Mr. David F. Davis
Director, Peace Operations Policy Program
George Mason University

Peace Operations and the UN: Past, Current and Future

Notes:
Below are informal notes taken by a JHU/APL staff member at the Seminar.

Mr. Davis began by providing some historical perspective on peace operations: In last 100 years or so, the US Army has been deployed overseas about 1,000 times. Only 10 cases could be considered full scale wars. The other 990 were what are now called non-traditional or irregular. In fact, the US has been involved in “irregular wars” since its earliest beginnings. At one time 20% of the US federal budget was being paid to the Barbary Pirates. Then it was decided that the relatively new US Navy would take action against the pirates. Using various types of raids and strikes they were eventually successful. Bottom line: the terms non-traditional and irregular are not the right words to be using for today’s military operations.

Topics for the seminar include:
- The establishment of the United Nations
- Peacekeeping’s path
- The Charter of the United Nations
- Current Organization
- What is a Peace Operation?

In 1942 President Roosevelt declared a war was being pursued by the “United Nations”
- In 1944 a proposal for the UN organization was drafted at Dumbarton Oaks
- Shortly thereafter, a conference in San Francisco made only a few changes and additions to the draft to create the UN Charter

The original purpose of the UN was to fight “our common wars”
- Therefore, the UN charter includes a Military Staff Committee
  - It was supposed to build an army to fight the next war
  - Never happened because of the complications of the Cold War
  - Korea involved the UN somewhat but with several missteps
- Today’s Military Staff Committee made up of representatives from the 5 Permanent Security Council countries
  - They do not now plan any wars or anything else beyond farewell get-togethers
PAST UN OPERATIONS

Three slides in the presentation list nearly all of the peace-related operations that the UN has been involved in since its beginning. (Those listed in yellow and orange are still underway.)

- About the first was set in Jerusalem in 1948 and is still going on
- A military observer force sent to the Indian/Pakistani border in 1949 is still there
- A Special Committee on the Balkans covered the Greek/Bulgarian disputes even before the deployment to Jerusalem but it did end
- Bottom line: There has been very little change in where the world has had problems over 60 years

The 1956 Suez Canal

- It was NOT between Egypt and Israel
- Britain and France decided that Egypt should not be in control of the Canal
  - The US disagreed
- Canadian Lester Pearson, the father of peace-keeping, identified the fact that the two sides really did not want to fight each other
  - The UN put lightly armed, impartial military forces between the two sides
  - United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF)
  - Gave the sides a reason not to fight

The region remained unstable, especially when Britain and France brought in their ally, Israel

- June 1967 – War between Israel and Egypt
  - Egypt went to UN and wanted UNEF to leave
  - Some portion did leave
- Eventually there was the UNEF II
  - Mostly in the Sinai Peninsula
  - Remained there until the Camp David Accords in 1979
  - That agreement helped for a short while
- Instead of UNEF III, a non-UN peacekeeping force has been there since 1979
  - Involves US forces but is commanded by non-US officers
  - Despite this precedence controversies continue to come up about US troops serving under non-US control
- Only from 1967 to 1973 was there no peacekeeping organization in the region

In Lebanon there has been the UN Interim Force (UNIFL) since 1978

- Also have the UN Disengagement Observers Force in the Golan Heights (not on presentation list)
- These usually involve only one or two US officers at a time
- One US officer was captured and killed (ed. note: COL Rich Higgins, USMC)

Summary: There are two types of UN peacekeeping forces

- Lightly-armed, impartial forces placed between two sides of a conflict
  - There by agreement of all parties
- Lightly- or un-armed observers who only observe and report
  - No interactions with either military force or the population
- Exception: Belgium’s withdrawal from the Congo
  - A major logistics effort – all US C-130s were involved
UN forces actually maneuvered in the field against an enemy
Lasted only through 1964

US is usually involved in the logistics / command and control / intelligence support of UN efforts but the US usually does not send that many troops

In the 1970s and 80s there were many new UN peacekeeping activities
- Went more into Africa
  - Different opportunities for peacekeeping
  - UN verification missions in Angola occurred when the Cubans were pulling out
- Began using Transitional Assistance Group
  - Activities that the UN can do for a country beyond just military security
  - Police were brought into the Congo since the country had very few
    - More toward personal security for leadership
    - Had used only large disengagement zones before this
  - After the end of the Cold War, UN did more with South America

At one point peacekeepers believed all they needed to do was to make sure a country could have an election. They have been trying to have one in the Western Sahara since 1991
- Each year there are recommendations to end UN involvement there
- UN continues their work there and elsewhere because it is the only presence the UN has in that area
  - Gives them some way to work with the country

At the end of the Cold War there was general belief that the UN could now do wonderful things in many places around the world
- Had some successes with disengagements
  - So wanted to do more
- Sent a multi-discipline force into Cambodia to work on all the long-standing problems there
  - Involved military / police / public diplomacy / much more
  - People on the ground there worked together despite the lack of formal organizational relationships
  - Result: an election in a country with some security and stability
    - It was still a success five years later
    - Success does not look quite so good at the 10-year mark
- Could see that Yugoslavia was falling apart and felt they could/must do something
  - Much discussion about what UN forces should do
    - Agreed to supply enough security for delivery of humanitarian donations
    - See BBC documentary “Peacekeepers” about Bosnia situation
  - Eventually, the US brokered the Dayton Accords
    - Wanted something other than UN assistance
    - Became a NATO problem
- There was a Western/Security Council gestalt to “do something”
  - Mostly US, UK, France, Germany, Japan were involved pushing to “fix things”
  - Even Russia was willing to help
There was increased enthusiasm to go to Somalia to “save the people” and bring aid
- Did start out providing aid but grew into a mandate for doing more
- Much of the work of trying to broker deals among the combatants was actually carried out by the UN Secretary General himself
- When things went wrong in Somalia, the military learned the lesson that they should not allow civilians to determine what they should be doing
  - Basic need: Avoid mission creep
  - Carried concepts to Bosnia where there was a substantial wall built between the civilian and military forces
- Can see this “wall” built into the Dayton Accords
  - Designed to provide deconfliction between civil and military authorities
- When UN forces were sent to Haiti, the ship was met by combatants holding signs that said “Remember Mogadishu,” and the ship left without unloading troops
  - In Haiti the UN learned the importance of using Special Forces to stabilize a situation – more for their cultural awareness than pure military skills
  - First time that troops other than regular infantry forces were used
  - Took this concept back to Bosnia
- UN forces seemed to forget all these lessons in Rawanda
- Some minor efforts did go well

By the time of the 4th iteration of the UN forces under the Dayton Accords, there was a recognition that all elements needed to talk to each other
- Must be able to work together
- Concept was written into the plans for Kosovo

In West Africa US and international forces have been there for a long time
- Sometimes they back one side and sometimes the other
- Sometimes they pick the winners and sometimes the losers
- It is a complex, resource-driven conflict
  - The problem may be becoming approachable
  - There has been a rediscovery of the value of integrating the civil and military efforts

The international community is trying to learn how to bring peace to trouble regions
- It is hard to do
- Some lessons have been learned – many times

**Current Operations**

Information on current UN peace operations can be found on the UN website
- Some operations are actually peace-building rather than peace-keeping
- Operations in Afghanistan are being handled by NATO with Provincial Reconstruction Teams

What in the UN Charter allows the UN to act in these capacities?
- Chapter 6 permits only talking, recommending, investigating – not doing
Chapter 7 says that if the Chapter 6 actions do not work then, the UN can try more active measures such as embargoes
  - Article 42 specifically permits blockades which are acts of war
Chapter 8 gives regional organizations the authority to act

Under the UN Charter only Chapter 7 provides authority for UN forces to enter sovereign states
  - Some elements of peace-building are mentioned elsewhere
  - Any country can ask for help
  - UN wants the consent of all parties before it goes in
    - There must be a recognized government for that to happen
  - Chapter 7 does not require consent

The chart below shows where there are current UN operations
  - Charts in the presentation provide data on the growing numbers of UN operations and the growing size of the forces involved
  - While the number of soldiers is increasing, US soldiers are not generally involved
  - US is the largest donor to the cost of operations
  - There is a large difference between which countries carry out the operations and which countries pay for them

UN Peacekeeping Organization

A Department of Peacekeeping was recently established
  - Department of Political Affairs previously handled direction of peacekeeping forces
  - Management departments handled the logistics issues
The Department of Field Services handled personnel and related matters
- A representative of the Secretary General is in charge of the military and police related functions
- Problems persist: Force commanders cannot fly anywhere without someone else making the decision to allow them to

Peace Operations Tasks

The Sarajevo Street Corner shows the complexity of the tasks involved
- 15-20 different military uniforms
- 15 men in 3-piece suits
- Several other groups of interested parties wearing various versions of Birkenstocks
- Police forces both local and foreign
- Many NGOs (800 were working in Bosnia)
  - Some are worldwide like OXFAM or Red Cross
  - Some are specialized groups such as Clowns without Borders who cared for traumatized children and did a good job at it
  - Usually NGOs work with their own funding so will not listen to directions from anyone else
  - Some may be funded by governments and basically do contract work

There used to be no UN connection with NGOs but relationships have been moving up a scale:
- Ignorance
- Awareness
- Deconfliction
- Coordination (some NGOs would consider this subordination)
- Cooperation
- Collaboration

The US military has mostly reached the Deconfliction stage

Four major types of peace operations are being carried out by two major groups (Charts in the presentation provide views on how these tasks work together)

- Peacemaking
- Peacebuilding – may include activities like building up a country’s rule of law / capacity-building / establishing a new government
  - Could include such things as developing a ministry of defense from scratch for Bosnia
  - Usually civilians do most of this work but the military does some of it, too
- Peacekeeping and Security – all the basic functions and tasks
  - Military must do most of this
  - Non-military elements still involved
    - Could be just providing security for other UN personnel with other tasks
    - Not usually shooting rifles but still engaged in security issues
- Logistical support needed for any of these operations

Chart above provides a very good picture of all the tasks involved that need to be woven together
- All these tasks used to be handled separately and in parallel ways
- Eventually those involved saw reasons to go beyond the Awareness stage
- Learned the lesson of integration many times over
- UN now has integrated mission groups
QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION

Training issues
US does most of the training and dramatic improvements have been made in the last 5 years
- Army staff could read New York Time articles about a lowly, untrained captain who manages to turn around his area of responsibility by getting the water system running
- Army wanted more such success stories but needed to find way to train officers
- Staff colleges have been slow to take on this task
  - Currently, only electives in such topics
  - Such public works, etc. training needs to be embedded in the course
In much of the Third World, State Department programs handle the training efforts
- May include such things as buying eyeglasses for the great number of soldiers who could not see the targets
- Can still only reach a small number
The UN itself does not do any training
- Does tell trainers what they training they are to do
- Then they come back and “evaluate” the results
- May cover training costs and equipment costs
Training for civil tasks is now only starting to be done by the State Department
- Starting slowly – a few short courses at NDU, etc.
- Non-government civilians are not trained by their organizations
  - They are hired as experts
- For police training – the US has problems with regulations about who can do what
  - Justice Department has some responsibility, programs
  - Funding must come from outside DOJ
- Training is somewhat limited in scope but can vary a great deal and could include:
  - “What are human rights laws all about”
  - “How to survive in a hostile environment”

The concept of role specialization
- Idea may be good but it scares some
- NATO talks about having a Special Advisor Corps
- In Iraq in the early days, few people had any idea about what needed to be done
- One improvement would be to choose more carefully who we send on these missions
- Obviously, there has been some recognition of the need for specialization in the military – otherwise there would have been no US Air Force

Those working in Haiti made the coordination work because of the personalities involved
- Started with the concept of no mission creep – Don’t get involved in election issues
- Representatives would go to conferences and listen about the elections being discussed but would not participate
  - They then were ready to pitch in when it was decided that they should
- This adaptability actually allows cooperation to happen on the ground
  - Concepts on cooperation are not reaching the upper levels of leadership
- Expect to see more changes in the next 6 months
  - USMC civil affairs units are getting very involved in training

Those in the military at least come to these situations with a concept of command and control
Those hired for civil tasks may not have that understanding of working together. Integration of the civil and military sides of operations is not being done by the NSC even though some believe that it should be.

The Project on National Security Reform is investigating ways of reorganizing the government to handle these and national security issues.

Now that so many people are looking at the subject, perhaps something will get done.

There are some advances.

- Previously, non-military stakeholders were *invited* to attend wargames who scenarios had already been written by the military.
- Now some of those stakeholders are being *asked to help with the planning* of the scenarios for wargames.

An Essential Task Matrix has been developed but it is very complex.

- Covers the Interagency – which includes DoD (It is *not* DoD and the Interagency.)
- Decompositional lists are being developed from the matrix.
  - 2,000 to 3,000 items deep
  - Once everything is decomposed then the tasks will be collapsed into a more manageable, coordinated manner.
    - CNA is doing some of the work on this.