

**STRATEGY
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UNITED NATIONS COMMAND AND CONTROL OF UNITED STATES PEACEKEEPERS; FACT OR FICTION

BY

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

United Nations Command and Control of United States

Peacekeepers; Fact or Fiction?

by

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ABSTRACT

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This strategic research project examines the issue of United States military forces serving under the operational control of a United Nations Force Commander during peace operations. Current United States policy supports this practice; however, the United States never relinquishes command over its forces. Therefore, the current United States policy creates dual chains of command for United States forces participating in UN peace operations. In fact, due to concerns relating to public perception and force protection, the amount of control relinquished to the United Nations, in practice, is typically more restrictive than operational control.

The author argues that current United States government policy regarding United Nations command and control of United States forces is too restrictive. This policy risks diminishing the United States commander's ability to effectively contribute to the mission's success.

The methodology used in this paper includes a review of both United States and United Nations policies as they relate to the command and control of military forces. Additionally, the operational effect that this policy, and its implementation, have had is examined through three case studies; Somalia - UNOSOM II, Haiti - UNMIH and Macedonia - UNPREDEP. Finally, recommendations are made to improve the implementation of current policy.

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UNITED NATIONS COMMAND AND CONTROL OF UNITED STATES

PEACEKEEPERS; FACT OR FICTION?

This paper examines policies, practices and past United Nations (UN) operations related to the command and control of United States (U.S.) forces participating in UN peace operations. The author argues that current arrangements for the command and control of U.S. forces serving under the operational control (OPCON) of the UN, in some instances, will not allow effective management of U.S. forces in hostile environments or crisis situations.

UN OPCON of U.S. military forces is summarized by the President's 1997 National Security Strategy which states that "at times it will be in our national interest to proceed in partnership with others to preserve, maintain and restore peace."¹

The key point of an OPCON relationship is that the UN commander has "the authority to perform those functions of command over subordinate forces involving organizing and employing commands and forces, assigning tasks, designating objectives, and giving authoritative direction necessary to accomplish the mission."² This is very seldom the case. When U.S. forces are OPCON to a UN commander, only a limited amount of control is relinquished. Often the degree of control released to

the UN commander is insufficient to accomplish the full range of tasks mandated by the UN.

The challenge is reflected by the Force Commander of the United Nations Operations in Somalia II (UNOSOM II), Lieutenant General Bir, Turkish Army, who cited "his lack of command authority over the assigned forces as the most significant limitation of this operation or any other organized under Chapter VII of the United Nations."³

The issue is important because American military participate, in ever increasing numbers, in UN mandated peace operations. From 1945 to 1987, only 13 United Nations (UN) peacekeeping operations were conducted. The number has doubled since that time.⁴

There is little question of the necessity for the U.S. to participate in multinational peace operations from both burden sharing and legitimacy aspects. Therefore, U.S. forces in peace operations under some degree of UN operational control is likely to continue in the future; thus, increasing the relevance of this research project's focus on international command of U.S. forces.

POLICY

U.S.

Presidential Decision Directive 25 (PDD 25), of 3 May 1994, establishes current U.S. policy for peace operations. The Directive codifies an interagency review of U.S. peacekeeping policies and programs. PDD 25 is an attempt to develop a comprehensive policy framework suited for the post-Cold War period. The PDD addresses six topics; when to participate in peace operations, how to reduce costs, defining command and control policy, reforms to improve the UN's operational management, improving U.S. operational management and funding and improving cooperation within the Executive Branch.⁵

Much of the PDD concentrates on command and control for U.S. forces indicating the importance of this subject to the Administration. The Directive reaffirms two principles for future peace operations:

First, "Although the President will never relinquish command of U.S. forces, he does have the authority to place American soldiers under the operational control of a foreign commander when doing so serves our national needs." Secondly, "The larger the peace operation, and the greater the likelihood of combat, the less likely it is that the United States will agree to surrender operational control of its forces to a UN commander. Participation of U.S. forces in operations likely to involve combat should be conducted under the operational control of the United States, an ad hoc coalition, or a competent regional security organization such as NATO."⁶

Command is defined as:

"No President has ever relinquished command over U.S. forces. Command constitutes the authority to issue orders covering every aspect of military operations and administration. The sole source of legitimacy for U.S. commanders originates from the U.S. constitution, federal law and the Uniform Code of Military Justice and flows from the President to the lowest U.S. commander in the field. The chain of command from the President to the lowest U.S. commander in the field remains inviolate."⁷

This definition is useful as background information, but is too broad to help commanders and soldiers in the field. Joint Publication 3-0, Doctrine for Joint Operations, a manual for Joint Operations, adds clarity by defining Combatant Command (COCOM) or command authority as "the authority of a combatant commander to perform those functions of command over assigned forces involving organizing and employing commands and forces, assigning tasks, designating objectives, and giving authoritative direction over all aspects of military operations, joint training and logistics necessary to accomplish the missions assigned to the command."⁸

The OPCON relationship inherent to command authority, can be delegated to subordinate commanders. As stated above, the President may delegate OPCON to a UN Force Commander. Joint Publication 3-0 states that elements of the OPCON relationship include "the authority to perform those functions of command over subordinate forces involving organizing and employing commands and forces, assigning tasks, designating objectives, and giving

authoritative direction necessary to accomplish the mission."⁹

The PDD, however, states that "within the limits of operational control a foreign commander cannot: change the mission or deploy U.S. forces outside the area of responsibility agreed to by the President, separate units, divide their supplies, administer discipline, promote anyone, or change their internal organization."¹⁰

Under PDD 25 and U.S. military doctrine, a U.S. commander in a UN peace operation will always answer to a U.S. commander in addition to a UN Force Commander. This dual command structure is not unique to U.S. forces; other countries have similar policies in which command flows directly from the national authority. The U.S. however, places multiple restrictions on the degree of OPCON allowed to a non-U.S. Force Commander.

The policy implications on the U.S. commander and the UN Force Commander are enormous. First, the UN Force Commander is limited in employing the forces under his control. Even if the operational situation changes, the Force Commander is strictly held to pre-established command arrangements. Secondly, U.S. commanders must balance information and loyalty between the two chains of command. Often, the outcome causes delay in executing field orders while the U.S. commander waits for U.S. approval.

UN

On 10 December 1993, the UN General Assembly, urged the Secretary General to conduct a review of the Secretariat's role, tasks and functions to assure "unity of command and control indispensable for successful peacekeeping."¹¹ In his report back to the General Assembly, the Secretary General cited problems in past peace operations; restrictions on UN contingents by Troop Contributing Nations (TCNs) and insufficient control over soldiers by UN Force Commanders. The Secretary General expressed the need to limit restrictions placed on contingents, before they deploy. Additionally, the Secretary General stressed that (TCNs) must resolve concerns about their national contingents through the offices of the Secretary General, Security Council and other troop contributors "rather than unilaterally through their contingent commanders."¹² The Secretary General's report regarding oversight of the forces challenges U.S. policy to maintain direct command and communications channels to the U.S. contingent commanders.

Clearly the UN, realizes the need for reform; however, the UN Charter, the document from which the UN derives its legitimacy, isn't as transparent regarding command and control. The Charter doesn't specifically mention peacekeeping or even the position of the Secretary General. Peacekeeping emerged from the cold war because of superpower agreement. Articles 97 and 98 of the Charter, describe the Secretary General as the "chief

administrative officer of the Organization."¹³ The organization failed to adequately distinguish the roles of administrator and commander of its chief executive.

Two chapters within the Charter relate directly to peace operations; Chapter VI, Pacific Settlement of Disputes (Peacekeeping) and Chapter VII, Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression (Peacemaking). Regarding the control of military forces, Article 47 of Chapter VII states that:

"There shall be established a Military Staff Committee to advise and assist the Security Council on all questions relating to the Security Council's military requirements for the maintenance of international peace and security, the employment and command of forces placed at its disposal, the regulation of armaments, and possible disarmament."¹⁴

The Military Staff Committee was to be comprised of the Chiefs of Staff of the Security Council permanent members. Although formally established, the Committee never fully exercised its peace operations oversight. Instead, the UN usually selects a member to lead military operations (the U.S. in Korea and Iraq) or uses regional organizations (NATO in Bosnia) to conduct Chapter VII actions.¹⁵ Command and control is never fully addressed. Chapter VII states that "questions relating to the command of such forces shall be worked out subsequently."¹⁶

In practice, the UN recognizes three levels of command. First is the Security Council which provides political direction. The Secretary General then provides executive direction and

control for Security Council decisions. Finally, field command resides with the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG), the Force Commander or Chief Military Observer. A SRSG, who holds Ambassadorial status, usually heads multinational missions. The Secretary General selects SRSGs and Force Commanders, but must gain Security Council approval. The Secretary General is ultimately responsible for command and control of UN forces and for implementing Security Council decisions. Importantly, he must recruit forces from member nations to implement the Security Council's decisions. He attempts to resolve command and control issues before forces are deployed. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) is the Secretariat office which assists the Secretary General in controlling forces in the field.

Therefore, control flows from the Security Council through the Secretary General to a SRSG or Force Commander. The UN must rely on TCNs for forces. The degree of control relinquished to the UN, called Terms of Reference, is worked out between the UN mission of each TNC and the Secretary General's staff.

On the ground, the Force Commander, charged with accomplishing the Security Council's mandates within Terms of Reference, typically exercises OPCON over assigned forces. The UN defines OPCON as the "authority granted to a commander to direct forces assigned so the commander may accomplish specific missions

or tasks which are usually limited by function, time, or location."¹⁷

One flaw in the UN system is that the Force Commander's authority over national contingents may not be commensurate with his tasks or mission. The Force Commander ultimately must balance the relationships established by the Secretary General and member nations to accomplish his mission. The UN system is built upon consensus and works well in low threat environments. The Force Commander's job becomes more difficult when the operational environment becomes more threatening. Most nations tend to increase restrictions on the employment of their forces under UN control when conflict becomes more likely. Consequently, when circumstances require positive control, Force Commander control is diminished.

CASE STUDIES

SOMALIA

The U.S. involvement in Somalia spanned three separate operations. *Operation Provide Relief*, a humanitarian assistance operation; *Operation Restore Hope*, which combined assistance and military action; finally, United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II), a peace enforcement operation.¹⁸

This paper does not examine all of the lessons learned from the U.S. experience in Somalia. Rather, this case study focuses on UNOSOM II command and control issues. To fully understand what occurred in terms of command and control, the U.S. and UN command structures must be analyzed because each system's deficiencies led to unfortunate results.

UNOSOM II, a UN controlled operation wasn't led by the United States. The U.S. role was to provide a 3000 soldier logistic support element under OPCON of the UN. Additionally, the U.S. was asked to provide a Quick Reaction Force (QRF) of about 1,500 soldiers which would operate under the tactical control (TACON) of the Commander, U.S. Forces Somalia.¹⁹ The TACON relationship limits control to the "detailed and usually, local direction and control of movements or maneuvers necessary to accomplish missions or tasks assigned."²⁰

Recently retired U.S. Admiral, Jonathan Howe, was the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) in Somalia.²¹ U.S. Forces Somalia (USFORSOM) Commander, Major General Thomas Montgomery also served as the Deputy Force Commander for UNOSOM II. The U.S. Commander of the UNOSOM II Logistics Command served as Deputy Commander, U.S. Forces Somalia.²²

U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) released the QRF for specific operations with the UN. Since the QRF was TACON to MG Montgomery, the UN Force Commander had no direct control over it. In August 1993, circumstances necessitated the deployment of 400 Army Rangers and Delta Force soldiers to assist in the hunt for the warlord Aideed who directed an ambush on 5 June against a Pakistani patrol, resulting in 24 peacekeepers being killed. The UN reacted with United Nations Security Council resolution 837 which mandated the apprehension of the responsible parties. The Rangers and Delta Force remained under the operational and tactical control of the Commander of CENTCOM's, U.S. Joint Forces Command, MG William Garrison.²³ He reported through CENTCOM to the U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM).

This arrangement led to three different chains of command for U.S. forces. This unusual command structure derived from the U.S. objectives for UNOSOM II - to keep U.S. forces under U.S. operational control, to reduce visibility of U.S. combat forces and to eliminate perceptions that U.S. forces were under UN command.²⁴

After the fateful Ranger operation of 3-4 October 1993, leading to eighteen American deaths and seventy-five wounded, the already complicated U.S. command structure in Somalia worsened. The U.S. sent additional forces to Somalia to protect the troops in country. These forces were placed under the command of a Joint Task Force (JTF). JTF Somalia was OPCON to CENTCOM, and was placed TACON to USFORSOM. This arrangement's intent was to take advantage of MG Montgomery's position as Deputy Force Commander.

From the UN's perspective, command and control arrangements for UNOSOM II were straightforward. The Security Council established policy and political direction for Somalia. The Under Secretary General for Peacekeeping and the SRSG implemented the Security Council's Resolutions. Operational and tactical decisions were left to the Force Commander. He controlled all national contingents down to brigade level, exercising operational and tactical control.²⁵ Unfortunately, implementation of this structure on the ground was not as easy as it seemed in theory.

The Force Commander, Turkish Lieutenant General (LTG) Bir, found it difficult to have timely execution of orders. For instance, in June 1993, LTG Bir directed Pakistani and Italian forces to patrol in and around Mogadishu. He intended to place the Italian force under TACON to the Pakistani Brigade Commander who controlled the area of operations. The Italian commander did not like the command arrangement or the fact that the mission was

out of the Italian area of operations. Rome's approval was sought and given for TACON of Italian forces, which reinforced the point that the Italian force was under the command of the Italian Force Commander and not the UN Force Commander.²⁶

LTG Bir expressed his concern with the national interference on several occasions. He cited his "lack of command authority over assigned forces as the most significant limitation of this operation or any other organized under Chapter VII."²⁷

The UN relied on consensus for command and control during UNOSOM II. This technique is more suited for Chapter VI operations than for Chapter VII operations. Given national concerns, consensus will be extremely hard to achieve in Chapter VII operation which may involve combat.

The U.S. was its own worst enemy in terms of command and control during UNOSOM II. The complicated U.S. command and control structure had adverse effects throughout the operation. The UN Force Commander had little to no control over U.S. forces. He had similar problems with other contingents, however, the size and capability of the U.S. contingent created a significant void in the overall capacity of the UN force. Additionally, parallel chains of command created a lack of unity of effort within the U.S. structure.

In a fluid, hostile environment, such as Somalia, the commander's ability to move forces and mass resources quickly is imperative for success. Neither LTG Bir nor MG Montgomery

possessed this responsiveness due to complicated command and control arrangements. Neither consensus nor unity of command were ever achieved. The UNOSOM II operation demonstrates the danger of allowing political concerns to affect command and control structures in the field.

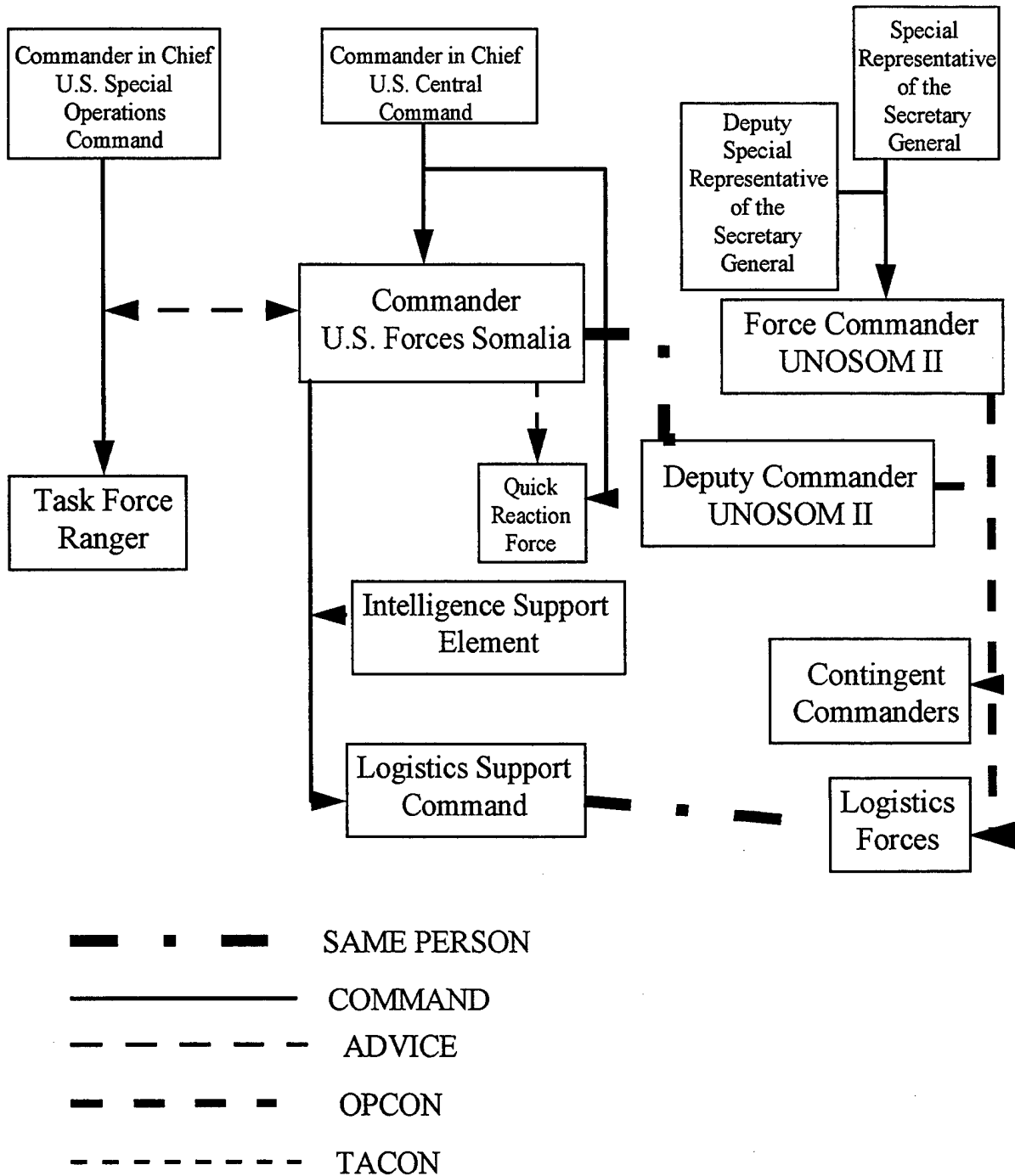


Figure 1 - UNOSOM II Command Relationships²⁸

HAITI

From a UN operational perspective the 1994 UN Mission in Haiti (UNMIH) was one of the most fruitful. Extensive preparation, uncluttered lines of command and decisive leadership are some of the characteristics attributed to the success of this mission. The UNMIH operation is unique in that a U.S. Army general held the key position of UN Force Commander. This operation may provide a glimpse into how future U.S. participation with the UN in peace operations can best serve U.S. and international security interests.

President Jean-Bertrand Aristide was elected President of Haiti in December 1990. After serving seven months a military coup forced him to flee Haiti in September 1991. He sought refuge in Washington and began a campaign to return as the legitimate Haitian leader. The de facto government of Haiti resisted economic and political pressures to restore President Aristide to power until the regime was threatened with military invasion by a U.S. led multinational force (MNF). Under the auspices of the UN, this Chapter VII operation paved the way for UNMIH.²⁹

The MNF accomplished its objective to establish a "secure and stable environment" very quickly.³⁰ The MNF consisted of approximately 20,000 soldiers from 30 countries. The largest contribution came from the U.S. with 18,000 soldiers and the majority of equipment and resources.³¹ Last minute negotiations,

precluded a forceful entry and the MNF quickly established its presence throughout Haiti.

The UN plan called for the MNF to create stable conditions and build the framework for the transition to UNMIH, a more permanent peace force. UN Security Council Resolution 940 established UNMIH. This mandate directed a Chapter VII operation and stated the conditions under which a transition to UNMIH, a Chapter VI mission, would occur. Significantly, the mandate directed that the MNF establish a secure environment by using "all necessary means."³² The UNMIH force was set at 6000 and was tasked to maintain the conditions established by the MNF. The mandate also provided for an UNMIH advance team to accompany the MNF to assist with planning for the composition of the UNMIH force and its transition with the MNF.³³ This advanced team of administrative, military, UN observers and civil police planning elements assumed its responsibilities fully six months before UNMIH commenced its operation.³⁴

The command structure for UNMIH also began to assemble months in advance of its mission. An American, Major General (MG) Joseph W. Kinzer, became the UN Force Commander. MG Kinzer's U.S. boss was the Commander in Chief, U.S. Atlantic Command (CINCUSACOM), previously responsible for the U.S. led MNF and for the transition to UNMIH. This proved to be particularly beneficial during the planning and transition phases of the UNMIH operation.

Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi was the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) for UNMIH. MG Kinzer quickly established a sound relationship with the Algerian diplomat. Not only the focal point for the military component of the UN, the Ambassador also coordinated with civilian agencies and the Government of Haiti.

Colonel Bill Fulton, a Canadian, served as Chief of Staff for UNMIH. He was a valuable resource when dealing with UN agencies and provided much needed continuity later when Canada assumed the lead for UNMIH from the U.S. in late 1995. Additionally, Colonel Fulton led the UN Advanced Team, giving him six months of experience in the UNMIH area of operations prior to launching the mission.³⁵ MG Kinzer relied heavily on his deputy U.S. Force Commander for liaison with the U.S. Ambassador to Haiti. As both UN Force Commander and U.S. Force Commander, MG Kinzer wished to avoid any impression of being biased in his approach to the mission.³⁶

The UNMIH Advanced Team used the pre-mission period to build unity of effort and a sound plan. Consensus was built among TCNs with visits by MG Kinzer and Ambassador Brahimi to UN Headquarters in New York in order to meet with national representatives. "This joint appearance by the top leaders of the mission served to reassure contributing nations about the employment of their forces in the mission."³⁷

MG Kinzer also used this time to ensure that the UNMIH staff was trained before they assumed the mission.³⁸ A UNDPKO initiative funded a six day training session in Port-au-Prince conducted by the staff of the U.S. Army's Battle Command Training Program (BCTP) from Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Additionally, team building seminars were conducted which improved the staff's mission preparedness.³⁹

MG Kinzer's staff, with SRSG and UN Headquarters approval, established specific planning criteria for the conditions necessary to transition the MNF with UNMIH. The criteria included a UN approved budget, a secure and stable environment, 95% of forces present in theater, 85% of the staff present and trained, a Quick Reaction Force (QRF) in place, and a functioning logistics system.⁴⁰ Additionally, he identified several tenets for the success of UNMIH, including "unity of command."⁴¹ Toward that goal, MG Kinzer worked to retain the MNF US Special Operations Force (SOF) capability for the UNMIH operation, allowing him a valuable resource for economy of force operations.⁴² This paid great dividends regarding command and control. This SOF capability was also used to communicate and follow-up orders to non-U.S. contingents, thus ensuring understanding and compliance.

MG Kinzer developed an operational concept suitable for the small UNMIH force. He divided the nine political boundaries into six operational zones. A UN contingent commander was responsible

for all activity and forces within each zone. The zone commanders enjoyed great latitude for zone security which afforded them increased flexibility.⁴³

Although a transition between the MNF and UNMIH was to occur by December 1994, some of the transition criteria were still not fully met by January 1995. The most important factor absent was a secure and stable environment in Haiti. In January 1995, however, the UNSC passed Resolution 975 extending UNMIH's mandate by six months and directing "that the transition from the MNF to UNMIH be completed by 31 March 1995."⁴⁴

The MNF transition to UNMIH went well due to the extensive UNMIH planning and the close cooperation between the advance team and the MNF staff. Most importantly, the majority of the MNF contracts and logistics were left in place for UNMIH. Additionally, seventy percent of the forces for UNMIH came from the MNF. They were already on the ground and fully committed to the mission. By the end of March UNMIH had approximately 6,000 military and 800 civilian and political personnel. Most of the civilian personnel were Civilian Police (CIVPOL) advisors to the Haitian police force.⁴⁵

UNMIH Command relationships for the military followed the usual UN model; OPCON was relinquished to the UN but TCN national authorities retained command of their contingents. This arrangement proved successful because MG Kinzer's continuing efforts to build consensus. He worked hard in his role as a

multinational Force Commander. His participation in events such as contingent's national holiday celebrations fostered a cohesive force. Consequently, no contingent commander would refuse to obey an order or would seek approval from a national authority during the UNMIH operation. Fortunately, a major crisis never developed during MG Kinzer's tenure as Force Commander. Most likely, if a serious situation had developed, the UNMIH military forces would have responded as a cohesive team with unity of purpose.

Concluding the mandate's third extension in December 1995, UNMIH started planning and executing the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Haiti. After a successful hand-off to the Canadians, the final U.S. contingent departed Haiti in April 1996.⁴⁶

Many reasons account for UNMIH success. One was the absence of armed resistance toward the MNF and UNMIH. This prevented national authorities from becoming preoccupied with the safety of their contingents. Additionally, close ties among CINCUSACOM, the MNF and UNMIH facilitated a well planned and executed transition. Dedicated training, preparation and team building prior to deployment were most fortunate. Clear contingent lines of command and communications ensured complete understanding of orders and the commander's intent for field operations. Another important factor was unwavering U.S. commitment to Washington's interest in the region. U.S. willingness to lead and resource the MNF and then support UNMIH with forces and leadership were key.

Other factors which contributed to the efficiency of the UNMIH operation included; UNDPKO operational oversight, command and control and logistics structures left in place from the MNF and U.S. SOF capabilities. A less tangible factor was the breadth of leadership of the SRSG, Ambassador Brahimi which extended beyond the military component of the mission to create and direct a very talented, diverse team. For instance, the Chief Administrative Officer for the operation, Mr. Seraydarian, brought much talent and more than twenty years of experience to Ambassador Brahimi's team. Mr. Seraydarian was responsible for the UNMIH budget and he personally selected and recruited key members of the mission's civilian staff. He knew the UN system, how much reform the field operations could bear and how to make that system work to UNMIH's benefit.⁴⁷

Finally, MG Kinzer's ability to gain unity of effort from the entire UN military force was critical. This cohesion extended to the mission's civilian component through Mr. Brahimi, the SRSG. This mutually supporting relationship between MG Kinzer and Ambassador Brahimi must not be understated.

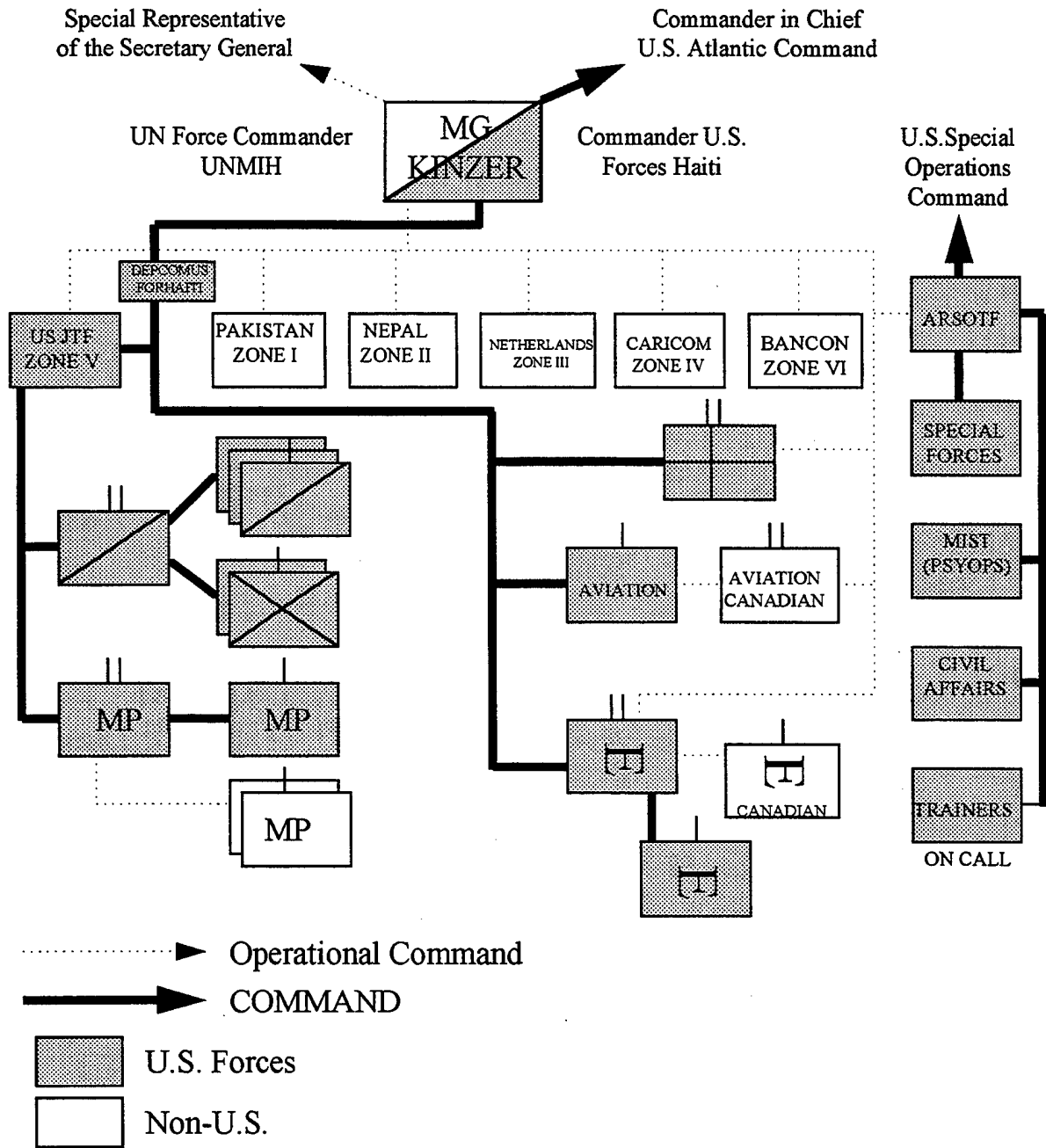


Figure 2 - UNMIH Command Relationships⁴⁸

MACEDONIA

The UN mission in Macedonia was the first preventive deployment for the organization. The UN considers the mission successful because Macedonia has remained relatively stable since the operation's inception. An examination of this operation provides insight into the challenges of a lengthy deployment involving U.S. soldiers under operational control (OPCON) to the UN. Macedonia provides the operational basis for the author's contention that current U.S. policy for the command and control of U.S. forces serving under the operational control of the UN is too restrictive.

On 11 December 1992, Security Council Resolution 795 was passed establishing the mission in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) after President Gligorov, the FYROM President, asked the UN to intervene.⁴⁹ The mission attempted to prevent the Bosnian conflict from spreading south. Initially a composite Nordic battalion deployed under the mandate and began patrolling the FYROM borders with Serbia and Albania.⁵⁰

In 1993, President Clinton agreed to support the UN in its Chapter VI mission to FYROM. The President received pressure from European allies to send soldiers to Bosnia in support of the UN mission there. With the deployment of U.S. soldiers to FYROM, the President hoped to show U.S. resolve toward containing the Bosnian war.⁵¹

The mission's command arrangements have undergone several changes over the years.⁵² The current mission, called the UN Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP), consists of one U.S. battalion arrayed along the Serbian and Bulgarian borders, and a Nordic battalion consisting of soldiers from Denmark, Finland, Sweden and Norway arrayed along the Albanian and Serbian border. The U.S. battalion is under OPCON to a Nordic UN Force Commander.⁵³ The Nordic battalion is also OPCON to the same UN Force Commander; however, he exercises much more control over its chain of command.

In addition to its UN chain, the U.S. battalion reports to the Commander in Chief, U.S. European Command through Headquarters, U.S. Army Europe for operational and force protection matters. The U.S. Army's V Corps and the battalion's parent Brigade Headquarters in Germany exert some influence over the U.S. battalion, mainly in the area of logistics.

Fortunately, few serious incidents have occurred along the relatively quiet border areas. However, constant friction exists between the UNPREDEP chain of command and its U.S. counterpart concerning the degree of control the UN actually exerts over the U.S. battalion.⁵⁴ Two incidents highlight the inherent problems with the current command arrangements.

The first occurred on 14 June 1994 in the U.S. sector on "Hilltop 1703", known locally as "Cupino Burdo."⁵⁵ Macedonian officials notified the UN command that a Serbian patrol had

occupied the hill inside Macedonian territory. The U.S. chain of command refused UN orders to send a patrol to investigate; however, the U.S. chain of command eventually ordered a temporary Observation Post (OP) on a nearby hilltop. This delay by the U.S. chain of command allowed the situation to escalate. The FYROM government sent an elite unit to confront the Serbs. The UN Force Commander, facing potential hostilities, negotiated a settlement with both governments which established an OP and small UN buffer zone around the hilltop. This incident caused U.S. soldiers to be restricted by their U.S. chain of command from occupying the OP and patrolling the area. The Nordic battalion manned the OP, in the middle of the U.S. sector, until June 1995. The two hour drive to the OP created a tremendous operational strain on the Nordic battalion. Additionally, Nordic soldiers occupying an OP in the middle of the U.S. sector was a point of embarrassment for the U.S. soldiers serving in FYROM. Fortunately, repeated requests from UN Headquarters and the support of the U.S. Ambassador to the UN, moved the U.S. chain of command to allow U.S. soldiers to reoccupy the OP in June of 1995.⁵⁶

The second major incident occurred on 3 October 1995 when an assassination attempt against President Gligorov left the Macedonian President critically wounded and the country in turmoil for several days. Following U.S. military orders, that contradicted the UN Force Commander, the U.S. battalion immediately stopped all border patrols and increased force

protection measures in all areas. The U.S. battalion provided medical, communication and transportation support to the stricken President. Additionally, contrary to UN orders, an armed force from the U.S. battalion was sent to President Gligorov's location to ensure the protection of U.S. medical personnel. From the assassination attempt until the situation stabilized approximately one week later, the U.S. battalion stopped responding to UN command authority.⁵⁷ Much to the discomfort of the UN Force Commander, orders, directives and information flowed almost exclusively through U.S. channels.

The incidents cited above, combined with many less threatening ones, raise the frustration level of the UNPREDEP leadership. UN employment and control constraints exercised over U.S. soldiers during this operation led to very different standards of operations between the U.S. and Nordic battalions.⁵⁸

Trust and confidence also suffer when such incidents occur. The personal relationship between the author and the UN Force Commander was never the same after the U.S. battalion's actions during the period following the assassination attempt against the FYROM President.

U.S. soldiers' performance and professionalism have never been at issue. Repeated UNPREDEP leadership concern centers around the self imposed U.S. force protection standards. These constrain routine U.S. force operations to such an extent, that the UN Force Commander exercises extremely limited operational

capability, even during times when the area of operation is calm.⁵⁹

If the past is instructive, any future significant crisis will cause the UNPREDEP chain of command to rely only on non-U.S. forces to perform UN operations. The U.S. battalion will immediately answer directly back to its U.S. chain for direction. This implies that the UN Force Commander only has half of his assigned force to count on in a crisis. Additionally, since the U.S. battalion will most likely cease patrols, the UN Force Commander would have to spread what little forces remain over his entire area of operations. His ability to mass forces or react to situations in his area of responsibility would diminish. Most significantly, the U.S. relinquishes opportunities to influence actions on the ground and may find itself expending additional, perhaps unnecessary resources to preserve its regional interests.

The U.S. supports the Macedonia mission for many reasons. Among them is its commitment to contain the Balkan war. The presence of U.S. soldiers sends a powerful signal to potential adversaries; however, U.S. command and control policies tend to dilute that signal. U.S. forces in UNPREDEP are seen as unduly cautious and overly concerned with force protection. This perception can reduce their effectiveness while threatening U.S. interest in the operational area.

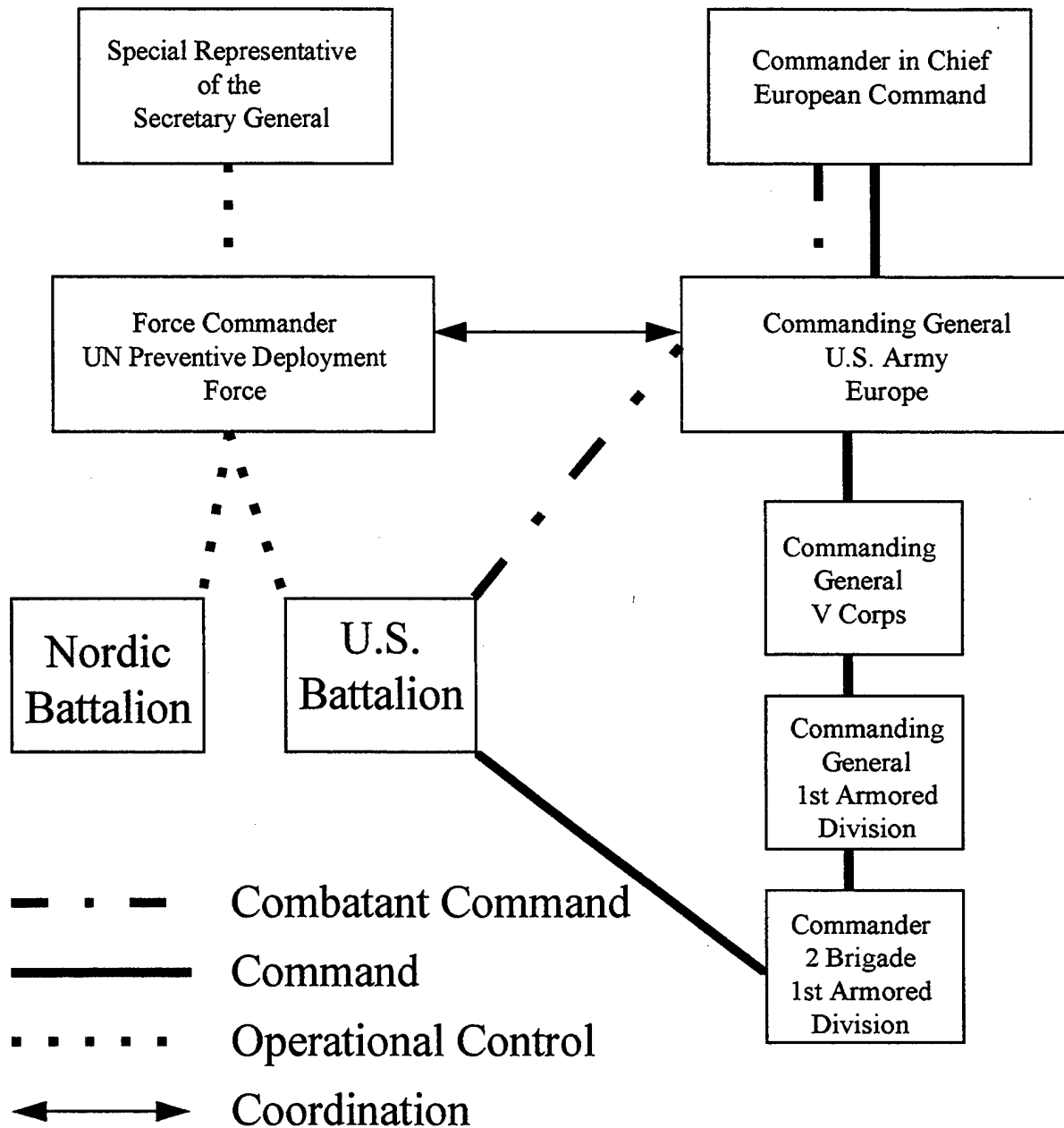


Figure 3 - UNPREDEP Command Relationships⁶⁰

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Two themes emerge from the case studies. The first is that leadership personalities play a major role in UN operations. Given the proper leadership, desire and resources the current command and control arrangements can work, as they did in Haiti.

This doesn't suggest that UN Force Commanders' leadership lacks quality. For instance, the leadership of the UN Force Commander while the author served in Macedonia was excellent. A true professional, he knew his business and the UN system. He was a competent commander in every sense. The problem in Macedonia stems mainly from an overly cautious U.S. chain of command which severely limited UN Force Commander control.

The second theme is that when U.S. and UN interests align closely during an operation, command and control become less of a problem. Unfortunately, when UN interests do not coincide with U.S. interests as in Somalia, command relationships become complex and in some instances unmanageable.

Both the U.S. and UN command and control systems have flaws. Policy, on both sides, is often unclear, unspecific, and open to different and potentially conflicting interpretations. The UN control system, tailored for Chapter VI operations, is cumbersome and relies heavily on consensus. Conversely, the U.S. attempts to relinquish only enough control to gain legitimacy. This cautious approach often complicates an already overly encumbered UN

control structure, as seen in Macedonia. Below are recommendations to improve future peace operations involving U.S. forces under operational control (OPCON) to the UN:

Recommendation #1: Define U.S. Policy more precisely regarding the command and control relationships of U.S. forces participating in UN peace operations. Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 25 doesn't differentiate between command structures for Chapter VI and Chapter VII operations. The U.S. should support Chapter VI operations by placing U.S. forces under OPCON to a mutually agreeable UN Force Commander. The U.S. should lead Chapter VII operations in which it participates, or operate through combat capable regional organizations such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The U.S. would be more willing to subordinate forces to such a regional organization, than to the UN during a Chapter VII operation because the current UN structure isn't sufficiently capable of conducting Chapter VII operations.

This recommendation calls for clarity in command and control structures in UN peace operations. At the moment, PDD 25 does not provide that clarity.

Recommendation #2: The U.S. must assist the UN in developing common terminology for command relationships. OPCON, Command and other terms require specific, commonly agreed upon definitions. These terms must be acceptable to the U.S., the UN, and all Troop Contributing Nations.

Recommendation #3: A pool of UN Force Commanders should be identified and trained for UN operations. The U.S. should assist in this training. Topics should include force protection, rules of engagement and commonly accepted operational methods. This would add some meaning to the PDD 25 term "competent UN Commander."

Recommendation #4: Force protection issues must be studied prior to committing U.S. forces and then reviewed periodically during the operation. This is particularly true when U.S. forces are serving under OPCON to a UN Force Commander. If force protection concerns negate the benefit for having U.S. forces participate in an operation, then the U.S. force shouldn't deploy or it should be withdrawn as soon as possible. Any modification of force protection guidance should be made on a case by case basis, and only after a thorough assessment of the operation. This assessment must be performed by the Regional Commander in Chief's (CINC) staff that exercises Combatant Command (COCOM) over U.S. force participating in the UN operation.

Recommendation #5: Increase the number of experienced military personnel in the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO). An existing UN reform increases the number of military personnel within United Nations, New York. DPKO received much of this needed expertise. The Department, a component of the UN Secretariat, currently provides military advice, not only to the Secretary General but also to the Security Council. In

addition to providing command and control to operations in the field, the Department has assumed many of the duties and responsibilities originally intended for the Military Staff of the Security Council under the UN Charter. Unfortunately, the Department's military augmentees are still not adequate to meet all of its requirements. Additionally, approximately forty countries provide military staffs to the national missions in the UN, however, only ten to twelve of these staffs routinely have peace operations experience.⁶¹ This operational advice and assistance is not sufficient to satisfy the understaffed Department's requirements.

The one DPKO unit critically lacking in experienced personnel is Civilian Police (CIVPOL). Strengthening this office would assist greatly the Department's mission to provide security expertise and advice to the Secretary General and the Security Council.

Recommendation #6: Teach the fundamentals of UN operations and systems earlier in U.S. military professional development. This process should begin in the service school advanced courses and continue through the War Colleges. Often, Captains and Majors are the focal point for the operational integration of U.S. forces into the UN system. A basic knowledge of UN agencies would be beneficial when there is a short notice requirement to support or lead a UN peace operation. Unfortunately, the Training and

Doctrine Command (TRADOC) currently does not see the need to teach UN operations in core officer advanced course classes.

The current U.S. system of "just in time" training, provided just prior to a deployment, is indeed cost effective. However, only the small group of officers which actually deploy receive the training. All U.S. officers should have a fundamental understanding of UN operations. This would require a small investment in our education system. This education would complement additional training received just prior to deploying for a UN peace operation.

Although not a recommendation, but in many ways the most important factor, is the issue of resolve. The best command and control system will falter if the U.S. Government isn't fully committed to supporting the UN during an operation. Hard decisions must be made before American lives are committed; but once committed there can be no softening of resolve.

A new Presidential Decision Directive, PDD 56, signed in May 1997, should increase U.S. resolve by improving interagency coordination, planning, and training. The Directive intends to "achieve unity of effort among U.S. Government agencies and international organizations engaged in complex contingency operations."⁶² At face value, the PDD should ensure most of the hard questions and likely contingencies are thought through and rehearsed in advance of deploying soldiers. The Directive attempts to apply lessons learned from past peace operations.

Presidential Decision Directive 56 is a step in the right direction; however, time will tell if this new management tool will correct past deficiencies and stiffen U.S. resolve in the process.

Word Count: 6,436

ENDNOTES

¹ President of the United States, A National Security Strategy for a New Century (Washington: The White House, May 1997), 12.

² Department of Defense, Doctrine for Joint Operations, Joint Publication 3-0 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, 1 February 1995), GL-10. This Joint Publication gives the following definition of **Operational Control (OPCON)**: "transferable command authority that may be exercised by commanders at any echelon at or below the level of combatant command. Operational control is inherent in combatant command (command authority). Operational control may be delegated and is the authority to perform those functions of command over subordinate forces involving organizing and employing commands and forces, assigning tasks, designating objectives, and giving authoritative direction necessary to accomplish the mission. Operational control includes authoritative direction over all aspects of military operations and joint training necessary to accomplish missions assigned to the command. Operational control should be exercised through the commanders of subordinate organizations. Normally this authority is exercised through subordinate joint force commanders and Service and/or functional component commanders. Operational control normally provides full authority to organize commands and forces and to employ those forces as the commander in operational control considers necessary to accomplish assigned missions. Operational control does not, in and of itself, include authoritative direction for logistics or matters of administration, discipline, internal organization, or unit training."

³ Kenneth Allard, Somalia Operations; Lessons Learned (Washington: National Defense University Press, January 1995), 34.

⁴ Ibid., 4.

⁵ National Security Council, "Executive Summary," Presidential Decision Directive 25: Multilateral Peace Operations (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Security Council, 3 May 1994).

⁶ Allard, 5.

⁷ National Security Council, "Executive Summary," Presidential Decision Directive 25: Multilateral Peace Operations.

⁸ Department of Defense, Doctrine for Joint Operations, GL-4. This Joint Publication gives the following definition of **Combatant Command (command authority)**: "nontransferable command

authority established by title 10 ("Armed Forces"), United States Code, section 164, exercised only by commanders of unified or specified commands unless otherwise directed by the President or the Secretary of Defense. Combatant command (command authority) cannot be delegated and is the authority of a combatant commander to perform those functions of command over assigned forces involving organizing and employing commands and forces, assigning tasks, designating objectives, and giving authoritative direction over all aspects of military operations, joint training, logistics necessary to accomplish the missions assigned to the command. Combatant command (command authority) should be exercised through the commanders of subordinate organizations. Normally this authority is exercised through subordinate joint force commanders and Service and /or functional component commanders. Combatant command (command authority) provides full authority to organize and employ commands and forces as the combatant commander considers necessary to accomplish assigned missions. Operational control is inherent in combatant command."

⁹ Ibid., GL-10.

¹⁰ National Security Council, "Executive Summary," Presidential Decision Directive 25: Multilateral Peace Operations. PDD 25 adds important caveats: "If it is to our advantage to place U.S. forces under the operational control of a UN commander, the fundamental elements of U.S. command still apply. U.S. commanders will maintain the capability to report separately to higher U.S. military authorities, as well as the UN commander. Commanders of U.S. military units participating in UN operations will refer to higher U.S. authorities orders that are illegal under U.S. or international law, or are outside the mandate of the mission to which the U.S. agreed with the UN, if they are unable to resolve the matter with the UN commander."

¹¹ Secretary-General of the United Nations, Report on Command and Control of United Nations Peace-Keeping Operations, Report Number A/49/681, (New York: General Assembly of the United Nations, 21 November 1994), 1.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Faribor L. Mokhtari, ed., Peacemaking, Peacekeeping and Coalition Warfare: The Future Role of the United Nations (Washington: National Defense University, Fort McNair, 1994), 48.

¹⁴ Walter Gary Sharpe, Sr., ed., UN Peace Operations (New York: American Heritage Publishing Group, 1995), 87.

¹⁵ National Defense Research Institute, Soldiers for Peace, Critical Operational Issues (Santa Monica: Published by RAND, 1996), 72.

¹⁶ Sharpe, 88.

¹⁷ United Nations, United Nations Military Observer Handout (New York: 1995), not in the possession of the author, gives the following definition of **United Nations Operational Control (UN OPCON)**: "authority granted to a commander to direct forces assigned so the commander may accomplish specific missions or tasks which are usually limited by function, time, or location (or combination thereof) to deployed units concerned, and to retain or assign tactical control of those units. It does not, in and of itself, include responsibility for administration and logistical support."

¹⁸ Allard, 13-14.

¹⁹ Ibid., 19.

²⁰ Department of Defense, Doctrine for Joint Operations, GL-12. This Joint Publication gives the following definition of **Tactical Control (TACON)**: "command authority over assigned or attached forces made available for tasking, that is limited to the detailed and usually, local direction and control of movements or maneuvers necessary to accomplish missions or tasks assigned. Tactical control is inherent in operational control. Tactical control may be delegated to, and exercised at any level at or below the level of combatant command."

²¹ William J. Durch, UN Peacekeeping, American Policy, and the Uncivil Wars of the 1990s (New York: St. Martin's Press, December 1996), 335-336.

²² Ibid., 339.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Allard, 57.

²⁵ USFORSOM (SOMALIA), After Action Report - Draft Version IV (PA: Carlisle, Military History Institute, November 1996) Vol. I, 8-7.

²⁶ Ibid., 8-7 - 8-8.

²⁷ Allard, 34.

²⁸ Durch., 337.

²⁹ U.S. Army Peacekeeping Institute, Success In Peacekeeping, United Nations Mission in Haiti: The Military Perspective (Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army Peacekeeping Institute, 1996), 2.

³⁰ John T. Fishel, "Old Principles, New Realities," Military Review, (July-August 1997), 28.

³¹ Lesson notes, in the possession of the author, from the United States Army Peacekeeping Institute, Carlisle Barracks, PA.

³² Ibid.

³³ U.S. Army Peacekeeping Institute, Success In Peacekeeping, United Nations Mission in Haiti: The Military Perspective, 2-3.

³⁴ Mark Walsh, conversation with author, Carlisle Barracks, PA, United States Army Peacekeeping Institute, 19 December 1997, cited with permission of Professor Walsh.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Fishel, 29.

³⁷ U.S. Army Peacekeeping Institute, Success In Peacekeeping, United Nations Mission in Haiti: The Military Perspective, 6.

³⁸ Ibid., 3.

³⁹ Ibid., 3-4.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 3.

⁴¹ Fishel, 28.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ U.S. Army Peacekeeping Institute, Success In Peacekeeping, United Nations Mission in Haiti: The Military Perspective, 13.

⁴⁴ Fishel, 28.

⁴⁵ U.S. Army Peacekeeping Institute, Success In Peacekeeping, United Nations Mission in Haiti: The Military Perspective, 5.

⁴⁶ Fishel, 29.

⁴⁷ Walsh, conversation with author.

⁴⁸ U.S. Army Peacekeeping Institute, Success In Peacekeeping, United Nations Mission in Haiti: The Military Perspective, 6.

⁴⁹ United Nations Security Council, "Resolution 795," (New York, United Nations Headquarters, 11 December 1992) S/RES/795.

⁵⁰ The President of the United States, "Letter to Congressional Leaders on the Former Republic of Macedonia," Washington D.C., 9 July 1993.

⁵¹ Congressional Research Service, Issue Brief, Bosnia and Macedonia: U.S. Military Operations, prepared by Steven R. Bowman, (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 8 June 1995), 12.

⁵² United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia - UNPREDEP, http://www.un.org/Depts/DPKO/Missions/unpred_b.htm; Internet; accessed on 15 October 1995. The mission was established in December 1992 as part of the UNPROFOR mission in the Former Yugoslavia. On 31 March 1995, the Security Council decided to make FYROM a separate operation. It retained the same mandate but was given the name of UN Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP).

⁵³ Ibid., The current Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) for UNPREDEP is Mr. Henryk Sokalski (Poland). The Force Commander is Brigadier General Bent Soehnemann (Denmark) who assumed his duties on 3 June 1997.

⁵⁴ The issue of how close U.S. patrols are permitted to come to UN Line (a UN administrative control measure which depicts the limit of advance for UN patrols between Serbia and Macedonia) is one example of the different approaches to the mission taken by the U.S. and the UN chains of command. The U.S. position has varied between 1000 to 300 meters south of the line. The UN position is that patrols are authorized up to the line. The Nordic battalion patrols to the limits of the UN line. Other issues include the use of U.S. helicopters and QRF assets, attempts to shift U.S. OPs out of the agreed U.S. sector and night patrols.

⁵⁵ Howard F. Kuenning, "Come Over to Macedonia and Help Us", (Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College, 15 April 1996), 14.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 14-15.

⁵⁷ The author commanded the U.S. battalion in UNPREDEP during the time period the assassination attempt against the Macedonian President occurred.

⁵⁸ The Nordic battalion is much more aggressive in its patrolling activities than the U.S. battalion. The Nordic soldiers investigate incidents along the border; whereas, the U.S. chain of command takes extraordinary measures not to make contact with the parties. The U.S. interprets its mission literally only to observe from a distance and report. The issue of force protection is the driving factor for this approach. There are several dividends to the aggressive patrolling techniques of the Nordic Battalion. The Nordic soldiers know the border area much better than their American counterparts. Additionally, when contact is made with a patrol from Serbia, it is seen as a routine event. The Nordic soldiers are used to making contact along the border. This is not the case in the American sector. Contact with Serbs in the American sector, is seen as an increase of Serbian border activity. This usually leads to a perception of increased tension in the area of operations by the U.S. chain of command.

⁵⁹ Kuenning, 25.

⁶⁰ The effect of having a Combatant Command relationship through the Commander of U.S. Army Europe to the Commander in Chief (CINC) of European Command was to have a much more direct line to the CINC. He received daily reports and communicated with the U.S. Ambassador in Macedonia and the UNPREDEP leadership on a routine basis. Additionally, the chain of command at the Corps, Division and Brigade levels was not involved to a great degree in the operational business of the mission. The end result of this relationship was that in a matter of minutes a minor incident on the ground in Macedonia could be an issue with the CINC.

⁶¹ Mark Walsh, conversation with author, Carlisle Barracks, PA, United States Army Peacekeeping Institute, 9 January 1998, cited with permission of Professor Walsh.

⁶² White Paper, "The Clinton Administration's Policy on Managing Complex Contingency Operations: Presidential Decision Directive - 56," May 1997, 1. Provided to the author by the U.S. Army Peacekeeping Institute, Carlisle Barracks, PA.

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