

THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE COLLECTIVE USE OF FORCE: WHITHER--OR WHETHER?

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This paper is the first in a series commissioned by the United Nations Association of the United States as part of its international policy project on the enforcement of resolutions adopted by the United Nations Security Council. The project seeks to (1) stimulate fresh thinking on ways of strengthening international enforcement mechanisms and (2) help build a global consensus on practical steps to enhance the credibility of Security Council actions taken under Chapter VII of the U.N. Charter.

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The United Nations picked the hard way to determine the limits of its capabilities in military operations: embarrassment and even humiliation on the ground in Somalia and Bosnia, followed by outright retreat in the first and an inevitable hand-off to NATO in the second. How much credibility the organization has left beyond the domain of traditional peacekeeping is not clear. But it should not be put to the test again until the U.N. and its members can answer two fundamental questions: What are they attempting to do? And are they prepared to equip the U.N. to do it? If they cannot provide satisfactory answers, then the U.N. and the world at large are better off by lowering the organization's military profile and not muddling the strategic calculus of states.

Critical assessments of so-called "gray area" U.N. peace operations have tended to focus on two sets of factors. One is the ambiguous and often shifting political objectives assigned to U.N. missions by the Security Council. The other concerns the U.N.'s own administrative shortcomings. Both, of course, have been serious impediments to the U.N.'s success. But there is also a third, mediating factor that has received far less attention than it deserves: military doctrine and command functions. This paper identifies the key dimensions in the hope that doing so will clarify the choices that governments and U.N. officials must make concerning the future of U.N. peace operations.

The first section briefly summarizes the model of U.N. military enforcement that the founders had in mind. The second section discusses the doctrinal confusion exhibited by recent U.N. peace operations. And the third section takes up the vexing issue of command-and-control.

The Enforcement System

The enforcement provisions of the U.N. charter were designed by the major powers with the origins of World War II in mind. Chapter VII of the charter provides for an escalating ladder of collective responses to interstate aggression, beginning with diplomatic isolation, stepping up to economic sanctions, and ultimately undertaking military actions. The key to the U.N.'s credibility as a deterrent against aggression, it was widely believed in the waning months of World War II, was the last of these: unlike the League of Nations, the U.N. would have "teeth."

Creating an international military force in some form was a central concern at the four-power Dumbarton Oaks conference held in the summer of 1944.¹ There were two alternatives: a standing international force or ad hoc arrangements providing national contingents when needed. Initially, almost all postwar planners favored a true international police force. But as time went on they drew away from the idea because of such practical difficulties as how to recruit, equip, base, train, transport and command an international force, and also due to the realization that ad hoc arrangements were likely to arouse less domestic political opposition.

President Franklin Roosevelt rejected the notion of "a superstate with its own police force and other paraphernalia of coercive power," favoring instead a mechanism for "joint action" by national forces.²

Three U.N. charter provisions on military enforcement emerged from Dumbarton Oaks, representing a radical departure from previous peacetime experience. Under the first, largely reflecting U.S. language, each member undertook to make available to the U.N. Security Council, "on its call" when needed to maintain international peace and security, armed forces, facilities, and other assistance, including rights of passage, in accordance with special agreements that were to be negotiated as soon as possible (Article 43). The agreements would specify the number and types of forces, as well as the kinds of facilities and other assistance, which each member was prepared to make available, and they were subject to the usual treaty ratification process of each member state.

The second provision reflected American and, even more so, Soviet interest in the special role of air forces. To enable the U.N. to take "urgent military measures," members that had the capability were asked to designate, on a stand-by basis, air contingents for combined international enforcement action (Article 45). They were to be governed by the same special agreements. The Soviet Union's interest presumably reflected the enormous losses they suffered at the hands of the invading German army during the war, and the desire to have all the help possible to intercept any future attack before it struck deep into its homeland. On the American side, the major advocate, not surprisingly, was the air force.³ But there was also great interest on political grounds because the use of air power, U.S. policymakers believed, would reduce the domestic difficulties involved in "sending our boys overseas."⁴

Third, at the suggestion of Britain, it was agreed to establish a Military Staff Committee comprising the national chiefs of staff of the Security Council's five permanent members (Article 47). The British drew on the successful precedent of the Combined Chiefs of Staff system with the United States for their joint campaigns in World War II. The Military Staff Committee was to advise and assist the Security Council on military matters within its jurisdiction, including the "strategic direction" of any armed forces placed at the Council's disposal. Questions regarding the actual command and control of such forces were left to be worked out subsequently.

In light of current struggles in Washington over the appropriate role of Congress in authorizing U.N. peace operations, it is worth noting how this issue was dealt with in 1945. During the Dumbarton Oaks discussions, Arthur Vandenberg (R, Mich), then ranking minority member on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, had taken the position that an affirmative vote by the United States at the U.N. in support of collective military action involving American troops was "tantamount to a declaration of war."⁵ This responsibility the constitution lodged in the Congress, he noted, not the Executive Branch. But Vandenberg also acknowledged the "long-term practice," in his words, whereby the president as commander-in-chief employed military force abroad in situations short of war and without prior congressional approval. He

confessed to being unsure how to reconcile the two. Secretary of State Cordell Hull seized the opportunity to clarify the matter for the Senator, dispatching a memorandum to the Foreign Relations Committee. There had been as many as seventy-six instances of such U.S. force deployments in prior U.S. history, Hull pointed out. What is more, he contended, disputes among members of an international organization are, in any case, akin to civil conflicts within the same political community, not acts of war as traditionally understood. Vandenberg dropped his objections.

Congress as a whole took up the issue in December 1945, when it considered the U.N. participation act. It was resolved, not by insisting on Congressional prerogative, as one might expect, but in favor of a strong U.N. enforcement capability. The act stipulated that once Congress ratified the Article 43 agreement with the Security Council that the charter called for, "the President shall not be deemed to require the authorization of the Congress to make available to the Security Council...the armed forces, facilities, or assistance provided for therein." Attempts to add reservations and contrary amendments were easily swept aside. Hans Kelsen, a leading postwar international legal scholar, underscored the significance: "according to this Act of Congress the employment by the Security Council of the armed forces made available by the United States is not to be considered as an act of war, the declaration of which requires, under Article 1, Section 8, of the Constitution, an act of Congress."⁶

In February 1946, the Security Council directed the Military Staff Committee, as its first task, to devise plans for the force agreements stipulated in Article 43. The committee met some 157 times during the next fifteen months, and reached agreements-in-principle on many issues. But by mid-1947 it became clear that its efforts had fallen victim to the escalating cold war. The negotiations foundered on the most basic issue of all: the overall size of the multinational force and the relative sizes contributed by each of the permanent five.⁷ The final U.S. position may well have been intended to be rejected by the Soviet Union, but its order of magnitude is astonishing all the same: it advocated a combined total of 20 ground divisions or around 200,000 men, 1,250 bombers, 2,250 fighters, 3 battleships, 6 carriers, 15 cruisers, 84 destroyers and 90 submarines. The Soviet Union favored a smaller combined force, consisting of 12 ground divisions, 600 bombers, 300 fighters, 5-6 cruisers, 24 destroyers and 12 submarines. In addition, and no doubt worried about U.S. dominance over U.N. enforcement activities, the Soviets divined a "principle of equality" in the charter as to the size and composition of forces--in accord with which each of the permanent five would have been limited to the same type and size of forces, thereby reducing all to the lowest level offered by any one of them. This interpretation was particularly problematical for the air component, because it would have lowered all contributions to the level of China's, which barely had an air force. It seems that, having solidified its control over the buffer states on its western borders, the Soviet Union no longer saw any pressing need for a collective air deterrent. Attempts to form U.N. stand-by forces were formally abandoned in August 1948.

The North Korean invasion of South Korea in June 1950 triggered the innovation of U.N.-authorized "coalition forces," utilized again in the Gulf war some forty years later. The Korean operation flew the U.N. flag whereas Operation Desert Storm did not, but the practical difference was negligible. It is unimaginable that General Douglas MacArthur, commander of U.N. forces in Korea, paid any heed to the U.N. when he ignored even his Washington superiors--and ultimately had to be sacked by President Truman for what amounted to insubordination.

There is no telling what might have happened if the stand-by forces negotiations had gone differently and agreements been reached. Even in a best-case scenario, the permanent five soon would have confronted the need to formulate a novel doctrine for joint military operations because even at that time relatively few of the conflicts the U.N. faced were instances of clear-cut interstate aggression. Furthermore, they would have had to deal with the unresolved issues of command and control. In other words, the U.N. would have encountered much earlier the practical military problems that have afflicted its peace operations in recent years.

Operational Doctrine

In several major recent U.N. peace operations, neither the U.N. nor its member states strictly speaking have fully known what they have been doing or how to do it. Frustration and failure, therefore, have been inevitable.⁸ The problem is this. The U.N. distinguishes between two purposes for the collective use of military forces: enforcement and peacekeeping. But its role in a rapidly growing number of conflicts has conformed to neither. As a result, these U.N. operations have wandered about in a conceptual void, sometimes with tragic consequences for their participants and for the U.N. itself.⁹ This problem would exist regardless of whether the U.N. were to have its own rapid deployment force, draws on dedicated stand-by forces, or is obliged to continue with the practice of waiting for countries to volunteer troops. The critical issue is not where forces come from, but the objectives and rules of engagement governing their deployment and employment.

Enforcement is easy to grasp, and it was the use of force that the U.N.'s architects envisaged. A specific act of aggression, or a more general set of hostile actions, are collectively identified as a threat to international peace and security and the aggressor state is subjected to an array of sanctions until its violation is reversed. Ultimately, enforcement can involve flat-out war-fighting--the "all necessary means" of Resolution 678, authorizing what became Operation Desert Storm. The U.N. does not have an institutionalized military enforcement capability of

this sort and is unlikely soon to acquire one. Large-scale U.N. military enforcement, therefore, is almost certain to remain episodic and, as in the Korean and Gulf wars, consist of U.N. authorization and general political oversight together with execution by ad hoc coalitions of the willing.

Peacekeeping is nowhere mentioned in the U.N. charter. It was a practical invention, the doctrinal expression of which was a reflection of the 1956 Suez experience. Above all, peacekeeping is predicated on the consent of the parties, which typically have agreed to cease hostilities before a peacekeeping mission is deployed. Moreover, peacekeepers fight against neither side but play an impartial interpositionary role, monitoring a cease-fire or controlling a buffer zone. Indeed, they do not fight as such. They carry only light arms and are authorized to shoot only in self-defense--and, on occasion, in the defense of their mission if it comes under direct attack. Unlike fighting forces, then, peacekeepers are not intended to create the peace they are asked to keep. They accept the balance of forces on the ground and work within it. In short, peacekeeping is a device to guarantee transparency, to reassure each side that the other is carrying out its promises. It is a non-combatant mission carried out by military personnel.

Symbolizing the new post-cold war spirit, in January 1992 the U.N. Security Council met for the first time ever at the level of heads of state or government. The summit asked Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali to prepare a keynote strategy document for U.N. peace operations in the new era. Entitled *An Agenda for Peace*, it set out to define more diverse and robust roles for the U.N.¹⁰ Two proposed departures from previous practice were critical. First, *An Agenda for Peace* defined peacekeeping as "the deployment of a United Nations presence in the field, *hitherto* with the consent of all the parties concerned..." (par. 20). Here was a clear signal that the U.N. might, in some instances, seek to deploy peacekeepers without local consent. Second, the document noted that cease-fires had often been agreed to in the past but not always complied with, making it necessary for the U.N. to try and restore a cease-fire. But because this task on occasion exceeded the capability of peace-keeping forces, Boutros-Ghali continued, "I recommend that the [Security] Council consider the utilization of peace-enforcement units in clearly defined circumstances and with their terms of reference specified in advance" (par. 44). Here the Secretary General was calling for a new United Nations military role altogether, beyond peacekeeping, but short of all-out war-fighting.

At the same time, the U.N. found itself confronting types of conflicts it had not encountered since the Congo operation in the early 1960s, which had nearly destroyed the organization. Of twenty-one peace operations established between 1988 and the end of 1994, thirteen involved what were (or became) primarily intrastate rather than interstate conflicts.¹¹ Many took place amid the rubble of contested or collapsed domestic authority (Angola, Cambodia, Somalia), and/or they involved large ethnic minorities left exposed when federal political structures disintegrated (former Yugoslavia, Caucasus).

Boutros-Ghali's proposals should have led immediately to joint efforts by the U.N. and its member states, especially national militaries, to work out their doctrinal implications and practical feasibility. Instead, the traditional peacekeeping modality was simply ratcheted up and projected into uncharted terrain--euphemistically termed "semi-permissive environments." There it was supplemented by ad hoc "peace-enforcement" components, such as the U.S. Quick Reaction Force and Rangers in Somalia, or NATO's air-strike capability in Bosnia-Herzegovina. But countries participating in these newer U.N. peace operations did so on the basis of very different understandings, sometimes not realizing that this was so.

In Cambodia, the earliest of these operations, doctrinal differences were muted, thereby possibly inducing a false sense of confidence. This was so for three reasons.¹² First, the major parties involved had reached the conclusion that the conflict should be terminated; the Paris agreements reflected that determination. Second, none of the internal factions could fundamentally alter the military balance of forces on the ground, which the U.N., in turn, might have been tempted to re-equilibrate. The Khmer Rouge repeatedly employed terror tactics to do so but, beyond its own area of control it was held in check by the Vietnamese-installed Cambodian government faction. The latter also intimidated and even murdered political opponents but was unable itself to dominate. This balance of forces created enough space for the U.N. operation to pursue its major non-military objectives, including the repatriation of refugees and conducting a nation-wide election to constitute a legitimate government. Third, all participants in the U.N. mission were resolute that the U.N. should not try to enforce its mandate. Accordingly, the U.N. simply accepted the fact that it would be unable to carry out several major military objectives that the mission had been assigned: achieving a complete cease-fire, followed by cantoning, disarming and demobilizing seventy percent of the four internal factions' forces. The U.N., in all likelihood, would have withdrawn entirely rather than engage in military action, in which case it would have failed to accomplish any of its aims.

Doctrinal confusion impeded--and ultimately defeated--the U.N.'s Somalia mission. During its U.S.-led phase, from December 1992 through May 1993, the operation was authorized, under the enforcement provisions of the U.N. charter, "to use all necessary means to establish as soon as possible a secure environment for humanitarian relief operations."¹³ The United States responded by committing up to 28,000 troops. As described by General Colin L. Powell, Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, the U.S. forces' mission statement reflected prevailing American military doctrine: an overwhelming force applied decisively over a limited period of time, after which the remaining political and humanitarian tasks would be handed off to the United Nations. Even so, the United States rejected a U.N. request that it pacify and disarm the warring clans.¹⁴ Paradoxically, after U.S. forces were drawn down and control of the operation was turned over to the U.N. under a more traditional peacekeeping mandate, the Security Council, urged on by the newly-inaugurated Clinton administration, escalated the mission's objectives to include disarming the tribal factions and, in retribution for a deadly attack

on Pakistani peacekeepers, implicitly authorized a manhunt for General Mohammed Farah Aidid and an offensive against his clan's leaders.

This escalation dismayed several troop contributing countries, which had not agreed to a mission that went so far beyond traditional peacekeeping. Italy threatened to withdraw its 2,600-member contingent, its Prime Minister, Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, accusing the U.N. of moving toward "a military intervention almost as an end in itself, against the wishes of those who are carrying it out."¹⁵ U.S. military leaders were unhappy for a different reason: Secretary of Defense Les Aspin turned down Gen. Powell's request for tanks and armored vehicles which the military felt the more hostile environment demanded.¹⁶

In the end, three types of forces with three different missions and three separate command and control structures were deployed simultaneously in the streets of Mogadishu: a traditional U.N. peacekeeping force, supporting the provision of humanitarian assistance; a U.S. Quick Reaction Force, only tenuously connected to U.N. command, for more muscular reinforcement; and to hunt Gen. Aidid, a 400-strong detachment of U.S. Army Rangers, completely autonomous from the U.N. "The U.N. will be powerless," a U.N. official predicted. "They won't know who's fighting who."¹⁷ He was right. An unsustainably ambiguous and even contradictory set of tasks and means to pursue them so eroded support for the mission that first the United States and then the United Nations were forced to abandon their military operations in Somalia--and despite humanitarian successes in the country-side, leaving Mogadishu in much the state they found it.¹⁸

Doctrinal confusion was even worse in the case of Bosnia. The United States viewed the issue of possible military intervention in the former Yugoslavia through the lenses of the "all-or-nothing" doctrine that came to govern its use of force in the wake of Vietnam.¹⁹ As defined by the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, the "all" part of this doctrine stipulates the swift, decisive, comprehensive, and synchronized application of preponderant military force to shock, disrupt, demoralize, and defeat opponents.²⁰ Because U.S. policy-makers did not consider America's vital interests to be directly affected by the disintegration of Yugoslavia while the U.S. military regarded the Serbian-dominated Yugoslav army (JNA) to be one of the more potent in Europe, even demonstration strikes were ruled out--as when the JNA shelled Dubrovnik and Vukovar in 1991, at which time, according to a recent account by Warren Zimmermann, who was then U.S. ambassador to Yugoslavia and had advised against military involvement, they might have deterred Serbian escalation.²¹ In 1992, Gen. Colin Powell angrily rejected former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's suggestion that the West launch limited air strikes to deter further Bosnian Serb shelling of Sarajevo: "As soon as they tell me it is limited, it means they do not care whether you achieve a result or not. As soon as they tell me 'surgical,' I head for the bunker."²² On the eve of a presidential election, the Bush administration required little persuading not to become militarily involved.

This "all-or-nothing" doctrine, however, left the United States with the "nothing" option for a growing number of conflict situations that conformed neither to traditional peacekeeping nor all-out war-fighting. Hence, at the end of 1994 the U.S. Army produced a new operational doctrine for that range of conflicts. It distinguished between "peace operations" and "war-fighting," and further differentiated two types of peace operations: peacekeeping and peace enforcement. The major differences between those two was said to involve the consent of the parties, the role of force, and the degree of impartiality in its application. Thus, in peacekeeping "the belligerent parties consent to the presence and operations" of peacekeepers, and "force may only be used in self-defense or defense [of] a mandate." In peace enforcement "consent is not absolute and force may be used to coerce or compel"--but not to *defeat* any belligerent. Even so, it was acknowledged that peace enforcement "strains the perception of impartiality," requiring diligence to retain even-handedness.²³ "Since misunderstanding can be disastrous," the manual encourages commanders to appeal to "higher authorities" for clarification and advice concerning these demarcations.²⁴ There was no opportunity for the U.S. Army to employ its new peace enforcement mode on the ground in Bosnia because the Clinton administration had decided to limit U.S. military involvement of any sort to NATO air strikes--except to protect U.N. troops if they were forced to withdraw or to implement a peace settlement.

While American and British legal scholars speculated in recent years about putative norms of humanitarian intervention in internal conflicts, France actively sought to shape U.N. peace operations to give expression to certain of those norms.²⁵ The French approach combined pursuit of negotiated settlements at the diplomatic level with the protection of civilian populations, by non-consensual military means if necessary, from aggression by local warring factions. Thus, France advocated creating "safe areas" within which civilians could be shielded and humanitarian aid distributed; "humanitarian corridors" through which these areas would be supplied; together with armed protection of humanitarian convoys engaged in "innocent passage" through the corridors.²⁶ Most notably, the proposal to establish the U.N. safe areas in Bosnia (Sarajevo, Tuzla, Gorazde, Bihać, Zepa, and Srebrenica) came from France.²⁷

In Bosnia these French notions ran afoul of two factors. First, unless "humanitarian intervention" in an internal conflict protects civilians on all sides, it will be regarded as a hostile act by the disadvantaged faction. The Bosnian Serbs frequently harassed and even attacked U.N. troops in the safe areas for that reason. Second, if the intervening force is regarded as favoring one faction and is also out-gunned by another, it merely offers itself up as a target. When the safe areas were created in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the U.N. Secretary General's military advisors estimated that it would take 34,000 troops to deter Serb aggression; governments provided the U.N. with 7,600, hoping that a symbolic U.N. presence and Serb fears that an attack on it might trigger NATO airstrikes would suffice.²⁸ France tried to compensate for the deficiency through heroics--as in Gen. Philippe Morillon's stand to keep Srebrenica from falling--denunciations--as in Gen. Jean Cot's very public complaints about the humiliations suffered by U.N. troops at the

hands of the Bosnian Serbs--and threats--that the U.N. either use greater force or suffer the withdrawal of French forces: "*tirer ou se tirer* (to shoot or to get out)." ²⁹ Until mid-1995, these efforts were in vain.

Britain expended greater effort than any other country to devise a new doctrine for post-cold war peacekeeping, but its attempt to achieve clarity in fact further confounded the U.N.'s Bosnian operation. Like the United States and France, Britain began with the view that the U.N. mission there constituted neither traditional peacekeeping nor war-fighting, that it was a "gray area" operation. When Lt. Gen. Sir Michael Rose arrived in Bosnia as U.N. force commander the press viewed his experience in British Special Forces, together with his own early actions to break the siege of Sarajevo in February 1994, to signify that the U.N. was now prepared to use greater force in securing compliance with its mandates. ³⁰

Gradually, however, the new British doctrine took shape, and it moved sharply away from these expectations. Termed "Wider Peacekeeping," the doctrine categorically rejected the very notion of "gray area" operations as "spurious historically [and] dangerous doctrinally." ³¹ There are only two types of U.N. military operations, it held, peacekeeping and enforcement, which it deemed a subset of war-fighting. Moreover, what divides the two "is not the level of violence," as is typically assumed, "but simply consent." ³² Thus, wider peacekeeping was said to share with traditional peacekeeping the defining feature of being consent-based. By the time he left his command, Gen. Rose had come around to echo this dichotomy: "Patience, persistence and pressure is how you conduct a peacekeeping mission...If someone wants to fight a war here on moral or political grounds, fine, great, but count us out...I'm not going to fight a war in white-painted tanks." ³³

But what, then, was "wider" about "wider peacekeeping?" Apparently, the fact that it did not rule out selective use of force for purposes other than self-defense. As Gen. Rose explained, "Hitting one tank is peacekeeping. Hitting infrastructure, command and control, logistics, that is war." ³⁴ Yet how can hitting even one tank be justified under the requirement of consent, except in self-defense? Here the British doctrine drew a distinction between "operational" and "tactical" levels of consent. Through continual negotiations with the appropriate leadership at the theater level, overall consent for an operation must be sought at all times. Accordingly, "wider peacekeeping" ruled out the *strategic* use of force. At the same time, within a framework of operational consent, the *tactical* use of force is permitted in defense of the mission as well as in self-defense. Moreover, when force is used for these purposes it must be "appropriate, proportionate, demonstrably reasonable and confined in effect to the specific and legitimate target intended." ³⁵

Insofar as the U.N. ever conceived of a common doctrine for its Bosnian operation, this was it. ³⁶ The results were not salutary. So-called operational consent carried over poorly to the

field level, leaving U.N. troops deployed in highly vulnerable positions. Their restrictive rules of engagement often made it difficult for these troops to defend themselves, let alone their mission. And when the mission was reinforced by the "peace enforcement" component of NATO airstrikes, as advocated repeatedly by the United States, the troops became, predictably, hostages to retaliation.

In sum, the major powers held very different precepts regarding the appropriate form of U.N. military intervention in the Bosnian conflict, while the U.N.'s civilian and military command roughly reflected Britain's concept of "wider peacekeeping." If these precepts were not entirely at cross-purposes, they decidedly did not add up to a coherent and sustainable doctrine. When the U.N. did rattle the enforcement saber with a pinprick NATO airstrike in April 1995, Serb forces took hundreds of U.N. peacekeepers hostage, laying bare the mission's underlying contradictions. Responding to a pervasive sense of failure and embarrassment, the U.N. redeployed its peacekeepers to more militarily defensible positions and Britain and France fielded a heavily armed U.N. Rapid Reaction Force. With the Clinton administration stirred to new activism by a move by the U.S. Congress unilaterally to lift the U.N. arms embargo on Bosnia, coupled with the opportunity created by Croatia's successful sweep through its Serb-inhabited Krajina region (presumably with the acquiescence of Serbia's President Slobodan Milosovic), NATO launched the punitive Operation Determined Force and the United States took the lead in forging the agreements ultimately embodied in the Dayton accords.

A doctrinal basis for "robust" U.N. peace operations must be formulated if the U.N. is to have a future in the domain between traditional peacekeeping and war-fighting. The British "wider peacekeeping" team focused on *consent* as the decisive factor, but that seems to settle only the most obvious cases. If a government is in control and consents to a U.N. peace operation, then the traditional peacekeeping modality suffices. If consent is not granted or is sporadic, then any U.N. military intervention must be viewed as a potential act of enforcement, fully capable of achieving compliance with its mission. The truly perplexing cases are those wherein domestic authority is contested and no faction has been collectively branded as the "aggressor." Here the U.N. faces a critical choice between two equally dear, but sometimes incompatible, principles: impartial versus minimum use of force.

If the U.N. wishes to adhere to the *impartial* use of force in an internal conflict, that choice logically implies the adoption of a "neutralization" strategy.³⁷ The political objective of such a strategy is to prevent local force from becoming the successful arbiter of outcomes on the ground and to persuade local combatants that they have no viable alternative but to reach a negotiated settlement. Ideally, the timely show of sufficient international force would deter the local use of force altogether. If the time for deterrence has passed, or should deterrence fail, international force would be employed in the attempt to dissuade local combatants from continuing military action by means of strikes against tactical targets that are specific sources

of offensive activity. As a last step, international force would seek to deny military victory to any side in the dispute by striking strategic targets, creating the military stalemate on which negotiated settlements typically depend. To achieve these objectives, the international force must be militarily credible. Neither its size nor technical or operational capabilities can be defined generically, therefore, but will depend on the balance of power on the ground. At the high end of the spectrum such a force could be virtually indistinguishable from war-fighting units in all respects *except* their political and military objectives.

U.N. member states may not be prepared to adopt such a strategy on principle, however, preferring the *minimum use* of force. Or for a variety of political and financial reasons they may be willing to provide the U.N. with only a small and lightly armed force. But if governments still ask the U.N. to intervene in internal conflicts under those constraints, then logically they must be prepared to abandon impartiality in order to achieve success. As Richard Betts has argued: "Limited intervention may end a war if the intervenor takes sides, tilts the local balance of power, and helps one of the rivals to win--that is, if it is not impartial...[T]he attempt to have it both ways has brought the United Nations and the United States--and those whom they sought to help--to varying degrees of grief."³⁸

In sum, formulating a shared understanding among governments of how to do what they ask the U.N. to do is a necessary first step. Constructing viable implementation mechanisms is the next.

Command and Control

In any military operation, personnel, equipment, and procedures must be integrated in such a way as to achieve unified direction of effort in the field, guided by and in support of overall strategic objectives. Recent U.N. operations have exhibited anything but those characteristics.³⁹

Under traditional peacekeeping, militarily U.N. headquarters essentially plays a management role, vested in the Secretary General. The newer peace operations, however, also require effective performance of critical command functions. The charter, as noted above, assigned the "strategic direction" of U.N. military forces to the Military Staff Committee, advising the Security Council, with operational command and control issues to be worked out subsequently. Today, the United States is not alone among Security Council members in believing that the representational character of this Committee--the permanent five--renders it inappropriate for command purposes. Be that as it may, command functions in non-traditional U.N. peace operations are now performed poorly.

Problems exist throughout the entire chain of command: the Security Council routinely adopts mandates that are inconsistent or that do not provide militarily meaningful guidelines to missions; troop contributing countries have no systematic input into the designing of mandates unless they happen to be Security Council members; there is no duly constituted military authority at U.N. headquarters to command overall operations and serve as the interface between political authorities and force commanders; and the Secretary General acts as both the Council's executive agent in military operations and neutral mediator. In theater, force commanders are required to perform operational tasks without adequate strategic guidance or plans. Their options in employing the troops and equipment provided by governments are subject to constraints by national authorities, which they do not always make known in advance. And national contingent commanders often seek instructions from their capitals before acting on orders by U.N. force commanders. This practice is hardly surprising, but it delays and can jeopardize the success of field actions while further undermining unity-in-command. Linking U.N. peace operations with non-U.N. "peace enforcement" components has also proved difficult: attempts to couple U.N. and NATO commands through a "dual key" arrangement for NATO airstrikes in Bosnia led to confusion and mutual recrimination, degrading the mission of both; decoupling U.N. and U.S. command structures in Somalia produced even greater calamity. As a result, U.N. military units have been unable to act strategically, quickly, and on a sustained basis.

These issues are unlikely to be fully resolved any time soon; national political cross-currents are simply too strong. Nevertheless, small steps toward improvements should be possible in three areas. First, however it is constituted, the U.N. requires a more effective military staff capacity at headquarters level, responsible to the Security Council and enjoying a sphere of institutional independence from the Secretary General. The current arrangement of military advisors leaves their functioning entirely at the discretion of the Secretary General, who may or may not ask for or accept their advice, or share it with the Security Council, and the arrangement in any case is too weak to perform the grand-strategic and operational planning roles that are now lacking.

Second, the major troop contributing countries should be more extensively brought into the determination of mandates and changes therein, as well as in reviewing operational plans. Greater involvement in the formative stages of missions ought to reduce the extent that national authorities interject themselves at the field level.

Finally, to reduce the incidence of national contingent commanders consulting their capitals before acting on U.N. force commanders' orders, senior officers of the larger contributing forces in any given mission could be made part of the field headquarters staff of U.N. missions, performing liaison and advisory functions outside the operational chain of command.⁴⁰ Troop contributing nations would be asked to deal only through this mechanism on matters affecting their contingents, and if warranted by an operation's size they could provide

their national representative officers with a staff to support these functions--thus turning what is now a vice undermining missions into a virtue strengthening them.

Conclusion

The end of the cold war created new possibilities for U.N. peace operations, but they were not nearly as unlimited or unproblematic as the early post-cold war euphoria promised. After Somalia and Bosnia, however, many observers have wondered whether *any* range of opportunity remains. Clearly, the U.N. was not equipped to undertake those missions successfully. But consider this counterfactual comparison: if Soviet armies had marched across the central front in Europe in the early 1950s, NATO's performance would have deeply embarrassed the alliance. It took the impetus of the Korean war as well as considerable time, effort and money for NATO to generate its formidable military structure.

U.N. member states do not aspire to have the U.N. resemble NATO in this regard. But the point is that they should not deploy the U.N. in contexts for which it is not prepared and expect it to be effective. Moreover, if they wish to ratchet up its role they must also upgrade its capabilities--just as NATO's were in the 1950s. This paper has argued that for any form of U.N. military operations beyond the traditional peacekeeping modality to succeed, a shared doctrinal understanding of the nature of these operations, together with improvements in the institutional arrangements for command and control, are absolute requisites.

Clearly, powerful political obstacles stand in the way. In the United States, the Republican Congress is hostile and the Democratic administration chastened. At some point, however, we can expect the U.S. military to weigh in and facilitate a more reasoned discourse. For the military, slowly shedding its Vietnam-induced doctrines, has become convinced that gray area conflicts are here to stay, and that in many cases coalition responses, through the U.N. and other mechanisms, are the most viable and sustainable option.⁴¹

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1. Robert C. Hilderbrand, *Dumbarton Oaks: The Origins of the United Nations and the Search for Postwar Security* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990). Actual negotiations took place among the United States, Britain, and the Soviet Union, followed by consultations with China.
 2. *Ibid.*, p. 65.
 3. See Perry McCoy Smith, *The Air Force Plans for Peace, 1943-1945* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1970), esp. pp. 49-51.
 4. Hilderbrand, *Dumbarton Oaks*, p. 142.
 5. *Ibid.*, pp. 149-151.
 6. Hans Kelsen, *The Law of the United Nations* (New York: Praeger, 1951), p. 755.
 7. See D. W. Bowett, *United Nations Forces: A Legal Study* (New York: Praeger, 1964), pp. 12-18.
 8. In September 1992, I observed that "it is a miracle of no small magnitude that disaster has not yet befallen one of these peacekeeping missions." In subsequent operations the U.N. ran out of miracles. John Gerard Ruggie, "No, The World Doesn't Need a U.N. Army," *International Herald Tribune*, September 26-27, 1992, p. 5.
 9. See John Gerard Ruggie, "Wandering in the Void: Charting the U.N.'s New Strategic Role," *Foreign Affairs*, 72 (November/December 1993).
 10. *An Agenda for Peace* (New York: United Nations, 1992).
 11. "Supplement to an Agenda for Peace: Position Paper of the Secretary-General on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations," U.N. Document A/50/60, S/1995/1 (3 January 1995), p. 3.
 12. See the account by Michael W. Doyle and Nishkala Suntharalingham, "The U.N. in Cambodia: Lessons for Complex Peacekeeping," *International Peacekeeping*, 1 (Summer 1994).
 13. "Excerpts From a Resolution On Delivering Somalia Aid," *New York Times*, December 4, 1992, p. A14.
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14. See Michael R. Gordon, "U.S. is Sending Large Force As Warning to Somali Clans," *New York Times*, December 5, 1992, p. A5; and Paul Lewis, "U.N. Says Somalis Must Disarm Before Peace," *New York Times*, December 6, 1992, p. 15.
 15. Quoted by Alan Cowell, "Italy, in U.N. Rift, Threatens Recall of Somalia Troops," *New York Times*, July 16, 1993, p. A1.
 16. John H. Cushman, Jr., "How Powerful U.S. Units Will Work," *New York Times*, October 8, 1993, p. A14.
 17. Quoted by Donatella Lorch, "Italian Forces Come Under Fire in Tense Somalia," *New York Times*, July 17, 1993, p. A3.
 18. Keith B. Richburg, "Two Years After U.S. Landing in Somalia, It's Back to Chaos," *Washington Post*, December 4, 1994, p. A1.
 19. For a discussion of the evolution of the all-or-nothing doctrine from Vietnam to the present, see Christopher M. Gacek, *The Logic of Force: The Dilemma of Limited War in American Foreign Policy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994).
 20. *A Doctrinal Statement of Selected Joint Operational Concepts* (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, U.S. Department of Defense, November 23, 1992).
 21. Warren Zimmermann, "The Last Ambassador: A Memoir of the Collapse of Yugoslavia," *Foreign Affairs*, 74 (March/April 1995).
 22. Quoted in Michael R. Gordon, "Powell Delivers a Resounding No On Using Limited Force in Bosnia," *New York Times*, September 28, 1992, p. A1.
 23. U.S. Department of the Army, *Peace Operations* (Washington, D.C., Field Manual 100-23, 30 December 1994), p. 12.
 24. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
 25. See Philip Guillot, "France, Peacekeeping and Humanitarian Intervention," *International Peacekeeping*, 1 (Spring 1994).
 26. According to Guillot, the analogy between humanitarian corridors and innocent passage in the law of the seas has been explicit in the thinking of influential French intellectuals and policymakers. *Ibid.*, p. 32.
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27. French troops also participated in the protection of Kurdish "safe havens" in Northern Iraq, and France's U.N.-authorized intervention in Rwanda reflected a similar model.

28. Michael R. Gordon, "Allies Seem to Hope Serbs Won't Attack," *New York Times*, May 24, 1993, p. A7. Here and throughout the Bosnian conflict, the U.N. Secretariat and Security Council members frequently invoked the concept of "deterrence," but to my knowledge there has been no serious analysis either within the U.N. or in any major government of the force level and employment requirements that could make deterrence effective.

29. Guillot, "France, Peacekeeping and Humanitarian Intervention," p. 39; and personal interviews with Generals Morillon and Cot in New York.

30. See, for example, John Pomfret, "U.N. to Attempt Sending Convoys Without Bosnian Factions' Permission," *Washington Post*, February 28, 1994, p. A12; and the retrospective assessment by Roger Cohen, "U.N. Commander Set to Leave Bosnia, After a Year of Triumph and Disaster," *New York Times*, January 22, 1995, p. A6.

31. Lt. Col. C.W.G. Dobbie, "Wider Peacekeeping: An Approach to Peacekeeping Post Cold War," paper distributed at United Nations High-Level Meeting on Peacekeeping, Ottawa, Canada, April 29-May 1, 1994, p. 3. The British Army Field Manual, which Col. Dobbie helped draft, coupled the phrase "spurious historically" with the less inflammatory "misleading doctrinally." *Wider Peacekeeping* (third draft, n.d.), p. II-5.

32. Dobbie, "Wider Peacekeeping," p. 3.

33. Quoted in Roger Cohen, "U.N. General Opposes More Bosnia Force," *New York Times*, September 29, 1994, p. A7.

34. *Ibid.*

35. Colonel Allan Mallinson, "Doctrine dilemma has only two horns," unpublished ms; Col. Mallinson helped direct the UK's "wider peacekeeping" doctrinal effort.

36. The U.N. never formally adopted a doctrine, but statements by the Secretary General and the Undersecretary General for Peacekeeping came to reflect these "wider peacekeeping" notions. The latter used the distinction between operational and tactical consent to explain certain U.N. actions on the ground in Bosnia as recently as June 19, 1995, in a plenary presentation at the Eighth Annual Meeting, Academic Council on the United Nations System, Graduate Center of the City University of New York.

37. See Ruggie, "Wandering in the Void."

38. Richard K. Betts, "The Delusion of Impartial Intervention," *Foreign Affairs*, 73 (November/December 1994), p. 21.

39. For an excellent assessment of the generic issues, see Roger H. Palin, "Multinational Military Forces: Problems and Prospects," *Adelphi Paper # 294* (London: Oxford University Press, for the International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1995), pp. 15-21; for a recent (and unsatisfactory) U.N. view, see Report of the Secretary General, "Comprehensive review of the whole question of peace-keeping operations in all their aspects: Command and control of United Nations peace-keeping operations," A/49/681 (21 November 1994).

40. This model draws on the precedent established by Gen. John Shalikashvili as commander of Operation Provide Comfort, protecting the Kurdish population in Northern Iraq in the wake of the Gulf war.

41. I base this conclusion on the experience of participating for two years in a series of workshops on "U.S. Participation in Multinational Peace Operations," co-sponsored by Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs and the National Defense University in Washington, D.C. Thanks are due to the MacArthur Foundation for funding Columbia's part of the project.