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United States General Accounting Office
Washington, DC 20548

May 24, 2002

The Honorable Henry J. Hyde
Chairman
The Honorable Tom Lantos
Ranking Minority Member
Committee on International Relations
House of Representatives

Subject: Issues in Implementing International Peace Operations

Peacekeeping operations play an important role in advancing U.S. security interests. The operations attempt to maintain international security in locations such as the Congo, Sierra Leone, Kosovo, Bosnia, and most recently Afghanistan. Between fiscal years 1996 and 2001, we estimate that the United States provided $3.45 billion in direct contributions and $24.2 billion in voluntary or indirect contributions to 33 U.N. peacekeeping operations in these and other locations.[1]

In light of the substantial U.S. commitments to ongoing peace operations and the potentially high costs for new operations in Central Asia and elsewhere, in late January and early February 2002 we briefed staff from your committee and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on our observations of three aspects of multidimensional peace operations: (1) negotiating and enforcing peace agreements; (2) using military force to create a secure environment in which a peace agreement can be implemented; and (3) administering and rebuilding civic functions. This correspondence summarizes that briefing, which was drawn from our extensive past work examining peace operations. Enclosure I documents the information we provided to you in the briefing.

Since 1990, we have issued 33 reports dealing with 16 of these operations. We have undertaken field studies while those operations were occurring and provided analyses to Congress on peacekeeping efforts in these countries.

Summary

In summary, we found that the prospects for implementing peace agreements are enhanced if all major parties to the conflict participate in negotiating the agreements and if these agreements include specific authority and mechanisms for their enforcement. For example, the peace agreement for Cambodia had 18 signatory nations, which gave the United Nations the authority and support it needed to confront the Khmer Rouge and conduct elections. In Bosnia and Herzegovina (hereafter referred to as Bosnia), the Dayton Accords specifically

[1] *U.N. Peacekeeping: Estimated U.S. Contributions, Fiscal Years 1996–-2001* (GAO-02-294, Feb. 11, 2002).

gave the Office of the High Representative authority to implement the accords, including adopting a common citizenship law, introducing a new currency, and removing local officials obstructing the peace process. Similarly, in Kosovo, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) had authority to provide security, which it used to demilitarize the Kosovo Liberation Army. These mechanisms were critical to begin building durable local institutions that could resolve disputes and enforce decisions. Moreover, to end hostilities, political agreements sometimes defer politically sensitive issues that must be dealt with later, such as the final political status of the disputed city of Brcko in Bosnia and the creation of a war crimes tribunal for Cambodia.

Peace operations are more likely to succeed if the military forces carrying out the operations have clear objectives, sufficient resources, and the authority to carry out their tasks. Military forces can help create a secure environment for civilian work to proceed. For example, the NATO-led deployments in the Balkans since the mid-1990s had sufficient troops and equipment and clear authority to enforce the agreements. These operations quickly created secure conditions to allow civilian organizations to conduct elections, begin reconstruction, and initiate police training. In contrast, U.N.-led peacekeeping missions in Somalia and in Bosnia in the early 1990s failed, in part, because they lacked sufficient troops and arms. In addition, the peacekeeping mission in Bosnia lacked clear authority to carry out its mandates. Furthermore, we have observed that non-U.N. multinational forces have tended to fare better than those led by the United Nations because they had a clearer understanding of the rules guiding the use of force and a greater certainty that individual national contingents would carry out the orders of the peace operation's leadership. In Bosnia, the NATO-led successor force to the U.N. peacekeeping mission had sufficient troops, equipment, and readily available reinforcements, and its objectives were clearly understood both by its troops and by the local authorities. In contrast, one national contingent of a U.N.-led force in Somalia conducted negotiations with a warlord opposed to the peace operation, while the rest of the force was trying to capture him.

We also observed that the slow or late deployment of a peace operation's civil administrators might impede efforts to establish good governance. In both Kosovo and Cambodia, the slow deployment of the operations' civil administration allowed the dominant factions in each country to take over key government posts and key ministries. This undercut the chance to build fair government and control political corruption. Also, peace operations are more successful if their civil administration components respond to the countries' evolving needs and are coordinated with military operations. For example, in Kosovo, the peace operation responded to the emerging need to control civil unrest by providing police forces trained in riot control. In Cambodia, the high degree of civil-military coordination allowed the return of hundreds of thousands of refugees within 1 year, which allowed legitimate elections to proceed. Finally, peace operations tended to be more successful when locals participated at every reasonable opportunity. In Bosnia, for example, growing local economic and civic participation in peace implementation efforts allowed more moderate political candidates to gain support, thus reducing the political influence of opponents of the peace process.

Background

Our observations apply to multidimensional peace operations—operations that have security, political, and humanitarian objectives that are undertaken simultaneously or sequentially to build a sustainable peace. Multidimensional operations are typically conducted in two phases. In the first phase, during an ongoing conflict, multinational military forces try to provide stability in a country that may have multiple warring factions, a humanitarian crisis,

the breakdown of government and law enforcement, economic collapse, and rampant corruption. The multinational forces' mandates might include protection of humanitarian operations and providing the security necessary for the United Nations or other negotiator to broker a political settlement.

In the second phase, the United Nations typically leads or authorizes a peace operation with regional security forces, such as those provided by NATO, and multilateral financial institutions, such as the World Bank. To build a sustainable peace, the operation conducts complex and costly tasks associated with, for example, improving or restoring the rule of law, rebuilding infrastructure and economic institutions, monitoring human rights, safeguarding humanitarian and refugee resettlement operations, overseeing democratic reform and transfers of power via elections, and controlling corruption.

Scope and Methodology

To prepare our briefing, we analyzed 33 GAO reports on peace operations produced since 1990. These reports included case studies in 16 countries, most of which included in-country fieldwork. In addition, GAO has produced more than 45 reports on activities related to peacekeeping, including refugee assistance and rule of law issues. We examined political agreements, use of military force, and civil administration aspects of numerous peacekeeping operations, but we drew our examples from some of the largest multidimensional peacekeeping operations in four countries—Cambodia, Somalia, Bosnia, and Kosovo. Although we noted elements that contributed to the relative success or failure of these peace operations, we did not generalize the results of these case studies as applying to all future peace operations or attempt to determine which aspects of past operations might apply to specific peace operations in the future. From this analysis, we derived overall issues or questions associated with effective peace implementation operations that could be raised in the oversight of any future peacekeeping operation.

The roles of the United Nations and other international organizations varied widely in the multidimensional peace operations conducted in each of these countries. First, we examined the accomplishments of the United Nations Advance Mission in Cambodia (1991–1992) and the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (1992–1993). These U.N. missions were established to ensure the implementation of a comprehensive political settlement. The United Nations had overall responsibility for maintaining the ceasefire, monitoring human rights, organizing elections, providing civil administration, implementing law and order, and helping resettle refugees.

In Somalia, the United Nations at first shared responsibility for the implementation of the peace operation with a multinational military force led by the United States. The U.N. Operation in Somalia (1992–1995) conducted a humanitarian operation while the multinational military force provided security. The U.N. mission subsequently assumed responsibility for enforcing the peace and replaced the multinational troops with a U.N.-led military force.

The U.N.-led Protection Force (1992–1995) in Bosnia and elsewhere in the former Yugoslavia at first provided humanitarian aid and then unsuccessfully attempted to establish the peace and security necessary to negotiate an overall peace agreement. Once a U.S.-led effort to negotiate a peace agreement succeeded in late 1995, responsibility for the peace implementation operation in Bosnia was divided among a number of international organizations. The Office of the High Representative oversees the civilian tasks of the peace

agreement, which are carried out by the United Nations, the European Union, and other international organizations. The United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1995 to the present) focuses primarily on monitoring and restructuring local police forces and mine clearance efforts. The NATO-led Stabilization Force in Bosnia implements the military tasks related to maintaining the ceasefire and disarmament of the former warring parties.

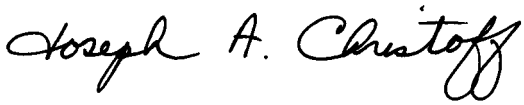
In contrast to the limited U.N. role in Bosnia, the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (1999 to the present) serves as an interim government and coordinates all aspects of the recovery and reconstruction of the province pending a final resolution of its political status. The NATO-led international security presence, or Kosovo Force, enforces the related military agreements and helps the U.N. mission provide public security and order.

We discussed our briefing with officials from the Departments of State and Defense and incorporated their technical comments where appropriate. We also reviewed numerous nongovernmental reports and documents on peacekeeping and discussed our briefing with peacekeeping experts. We considered relevant peacekeeping analyses and expert opinions in completing our briefing.

We conducted work for this report from December 2001 to February 2002 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

We are sending copies of this letter to the Chairs and Ranking Minority Members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the House Armed Services Committee, and other interested committees. This letter will also be available on GAO's home page at http://www.gao.gov.

If you or your staffs have any questions concerning this report, please call me at (202) 512-8979. Key contributors to this report included Tet Miyabara, B. Patrick Hickey, Dave Maurer, Richard Boudreau, Addison Ricks, and Lynn Cothern.

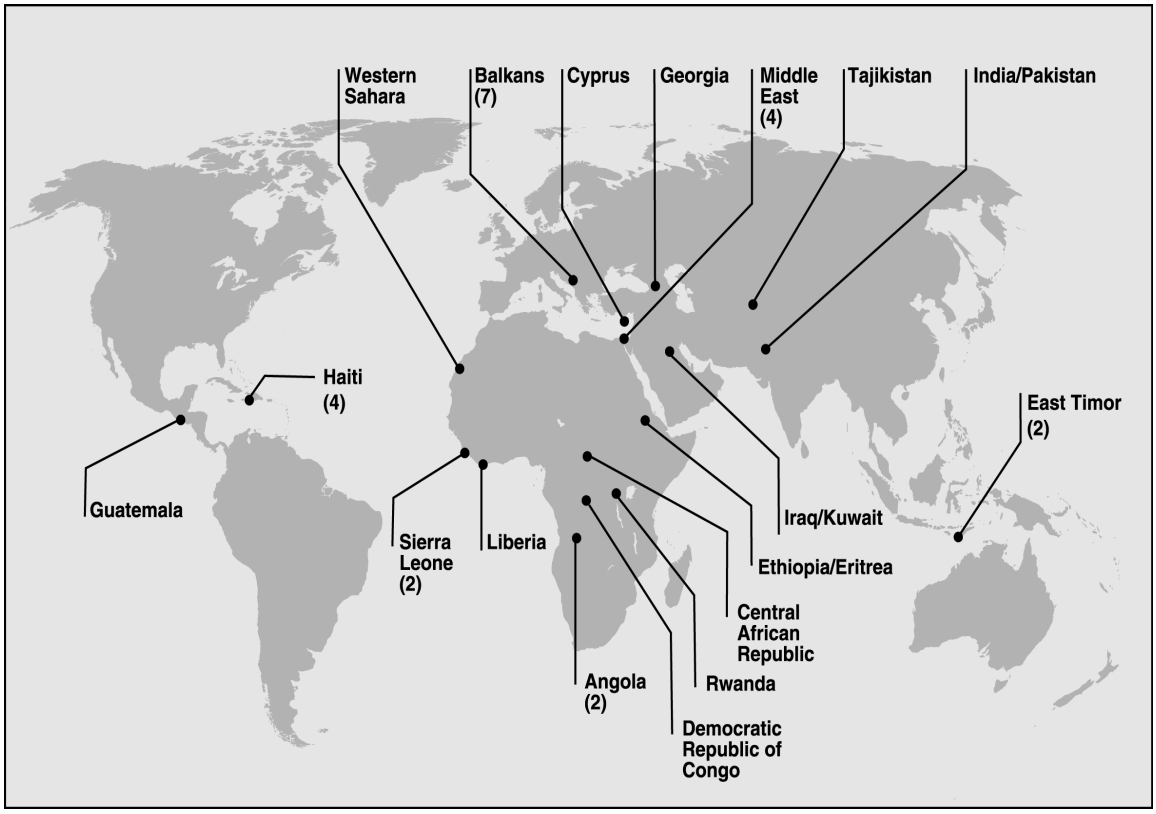


Joseph A. Christoff, Director
International Affairs and Trade

Enclosure

Issues in Implementing International Peace Operations

U.N. Peace Operations 1996–2001



Source: GAO.

Objective:

Make observations about the planning and implementation of past international peace operations

Phases of Multidimensional Operations

Typical Conditions: Ongoing Conflict

- Regional security threats
- Multiple warring parties
- Genocide, famine, rape, and torture
- Courts, police, and markets not functioning
- Crime and corruption rampant

Multinational forces try to restore or provide stability and security, typically to:

- Protect humanitarian operations;
- Provide a transition time for a U.N. operation to deploy.

U.N. operations try to:

- Facilitate implementation of political accord;
- Help establish and control interim government.

Typical Conditions: Post Conflict

- Unstable government
- Widespread corruption
- Complex and costly tasks
- Multiple NGOs
- Shattered economy
- A need to reintegrate fighters
- Rule of law lacking

U.N.-led or coalition-led multilateral operations, with World Bank and others:

- Provide stability with a multinational force;
- Help build police and justice system;
- Help construct administrative and political institutions;
- Help build economic institutions—banking, finance, and treasury;
- Provide for economic reconstruction;
- Provide refugee return and repatriation;
- Ensure that basic human rights are honored;
- Advise and oversee elections, transfers of power.

Sustainable Peace

GAO Work on Peace Operations

GAO work includes:

- 32 reports in 12 years;
- Case studies of operations in 16 countries and most included in-country work;
- More than 45 reports on related activities such as rule of law and refugee assistance.

For this briefing, we focused on peace operations in Somalia, Cambodia, Bosnia, and Kosovo and three components of these operations:

- Political agreements;
- Use of military force;
- Civil administration.

Observations on Political Agreements

Leaders sign Dayton Peace Accords.

Participation of major internal and external parties in negotiations enhanced prospects for implementing agreements.

- The international community backed the High Representative in enforcing the Dayton Accords, which had been signed by representatives of all major parties to the conflict;

- U.N. military in Somalia lacked an internationally sanctioned peace accord, thus depriving its activities of legitimacy with parts of the Somali population;

- China and 18 nations signed the Cambodian agreement and supported its implementation despite Khmer Rouge opposition.

Observations on Political Agreements

U.N. returns refugees to Cambodia.

Police cadets graduate in Kosovo.

Writing specific activities into a peace agreement enhanced implementation of the agreement.

- Cambodian peace settlement set timelines for the repatriation of refugees, which the U.N. used to force the pace of repatriation;

- Kosovo Agreements gave the U.N. and the OSCE responsibility for the creation of a Kosovo police force and allowed NATO to demilitarize the Kosovo Liberation Army;

- Dayton Accords defined the rules and schedule for disarming the parties, which NATO enforced when violations occurred.

Observations on Political Agreements

Wolfgang Petrisch is high representative for Dayton implementation in Bosnia.

Kosovars greet entering KFOR troops.

For successful implementation, agreements often required mechanisms for their interpretation and enforcement.

- To enforce Dayton Accords, the Office of the High Representative annulled laws and removed officials;

- In Kosovo, the NATO military force was charged with enforcing peace;

- Initially, U.N. operations in Cambodia did not have a special prosecutor's office to enforce human rights; human rights were widely abused.

Observations on Political Agreements

Kosovo's status is unresolved.

Brcko is important to all ethnic groups in Bosnia.

To end hostilities, parties sometimes deferred politically sensitive issues.

- Parties to the Kosovo conflict agreed on ceasefire and repatriation of refugees but left final political status of Kosovo undecided;

- Dayton Accords drew boundaries between the parties but left open eventual control of Brcko, a strategic city in Bosnia;

- Paris peace negotiations used participation of Khmer Rouge to create a peace settlement but did not provide for a war crimes tribunal.

Observations on Military Force

Khmer Rouge faction retained weapons in violation of Cambodian disarmament agreement.

Canadian peacekeepers evacuate civilians wounded in Srebrenica.

Military forces with insufficient resources often met with failure.

- In Somalia, the U.N. had too few troops to provide security throughout the country;
- U.N. lacked sufficient troops and firepower in Bosnia to halt Serb attacks against safe havens;
- U.N. not capable of forcing disarmament in Cambodia;
- NATO had military means to carry out objectives in Balkans.

Observations on Military Force

Hutus look for Tutsis at checkpoint in Rwanda.

U.S. troops patrol Route Arizona Marketplace in Bosnia.

Military should have had clear understanding of its role.

- Troops should understand:
  - Mission objectives;
  - Measures of success;
  - Command and control structure; and
  - Rules of engagement for lethal force.

- U.N. weak and ineffective in Rwanda during genocide in part because U.N. troops and local civilians were unclear about the U.N.'s role;

- NATO raids on Serb weapons sites in Bosnia aided by troops' and Serbs' understanding of NATO role.

Observations on Military Force

Source: NATO.

NATO secured ethnically divided Mostar, Bosnia.

Source: Amnesty International.

U.N. pulled most of its troops out of Rwanda.

Non-U.N. multinational forces fared better than U.N.-led forces

- Sufficient troops, equipment, and reinforcements more readily available;
  - NATO had 60,000 troops in Bosnia;
- Clearer approach to effectively guide the use of force
  - Some U.N. contingents failed to act during ongoing genocide in Rwanda;
- Greater certainty that national contingents will carry out orders;
  - Italian contingent in Somalia negotiated with Aidid while rest of U.N. force tried to capture him.

Observations on Military Force

U.N. peacekeeper on guard as Cambodians vote.

NATO provided security at ethnic boundaries in Bosnia.

Military must provide secure climate for civilian work to proceed.

- Without troops to maintain order, developing rule of law in Somalia was impossible;

- Large NATO deployments into Bosnia and Kosovo quickly created security to allow elections, reconstruction, and police training to begin;

- The U.N. force's inconsistent protection of food delivery allowed Bosnian Serbs to manipulate access to food and use it as a weapon.

- U.N. force in Cambodia provided enough security for credible elections.

Observations on Civil Administration

U.N. police commissioner in Kosovo reports on the consequences of slow deployment of "desperately needed" international police.

Local Cambodian officials conduct business.

Slow deployment of mission impeded establishment of civil administration.

- In Kosovo, slow deployment of U.N. mission allowed Kosovo Liberation Army to temporarily run civil administration, jeopardizing U.N. mission's credibility;

- Delays in U.N. deployment to Cambodia allowed one party to control key government agencies, such as Finance and Defense, undercutting the chance to build a fair government and control corruption.

Observations on Civil Administration

Soldier distributes food aid in Somalia.

Dutch soldiers protect refugee repatriation in Cambodia.

Civil administration was most successful when military and civilians worked together.

- Poor coordination between military and NGOs in Somalia hindered initial food aid efforts;

- U.N. peacekeepers provided security that allowed the U.N. High Commission for Refugees to help 360,000 refugees return to their homes in Cambodia within a year;

- U.N. civilian police force, in coordination with NATO troops, provide public security until multiethnic Kosovo police force assumes that role.

Observations on Civil Administration

Bosnian returnees rebuild their community's school.

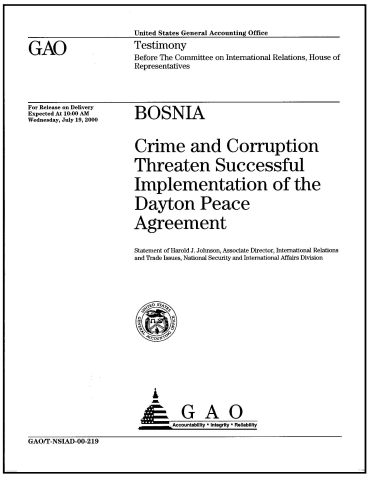
Citizen stands before a court in Cambodia.

Civil administration was more successful when peace mission had authority to enforce agreements.

- In Bosnia, the High Representative removed local officials that obstructed the return of ethnic minorities to their pre-war homes;

- The U.N. mission in Cambodia created a corps of human rights prosecutors, but it was powerless to act when Cambodian judges refused to hear cases.

Observations on Civil Administration



United States General Accounting Office

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Testimony

Before The Committee on International Relations, House of Representatives

For Release on Delivery
Expected At 10:00 AM
Wednesday, July 19, 2000

BOSNIA

Crime and Corruption Threaten Successful Implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement

Statement of Harold J. Johnson, Associate Director, International Relations and Trade Issues, National Security and International Affairs Division

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GAO/T-NSIAD-00-219

GAO has reported and testified on corruption in Bosnia.

International police in Kosovo confront rioters.

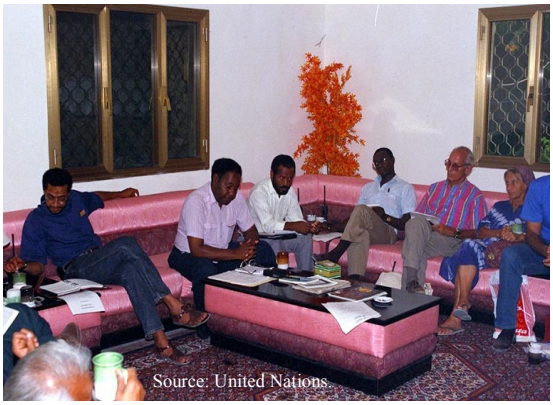
Civil administration was more successful when international response matched evolving needs.

- The mission in Bosnia has been slow to provide resources in response to corruption, a problem that threatens implementation of the Dayton Accords;

- The U.N. mission and NATO-led forces in Kosovo responded to potential civil unrest needs by providing police forces trained in riot control;

- In Cambodia, the U.N. responded to immediate needs by reprogramming money into quick impact projects that provided jobs and reintegrated combatants.

Observations on Civil Administration



U.N. officials in Somalia attempt to negotiate safe passage for aid shipments with members of two warring factions.

Bosnian-Serb leader Biljana Plavsic has moderated her politics.

Civil administration worked best when locals participated at every reasonable opportunity.

- With few Somalis in the U.N. mission, local warlords exploited charge that the mission was a foreign encroachment on Somalia's sovereignty;

- From 1996 to 2000, more moderate candidates in Bosnia have gained support as economic and civic participation have increased.

Overall Issues for Oversight

- Has a process been established to create durable local institutions that can resolve disputes and enforce decisions peacefully?

- Are military, civilian, and humanitarian efforts coordinated and adequately funded to accomplish common objectives?

- Do the local population and officials act as key participants in making decisions about the operation?

- What is being done to fight corruption?

(320109)