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EXERCISE/EXERCICE NEW HORIZON

**CANADIAN MILITARY CONTRIBUTIONS
TO UNITED NATIONS PEACE SUPPORT OPERATIONS**

By/par Maj Gérard Sénéchal

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the evolution of peacekeeping from the traditional to the more complex operations following the end of the Cold War and the trend by which Canada turned away from UN-led Peace Support Operations (PSOs) in favour of NATO. This paper argues that this trend impacted negatively on Canada's influence in the world, in particular as a member of the UN and especially in the context of international peace and security issues. It argues that regional security organizations, such as NATO, do not provide as a legitimate avenue in leading PSOs as the UN, which has the primary mandate for the maintenance of international peace and security. It further suggests that if Canada wants to contribute to the strengthening of the UN, which it considers the multinational organization of choice, it must be able to influence other Member States. However, the amount of influence it can regain will be commensurate to the amount of resources it is willing to commit. The author concludes that for Canada to regain its international influence it must actively pursue an increase in its contribution to UN-led PSOs, even if it has to reduce its military commitments to other international operations.

INTRODUCTION

Canada has a rich and proud history of participation in United Nations (UN) peace support operations since the very inception of the concept itself.¹ These contributions, as Canada played a leadership role in peacekeeping, also greatly contributed to its influence on the world stage. However, according to a recent major study of international politicians, diplomats and thinkers, while “the world appreciates Canada's military contributions to the Balkans and Afghanistan, the country is seen as a bit player in bringing peace to war-torn parts of the world” and as a result it’s “international influence is seen as waning.”² The study suggests that it could make a huge difference in Canada regaining its leadership role and much of its international influence if it were to create “a swift and mobile brigade of peacekeepers ... that could actually get into tough regions quickly and be there for a couple of months at a time.”³ In an interview, the author of the study, Robert Greenhill, a former president of Bombardier Inc., indicated:

It was sobering and exciting. Sobering in the sense that we've had a declining impact over the last 15 years. Exciting, in the sense that with some of the big challenges facing the world today, Canada was seen as being almost unique in its ability to address some of them.⁴

¹Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, “Canada and Peace Support Operations,” <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/peacekeeping/menu-en.asp>; Internet; accessed 30 August 2004. The eruption of conflict in the Middle East in 1956, specifically between Egypt and Israel, prompted Lester B. Pearson, then Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs and later Prime Minister of Canada, to propose the deployment of an international peace force under the UN flag. While the idea of establishing a United Nations presence in areas torn by conflict was not a new idea, the scope of the operation for the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) set it apart from anything that had come before. Military observers were sent to the Middle East to monitor armistice agreements coordinated by the United Nations in 1948-49 and to Kashmir in 1949 to monitor the cease-fire line between India and Pakistan.

²Mike Blanchfield, “Canada a bit player worldwide,” *Edmonton Journal*, (25 January 2005); available from <http://www.canada.com/edmonton/edmontonjournal/news/story.html?id=b23a90c0-8012-4395-a6ad-ce8cf92056bb>; Internet, accessed 26 January 2005.

³*Ibid.*

⁴*Ibid.*

The government did not need this report to realize that Canada's influence was being eroded and it needed to take action to restore it to its former standing. Prime Minister Martin said that much in his reply to the Speech from the Throne on 2 February 2004:

We want for Canada a role of pride and influence in the world . . . Canadians want their country to play a distinctive and independent role in making the world more secure, more peaceful, more co-operative, more open. They want to see Canada's place of pride and influence in the world restored.⁵

While it can be argued that Canada continues to make a substantial contribution to peace support operations (PSOs), the preference in recent years has clearly been to contribute to multi-nationals or NATO-led operations rather than UN-led missions.⁶ This paper will argue that this trend is impacting negatively on Canada's influence in the world, in particular as a member of the UN and especially in the context of international peace and security issues. This paper will advocate that in order to rectify this decline, Canada must actively pursue an increase in its contribution to UN-led PSOs, even if it has to reduce its military commitments to other international operations.

To accomplish this task, this paper will be presented in four parts. First, in order to get a better understanding of the subject under review, the reader will be provided a fundamental appreciation of PSOs. Second, to grasp the changing nature of PSOs, we will examine the operations during the Cold War and how they expended after it. Third, to understand the alternative option to UN-led operations, the involvement in PSOs by regional security organizations and its problematic will be examined. Finally, where Canada stands will be examined and arguments will be presented to demonstrate that contributing to UN-led PSOs

⁵Office of the Prime Minister, Prime Minister Martin reply to the Speech from the Throne on 2 February 2004. Available at <http://pm.gc.ca/eng/news.asp?id=278>; Internet; accessed 27 January 2005.

⁶Steven Edwards, "Pull your weight on world stage, UN to tell Canada," *The Ottawa Citizen*, 7 May 2004, A.4.

would make a significant difference in Canada regaining the international influence it once had and cherished.

PEACE SUPPORT OPERATIONS

In order to properly consider Canada's contribution to PSOs, it is necessary to first briefly examine how the concept itself evolved, what conditions are necessary for their success, how they are authorized and what are Canada's consideration for participation.

The term "peacekeeping" was and continues to be generally used to describe all types of operations from the first UN peacekeeping mission monitoring a ceasefire in the Sinai, to the UN-authorized operation expelling Iraq from Kuwait, to the operations protecting the delivery of humanitarian relief during the civil war in Somalia. However, the nature of peacekeeping has changed considerably, and today a distinction is made between "traditional" and "complex" peacekeeping operations.

Traditional peacekeeping refers to only those operations that meet the principles of consent of the parties, impartiality, and use of force only in self-defence. These operations are largely restricted to the interposition of unarmed observers or lightly armed peacekeepers in a buffer zone established between the warring states. Their objectives are the most constrained of all UN operations, generally limited simply to reporting conditions following a ceasefire achieved by political agreement. Within this general objective, one of the following three specific military tasks is commonly undertaken by UN traditional peacekeeping operations: border or demilitarized zone monitoring; ceasefire, truce, or general armistice agreement monitoring; or supervision of the withdrawal of forces.⁷

⁷Department of National Defence, B-GJ-005-307/FP-030 *Joint Doctrine Manual Peace Support Operations* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2002), 2-3 – 2-4.

On the other hand, complex peacekeeping operations are multi-functional missions in which the military component is only one part of a comprehensive political, diplomatic, humanitarian, and economic effort. While traditional peacekeeping operations are meant to resolve disputes between states, complex peacekeeping operations are most often launched in failed or failing states where unstable intra-state conflicts are taking place. Because of their nature, where it can be difficult to differentiate between the combatants of the different parties to the conflict and as their level of consent maybe uncertain, these operations are generally considerably more aggressive and complex than those of traditional peacekeeping.⁸

However, in the last decade the term Peace Support Operation (PSO) has increasingly become the accepted term that encompasses both traditional and complex peacekeeping operations. For example, following the Somalia Inquiry, the Canadian Forces has adopted this term in developing its Peace Support Operations Joint Doctrine Manual.⁹ PSOs may include peacekeeping and peace enforcement, as well as conflict prevention, peacemaking, peace building and humanitarian operations.

What makes PSOs distinct is their impartial nature. PSOs are neither in support of, nor against a particular party, but are conducted by the equal and fair application of the terms of the mandate to all parties. Rather than trying to achieve a short-term military victory, the multi-functional operations of PSOs are designed to encourage or enforce compliance with the operation's mandate and to create a secure environment in which the civilian elements of the mission and civilian agencies can rebuild the infrastructure necessary to create a self-sustaining peace.¹⁰ The UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, expressed this important function of the

⁸*Ibid.*, 2-4.

⁹*Ibid.*, i.

¹⁰*Ibid.*,2-1.

military component in a PSO in these terms: “Peacekeeping missions can never end wars by themselves. But they do offer the best possible way of ensuring there is a sustainable peace”¹¹

In the conduct of PSOs, mission success requires that the peace support force must be adequately trained, organized, equipped and armed. Meeting these requirements and the effective integration of combat power will greatly contribute in establishing the credibility of the force with the parties and thereby its ability to accomplish its military objectives. A second criterion for success, as noted earlier, is the strict impartiality of the peace support force. Notwithstanding all best efforts, it may very well be necessary to counter charges of partiality that may be raised.¹² Finally, the professional conduct of the peace support force must reinforce all aspects of the conduct of the mission.¹³

As to how PSOs are authorized, it must be stressed that the United Nations is the only internationally recognized organization with the vested authority to uphold international peace and security. This authority comes from the free and equal participation of the Member States and is set out in the Charter of the United Nations. While the United Nations, and primarily the Security Council, has the authority to establish a PSO in accordance with Chapters VI and VII of the Charter¹⁴, it may also decide to endorse operations carried out by regional organizations under Chapter VIII.¹⁵

¹¹Kofi Annan, United Nations press release, 24 May 2004, available from <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2004/sgsm9321.doc.htm>; Internet; accessed 6 February 2005.

¹²Nita Bhalla, “UN bows to Ethiopia over force chief,” *BBC News*, 2 October 2002; available from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/2290319.stm>; Internet; accessed 6 February 2005. The Ethiopian Government in 2002 made such a claim of partiality against the Force Commander of the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), Major-General Patrick Cammaert. General Cammaert was unofficially declared persona non grata by Ethiopia for allegedly having a political bias in favour of Eritrea and requested that he be replaced.

¹³Department of National Defence, B-GJ-005-307/FP-030, 2-1, 2-2, 2-6 and 3-7.

¹⁴United Nations, *Charter of the United Nations*, available from <http://www.un.org/aboutun/charter/index.html>; Internet; accessed 30 August 2004.

¹⁵Department of National Defence, B-GJ-005-307/FP-030, 1-3 – 1-5.

Finally, in considering a potential participation in a PSO, Canada's decision to participate or not is based on guidelines that were first outlined in the 1994 Defence White Paper and takes into account whether:

- the crisis, be it a conflict or humanitarian emergency, poses a serious threat to international security;
- there is a clear, achievable mandate from a competent political authority, such as the Security Council;
- except for enforcement actions, the parties to the conflict have accepted the participation of Canadian personnel in that operation;
- the command, control and co-ordination structure must be appropriate and the concept of operations must be clearly defined;
- the number of personnel and the international composition of the operation are suited for the mandate;
- the operation is adequately funded and has a satisfactory logistical structure;
- a single and identifiable authority must exist;
- the rules of engagement (ROE) must be clear and appropriate for the mission's mandate;
- Canada has the capacity to respond, given its existing multilateral engagements; and
- the risks to Canadians are within reasonable limits.¹⁶

Now that some fundamental aspects of PSOs have been presented, we will now consider how their nature has changed over the years and what have been the resulting effects.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 6-5 – 6-6.

THE CHANGING NATURE OF PSO

Although peacekeeping had not been envisaged when the UN was created in 1945, and consequently was not specifically mentioned in the UN Charter, it emerged during the Cold War era in response to the increasingly antagonistic relationship between the two nuclear-capable superpowers. This situation demanded greater efforts to seek peaceful solutions to disputes and greater co-operation at the international level. Thus, the driving force behind the development of traditional peacekeeping during this period was the interest of the superpowers in ending proxy wars before they were dragged into direct confrontation.¹⁷

With the end of the Cold War in the late 1980s, things changed dramatically. This period was characterized by an unprecedented accord within the Security Council and opened the possibility of UN intervention in internal conflicts, and thus breaching the previously sacred sovereignty principle of traditional operations.¹⁸

As initial successes for complex operations raised confidence in peacekeeping as an effective response to global insecurity, along with the above noted new unity within the Security Council, brought an accompanying sharp rise in the number of missions authorized, and also prompted increasingly ambitious mandates. For instance, between 1988 and 1992 thirteen missions were launched, as many as had been undertaken during the previous forty years of the UN's existence. Because of the missions' increased complexity, their size was also greatly

¹⁷Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, "Conflict Cycle," <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/peacekeeping/conflict-en.asp>; Internet, accessed 30 August 2004. Former UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld famously described peacekeeping as characterizing 'Chapter VI ½' of the Charter; that is, lying somewhere between peaceful (Chapter VI) techniques, such as mediation and fact-finding missions, and more robust (Chapter VII) methods, including military intervention.

¹⁸ Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, "Canada and Peace Support Operations."

expanded. Between 1990 and 1993, the number of military and police serving with UN operations rose from 13,700 to 78,500.¹⁹

However, the sheer scale and abruptness of the changes placed massive demands on the UN system, thereby causing the ill-prepared, under-resourced and over-bureaucratic UN machinery to feel the strain placed upon it. It soon became clear that the post-Cold War enthusiasm for peacekeeping would be short-lived, as many missions ran into severe difficulties.²⁰ Some notable disasters ensued, severely undermining confidence in peacekeeping as a solution to global insecurity and bringing about a decline in peacekeeping in the mid-1990s as impressive as its earlier growth.²¹

The crisis of the 1990s prompted the UN to undertake some serious analysis of peacekeeping. In 1999, two inquiries were released into the infamous peacekeeping disasters of Rwanda²² and Srebrenica²³, exploring the failings of the UN system and its Member States and offering recommendations for reform. While these inquiries were thorough and critical in acknowledging and analyzing many of the shortcomings of the UN system, Secretary-General Kofi Annan sought a more comprehensive review of UN peacekeeping capacity and thus on 7

¹⁹United Nations, *Supplement to an Agenda for peace: Position Paper of the Secretary-General on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations*, A/50/60 - S/1995/1 3 January 1995, Section II. Available from <http://www.un.org/Docs/SG/agsupp.html>; Internet; accessed 5 February 2005.

²⁰Difficulties were perhaps most clearly exemplified in the collapse in 1993 of the UN peacekeeping operation in Somalia. Here, the use of force to defeat local faction leader General Farah Aideed, designated as the enemy, in what was, in practice, a declaration of war by the peacekeepers, led to the very public deaths of 18 US Rangers serving alongside the UN mission. This incident provoked the withdrawal of the mission with the Somali war still raging on and ultimately initiated a prolonged period of disengagement from UN peacekeeping for the international community, as demonstrated in the lack of response to the Rwanda crisis in 1994.

²¹By 1998, the 78,500 military and police personnel serving with UN peacekeeping operations in 1993 had dwindled to around 14,600.

²²United Nations, *Report of the Independent Inquiry into the actions of the United Nations during the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda*, S/1999/1257, 16 December 1999. Copy available at: <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/reports.htm>; Internet, accessed 13 March 2005.

²³United Nations, *Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to General Assembly resolution 53/35: The fall of Srebrenica*, A/54/549, 15 November 1999. Copy available at: <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/reports.htm>; Internet, accessed 13 March 2005.

March 2000 appointed an independent panel of experts to make frank, specific and realistic recommendations for change in UN peace operations.²⁴

The Report of the Panel on UN Peace Operations, released by the UN in August 2000, made numerous recommendations to improve UN peacekeeping capacity including in such areas as doctrine, strategy, planning, decision-making, headquarters organization and staffing levels, logistics, rapid deployment, and public information. Of particular importance, the report called for improve co-operation between Member States and the Secretariat and highlighted the importance of clear and robust mandates for peacekeeping operations with clearly defined tasks and performance.²⁵ As pointed out by the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre: “These reforms address many of the concerns and objectives articulated in 1995 in *Canada and the World*. They are worthy of our active support and should create the conditions for enhanced Canadian confidence and investment in the United Nations.”²⁶

Along with this drive for UN peacekeeping reform came a renewed interest in UN peacekeeping by the international community, although more cautiously than in the early 1990s. At times sizeable and ambitious UN operations have been launched in Afghanistan, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), East Timor, Ethiopia/Eritrea, Kosovo,

²⁴United Nations, *United Nation Peacekeeping: Meeting New Challenges*, published in 2004. Copy available at http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/faq/qa_english.pdf; Internet, accessed 21 April 2005.

²⁵United Nations, *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations*, A/55/305 - S/2000/809, 21 August 2000. Copy available at http://www.un.org/peace/reports/peace_operations/; Internet, accessed 13 March 2005. The Report of the Panel on UN Peace Operations, commonly referred to as the “Brahimi Report” because Lakhdar Brahimi, the former Foreign Minister of Algeria, chaired the group, was published shortly before the UN Millennium Summit was held in early September 2000. The report made some sixty specific recommendations for improvements to UN peace operations, including in such areas as doctrine, strategy, planning, decision-making, headquarters organization and staffing levels, logistics, rapid deployment, and public information.

²⁶Pearson Peacekeeping Centre, “Canada and International Peace Operations: Is Canada still a peacekeeping Nation?” (29 April 2003); available from http://www.peaceoperations.org/en/pdf/reports/2003_05_29_ForeignDialogPolicy.pdf; Internet; accessed 25 January 2005. The reference to Canada and the World is as follows: Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, *Canada in the World, Canadian Foreign Policy Review*, 1995, http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/foreign_policy/cnd-world/chap4-en.asp; Internet; accessed 25 January 2005.

Sierra Leone and Liberia and there has been a corresponding recovery in the number of UN peacekeepers. By December 2001, the number of military and civilian police personnel serving with UN peacekeeping missions had risen to just over 47,800 and stood in February 2005 close to 67,000.²⁷ However, notwithstanding this renewed interest, Western states have generally remained reluctant to provide troops for UN peacekeeping operations.²⁸

The failure of some of the UN peacekeeping missions in the 1990s revealed the limitations of UN capacity to mount effective peacekeeping operations. Analysis of peace enforcement, for example, highlighted that the demands of combat required a proficient military alliance and formation, which was not available to the UN. Indeed, the Brahimi Report recognized that enforcement had regularly been entrusted to coalitions of willing States.²⁹ These shortcomings in UN peacekeeping capacity, although now largely addressed, have contributed to the process of the regionalization of UN peacekeeping. This important trend is very significant to Canada and, as such, it will receive special attention in the next part of this paper.

In summary, the limited nature of traditional peacekeeping during the Cold War era evolved in the context of international politics and, with the end of the Cold War, took on a more complex role. This change caused severe stress to a UN that was ill prepared to take on this challenge. The resulting effect was disastrous in some missions, and although changes were implemented, Western Nations, including Canada, have not participated in UN-led operations as

²⁷United Nations, Department of Peacekeeping Operations, *Monthly Summary of Contributions to UN Peacekeeping Operations*, available from <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/contributors/>; Internet; accessed 15 March 2005.

²⁸For instance, in February 2005 the biggest UN-troop contributors (including military observers and civilian police officers) were: Pakistan (9860), Bangladesh (8054), India (5908), Ethiopia (3425), Nepal (3355), Ghana (3336), (Nigeria (3049), Jordan (2902). Western countries do not even average 600: France (606), Ireland (483), United Kingdom (423), The United States (371) and Canada (327).

²⁹United Nations, *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations*, paragraph 53.

they once did. Thus leaving the task to take on an ever-increasing role to developing countries while Western Nations increasingly prefer to contribute their effort in regional organizations.

REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

The cooperation between the UN and Regional Organizations is based on Chapter VIII of the UN Charter, articles 52 to 54. Article 52 paragraph 1 states:

Nothing in the present Charter precludes the existence of regional arrangements or agencies for dealing with such matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security as are appropriate for regional action provided that such arrangements or agencies and their activities are consistent with the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations.³⁰

As pointed out by Peter Leentjes, a retired Canadian Military Colonel who served for four years in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations at the UN headquarters, cooperation with regional security organizations is certainly in the best interest of the UN. While acknowledging their imperfections, Leentjes also notes that regional security organizations' involvement in PSOs can also offer some advantages over UN operations. He cites, for examples, a better understanding of their region and familiarity with each other's problems, generally a greater willingness to commit resources to support an operation in their region rather than support UN operations and, for those with the necessary resources (notably NATO), a greater operational force coherence and capacity to deploy more rapidly.³¹ However, for regional security organizations to take a leading role in PSOs can be problematic for a number of reasons. Two papers, in particular, took a critical look at this issue and both concluded that regionalization of peacekeeping was not the best option. Specifically, a paper prepared by W.

³⁰United Nations, *Charter of The United Nations*.

³¹Peter Leentjes, "Do Regional Organizations Have a future in Peace Operations?" *Center of Excellence DMHA Liaison*, vol 1, no 3 (October – December 1999) [journal on-line]; available from http://coe-dmha.org/Liaison/Vol_1No_3/Feat02.htm; Internet; accessed 12 April 2005.

Dorn argues that regional peacekeeping, in most cases, is not the best approach to take and should only be undertaken in exceptional cases rather than becoming more prevalent.³² The other paper, prepared by Tim Pippard, cautions against an over reliance on regional organizations to “. . . carry out tasks that an adequately mandated and equipped UN peacekeeping force could carry out better.”³³

What then are the reasons for regional organizations not taking a more active role in PSOs? First and foremost there is the question of impartiality, which, as has been noted earlier, is one of the primary prerequisites for a mission success.³⁴ As pointed out by Dorn: “States in the area usually have close economic, political and military connections with the conflicting parties. Thus, they are less able and likely to conduct impartial peacekeeping.”³⁵ On the other hand, “the UN usually deploys troops from Member States with no direct stake in a conflict, and is thus able to maintain its impartiality.”³⁶ As General Dallaire put it: “I do not applaud how much is being done outside of the U.N. I can’t fathom why single-nation-led coalitions are the solution for the future. There’s no body internationally that is more transparent and impartial than the U.N.”³⁷

³²W. Dorn, *Regional Peacekeeping is not the Way*, Published in "Peacekeeping and International Relations", vol. 27, no. 2, July-October issue, Pearson Peacekeeping Centre, Nova Scotia (Canada), 1998, p.1. http://www.rmc.ca/academic/gradrech/dorn5_e.html; Internet; accessed 26 January 2005.

³³Tim Pippard, *Regional Security Organisations and the Challenge of Regional Peacekeeping*, ed. Alex Ramsbotham (United Nations Association of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), available from <http://www.una-uk.org/UN&C/regionalsecurity.html>; Internet; accessed 26 January 2005.

³⁴This problem surfaced in Liberia in 1990, where Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso appeared to take different sides in the conflict. Similarly, the South African Development Community's (SADC) efforts in 2000 to resolve the crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) were also tarnished by the internal political clash between South Africa and Zimbabwe, as well as their opposing external support for various factions.

³⁵W. Dorn, *Regional Peacekeeping is not the Way*.

³⁶Tim Pippard, *Regional Security Organisations and the Challenge of Regional Peacekeeping*.

³⁷Roméo A. Dallaire, *Speaking at Carnegie Hall about his book "Shake Hands with the Devil: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda,"* 29 Mar 2003, available from <http://www.carnegiecouncil.org/viewMedia.php/prmTemplateID/8/prmID/848>; Internet, accessed 6 February 2005.

Another difficulty relates to the diversity in regional peacekeeping capacity, a point raised in the Brahimi Report: “Military resources and capability are unevenly distributed around the world, and troops in the most crisis-prone areas are often less prepared for the demands of modern peacekeeping than is the case elsewhere.”³⁸ Furthermore, “A lack of financial resources represents a significant obstacle to the deployment of regional operations, and without international financial support their effectiveness and credibility is significantly undermined.”³⁹ Louise Fréchette, UN Deputy Secretary General, also emphasized this shortcoming when she stated:

But the fact is that resources are not distributed among the world's regions in the same proportion as needs, and there is a manifest imbalance between the 30,000 NATO peacekeepers deployed in tiny Kosovo and the 10,000 UN peacekeepers deployed in Congo, which is the size of Western Europe, and where some 3.5 million people may have died as a result of fighting since 1998. If the United Nations stands for anything, it must surely be for greater solidarity between strong and wealthy nations on the one hand and relatively weak and poor ones on the other.⁴⁰

Still, another point of controversy is the legitimacy of regional organizations to act without specific authorization from the Security Council.⁴¹ “The UN possesses the moral and legal authority of a world body that regional organizations lack . . . [and] it remains today the foremost avenue for the pursuit of [the maintenance of international peace and security].”⁴²

³⁸United Nations, Report of the Panel on UN Peace Operations, section II, paragraph 54.

³⁹Tim Pippard, *Regional Security Organisations and the Challenge of Regional Peacekeeping*.

⁴⁰United Nations, Press Release DSG/SM/212, 27 January 2004, available from <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2004/dsgsm212.doc.htm>; Internet; accessed 6 February 2005.

⁴¹In Liberia in 1990, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) claiming that the refugee crisis and human rights violations constituted a threat to peace and security and warranted intervention, sent the military expedition called Economic Community Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) to stop its civil war. Similarly in Kosovo in 1999, NATO judged that the unfolding humanitarian crisis fuelled by Serb violations of human rights, coupled with the seemingly impossible prospect of a Security Council resolution, justified intervention. While both missions received implicit and retroactive authorization from the UN, initially they were both criticized on the grounds of acting illegally and without legitimacy.

⁴²W. Dorn, *Regional Peacekeeping is not the Way*.

Finally, there is the concern that a State with greater capabilities than its partners may dominate the regional organization and manipulate it to serve its own interest. While the Nigerian control of ECOWAS is often cited as an example of such dominance by one state,⁴³ the same analogy could also be made about the United States and its NATO partners. As Dorn succinctly put it: “While the motives of the Security Council—or even of the Secretary-General who is responsible for the conduct of UN peacekeeping missions—can sometimes be questioned, those of regional organizations, led by ambitious regional powers, are much more suspect.”⁴⁴

On a related issue, it must also be emphasized that support for regional security organizations does take military resources away from UN operations. For example, and as has been previously noted, the trend has certainly been for Western states, including Canada, to focus their effort on NATO-led operations. In doing so, these countries have reduced their military commitment to UN PSOs, leaving the burden to developing countries to fill the gap in some of the world’s most difficult conflicts, notably those in Africa.⁴⁵ For example, of the nearly 20,000 United Nations peacekeepers in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) in February 2005, only 11 were Canadian, less than 400 were from Europe (Russia and Ukraine contributing alone 324 together) and none from the United States.⁴⁶ Speaking about this lack of Western contribution, Jean-Marie Guéhenno, UN Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, pointed out in an October 2004 interview: “If UN Blue

⁴³*Ibid.*

⁴⁴*Ibid.*

⁴⁵Pearson Peacekeeping Centre, “Canada and International Peace Operations

⁴⁶United Nations, Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Monthly Summary of Contributions to UN Peacekeeping Operations.

Helmets only come from a certain part in the world, our position weakens because it does not give a strong political signal: there is no strong involvement of the international community.⁴⁷

In summary, while cooperation between regional security organizations and the UN should be encouraged, these have acquired a substantive role in leading international efforts in peace and security since the mid-90s, which has highlighted some of the shortfall in their diversity and capacity that render the prospect of effective regional peacekeeping less attainable.⁴⁸ For instance, whereas some states may favour a regional security apparatus that gives an organization the responsibility for security affairs in their region, others may be anxious about the prospect that the most powerful states could use their influence to pursue their own agenda. Diversity between the capabilities of the different regional organizations is also problematic. In short, the United Nations, which has the primary mandate for the maintenance of international peace and security, is the most appropriate mechanism and should remain so. However, the increasing support for regional organizations does have a direct negative impact on the UN ability to fulfill that mandate.

WHERE DOES CANADA STAND?

Canada's history with peacekeeping is very much closely linked to the evolution of the concept itself and its failures, as well as the trend towards regionalization. As such, while Canada's participation to the traditional peacekeeping missions was fundamentally to support world peace and to alleviate human suffering, it was also in Canada's self-interest. As Allen Sens points out, "During the Cold War, the primary security rationale for participation in

⁴⁷Jean-Marie Guéhenno in an interview with Robert Van De Roer, Editor of RUNIC, 3 October 2004. <http://www.runic-europe.org/englishevents/guehennointerview.html>; Internet; accessed 6 February 2005.

⁴⁸Tim Pippard, *Regional Security Organisations and the Challenge of Regional Peacekeeping*.

peacekeeping missions was to contain conflicts that might escalate to a superpower conflagration that would engulf Canada.”⁴⁹ Although this concern was removed with the end of the Cold War, contribution to PSOs continued to play a significant role in supporting Canada’s foreign policy⁵⁰ and has become a core element of its national security.⁵¹ Notwithstanding these declarations, the fact still remains that with the disastrous efforts in the 1990s in Somalia, Rwanda and Sebrenica, Bosnia, Canada started to distance itself from UN operations in favour of NATO-led operations.⁵²

As early as 1993, while Canada’s capability to sustain its contribution to PSOs was already being questioned, it was also recognized that its international influence would not be the same if it were to reduce its contribution to UN operations.

Thirty-seven years after the Blue Berets’ first mission, Canadians question if Canada can afford to continue policing the world’s trouble spots? The debate is twofold: we have neither the resources nor the manpower to sustain our presence around the world but, at the same time, Canada’s international influence would be considerably diminished without the Blue Berets.”⁵³

Nevertheless, two years later, when Canada’s military commitment to the UN was being considerably reduced, its enviable international position and influence were still being voiced in the House of Commons:

Canada’s support for peacekeeping is a reflection of our strong commitment to international peace and security. Our impressive record in this field is recognized worldwide. We have long argued our experience and skills are unmatched. As proof of our expertise Canada is currently at the forefront of efforts to improve the conduct of the

⁴⁹Allen Sens, “From Peacekeeping to Intervention: Expeditionary Capabilities and the Canadian Force Structure Debate,” University of British Columbia (2001); available from http://www.ccs21.org/ccspapers/papers/Sens-peacekeeping_intervention.htm; Internet; accessed 25 January 2005.

⁵⁰Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, “Canada and Peace Support Operations.”

⁵¹Privy Council Office, *Securing an Open Society: Canada’s National Security Policy* (April 2004), vii.

⁵²Steven Edwards, “Pull your weight on world stage, UN to tell Canada.”

⁵³Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, “Peacekeeping, at what cost?” Broadcast 9 February 1993. http://archives.cbc.ca/IDC-1-71-1290-7530/conflict_war/blue_berets/clip7 Internet; accessed 24 January 2005.

United Nations' peacekeeping operations. We take pride in our peacekeeping reputation and we work hard to preserve it.⁵⁴

However, as Boisvert points out, “Sentiment might fool the home constituencies, but it doesn’t cut it before an international audience, who are looking to the CF as the necessary [centre]piece] for Canada’s return to relevance in the world.”⁵⁵ In other words, “Canada’s ability to influence matters related to international peace and security will only be as great as the resources, expertise, and political will that [Canada is] prepared to commit to the task.”⁵⁶ Or as Sens stresses:

In PSOs, it is troops and materiel that confer political and operational influence. The ability to deploy interoperable, formed land, air, and naval units and sustain them over time remains the key expression of a country’s commitment to a multilateral effort and a key component of any political or operational voice or influence that country can expect to have. After all, the “functional principle” works in reverse; those countries that do not contribute (or contribute relatively little) to multilateral efforts cannot expect to have a seat at the table or the influence that goes with it.⁵⁷

As previously noted, the trend towards regional organizations reduces the resources available to the United Nations and, therefore, its capacity for meaningful action. As Canada’s capacity is limited, it should not let its commitment to NATO undermine its overall commitment to the United Nations. “Rather, contributions should seek a balance and be mutually reinforcing.”⁵⁸

Whatever its flaws, the United Nations remains the most acceptable body through which the international community can work. In the case of peace operations, there can be no

⁵⁴Leonard Hopkins (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke, Lib), speaking in the House of Commons on 13 June 1995; http://collection.nlc-bnc.ca/100/201/301/hansard-e/35-1/217_95-06-13/217PB1E.html; Internet, accessed 24 Jan 2005.

⁵⁵Nic Boisvert, “The Canadian Forces in the 21st Century: A Sentimental Military,” Council for Canadian Security in the 21st Century, 1 February 2005; available from http://www.ccs21.org/articles/2005/feb05/boisvert_sentimental_feb05.htm; Internet; accessed 2 February 2005.

⁵⁶Pearson Peacekeeping Centre, “Canada and International Peace Operations

⁵⁷Allen Sens, “From Peacekeeping to Intervention

⁵⁸Pearson Peacekeeping Centre, “Canada and International Peace Operations

more appropriate body to authorize international action than the United Nations Security Council.⁵⁹

However, beside the limitations imposed by resources availability, including personnel, any attempt to seek a balance must also contend with the question of credibility that, as we have seen earlier, is necessary for the mission success in a PSO. This problematic can be explained as follows:

. . . since the first Gulf War, Canada through participation in U.S. and NATO led military ventures has placed its armed forces in both potential and real conflicts of interest. This conflict of interest is both logistical and moral and can be summed up as follows: How can Canada having participated in combat missions led by the United States or NATO, then assume the role of a “neutral” party in a United Nations peacekeeping effort involving the same conflict? The short answer is that the Canadian military cannot be a credible peacekeeping force if Canadian foreign policy is inconsistent on Canada’s role in armed conflict outside its borders.⁶⁰

It is not the intent of this paper to diminish in any way the accomplishments and the sacrifices of those personnel who served and those who continue to serve today in non-UN operations, as “more often than not the other missions are in support of UN mandates or goals. But it does mean that Canada is unable to commit those soldiers to other UN operations that may otherwise have trouble generating troop commitments.”⁶¹ Still, the UN, recognizing Canada’s military “well-earned reputation of being professional, well-trained and highly motivated, with a vast reservoir of knowledge and experience,”⁶² continues to this day to regularly seek its contribution to PSOs. However, with few exceptions and even then in a very limited numbers, a negative response is typically provided.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*

⁶⁰Canadian Council for International Co-operation, CCIC’S Response to the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade’s “A dialogue on foreign policy”, May 2003, 7. http://www.ccic.ca/e/docs/002_policy_2003-05_foreign_policy_final_response.pdf; Internet; accessed 9 January 2005.

⁶¹Jane Boulden, “The United Nations,” *Council for Canadian Security in the 21st Century*; available from <http://www.ccs21.org/>; Internet; accessed 29 September 2004.

⁶²Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, “Canada and Peacekeeping Actors and Stakeholders,” <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/peacekeeping/actors-en.asp> Internet; accessed 23 January 2005.

While Canada distanced itself from actively contributing to UN PSOs, it nevertheless was able to use its dwindling influence to actively contribute to the reform of the UN system.

Canada's tradition of international political commitment and its years of military contributions to UN operations has earned it a position of respect in the international community that it is able to draw on in order to propose and advocate changes and improvements in the way the UN itself operates. In this respect Canada has made valuable policy contributions at the UN on a variety of issues.⁶³

However, as Canada's influence diminishes,⁶⁴ so is its prospect to contribute significantly to the further strengthening of the international organization it continues to hold in high esteem as attested by Prime Minister Chretien's message at the UN Millennium summit in New York in September 2000: "With the will and the resolve, the United Nations – which is the cornerstone of Canada's foreign policy – will remain the world's indispensable institution in the 21st century. And Canada is committed to being an indispensable partner."⁶⁵ Still today this feeling has remained strong with Canada's current Prime Minister:

We will speak out for reform of the United Nations. We will speak out for the establishment of guidelines to enable the international community to intervene more swiftly and effectively inside sovereign states that perpetrate or fail to stop massive human suffering, such as the ongoing tragedy in Darfur.⁶⁶

Even more recently, Prime Minister Martin spoke of the need for Canada to get more involved with the UN, noting the requirement to deploy effective peacekeeping units to Darfur:

Canada will no longer sit by and allow the grim humanitarian disaster in Sudan's Darfur region to continue, Prime Minister Paul Martin said yesterday, pledging "whatever is required" to a robust peacekeeping force being considered at the United Nations. In an

⁶³Jane Boulden, "The United Nations."

⁶⁴Canadian Institute of International Affairs, "National Foreign Policy Conference. Canada Now: Fading Power or Future Power?" (Toronto, 28 – 30 March 2003), 6. <http://www.ciiia.org/proceedings/FPC2003.pdf>; Internet; accessed 25 January 2005.

⁶⁵Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, 'A New UN for a New Millennium,' *Canada World View*, Issue 10, (Winter 2001); available from <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/canada-magazine/issue10/10t2-en.asp>; Internet; accessed 5 February 2005.

⁶⁶Prime Minister Martin reply to the Speech from the Throne on 5 October 2004. Available at <http://pm.gc.ca/eng/sft-ddt.asp?id=2>; Internet; accessed 24 January 2005.

unexpected and passionate statement after a NATO summit that largely ignored African security issues, Mr. Martin declared that the African Union has failed to deploy effective peacekeeping units in Darfur.⁶⁷

Canada rightfully prides itself for the active role it has played in world affairs and it would be difficult to imagine a Canada that would be less active. Its fundamental interests, values and cultural make-up naturally thrust it on the world stage. While it would be too simplistic to believe that Canada's diminishing contribution to UN-led PSOs is the only reason for its declining influence, it nevertheless remain that it played a significant part in it and so it will need to be part of the solution.⁶⁸ Hence, in order to regain its influence, or even maintain what it has left, will clearly require re-investment in peace operations.⁶⁹

This paper, however, does not advocate that Canada should accept all invitations to contribute to UN-led PSOs, but contends that in considering participation the guidelines presented earlier are still valid and should still be used. Nevertheless, it is clear that if Canada fails to increase its contribution to UN-led PSOs, its influence will be further reduced and, along with it, any hope it may have to contribute to the further strengthening of the organization the recently released Canada's International Policy Statement regards as "essential to our collective security and prosperity".⁷⁰

⁶⁷Paul Koring, "Martin vows to ease Darfur's suffering," *Globe and Mail*, 23 February 2005, A1. <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/ArticleNews/TPStory/LAC/20050223/DARFUR23/TPNational/TopStories>; Internet; accessed 23 February 2005.

⁶⁸Robert Greenhill, *Making a Difference? External views on Canada's International Impact*, A Canadian Institute of International Affairs Special Project (Toronto, January 2005), 1-5. Available from http://www.ciiia.org/XVoices_Int_Report.pdf; Internet; accessed 12 April 2005. Aside from Canada's declining contribution to UN-led PSOs over the last 15 years, the report cites a number of other contributing factors such as: lack of focus in Canada's international development commitments; the increasing international role played by other nations such as China, Brazil, India and Mexico; the decreasing influence of international organizations such as the G8 and NAO in which Canada played an important role; and Canada's diminishing influence on the United States foreign policy.

⁶⁹Pearson Peacekeeping Centre, "Canada and International Peace Operations . . ."

⁷⁰Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, *Canada's International Policy Statement – A Role of Pride and Influence in the World – Overview* (Ottawa: Canada Communications Group, 2005), Forward from the Prime Minister.

CONCLUSION

Canada has played a key role in PSOs since the very inception of the concept itself. It gained a well-deserved reputation as a significant contributor to UN-led PSOs and, in so doing, also an enviable influence on the world stage. With the end of the Cold War came an unprecedented accord within the Security Council and a willingness to intervene in internal conflicts even if it meant breaching the previously sacred sovereignty principle of traditional operations. PSOs thus became increasingly more complex, and the number and size of missions being mandated surged to unprecedented levels. However, the UN system was ill prepared to manage such an increase, which resulted in disastrous effects in some missions. Even when critical reviews of the UN failures were conducted and changes implemented, Western states, including Canada, no longer contributed to UN-led PSOs as they once did, turning their attention instead to regional security organizations, such as NATO.

While regional security organizations do offer some advantages over UN-led operations, it can be problematic if they take the lead in PSOs. First and foremost there is a lesser likelihood that they will be impartial, one of the main condition for PSO mission success. Second, their diversity in capacity makes some less well suited to take on the modern responsibilities of complex operations, thereby undermining their effectiveness and credibility. Third, the legitimacy to act without a mandate from the UN can be controversial. Finally, there is the danger that an ambitious regional power may use the regional organization to pursue its own agenda. In short, the UN is the most appropriate mechanism to maintain international peace and security. However, as military resources are not unlimited, support for regional security organizations take away resources from UN operations and, as such, has a direct impact on the UN ability to fulfill its mandate.

While not the sole reason to explain Canada's dwindling international influence, turning away from UN-led PSOs certainly was a significant contributing factor. While it could be argued that Canada's participation in both UN and non-UN PSOs would be best, resources limitations and potential for conflict of interest would clearly dictate otherwise. Furthermore, as the UN provides a more legitimate avenue for PSOs than any regional security organization, and as the UN continues to be the multinational organization of choice of the Government of Canada, contributing to its further strengthening would be in Canada's best interest.

In final analysis, for Canada to rectify the decline in its international influence, specifically in the context of peace and security, it must actively pursue an increase in its contribution to UN-led PSOs, even if it has to reduce its military commitments to other international operations. However, the level of influence Canada can regain will only be commensurate with the resources it is prepared to commit. Failing to do this will further reduce its influence to the point that no one will listen to what it has to offer, no matter how good an idea it may have, and thus its efforts to strengthen the UN could be in vain.

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