup>3</sup>

Much activity is occurring in DOD regarding peace operations. For example, the Army Peacekeeping Institute actively supports foreign nations peacekeeping programs. Officers assigned to the institute recently traveled to Argentina to evaluate and share information with the Argentine Peacekeeping Training Center.<sup>4</sup> This activity reflects the initiative of military professionals who are adapting to the changing strategic environment. The combatant commands each have established peacekeeping programs and have conducted exercises with a peacekeeping focus. For example, the US Southern Command recently participated in peacekeeping activities with the Argentines. The European Command has been actively engaged in several peacekeeping contingency operations to include UN protective forces in Bosnia, Operation Deny Flight, and Operation Provide Comfort in northern Iraq. In fact, this is a bottom-up strategy and the overall effort could be more focused and unified. As Sewell said the US government “lacks a process for incorporating the full range of lessons learned from peace operations. Because no single agency is responsible for peace operations, no one is responsible for compiling and institutionalizing agency-wide lessons.”<sup>5</sup> The US Peace Operations Center would serve as a conduit for sharing this information.

The Peace Operations Center should contain a deployable headquarters staff team that could augment the combatant command's strategic planning cell in a contingency and provide experience and expertise specific to peacekeeping. Moreover, this team could deploy to a regional organization's headquarters and not only provide expertise but also serve as liaison officers to help the regional organization access US logistics and intelligence.

Currently, each service conducts their own level of peacekeeping training, doctrine, and education based primarily on their traditional roles and missions. Consequently, the US Army leads DOD in peacekeeping education, training, and expertise. The Army Peacekeeping Institute actually provides many of the services mentioned regarding the proposed Peace Operations Center, albeit on a smaller scale, with only 11 officers assigned. Each service can offer a certain degree of peacekeeping expertise and establishing closer service ties in this area will improve US capability and put the United States in a better position to assist regional organizations' capability.

**Increase Contacts between the Combatant Commands and Regionals.** The strategy of peacekeeping must not detract from the current role of the combatant commands. Rather it should build upon their area expertise, bilateral agreements, military to military contacts, and regional exercises. The unified commanders should be encouraged to strengthen ties with the regional organizations and work with the State Department to ensure that agreements with the regional organizations complement standing

bilateral agreements. Currently, no process exists at the State Department to review regional organizations agreements with their member's bilateral agreements.<sup>6</sup> The role the unified commanders are expected to play in peace operations should be spelled out in the Defense Planning Guidance and Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan. This would assist the commands in allocating resources and should improve budgeting for peace operations.

**Develop a Technology Strategy That Considers Peace Missions.** The US Peace Operations Center would serve along with the combatant commanders to develop requirements for appropriate peacekeeping technological products. At a National Defense University sponsored workshop studying operations other than war (OOTW), the military officers attending concluded that "at present there appears to be no coherent comprehensive approach to framing OOTW technology requirements. Many agencies are developing technologies relevant to OOTW, but their efforts are not fully coordinated."<sup>7</sup> In coordinating these technologies, there are several considerations. First, will it contribute to enhancing the mission of peacekeeping? For example, will it save lives and help keep the peace? Second, is it technologically and economically feasible? It may be a great idea, but regional organizations are under severe budgetary constraints and the systems must be procured and maintained by smaller nations. Third, the technology must have applications beyond peacekeeping. If the military spends money on it, then it better contribute to warfighting.<sup>8</sup> The NDU conference identified several technologies needed in peacekeeping today, including mine clearing, counter sniper, and counter mortar capability, and language capability.<sup>9</sup> An example of pursuing appropriate systems that are affordable, meet the peacekeepers requirements, and serve other military purposes is in the area of aircraft procurement.

The United States can make a contribution to peacekeeping in the form of airpower. Airpower can make a significant contribution: humanitarian operations support, troop and equipment airlift, force protection, psychological operations, reconnaissance, and surveillance.<sup>10</sup> In Somalia the US armed forces found that a need existed for twin engine, fixed wing, light transport aircraft of the CASA 100 type, capable of carrying a small number of passengers or limited supply, and able to land on the short rough airfields scattered throughout the country.<sup>11</sup> Maj Michael C. Koster examined the issue of foreign internal defense as a research fellow for Special Operations Command in 1993. He discovered that a "few areas in the third world are well suited for C-130 operation. At issue are their runways. They are either too small or stressed to handle lighter aircraft."<sup>12</sup> Moreover, he notes that helicopter assets are the most maintenance intensive and expensive aerospace vehicles to operate.<sup>13</sup> The same aircraft he recommends for foreign internal defense would serve the peacekeeper as well. For example, aircraft such as the Pilatus PC-6 turbo can conduct surveillance and airlift at relatively inexpensive cost. This particular aircraft could operate from 91 percent of South America's runways and 93 percent of Africa's.<sup>14</sup> The Skytrader Scout STOL costs \$1.6 million, carries 6,700 pound payload, and

can operate from 82 percent of South America's runways and 64 percent of Africa's.<sup>15</sup> Investing in systems such as these would enhance the capabilities of regional organizations to conduct peacekeeping while at the same time they would provide legitimate enhancements to their own internal defense. Moreover, these products may be made more attractive to the nations if purchased under the Foreign Military Financing Program (FMFP), which provides loans and grants for equipment purchases. A RAND study on peacekeeping suggests that one "way to proceed would be to offer FMFP grant funds to groups of countries that voluntarily come together and propose a plan for formation of a regional unit as an incentive for their creation."<sup>16</sup>

**Develop Regional Core Competencies.** The United States needs to focus and expand current programs in order to help regional organizations to develop their organizational capability to field troops, as well as train and equip them. According to Johan Holst, "Infantry units are not in short supply, however, the need for more specialized units and particularly experience in the technology of peacekeeping will be significantly constraining."<sup>17</sup> Officers who work with foreign infantry units are usually impressed by their skill and dedication. Officers refer to the excellent performance of the Uruguayans in the Sinai Multinational Force and Observer (MFO) mission for the last 14 years.<sup>18</sup> The US strategy ought to coordinate with regional organizations and member-states to develop core competencies within the regions. Rather than attempt to develop general peacekeeping capabilities in each member-state, the United States, through the regional bodies, should develop specialized expertise in each nation. For example, the Argentines could be encouraged to develop civil engineering units, the Uruguayans could develop a medical unit, and the Chileans could develop transportation units and civil affairs. While this would create a certain level of dependency, it would also facilitate efficiency and effectiveness. These specialized units would be tied to more developed partners that would support these specialized units logistically. For example, the Argentine civil engineering battalion could establish a partnership with a Canadian unit.

RAND recently conducted a global survey regarding the peace operations capabilities of over 46 countries. This study identified the strengths and limitations of a host of nations who may contribute to peacekeeping activities. This information should be used to target current assistance programs to encourage peacekeeping capability. This information should be further expanded to the regional organization level to ensure regional organizations that are willing possess the capability to conduct peacekeeping.<sup>19</sup>

**Ensure Adequate Funding.** Funding of peacekeeping remains extremely problematic. Congress attempted to legislate responsibility to DOD for all peacekeeping, not because of strategic reasons, but because DOD would be tasked to fund the operation without an increase in budget. This obviously contradicts the spirit of the national security strategy and national military strategy. Advanced funding is a partial solution to long-term operations; however, DOD must continue to make its case to Congress that line items for peacekeeping should be included in the budget; possibly under the foreign

assistance budget or special allocations assigned to enhance peacekeeping capability in the OAS, OAU, SADC, and ASEAN.

**Education and Training.** Currently, DOD maintains a robust professional military education program and conducts numerous exercises. For example, most professional schools include some discussion of peacekeeping operations, usually as part of a course on OOTW. Also, exercise participants at the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk, Louisiana, have the option to train in a peacekeeping scenario.<sup>20</sup> Current practice is to conduct predeployment training for troops identified to conduct peace operations. Each organization should have the capability to train at one such center and consideration should be given to developing a center in Panama for the OAS. The International Military Education and Training (IMET) program should be expanded and include specific training regarding peacekeeping.

## Operational Art Issues

While changes at the strategic level may enhance regional peacekeeping, one notices when talking to those with peacekeeping experience how quickly the talk turns to operational deficiencies. The United States can enhance regional organizations' capability for conducting peacekeeping by improving the operational capability in several areas. Peacekeepers agree that the keys to successful coalition operations in peacekeeping were understood to be unity of command, unity of purpose, and effective communications.<sup>21</sup>

**Military Staff Headquarters.** According to military professionals, "a well structured and staffed headquarters is essential to any military force."<sup>22</sup> This staff develops the courses of action, develops and implements plans, and issues orders. US expertise can assist in developing this capability to include communications. While no two operations are the same, a minimum set of required communication capabilities was defined for effective peace operations. First, the peacekeeper's communications within the theater must be interoperable and secure. This problem for the peacekeeper is exacerbated by different national equipment, procedures, and languages.<sup>23</sup> Second, "the lack of permanent communications facilities often forces peacekeepers to rely on temporary and ad hoc arrangements. This problem is best summed up by a Canadian peacekeeper: 'I was involved in setting up communications for several peacekeeping operations, and every time was completely different. We were never sure what would work until we hit the ground, and we were usually wrong the first time.'"<sup>24</sup> In 1981 the commander of the OAU intervention force in Chad could not communicate with the OAU headquarters in order to relate the changing environment and receive orders, thus contributing to that operation's failure. The United States could help the regionals to standardize equipment and provide communication equipment and training for contingencies.

Liaison personnel should be assigned to the major regional and subregional organizations, with frequent time spent at the organizations headquarters. NATO serves as an example of how working relationships over time serve to build confidence, improve cooperation, and facilitate communication. Personal contacts with regional organizations on a military level will help improve the peacekeeping capability of the regional organization and smooth cooperation during an operation as the liaison would improve access to communications, logistics, and intelligence. For instance, military personnel ought to provide liaison teams to act upon requests for information and to pass on US-derived intelligence.

**Improve Logistical Support.** “Logistics is the Achilles heel of any peacekeeping operation.”<sup>25</sup> Logistics entails all aspects of theater operational support from deployment, sustainment, and withdrawal to include consumables, transportation, maintenance, clothing, and medical needs. It is a strength of the US military. Peacekeepers relate many horror stories regarding logistics. General Douglas, chief of staff of the UN mission in Central America, December 1989 until December 1990, relates how he had to rent banana trucks in Central America for peacekeeping duties.<sup>26</sup> Maj George Steuber, a peacekeeper in Cambodia, tells how he had to threaten a UN official with bodily harm to receive funds for maps and then buy them on the black market. He further relates how his troops were told to buy rations on the economy in a war torn Cambodia. The troops were inadequately cared for, to include a unit going two weeks without potable drinking water.<sup>27</sup> The point is that small improvements in logistics can pay big dividends in peacekeeping.

The US-led international community can do better by identifying the needs of the member-states of the key regional organizations and then targeting the excess defense articles program to those needs. Further, each regional organization should identify a logistic center and those should be stocked with nonlethal prepositioned items such as vehicles, tents, emergency rations, mission start-up kits, and medical supplies. Moreover, dormant contracts should be established in order to facilitate procurement. Finally, the United States, in conjunction with regional organizations, must establish standard operating procedures for conducting the logistics portion of the operations. Procedures for supply support, resupply, procurement, and maintenance of materials should be addressed.<sup>28</sup>

**Improved Intelligence Support.** Military organizations rely on the collection and analysis of accurate intelligence to conduct mission analysis and assist decision making. “The biggest single problem in the area of control of UN peacekeeping operations has been the lack of adequate intelligence for both the UN planners and the deployed forces.”<sup>29</sup> As William Durch and Barry Blechman note in their study, *Keeping the Peace: The United Nations in the Emerging World Order*, “high quality initial information may be most important in the case of a multi-component operation that deploys on a time-limited mission. It has basically one chance to do its job. If its information is faulty, the result can be fatal to mission members, due to uncharted minefields or unappreciated local sensitivities, or even fatal to the

mission itself.”<sup>30</sup> In Namibia in 1989, the United States denied national intelligence asset information to the peacekeepers, and the Canadians blamed the lack of prompt intelligence on hostile troop movements as “potentially disastrous” and requested that national intelligence sources be used for UN force defense in the future.<sup>31</sup> Clearly, adequate and timely intelligence is an important component of achieving operational success.

Traditionally, the UN has resisted the area of intelligence because of the connotations of spying.<sup>32</sup> Intelligence remains an emotionally charged term for many developing countries; however, professional peacekeepers recognize its importance and regional organizations want to improve their capability in this area.<sup>33</sup> The focus needs to be on getting the information to the deployed forces and the headquarters while protecting the sources. The United States should pursue two avenues to improve regional organizations intelligence capabilities. First, the deployable headquarters team and liaison officers should have the training to assist in accessing the intelligence information while protecting the sources. Concurrently, the regionals should have personnel trained in the United States on standardized procedures for collecting, reporting, and communicating intelligence information. The need for information in peacekeeping dictates that the United States encourage regional organizations to establish an intelligence capability.

## **Conclusion**

Successful peacekeeping relies on consent of the parties, political willingness of the intervening parties, and a degree of operational capability. The United States is in a unique position as world leader to assure that a peacekeeping operation does not fail due to inadequate support. The United States should play to its strengths and provide strategic lift, logistics, communications, and intelligence to a peacekeeping operation, and assist in improving the regional organizations’ abilities to conduct civil affairs, psychological operations, engineering, and headquarters staff functions. In the long run, these contributions will pay dividends in both money and lives saved.

## **Notes**

1. Preston Niblack, Thomas S. Szayna, and John Bordeaux, *Increasing the Availability and Effectiveness of Non-United States Forces for Peace Operations* (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, 1996), xiv.

2. Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy and Requirements Edward L. Warner III, Statement to the Senate Armed Services Committee, 3 May 1995.

3. The author is indebted to Lt Col Ann Story for the title and suggestions regarding the US Center for Peace Operations.

4. Lt Col Samuel Butler, USA, US Army Peacekeeping Institute, telephone interview with author, 27 March 1996.

5. Sarah B. Sewell, "Peace Operations: A Department of Defense Perspective," SAIS Review 15 (Winter-Spring 1995):14.
6. Col Thomas Resau, USAF, military liaison with the State Department, telephone interview with author, 8 March 1996.
7. David S. Alberts, Operations other than War (Washington, D.C.: Institute for National Strategic Studies, NDU, November 1995), 21.
8. Ibid., 28.
9. Ibid., 4.
10. James S. Corum, "Airpower and Enforcement" (paper presented at the Royal Norwegian Air Force Academy, February 1996), 4.
11. Ibid., 5.
12. Michael C. Koster, Foreign Internal Defense: Does Air Force Special Operations Have What It Takes? (Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Air University Press, 1993), 45.
13. Ibid., 46.
14. Ibid., 59.
15. Ibid., 61.
16. Niblack, Szayna, and Bordeaux, 30.
17. Johan Jorgen Holst, "Enhancing Peacekeeping Operations," Survival 32, no. 3 (May/June 1990): 271.
18. Maj Russ Hall, USAF, telephone interview with author, December 1995.
19. Thomas S. Szayna, William D. O'Malley, and Preston Niblack, Peace Operations Deficiencies: A Global Survey (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, 1995), ix.
20. Butler.
21. David S. Alberts, Command and Control in Peace Operations (Washington, D.C.: NDU, 1995), 1.
22. Roger Palin, Multinational Military Forces: Problems and Prospects, Adelphi Paper 294 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 42.
23. Brooks L. Bash, The Role of United States Air Power in Peacekeeping (Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Air University Press, 1994), 19.
24. Ibid., 20.
25. William H. Lewis, Military Implications of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (Washington, D.C.: NDU, June 1993), 56.
26. Ibid.
27. Ibid., 69.
28. Rodney A. Mallette, "Logistics for UN Peacekeeping Operations," Army Logistician (January-February 1994): 22.
29. James S. Corum, "Operational Problems in Peacekeeping and Humanitarian Operations" (paper presented at the School of Advanced Airpower Studies, Maxwell AFB, Ala., undated), 3.
30. William J. Durch and Barry M. Blechman, Keeping the Peace: The United Nations in the Emerging World Order (Washington, D.C.: Henry L. Stimson Center, 1992), 37.
31. A. S. Henry, A. A. Clark, and P. F. Heenan, "Final Report on NDHQ Program Evaluation E2/90 on Peacekeeping" (Ottawa, Canada: National Defense Headquarters, 30 June 1992), 116.
32. Col Thomas Kearney, USAF, US Mission to the UN, 1992-1994, interviewed by author, Maxwell AFB, Ala., 19 March 1996.
33. Brig Gen Hendrik A. Potgieter, chief of operations, SAAF, interviewed by author, Maxwell AFB, Ala., 6 March 1996.

## Chapter 7

# Conclusion

There is, after all, no more immediate or local an issue than whether our sons and daughters will some day be called upon to do battle in big wars because we failed to prevent or contain small ones.

—Madeleine K. Albright

The post-cold-war strategic environment offers both challenges and opportunities. The challenges posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, drug trafficking, and ethnic wars appear overwhelming. Conversely, opportunities exist to mitigate violent conflict by improving the ability of the international community to resolve conflict through tools such as peacemaking, truce monitoring, and peacekeeping. While the UN leads the list of international organizations pursuing the peaceful resolution of conflict, it simply lacks the resources, organization, and personnel to engage in every dispute in every region. Perhaps the single-minded focus on the UN as the vehicle for peaceful resolution has caused the international community to overlook the potential of regional organizations. Regional organizations—with an improved capability to reduce, resolve, and prevent conflict—can share the peacekeeping burden, and intervene at the earliest point before a dispute becomes a crisis.

Regional organizations provide a second tier in the international community for conducting peacekeeping operations. They are closer to the situation, have a greater interest in the outcome, and possess the best opportunity for early intervention. Obviously, regional organizations are not the right vehicle for peacekeeping in every situation. For instance, the UN or a coalition such as the Sinai's MFO are better suited for manning a buffer zone between Israel and Egypt than the Arab League would be. The point is that in all cases the regional organization should provide early warning to the UN, and in most cases, either independently or in concert with the UN, regionals should be capable of conducting peacekeeping operations.

Since World War II, regional organizations have conducted several peacekeeping operations with various degrees of success. The Arab League was successful in keeping the peace between Iraq and the newly independent Kuwait in 1961. Conversely, the OAU's foray into Chad was a failure by any standard. This study examined the OAS intervention in the Dominican Republic in 1965, the OAS involvement in the Central American peace process in the late 1980s, and the ECOWAS intervention in Liberia in 1990 to the present. These cases illustrate many lessons regarding regional

organizations conducting peacekeeping. First, the nature of peacekeeping is complicated requiring a high degree of perseverance and political will. In a mission such as observing a buffer zone between two states, where consent is granted by the belligerents, then peacekeepers from outside the region may be acceptable. However, in a case of intrastate conflict that calls for the imposition of peace, a regional organization may be more desirable because they will have greater political will to see the problem through. It is doubtful that the United States or other nations outside the region would have stayed the course to the extent that ECOWAS has in Liberia under the tenuous conditions of that cease-fire. Second, peacekeeping is a military mission that provides diplomats an opportunity to secure lasting peace. The OAS participation in the Central American peace process, in conjunction with the UN, demonstrates what can be accomplished when the conditions for peace are facilitated by peacekeepers. Third, a certain degree of operational support is necessary to be successful. While it would be beneficial for peacekeeping to move beyond the binocular phase and into high tech acoustic and seismic sensors and UAVs, it would be premature in most cases for regional organizations. An effort should be made to assist regionals in acquiring fundamental equipment and training for the mission. The Department of Defense can enhance the regional organizations through many existing programs and should focus on establishing core competencies among nations in these organizations.

The United States should play to its strengths and offer intelligence, logistic, transportation, equipment, and organizational support to regional organizations. The focus should be on developing national core competencies that when combined provide a regional organization with the operational capability to conduct peacekeeping. Establishing a US Center for Peace Operations would facilitate this effort and could provide the expertise and liaison capability to these organizations. Furthermore, existing programs such as IMET and FMFP should be expanded and more effort focused on enhancing the regional organizations capabilities. Regional organizations run the gamut in both political will and operational capability. However, many indicate an increasingly strong willingness to participate in peacekeeping missions. They understand that a positive correlation exists between regional political stability and economic growth, and they appear ready to take the steps necessary to create an environment for regional growth. This political willingness should be encouraged and supported.

The United States must act to enhance the capability of regional organizations to conduct peacekeeping, not because of altruistic or moralistic concerns, but because it is in the US interest to do so. Regional stability enhances US economic and political well-being. Actions that dampen conflict and alleviate human suffering at the earliest level of a crisis eliminate the need for the United States to intervene later at greater material and human cost. Indeed, it is likely that the United States must play a leadership role to ensure the success of the international community in preventing or limiting conflict. The Department of Defense should actively support the improvement

of regional organizations capability to conduct peacekeeping operations through a comprehensive strategy that builds on the activities taking place on the bilateral level and within the combatant commands. Strengthening regional organizations can ameliorate the burden of being the world's remaining superpower, leverage the US leadership position, and further US national interests.

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