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Editor: Tom Kristiansen

Trykk: Hamtrykk A/S

ISSN 0333-3981

FORSVARSTUDIER 5/1999

Stumbling into a new role

NATO's out-of-area policy after the Cold War

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Preface

This study is part of a joint project on *NATO's out-of-area problems in a historical perspective*. The project was initiated at the Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies (IFS) in 1996, and received funding from the Norwegian Ministry of Defence in 1996 and 1997. The Norwegian Research Council and the British Council also provided a joint grant in 1996. The project has resulted in two separate but closely related studies. The first part was written by Frode Liland (*Keeping Nato out of trouble: Nato's non-policy on out-of-area issues during the Cold War, Defence Studies No. 4/1999*). This is the second part, which covers the transformation of NATO's 'out-of-area' policy after the end of the Cold War.

The bulk of the research was carried out between November 1996 and March 1998 when I was engaged as a research associate at the Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies. Some of the writing was done later, when I was working at the Norwegian Ministry of Defence. It should be added that the views expressed throughout the study are strictly my own, and are not necessarily in accordance with the policy of the Norwegian Ministry of Defence.

I would like to thank the following persons for valuable comments on earlier drafts of this study: the project supervisor, Dr Mats R Berdal, my colleagues at the Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies, Sven G Holtmark, Frode Liland, and Per Fredrik Ilsaas Pharo, the Research Director at the IFS, Professor Olav Riste, and the Director of the IFS, Professor Rolf Tamnes. I would also like to extend warm thanks to all my colleagues at the Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies, including those mentioned above, for providing a stimulating and highly enjoyable working environment. Finally, I would like to thank Lars Øy and Irene Kulblik for editing assistance and Kari Dickson for invaluable language editing, without which this manuscript could not have been published.

Any errors and misjudgements are solely my responsibility.

Abbreviations

AFSOUTH	Allied Forces Southern Europe
AWACS	Airborne Warning and Control System
CINCSOUTH	Commander in Chief, Allied Forces Southern Europe
CJTF	Combined Joint Task Force
CSCE	Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe
FRY	Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
IFOR	Implementation Force
IHT	International Herald Tribune
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
KVM	Kosovo Verification Mission
KFOR	Kosovo Force
NAC	North Atlantic Council
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PfP	Partnership for Peace
SACEUR	Supreme Allied Commander Europe
SFOR	Stabilisation Force
UCK	Kosovo Liberation Army
UN	United Nations
UNPROFOR	United Nations Protection Force
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNSCOM	United Nations Special Commission
US	United States
WEU	Western European Union

Introduction

Allied handling of conflicts outside the North Atlantic area has been a controversial issue since the creation of NATO. However, in spite of pressure from different members, a policy of non-involvement was firmly established during the Cold War. NATO, as such, chose to limit itself to the collective defence of its own territory, as formal or informal co-operation between two or several members in other parts of the world was kept off the NATO agenda. Conflicts resulting from the colonial interests of some European countries and the American global anticommunist engagement were handled in accordance with this intra-Alliance understanding.¹

The end of the Cold War did not bring any immediate change to this more or less established agreement. As late as 1992, Nicole Gnesotto and John Roper summarised NATO's future role outside the Alliance area as follows: 'To those who would have liked to see an enlargement of NATO's responsibilities to out-of-area missions, the Gulf War quickly showed the *impossibility* of this; public opinion in a substantial number of European countries during the crisis in fact expressed strong feelings against such a change'.² Nevertheless, seven years later, NATO had several thousand troops on the ground in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and was heavily engaged in an extensive air campaign against former Yugoslavia. This study tells the story of how and why this complete change of policy took place. It also tries to point out some of the implications.

The term 'out-of-area' had a fairly clear and precise meaning in NATO vocabulary during the Cold War, referring primarily to events taking place outside the territory of NATO's members. The only exception to this ground rule was events taking place in the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact-countries, which could have a direct bearing on the Alliance. The difference between the NATO area and the rest of the world was embodied in the security guarantee formulated in NATO's Article 5, requiring all members to

consider attack on one state as an attack on all. At NATO's 50th anniversary, this distinction seemed to have lost some of its relevance, as many argued that the term 'out-of-area' no longer conceptualised any clearly defined area. It could, for instance, well be argued that NATO had in fact guaranteed the safety of the new state Bosnia-Herzegovina just as firmly as if it had been covered by Article 5. Nevertheless, in this study, the distinction between the territory covered by NATO's Article 5 and 'out-of-area' territory will be maintained, claiming its continued relevance. It will also be argued that the problems connected to NATO's 'out-of-area' involvement, which prevented an expansion of NATO's role during the Cold War, are as prominent now as then, and the solutions are far from obvious.

The development of NATO's 'out-of-area' engagement will be divided into three main phases. *First*, between 1990 and 1992, NATO's traditional reluctance to engage in 'out-of-area' conflicts came under pressure, but remained largely unchanged. In 1991, NATO recognised that '[t]he monolithic, massive and potentially immediate threat which was the principal concern of the Alliance in its first forty years has disappeared.'³ Moreover, the dwindling of Soviet power meant that the contest for global hegemony was temporarily settled, and the United States was the only remaining super power with global interests and capabilities. Against this background, NATO was forced to undertake radical changes. As a result, NATO started to review its strategy, but even though the new Strategic Concept, which was adopted by the North Atlantic Council in November 1991, opened up for 'co-ordination in fields of common concern', few of the members envisioned an expanded 'out-of-area' role for the Alliance at the time. However, the almost simultaneous collapse of the Soviet Union and the outbreak of war in Yugoslavia made NATO's new Strategic Concept outdated before it had been put into practice.

Secondly, between 1992 and 1995, NATO gradually became involved in the war in Bosnia. Throughout this period, NATO's role was to support the United Nations peacekeeping operation on the ground. However, through an incremental development, NATO's role in the joint operation gradually increased from the initial launching of a modest naval operation in the Adriatic

in 1992 to the large-scale air campaign against the Bosnian Serbs in 1995. Throughout this period, NATO acted more and more independently, changing the joint operation from peacekeeping to peace enforcement by finally intervening directly in the war.

Thirdly, since 1995, NATO has embraced a fully independent 'out-of-area' role. The increasing NATO influence in Bosnia culminated when NATO replaced the UN following the deployment of its first peacekeeping force to Bosnia in December 1995. The final step in this development occurred when NATO's members decided to use force against former Yugoslavia without the authorisation of the UN Security Council in March 1999. The new 'out-of-area' role was formalised in the new Strategic Concept adopted at NATO's 50th anniversary summit in Washington 23-24 April 1999.

Three main arguments will be presented in this study. *First*, far from being a result of a designed policy or conscious choices, NATO's new 'out-of-area' policy seems to have developed almost by accident. Each new step was driven by events, and appears to have been taken without full consideration of its potential consequences. In fact, the policy was formally formulated after it had been *de facto* implemented. Through this process, NATO has repeatedly backed itself into a corner, only to find itself in a situation where the credibility of the Alliance has become closely dependent on its ability to handle 'out-of-area' conflicts effectively.

Secondly, it will be argued that NATO's overwhelming military strength has proved largely ineffective in relation to many of the challenges posed by internal conflicts such as Bosnia. In fact, the use of massive force may in many instances be counterproductive with regard to the overall goals of the operation.

Thirdly, as it is not possible to argue that NATO is defending the territory of a member state in any 'out-of-area' conflict, force must be used in defence of some other particular Alliance interest. The vision of an interest-based Alliance was launched in a speech by NATO's Secretary General Manfred Wörner to the North Atlantic Assembly in November 1990. In his speech Wörner asked whether it was not possible to 'develop an internal Alliance understanding whereby ... the degree of engagement in dealing with a given

[out-of-area] problem might vary from Ally to Ally, but the assets of the Alliance would be available for co-ordination and support'. But in the same speech Wörner also recognised that 'This would operate *where there is a clear need for common alliance interests to be defended*'.⁴ Balancing these two potentially conflicting needs - allowing some members to use common assets, but only in defence of common alliance interests - remains the essence of the dilemma of NATO's post-Cold War transformation.

1990-1992: Cold War aftermath

Introduction

The dissolution of the Warsaw Pact at the summit meeting in Prague on 1 July 1991, and the collapse of the Soviet Union the following December have been said to symbolise NATO's victory in the Cold War. However, even before the Soviet Union collapsed, the war against Iraq and the inclusion of former East Germany into NATO made it evident that NATO's old 'glue', the common threat from a hostile Soviet Union, had changed beyond recognition. In the early 1990s, many saw these events as depriving NATO of its basis for existence. It was clear that fundamental changes had to be made, but there was also initially considerable confusion over what these changes implied for NATO and the West. The issue of 'out-of-area' operations soon appeared, but there was little eagerness among most of NATO's members to engage the Alliance outside the NATO area, as they probably recognised the difficulties inherent in this new role.

The Gulf War has sometimes been referred to as the first informal NATO 'out-of-area' operation. However, this perception is misconceived, as NATO policy followed established Cold War procedures (see p 14-23), and the Alliance as such was only marginally involved. Nevertheless, the measures taken both by NATO and the US-led coalition provided some valuable lessons with regard to both the problems and benefits connected to engaging NATO outside the treaty area, and will thus be thoroughly discussed.

Whereas NATO's new Strategic Concept of November 1991 made no direct reference to a new 'out-of-area' role, it will be argued that the escalating war in Yugoslavia led to mounting pressure on NATO, making it practically impossible to adhere to the old rules. Given the vital importance of the Yugoslav wars for the development of NATO's 'out-of-area' policy, a brief background to the outbreak of these wars and the initial international response

will be presented. It will be argued that the Western states' inability to agree on a common response to the war in Bosnia led to the introduction of measures designed mainly to show that something was being done, rather than an adequate military response, if such a response could be found, to the problems at hand. NATO's first 'out-of-area' operation, deployed in close competition with the Western European Union, was one such measure.

Defining a new role for NATO - the initial steps

The inclusion of the former German Democratic Republic in NATO, following German unification, in itself resulted in a radical change in NATO's geographical scope. The speed of the unification process was both unpredicted and unprecedented and demonstrated that profound changes were taking place in East-West relations. In January 1990, the German Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hans Dietrich Genscher, stated: 'To think that the borders of NATO could be moved 300 kilometres eastwards, via German unification, would be an illusion. ... No reasonable person could expect the Soviet Union to accept such an outcome.'⁵ Eight months later the unification was formally passed, and the Soviet Union had agreed to the Helsinki Act principle that every state has the right to choose its own alignment. In September 1994, the former East German forces were integrated into NATO's military command.

German unification also prompted the first official signals of radical change in NATO's tasks and strategy. In order to reassure the Soviet Union, NATO issued the London Declaration on a Transformed North Atlantic Alliance at a meeting of the North Atlantic Council (NAC) on 5-6 July 1990. In the London Declaration, NATO extended 'a hand of friendship' to its former adversaries. More specifically, it was an invitation to the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria and Romania to establish regular diplomatic liaisons with NATO, in addition to closer military contact. Furthermore, NATO intended to undertake a fundamental change in the Alliance's integrated force structure and strategy to reflect a reduced reliance on nuclear weapons, which were to be truly *weapons of last resort*.

The preparations for the London Summit focused largely on the unification

of Germany and the Soviet response. It had become clear that unification was imminent, and there had been intense negotiations with the Soviet Union over the last six months. Prior to the summit, the Soviet Union had emphasised the importance of a visible change in NATO policy.⁶ The United States and West Germany, which led the unification process, therefore needed to make an ambitious declaration. There was already growing concern in Washington that Gorbachev's charm offensive towards the West and the diminishing Soviet threat could lead to a fragmentation of NATO.⁷ This meant that it was important to preserve unity at the meeting. Due to the somewhat contradictory nature of these demands, Washington decided to ignore NATO's normal consultative procedures and drew up a draft declaration, which was presented a few days prior to the summit. The draft was adopted more or less unchanged, despite strong French and British opposition to many of the main points.

The Declaration made it clear that radical change was to be expected without specifying new structures or policies, but the overall goal of reassuring the Soviet Union was largely achieved. While the Declaration denounced the old threats that had been NATO's *raison d'être* for the last 40 years, no new threats were identified. Questions were bound to be raised concerning the fundamental purpose of an Alliance which had not identified any precise threats, but the expansion of Alliance responsibilities beyond the treaty area was clearly not an issue at this point, primarily for fear of provoking the Soviet Union. However, the situation changed rapidly following the outbreak of the Gulf War.

The Gulf War - NATO's geographical scope is challenged

The first post-Cold War conflict directly affecting NATO's members erupted only a few days after the London Summit, when Iraq invaded Kuwait on 2 August 1990. The Gulf War, which started five months later, was fought between Iraq and a broadly based, US-led 'coalition of the willing'. The mandate issued by the UN Security Council authorised 'Member States co-operating with the Government of Kuwait' to use 'all necessary means' to

ensure that Iraq withdrew from Kuwait.⁸ The United States accounted for 70 per cent of the coalition forces, with a force consisting of more than 500,000 troops, 2,000 tanks, and 1,800 aircraft. Other major contributors were Saudi Arabia (94,000 troops), the United Kingdom (42,000 troops), Egypt (40,000 troops), and France (20,000 troops).⁹ Following an intense build-up and several months in preparing for war, the first air attacks were launched on 16 January 1991. The extensive air campaign was followed by a major ground offensive, which started on 24 February, and on 3 March 1991 Iraq capitulated unconditionally.

Even though NATO, as such, was only marginally involved, the war brought the 'out-of-area' issue to the midst of NATO's agenda. With the benefit of hindsight, it may be argued that the international constellations which appeared during the Gulf War made it necessary for NATO to reconsider its 'out-of-area' policy. First, the fact that the Soviet Union supported the US-led international coalition which was fighting against a Middle East country, made it evident that the Soviet Union was no longer the enemy it had been during the Cold War. Following on from that, the threat perception had to change. It was recognised that future threats to European security may not be in the form of a direct attack on one or several NATO members, but rather in the form of instability outside the NATO area which could affect the allies directly or indirectly. Secondly, the fact that the exceptional nature of the political and military conditions prevalent during the war was grossly underestimated, also affected NATO's 'out-of-area' policy discussion. The post-Cold and Gulf War euphoria led to unrealistic expectations of a new era in which effective collective security institutions would be able to resolve international conflicts, and NATO had to define its new role within this framework.

What role did NATO actually play?

Though not directly involved, the Alliance did play a distinctive role in the war through its contributions to the coalition effort and through its own operations. However, the procedures followed did not in any way conflict

with NATO members' informal rules for 'out-of-area' deployment, developed during the Cold War.

US pressure on European allies to take a more active global role had been on the increase since the early 1980s following the invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union.¹⁰ Washington started implicitly and explicitly to link the continued presence of US troops in Europe with future European support for US military involvement outside the NATO area.¹¹ The US demands were accommodated in a new 'consultation-facilitation-compensation' formula, which was intended to make NATO more adept in handling the commitments of important members outside the Treaty area. The more formal procedures for 'consultation' were based on the recognition that NATO's concept of security had to be broadened to allow for common NATO statements regarding conflicts which involved only some of the allies. 'Facilitation' entailed the need for NATO to maintain sufficient military strength within the Treaty area to ensure a credible defence in the event that the United States and selected NATO powers had to redeploy their forces outside the NATO area. Finally, 'compensation' entailed that any logistical differences and shortfalls in manpower arising from the redeployment of US combat troops, originally designated for NATO defence reinforcement, to Southwest Asia, were to be covered by the European members.¹²

Allied contributions to the coalition

These measures were implemented during the build-up of coalition forces in Saudi Arabia in the autumn of 1990 and during the 100-day war at the start of 1991, though not without provoking some transatlantic tension. At a meeting of the North Atlantic Council on 10 September 1990, the US Secretary of State, James Baker III, announced that, in addition to financial contributions, the United States would welcome the deployment of allied troops to Saudi Arabia. Four days later Britain ordered its 7th Armoured Brigade to the Gulf and France announced its own operation. Italian and Turkish bases were also used by the Americans for Gulf operations. France offered over-flying rights and refuelling facilities for US B-52s. The smaller contributions made by other

NATO allies were of more political than military significance. Germany did not participate in the coalition forces at all, as the deployment of German forces to the Gulf was deemed to contravene the German constitution. However, a substantial part of the US command, control and communication network for 'out-of-area' operations in the Mediterranean was operated through Germany. In this respect, the Gulf War followed a Cold War pattern in which Germany was repeatedly used as a logistical base and command centre for US military action. Furthermore, US, British and Canadian deployments to Saudi Arabia included troops and equipment stationed in Germany for defence purposes. Germany provided extensive support for the movement of these troops and some of its reserves were activated to manage the logistical tasks.¹³ Large amounts of German ammunition were also shipped from Germany to the coalition forces in the Gulf.

NATO operations

NATO as an organisation also launched its own separate operation. Operation Southern Guard comprised two main elements. The first, Operation Med Net, was an air and naval operation, designed to detect and deter troublemakers on sea and air routes in the Mediterranean. Operation Med Net was a training and surveillance operation and was not directed against any specific adversary. It was justified as a prudent measure in the light of events taking place along the boundaries of the Southern Region of NATO.

Even though the second element was directly linked to NATO's core function, it still provoked difficulties within the Alliance. On 17 December 1991, Turkey asked for assistance and requested that NATO's Mobile Air Force should be deployed along the eastern border with Iraq. The reason for this request was that Iraq had threatened to retaliate against Turkey if US air attacks on Iraq were launched from Turkish bases. On 2 January 1992, NATO's Defence Planning Committee approved the request and launched Operation Dawn Set. The decision was made after some hesitation, by Germany in particular. The major German opposition party (the SPD) stated that Turkey had provoked Iraq by allowing US planes to operate from Turkish

bases. Any retaliation by Iraq against Turkey would therefore not qualify the activation of Germany's obligation to assist in the defence of Turkey, pursuant to Article 5.¹⁴ Even though Germany did finally agree to send 18 Alpha Jet ground attack aircraft and a supporting force of 270 men, it reserved the right to approve the use of these forces in the event of war. The German opposition argued that such a commitment of forces should be approved by a two-thirds majority vote in the Bundestag.¹⁵

All in all, in addition to direct participation in the coalition, the allies contributed to the coalition war effort in five ways: by strengthening the defence of Turkey; by protecting air and sea routes in the Mediterranean through training and surveillance operations; by supporting coalition troops with logistics and transport; by compensating and replacing American troops in Europe who had been transferred to the Gulf; and by financial contributions. Nevertheless, it would be misleading to claim that the Gulf War was mainly a NATO effort. US forces accounted for the bulk of the coalition, and the second largest force consisted of troops from Middle East countries. Furthermore, the coalition was established unilaterally by the United States, which also commanded the operation. Even though consultations did take place between the NATO allies, the important decisions were made unilaterally by the United States. Furthermore, as the coalition force also included non-NATO members, most consultations took place bilaterally between the United States and each coalition member, or in the UN.

Sources of tension within the Alliance

Was the Gulf War a demonstration of an informal, but coherent and successful NATO 'out-of-area' policy, or on the contrary, a display of internal discord despite suitable conditions for a joint operation? In order to answer this question one has to look at the broader picture.

According to Michael Brenner, there has been a tendency to overlook both the extreme reluctance with which the United States went to war and the bitter recriminations that would have ensued had the human costs been higher.¹⁶ The reason why the Iraqi leader, Saddam Hussein, allowed the

coalition four months to build up its forces undisturbed, was probably that he believed that the coalition would break if Iraq inflicted enough damage on the coalition forces. But the coalition held - not only between NATO members, but also between NATO and its rather unlikely coalition partners. This is perhaps the clearest indication that the Gulf War was quite exceptional with regard to NATO cohesion on 'out-of-area' issues. However, the two prime sources of tension were familiar Cold War issues: burden-sharing within the Alliance, and differing national interests in the conflict area and in how the conflict should be solved.

The burden-sharing issue came to a head in connection with Germany's contribution to the war effort. The German claim that the deployment of its troops outside the NATO area would be unconstitutional was viewed as a 'cheap excuse' by many of its allies.¹⁷ Irritation increased when Germany reacted slowly to the US request for financial support. On 30 August 1990, the Bush administration publicly requested that other countries help to bear the financial burden. The German government, which was preoccupied with unification, took two weeks to respond, causing irritation within the Alliance.¹⁸ In the light of the coming unification, Germany was wary of provoking the Soviet Union, fearing that it might raise new objections, or withdraw its previous consent to unification. Another controversial issue was Germany's refusal to sanction the delivery of spare parts for allied Tornados operating in the area, and to lift the ban on low-flying Tornado practice flights in Germany.¹⁹ Germany's reluctance to assist Turkey reinforced the view that Germany was a free rider, unwilling to deal with the uncomfortable sides of exercising power.

Even though there was less dissatisfaction with the other allies, Brenner argues that there was still the potential for an angry reaction by the United States against its allies, and that even the predicted casualty levels (which were much higher than the actual figures) could have ignited this anger.²⁰

A second source of tension was differing national interests in connection with the conflict, most notably between the United States and France, but also between the United States and Germany. French policy during the Gulf crisis was a demonstration of the diplomatic art of balancing two partly

contradicting interests. French sensitivity to Arab interests may in part be explained by its Arab-speaking minority and traditional ties with Arab countries which were not part of the coalition, and in part by the traditional French stance of maintaining some distance and independence in relation to US policy. However, France did not want to side with Saddam Hussein against the United States, and at the crucial points France not only supported the coalition but also agreed to submit its forces to the overall US command. France tried to resolve these conflicting interests by attempting to link Iraqi withdrawal to other Arab issues. One example of this policy was the French call for free elections in Kuwait following an Iraqi withdrawal, instead of the unconditional return of the Al Sabah dynasty.²¹ However, any such concessions, which could be interpreted as rewards to Saddam Hussein, were totally unacceptable to the United States. The most serious challenge to coalition unity was France's solo diplomacy the day before the deadline of the UN ultimatum. France submitted a six-point proposal to the Security Council, which linked Iraqi withdrawal to an international peace conference on the Arab-Israeli conflict. The proposal was not cleared in advance with any of the NATO members, and was not mentioned by President Francois Mitterand at a lunch with the new British Prime Minister, John Major, the same day. As observed by Francois Heisbourg, '*Since Iraq refused, no harm was done in terms of allied solidarity.* At the same time Paris could turn to the Arab world to say that no stone had been left unturned in the quest for peaceful resolution.'²² But if Iraq had accepted the offer, it would have been difficult to hold the coalition together, and NATO cohesion would have been undermined. The United States was not prepared to reward Saddam's aggression, yet France could not have gone to war if Iraq had accepted the peace offer. The internal cohesion of NATO was therefore probably saved by Saddam Hussein's rejection.

Why did the coalition hold?

The overall united front, not only between NATO members but also within the wider coalition, shows how exceptional the situation was. The new regime in Moscow was an important factor in this picture. Another factor which made

it possible to build such a broad coalition, was the fact that the Iraqi invasion was a clear-cut violation of international law in a strategically important and very unstable area. It was the combination of such a flagrant violation of international law and the threat to vital national interests that offended and threatened both Western and Middle Eastern states. Another important factor was Saddam Hussein's threat to use hostages as human shields and to use chemical weapons. The international outcry against Iraq by state leaders and the general public was further fuelled by the fact that Saddam Hussein's campaign involved actions that could lead to an ecological disaster. Domestic opinion in the Western democracies was therefore likely to be more tolerant of both their own casualties and collateral damage.²³ As it turned out, the war only lasted for 100 days, and coalition casualties were far lower than estimated. Military conditions were favourable, with a static Iraqi force situated in open terrain, and largely removed from civilian structures. Before the war broke out, support for the use of force was low in leading opposition circles as well as with the general public in the United States, Germany and France. The German opposition's reluctance to send troops to Turkey has already been mentioned. France's socialist Minister of Defence, Jean-Pierre Chevènement, continued to express reservations about French participation in a military solution to the crisis. Jean-Marie Le Pen's right-wing party was against French participation, which probably prevented the emergence of a larger anti-war faction within the Socialist Party. When the war finally broke out, public support rose sharply in all coalition countries, but the opposite could have been the case if the war had been less successful.

Could NATO have done it alone?

Even though the United States contributed the bulk of the international force, it was clear from the start that the coalition against Saddam Hussein would have to be more than a Western alliance. Iraq had for many years enjoyed close relations with the Soviet Union, and a continued supply of Soviet arms to Iraq throughout the war could have caused tension between the Americans and a rapidly declining Soviet Union. Furthermore, Iraq's attack on Israel could have

provoked a regional war and Israeli retaliation was only avoided by US military countermeasures and the fact that several Arab countries (most notably Egypt and Saudi Arabia, but also Syria though only on a symbolic level) were involved in the war on the US side. The broad coalition was therefore necessary in order to avoid both an East-West and an Arab-Israeli conflict. Politically, NATO could probably not have achieved this alone. The limited air attacks by US and British forces against Iraq in 1998 and 1999 do not alter this conclusion.

The Gulf War also revealed the Alliance's limited military capacity for large-scale 'out-of-area' operations. European armies, conscripted for the purpose of national defence, proved largely unsuitable for 'out-of-area' operations.²⁴ In the case of France, in particular, the refusal to use conscript soldiers created difficulties when setting up a sizeable, all-professional combat force in Saudi Arabia.²⁵ According to Francois Heisbourg, the Gulf War revealed 'the patent unsuitability of France's Cold War force structure to post-Cold War conditions'.²⁶ One of the many lessons for France was the lack of relevance of its nuclear deterrent. Another was that, had the war dragged on beyond spring, the rotation of the French force would have posed real problems. Germany faced the same problem with a conscript-based army, in addition to a much stronger psychological barrier towards the use of force for any purpose other than the defence of its own territory. According to Alan Sked, the number of Germans claiming exception from military service on the grounds of conscientious objections increased by 54 per cent after the outbreak of the Gulf crisis; 40 pilots resisted transfer to Turkey and 7,000 reservists were unwilling to be mobilised.²⁷ However, Germany took important steps during the Gulf crisis which signalled a change in attitude. A minesweeping detachment, in part manned by conscripts, was transferred from the Mediterranean to the Gulf to help clear the mined shipping lanes. For legal reasons this was termed a contribution to a co-ordinated 'humanitarian mission'. Another less controversial measure was the participation of Bundeswehr engineering and aviation units in attempts to control the Kurdish refugee crisis. In their analysis of German support to the Gulf War, Karl Kaiser and Claus Becher concluded: 'In Germany, therefore, the experience of

the Iraqi crisis worked as a catalyst for broadening the awareness of security challenges to industrial democracies as a whole and of the necessity for a German contribution to European, Western and UN approaches.'²⁸

The lessons of the Gulf War prepared NATO's members for future 'out-of-area' operations. However, at the time of the Gulf War it was still not obvious that NATO would change its 'out-of-area' policy. Resistance to a redefinition of NATO's tasks was strong both within and outside the Alliance. There were two main reasons for resistance: first, many members feared that NATO 'out-of-area' missions would weaken the cohesion of the Alliance and the commitment to Article 5, secondly, instability in the Soviet Union made any future threats from the East quite unpredictable. At the same time, the positive developments in East-West relations gave rise to hopes for more collective security arrangements under the auspices of the UN or the revitalised Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).

Consequently, the conclusions drawn in the immediate aftermath of the Gulf War did not envisage a new 'out-of-area' role for NATO. The US Permanent Representative to the North Atlantic Council, William Taft, argued that an important future task would be to extend Alliance co-operation as widely as possible, but added that this did not mean a formal extension of NATO to other areas. In June 1991 he wrote that 'NATO, as an institution, did not play a direct role in the Gulf, only in the defence of Turkey and this is likely to be the case in any similar situation in the future.'²⁹

Many problems remained unsolved. In the United States, the Gulf War only served to reinforce the public's deep-rooted conviction that it was time for the United States' allies to step forward and take their place in the front line to protect common interests. In 1991, Michael Brenner concluded: 'The evidence from the Gulf episode indicates that significant divisions of opinion go beyond thinking about 'out-of-area' situations to include more fundamental beliefs about what constitutes acceptable international conduct and the acceptable means for enforcing it.' He went on to argue that 'Achieving a more equitable sharing of responsibilities is only possible if there is a broad consensus on interests, purposes and methods for realising them.'³⁰ The question that remained was whether such a consensus existed.

The new Strategic Concept of 1991

By the end of the same year, in November 1991, NATO had completed its new Strategic Concept. In the time that had passed since the first step was taken at the London Summit in 1990, NATO had experienced German unification, the Gulf War and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact. If NATO were to avoid appearing outdated in relation to recent international developments these changes would have to be reflected in its new policy statement.

The review of NATO's strategy was a thorough three-track bureaucratic process which involved both civilian and military staffs. Three separate documents were produced: a political declaration drawn up by the NATO ambassadors, the new Strategic Concept negotiated by the International Staff's Strategy Review Group, and the 'Directive for the military implementation of the Strategic Concept' prepared by the permanent military delegations, the International Military Staff and SHAPE.³¹ Despite these complex and time-consuming procedures, the bulk of the Strategic Concept was negotiated by ministers at the North Atlantic Council meeting in November.

Four main issues were discussed by all the strategy groups: (1) the development of a European pillar within NATO and the role of the Western European Union (WEU); (2) relations with former Warsaw Pact countries; (3) the question of how much attention should be focused on the Soviet Union; and (4) NATO's role 'out-of-area'. However, the November summit started without consensus, as NATO's permanent staff and bureaucracy had been unable to reach agreement. The following summit declaration was the first of many statements to reflect NATO's difficulties in agreeing on common formulations with regard to how the changes in its perceived threat were to be handled. Vague formulations which allowed for different interpretations papered over disagreements with regard to the future aims and tasks of the Alliance. Discussions were also complicated by the continued, rapid changes in the strategic environment in Europe, the most important probably being the attempted coup in Moscow in August 1991, which contributed to a continued

focus on the East. Consequently, at the summit, most of the allies had not yet developed a concrete picture of NATO's future role. Despite numerous references to the promising new age of Europe, the definition of NATO's core functions, as listed in paragraph 21 in the new Strategic Concept, was rather conservative. NATO's core functions were:³²

To provide one of the indispensable foundations for a stable security environment in Europe, based on the growth of democratic institutions and the commitment to the peaceful resolution of disputes, in which no country would be able to intimidate or coerce any European nation or to impose hegemony through the threat or use of force.

To serve, as provided for in Article 4 of the North Atlantic Treaty, as a transatlantic forum for Allied consultations on any issues that affect their vital allied interests, including possible developments posing risks for members' security, and for appropriate co-ordination of efforts in fields of common concern.

To deter and defend against any threat of aggression against the territory of any NATO member state.

To preserve the strategic balance in Europe.

The main emphasis remained on NATO's traditional role (Article 5 operations and strategic deterrence of the Soviet Union) as reflected in point III and IV. The carefully selected wording in point II, which was the only reference to the new threats, left all options open, but 'consultation' and 'co-ordination' on issues of common concern was really nothing new. The explicit reference to Article 4 of the North Atlantic Charter also underlined continuity rather than change. The strongest formulation was found in a separate chapter on 'Management of crisis and conflict prevention', in which it was stated that 'The success of Alliance policy will require a coherent approach determined by the Alliance's political authorities choosing and co-ordinating appropriate crisis management measures as required from a range of political and other measures, *including those in the military field.*'³³

The different positions on NATO's future role 'out-of-area' were obvious

and predictable. France and Spain were opposed to an expanded role for NATO, and advocated a greater role for the Western European Union (WEU). Smaller members still feared that NATO's core functions would be weakened by an expansion of the scope. In Germany, the use of German forces outside the NATO area was a political non-issue. In fact, the United States and Britain were the only countries eager to discuss an expansion of NATO's role. A compromise was found in a concept which had been introduced earlier that year. During the Gulf crisis in 1991, 'passive solidarity' had been launched as a possible approach to 'out-of-area' conflicts.³⁴ This entailed that allies operating 'out-of-area' could make use of NATO facilities such as infrastructure, collective equipment and co-ordinating procedures. General Vigleik Eide, chairman of NATO's Military Committee at the time, had publicly highlighted allied contributions to the international coalition in areas such as logistics and material.³⁵ 'Passive solidarity' implied a small step forward in relation to Cold War 'out-of-area' policy, but not a radical change. In many ways it simply formalised an already agreed policy. However, despite vague references to phrases like 'crisis management' and 'conflict prevention' in connection with incidents that could develop into a *direct* threat, NATO would continue to be a collective defence organisation and the justification for its existence was, to a large extent, the threat posed by the Soviet Union.

However, the immediate collapse of the Soviet Union, and the escalating war in Yugoslavia made NATO's new Strategic Concept more or less outdated less than a year after its inception. Even though the new Concept opened up for 'appropriate co-ordination of efforts in fields of common concern', no directions were given with regard to what this really entailed. Therefore, when NATO declared its willingness to support the UN and the OSCE on a case-by-case basis in June 1992, NATO took its first step into a new 'out-of-area' role. The fact that this decision had not been made half a year earlier in connection with the formulation of the new Strategic Concept, clearly indicated that NATO's new 'out-of-area' policy was a result of the events of the day rather than conscious choice based on a longer time perspective.

The dissolution of Yugoslavia

NATO's future role and the wars in former Yugoslavia

When Yugoslavia started to disintegrate in 1990-91, the initial assessment of most major Western powers was that the conflict was of little strategic significance and that national interests were not at stake. Four years later, however, the war in Bosnia had become 'the most challenging threat to existing norms and institutions that Western leaders faced.'³⁶ The war in Bosnia had also caused the deepest rifts in NATO on 'out-of-area' issues since the Suez crisis in 1956. Moreover, as NATO's intervention in Bosnia was the first armed force operation in the history of the Alliance, its military credibility came to depend on the success of the operation. In the absence of a unifying external threat, NATO's first 'out-of-area' operation was seen by many as a test case for the future integrity and viability of NATO. The following question was therefore raised: 'If [NATO] leaves Bosnia without finishing the job, how can it be taken seriously anywhere else?'³⁷ Failure or success in Bosnia was then also linked to the resolution of all the other post-Cold War challenges NATO had to face. Bosnia became a test case for co-operation within the Partnership for Peace, with Russia, and new members. The fate of Bosnia, and later also Kosovo, the fate of NATO and the enlargement process became closely interconnected.³⁸ In the words of Richard Cohen: 'The future of NATO ... is inextricably linked to what happens in Bosnia. We cannot have it both ways: an expanded and still-important NATO, and a failed effort in Bosnia.'³⁹

The reason why Bosnia and Kosovo became so important to NATO's future was explained by Robert E. Hunter, US ambassador to NATO, as follows: 'When I arrived [at NATO], I found the alliance drifting into irrelevancy because of the Bosnian conflict. It wasn't NATO's fault, but the perception was that NATO was failing because it wasn't halting a conflict threatening Europe and causing moral outrage.'⁴⁰ Thus, NATO's continued relevance and military credibility became linked to the successful resolution of the conflicts in the Balkans.

The process of dissolution

The forces behind Yugoslavia's dissolution have been thoroughly described and analysed since the first war broke out in 1991.⁴¹ Here it suffices to mention the most critical factors. The decentralised federal structures adopted by the Yugoslav leader Josip Tito in the early 1970s made centralised decision-making slow and cumbersome. When Yugoslavia was hard hit by economic recession in the 1980s, the central government was unable to respond effectively, primarily because the republics had diverging interests with regard to economic reform as their economies were so different. When Yugoslavia's strategic importance diminished following the end of the Cold War, Western financial aid dried up and the economic situation deteriorated further. Historical tensions between the different ethnic groups were then fuelled by leaders using nationalist rhetoric to rally support for their political goals. In this situation, Slovenia, the most economically advanced republic, correctly judged that Belgrade would not put up much resistance to its secession as the republic was ethnically homogenous. Croatia had a larger Serb minority, but after a short war in 1991, both Slovenia and Croatia gained international recognition. Thus the Bosnian Muslims had become a small minority in Yugoslavia dominated by an increasingly nationalistic regime in Belgrade. The question of whether the wars in the former Yugoslavia can be defined as civil wars or as wars of liberation from Serb repression, arouses strong emotions. But either classification would be too simplistic and unjust to the complexities of the many wars and conflicts which erupted throughout the disintegrating state between 1991 and 1995. The first brief armed struggle was fought on the border between Yugoslavia and Slovenia, which unilaterally declared its independence on 25 June 1991. The war only lasted for ten days when the Yugoslav National Army withdrew based on an agreement between the Yugoslav and Slovene leaders. Slovenia was the only ethnically homogeneous republic in Yugoslavia, and Milosevic wanted to concentrate his effort on areas with a Serb population. Furthermore, Germany and the United States, which saw the conflict as a war of independence between a Western democratic republic and communist repression, supported the Slovenes. A

cease-fire was brokered by the European Community (EC), and the consequences were summarised by Laura Silber and Allan Little as follows:

Slovenia had opted for force and had won a great prize. It had taught Europe a lesson that the peace mediators never once took on board - that war is sometimes not only a profoundly rational path to take, especially when you know you can win, but it is also sometimes the only way to get what you want.⁴²

The second war was fought between Yugoslavia and Croatia during the autumn of 1991. When Croatia unilaterally declared its independence on the same day as Slovenia, Serb militia, backed by the Yugoslav National Army, started to take control of the Serb-populated areas in Krajina, eastern Slavonia and central Croatia. The war raged for four months before the parties agreed to a cease-fire, brokered by negotiators from what by then had become the European Union.

The third Yugoslav war of secession escalated in Bosnia-Herzegovina during the spring of 1992. By then Bosnia's three ethnic groups (Muslims, Croats and Serbs) were irreconcilable. In October 1991, the Bosnian parliament voted for independence, resulting in the Bosnian Serbs walking out, and later forming a separate Serb parliament in Pale. In January 1992 the Pale parliament unilaterally declared the sovereignty of the Serb Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Tensions grew during the following months, and after an attack on the border town Zvornik, which involved Serb paramilitaries and the Yugoslav National Army, the Bosnian president, Alija Izetbegovic, issued a general mobilisation of the Bosnian territorial defence.⁴³ One month later, Bosnia descended into full war, and the systematic ethnic cleansing of the Serb-dominated areas in the north began.

The initial international response

In the first two months of 1992, Western states were preoccupied with two separate strategies: the EC initiated negotiations in Lisbon between the three

parties in the Bosnian conflict, based on the Swiss model with ethnic cantons. At the same time the United States launched a campaign for the international recognition of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which had been the odd man out following Europe's recognition of Slovenia and Croatia. The two separate strategies may have led Izetbegovic to withdraw his support for the Lisbon plan, in the hope that international recognition of Bosnia would result in international intervention.⁴⁴

As negotiations collapsed and the war in Bosnia escalated, the debate on Western intervention coincided with the debate on the future role of NATO, including the division of responsibility between Europe and the United States, regarding European security. Not surprisingly, the most eager calls for an international military intervention authorised by the UN came from countries which were not in a position to participate in any such action, most notably Germany (due to constitutional and historical constraints) and the Netherlands (which lacked the necessary combat forces). Washington, on the other hand, was reluctant to take part in or even finance a UN force. The US Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Colin Powell, set out a number of principles for military intervention based on the Gulf War experience, and advised against the use of force. Britain was also reluctant to participate, and feared an endless military commitment. As a consequence the piecemeal approach, which had characterised the response of the West to the conflicts in Slovenia and Croatia, continued. When the United States was finally pushed into action following a visit by the Bosnian Foreign Minister to Washington, the course of action chosen was to establish a humanitarian airlift to Sarajevo.⁴⁵ For lack of a political solution, the West focused on mitigating some of the most visible consequences of the war.

Dissent on how to prevent war

The debate on international recognition of the former Yugoslav republics revealed many problems in connection with the formulation of a common NATO policy regarding 'out-of-area' conflicts. At the time, Germany was the only NATO member which felt that its vital national interests were threatened

by the war, and the rest of the allies were reluctant to get involved. Moreover, it soon became clear that there was a significant difference between stating a preferred outcome, and providing the means to achieve it, as none of the allies were willing to deploy preventive forces in Bosnia. Transatlantic co-operation was further complicated by tensions between a divided Europe seeking greater influence and the United States, which was as reluctant to bear the financial burden of Europe's security as it was to relinquish its control over it.

Until mid-1991, Western states took little action in response to the many signs of Yugoslavia's disintegration. There was general support for a united Yugoslavia, whereas economic assistance and political support for democratisation favoured the seceding republics.⁴⁶ Western unity faltered when German policy began to change in favour of recognition during the summer of 1991. Germany's traditional multilateralism gave way to an unprecedented *Aleingang* regarding the question of recognition. The change in German policy was due to a combination of pressure from domestic groups siding with the Slovenes and the Croats (including the Catholic Church and the Croatian *gastarbeiter* community), the effect of thousands of refugees flowing into the country during 1991, and a genuine desire to put an immediate end to the violence erupting not far from the German border.⁴⁷ International recognition of Slovenia and Croatia was aimed at deterring the use of the Yugoslav National Army to keep Yugoslavia united, as this would then become a violation of two sovereign states.

Apart from Austria, none of the Western powers initially supported Germany's policy. In fact, the EC-appointed mediator, Lord Carrington, the UN Secretary General and his envoy, Cyrus Vance, the US State Department and the international diplomatic corps in Belgrade, including Germany's own ambassador, warned of the potentially disastrous consequences (primarily for Bosnia) of premature recognition.⁴⁸ Despite this warning, Germany officially recognised Slovenia and Croatia in December 1991 and the European countries followed suit in January 1992. An important factor behind the change of policy by the European countries was the completion of negotiations regarding the Maastricht Treaty in December 1991, in which the Yugoslav crisis came to be seen as a test case for the ability of the European

Union to develop a common foreign and security policy.

The United States continued to withhold recognition for a while, but its policy was far from clear and consistent. The Bush administration favoured a united Yugoslavia, but made it clear that the United States would not accept the use of force to achieve this. On the other hand, it was made equally clear that the United States would not engage its own forces to prevent this from happening. US policy was further confused by repeated resolutions from Congress calling for increased independence for the Albanian minority in Kosovo.⁴⁹ The White House was also anxious to demonstrate to domestic audiences that the United States would not continue to shoulder the bulk of Europe's post-Cold War security expenses.⁵⁰ There was an undercurrent in Washington, 'often felt but seldom spoken', that it was time for the Europeans to show that they could act as a unified power, following years of transatlantic tension regarding the US role in Europe.⁵¹ Consequently, international mediators lost their most valuable 'bargaining chip' - a unified international stance, linking recognition to an overall solution, including a solution to issues such as contested borders and minority rights.

A military option?

The question of external military intervention in Yugoslavia was the only point on which the major NATO powers agreed. None of the allies was willing to use force to back up their policy.⁵² In the autumn of 1991 NATO's 'out-of-area' capacity was in some ways rather limited. The new Rapid Reaction Corps was still in the planning stage. Few senior NATO officers or planners had any experience in peacekeeping or understanding of the inherent limitations of the use of force in peacekeeping operations. The extent to which diplomatic, civilian, humanitarian and military aspects were interrelated in such operations was also something new to NATO's military staff.⁵³ More importantly, there was no political consensus on an independent role for NATO in operations outside Article 5. According to the US ambassador in Belgrade, Warren Zimmerman, no Western government called for a military intervention by NATO in the Serbs-Croat war at the time: 'The use of force

was simply too big a step to consider in late 1991'.⁵⁴ However, the outbreak of war in Bosnia a few months later made it impossible not to consider this option.

The question of NATO involvement

The first half of 1992 was also a turbulent time for NATO. Uncertainty regarding the future of the Alliance reached a new high, and competition between the 'Atlanticists', led by the United States, and the 'Europeanists', led by France, was intense. In the midst of this competition, the North Atlantic Council decision on 4 June 1992 became the decisive step towards a new role for NATO outside the treaty area. The Council decided to 'support, on a case by case basis in accordance with our own procedures, peacekeeping activities under the responsibility of the CSCE, including making available Alliance resources and expertise'.⁵⁵ What had changed in the last six months since the adoption of the new Strategic Concept?

First, the Soviet Union had become the Commonwealth of Independent States, with a drastically reduced conventional military capacity. The threat of a major attack on NATO territory by conventional forces did not exist in the foreseeable future.⁵⁶ Questions such as 'Why do we need American troops in Europe if they are not going to be used for real security problems?'⁵⁷ began to appear frequently in American newspaper columns. The US Congress soon raised similar questions as well.

Secondly, the members of the Western European Union had decided to increase the operational capacity of the organisation. In late May 1992, the French and German heads of states, Francois Mitterand and Helmut Kohl, launched a proposal for a 35,000-strong joint army corps, intended to be the nucleus of a future European army. On the day that the Eurocorps was announced, the US State Secretary, James Baker, called for political, diplomatic and economic action against Serbia, after having conferred with the British Prime Minister, John Major.⁵⁸ Even though Baker did not call for military intervention, he argued that NATO was the only organisation able to field forces of the kind needed to impose a cease-fire in Yugoslavia.⁵⁹

The UN's limited capacity was a third factor which opened up for NATO involvement. Many newspapers argued that peace had to be enforced, not brokered, in Yugoslavia and that NATO had to assume this role.⁶⁰ The UN Secretary General, Boutros Boutros Ghali, fuelled the NATO-WEU competition by suggesting that he might ask the WEU to undertake peacekeeping operations in Bosnia.⁶¹

What finally prompted NATO to act was probably the discussion prior to the CSCE meeting in Helsinki in July. By early summer it became clear that the CSCE was about to expand its responsibilities to include peacekeeping on the European continent, but there was no agreement as to how this should be done. France predictably objected to any expansion of NATO's role, and argued that the CSCE should direct future requests for military assistance to individual states, not to regional organisations. Nevertheless, France caved in to pressure and the NAC made a formal decision to support the CSCE on a case-by-case basis. Following NATO's decision, the WEU soon followed suit, and on 19 June, issued the Petersberg Declaration, stating its willingness to 'support, on a case by case basis and in accordance with our own procedures, the effective implementation of conflict-management measures, including peacekeeping activities of the CSCE or the United Nations Security Council.'⁶²

Thus, within the same month, both the Atlantic and European defence organisations had opened up for involvement in peacekeeping operations, outside their 'normal' area of operation. Edward Mortimer of the Financial Times perceptively questioned whether 'the argument is not really about what should be done in the former Yugoslavia but about future security arrangements in Europe.'⁶³

However, the implications of these decisions were far from obvious. The geographical areas mentioned in the discussions at the NAC meeting were the former Yugoslavia and Nagorno Karabakh. However, the US Defence Secretary, Dick Cheney, made it clear that NATO 'won't necessarily take the next step in thinking Yugoslavia is the first place to implement such a decision',⁶⁴ and the United States and Britain both stressed that there were no plans to send a NATO peacekeeping force to Croatia or Bosnia.⁶⁵ None of the

Alliance members appeared to envisage the establishment of a permanent standby peacekeeping force. The fact that the NATO communiqué only referred to operations mandated by the CSCE, and not the UN, also indicated a lack of clarity for the implications. The main argument for allowing NATO assistance in such operations was its military strength, NATO being the only organisation able to enforce peace. But the CSCE clearly drew the line at peacekeeping, leaving enforcement actions to the UN Security Council.⁶⁶ In the end, it was the UN Security Council, that issued a mandate for NATO's first operation launched less than two months later. As noted by Rosalyn Higgins, 'without treaty amendments to allow it either to act in circumstances other than an attack on one of its members, or out of area, NATO had determined to do both of those things.'⁶⁷

Operation Maritime Monitor

In response to a formal request from the UN Secretary General to NATO and the CSCE, both NATO and the WEU authorised parallel naval operations to monitor international compliance with UN sanctions against former Yugoslavia.⁶⁸ Thus NATO's involvement in the Yugoslav crisis began when the NATO Standing Naval Force Mediterranean entered the Adriatic Sea on 16 July 1992.⁶⁹ At the time, NATO had never carried out an exercise for peacekeeping purposes and had no contingency plans for peacekeeping operations.⁷⁰ Once more, the decision to launch the operation seemed to be only partly related to events in Bosnia. A naval surveillance operation could only be expected to have a marginal influence on a war that was being fought on the ground. NATO's members had ruled out the use of force, but also stated their willingness to use NATO in support of 'peacekeeping activities'. The combination of a reluctance to use force and a need to demonstrate NATO's capability to act, led to the decision to launch a naval operation. This became NATO's first reluctant step into an 'out-of-area' role.

1992-1995: UN assistant

Introduction

Over the next three to four years, NATO's involvement in Bosnia increased gradually. Throughout this period, NATO's role was restricted to the provision of military support to the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), which was operating on the ground. Even though NATO's role remained one of support to another organisation, NATO's involvement expanded both quantitatively and qualitatively. The quantitative expansion occurred as new tasks were added to those already performed by NATO. The qualitative expansion took place through an increase in the use of force, a growing willingness to intervene directly in the war, and a gradual increase in NATO's control of the entire international operation. In December 1995, the transformation culminated with the formal transition of power from UNPROFOR to the NATO-led Implementation Force (IFOR).

During this period, NATO had to confront three major challenges. The first was how to apply force in a peacekeeping operation. The second was how the UN and NATO, with their fundamentally different purposes, structures and traditions, could effectively work together towards the same goal. And the third was how to identify common interests and common policy within the Alliance with regard to an 'out-of-area' conflict. NATO's struggle to tackle these challenges will be analysed in four main parts.

First, a brief presentation of all NATO activities relating to the conflict in the former Yugoslavia during the UNPROFOR period will be provided in order to show the gradual, and almost accidental, expansion of NATO's engagement. Secondly, political developments which provided the basis for NATO's operations will be discussed briefly. Thirdly, NATO's attempt to apply force in pursuit of ambiguous and unclear political goals will be analysed. The final part will examine how NATO's members tried to establish a new basis

for NATO's engagement in the first 'out-of-area' ground operation in its history.

NATO's support of UNPROFOR – a brief description

The first expansion of NATO's tasks in Bosnia took place in October 1992, when NATO's naval monitoring operation was mirrored by Operation Sky Monitor. NATO's Early Warning and Control System (AWACS) force began to monitor the UN 'ban on military flights in the airspace of Bosnia-Herzegovina'.⁷¹ The operation was an extension of the role of NATO AWACS aircraft already involved in the monitoring operation in the Adriatic. The information gathered was to be passed on to UNPROFOR as part of its overall monitoring operation on the ground.

The first qualitative expansion took place when Operation Maritime Monitor was changed to Operation Sharp Guard in November 1992. With reference to Chapter VII and VIII of the UN Charter, the Security Council called upon 'States, acting nationally or through regional agencies or arrangements, to use such measures commensurate with the specific circumstances as may be necessary under the authority of the Security Council to halt all inward and outward maritime shipping in order to inspect and verify their cargoes and destinations and to ensure strict implementation of the provisions of Resolutions 713 (1991) and 757 (1992)'.⁷² The resolution allowed for the use of coercive force in the ongoing naval operations in the Adriatic.

The second qualitative expansion took place when the air operation was also authorised to use force. On 31 March 1993, the UN Security Council (again acting under Chapter VII of the Charter) authorised member states 'acting nationally or through regional organisations or arrangements, to take, under the authority of the Security Council and subject to close co-ordination with the Secretary General and UNPROFOR, all necessary means in the airspace of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the event of further violation to ensure compliance with the bans on flights...'.⁷³ The North Atlantic Council approved plans for Operation Deny Flight on 8 April. The

operation began four days later.

A few months later, another step was made when NATO was authorised to use 'protective air power in case of attack against UNPROFOR in the performance of its overall mandate, if it so requests'.⁷⁴ The close air support operation began on 22 July 1993. Then, on 2 August 1993, in response to Serb advances outside Sarajevo, the North Atlantic Council expanded its own mandate, without UN authorisation. After a lengthy debate, the Council decided to make an 'extensive interpretation' of UN Security Council Resolution 836, which authorised close air support in defence of UNPROFOR, by stating:

The Alliance has now decided to make immediate preparations for undertaking, in the event that the strangulation of Sarajevo and other areas continues, including wide-scale interference with humanitarian assistance, stronger measures including air strikes against those responsible, Bosnia Serbs and others, in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

In other words, NATO would not only provide protection for UNPROFOR, it would also conduct retaliation air strikes against one of the conflicting parties. Even though it was stressed that possible strikes should not be interpreted as a military intervention in the conflict,⁷⁵ NATO was, in practice, becoming directly involved in the war. However, the UN remained largely in control of NATO operations through the command arrangement, as NATO's use of air power had to be authorised by the UN Secretary General.

These arrangements were the basis for NATO involvement over the next two years. A further step was taken in July 1995, when the UN control of air power was abandoned by an amendment of the command structure. The authority to approve air strikes was delegated from the UN Secretary General (or his special representative) to the commander of UNPROFOR. The chain of command now only consisted of military personnel from NATO countries.

Finally, in August 1995, NATO decided to intervene directly and decisively in the war. After a mortar attack on Sarajevo, the Commander in Chief of AFSOUTH and the Force Commander of UNPROFOR authorised air strikes

against Bosnian Serb military targets, pursuant to UN Security Council Resolution 836.⁷⁶ Operation Deliberate Force began on 30 August 1995. Over the next two weeks 3,515 sorties were carried out. On 14 September, the Serbs requested negotiations and agreed to the UN/NATO demands. By the end of the year the Dayton Agreement had been signed and NATO's first peacekeeping ground force (IFOR) had formally taken responsibility for the international operation in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

This brief description of NATO's gradually increasing involvement outside the NATO area shows that the escalation of NATO involvement was driven by day-to-day developments in the theatre, up to the point where NATO was so deeply involved that the credibility of the Alliance became intrinsically linked to its ability to manage the conflict. At the end of the UNPROFOR period, NATO had learned some expensive lessons. First, the difficulties connected with use of force in a peacekeeping operation had been painfully demonstrated. Secondly, co-operation with the UN had demonstrated the difficulties of unifying NATO's need for swift and decisive action with the UN's need for broad consensus on a much wider range of interests. The most important lesson, though, was that an operation with no clear common NATO interest, resulted in the pursuit of differing national interests and a predominance of domestic agendas, which caused serious strains on the internal cohesion of the Alliance.

The political setting

Search for a political solution

Between 1993 and 1995, there was no consensus among the major NATO powers with regard to a political solution to the war in Bosnia. On the contrary, there was disagreement over (1) which strategy to pursue to end the war, (2) which measures to apply to mitigate and contain the conflict and (3) in connection with this, the application of force by NATO.

No less than four different peace plans were launched in 1993. The first plan, named after its creators, EU representative, Lord David Owen, and UN

envoy, Cyrus Vance, divided Bosnia into ethnically homogenous provinces within one state. The plan was rejected by the Bosnian Serbs, and the next bid for peace was the Stoltenberg-Owen Plan, which was negotiated in July and August 1993. As this plan gave the Muslims a smaller share of the territory than the Vance-Owen Plan, no Western government was willing to put pressure on President Alija Izetbegovic, and the Bosnian parliament rejected the plan. The third attempt to reach a settlement was made on the British aircraft carrier, HMS Invincible, in September, but there was still no will to put pressure on the Bosnian Muslims, who again rejected the plan. In November, the European Union proposed a fourth plan which entailed the lifting of the economic sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro in return for a transfer of territory held by the Serbs to the Bosnians. However, the Americans refused to lift the sanctions, whereas Russia insisted that sanctions should be lifted right away, and the plan collapsed at a meeting in Brussels in December.⁷⁷

All the plans failed to get the backing from all the external powers with an interest in the outcome, and NATO's members also failed to give united support to any of the plans. The United States, which had the greatest influence over the Bosnian Muslims, found it particularly difficult to commit to any of the suggested political solutions. The incoming Clinton administration appeared to be both ambivalent and divided about the war in Bosnia. In February the United States expressed reservations regarding the Vance-Owen Plan on the grounds that it rewarded Serb aggression. UN ambassador, Madeline Albright, argued that the plan amounted to 'rewarding aggression and punishing the victims', and advocated a more forceful approach involving air strikes. However, both Congress and the military establishment were wary of being dragged into the conflict. The US Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Colin L. Powell, repeatedly argued that air strikes alone were not likely to deter Serb aggression⁷⁸ and Congress expressed anguish regarding the possibility of US troops on the ground in Bosnia, as implicitly entailed by the Vance-Owen plan. By April, US State Secretary Warren Christopher's characterisation of the war in Bosnia had changed from 'a test case for America's ability to nurture democracy in the post-Cold War world' to 'an intractable 'problem from hell' that no one can be expected to solve'.⁷⁹

The first significant progress in the peace negotiations was made when the Americans decided to get directly involved in late 1993. In January 1994 the United States announced that the Bosnian Muslims and Bosnian Croats, who had been engaged in heavy fighting since the previous summer, had agreed to a new Muslim/Croat Federation.⁸⁰ The idea of the Federation came about largely due to growing US desperation. Documentation of Croat atrocities against Muslims in central Bosnia threatened to provoke international sanctions against Croatia. The United States was concerned about the humanitarian consequences of such sanctions for the many refugees in Croatia and Bosnia. Furthermore, the shipment of arms to the Muslim forces through Croatia, which was secretly supported by the Americans, would become impossible. The United States, therefore, pressured the Croats to agree to the establishment of the Federation. However, the US engagement in the peace negotiations was only of limited duration.

In early 1994, growing frustration over the lack of political support from the great powers during the negotiation process led to the establishment of the Contact Group, consisting of the United States, Russia, Britain, France and Germany. The group presented a new 'take-it-or-leave-it' peace plan to the parties in June 1994. When the Bosnian Serbs rejected the plan for the third time in August, the Group was unable to agree on the next move. The United States and Germany insisted on isolating the Serbs, hoping that they would give in to pressure. The remaining members of the group feared that isolating the Serbs would only push them to adopt an even more radical policy. Unable to agree on this, the peace negotiations reached a stalemate, which lasted for more than a year. The warring parties did not meet to negotiate between August 1994 and the preparation of the Dayton negotiations in October 1995.

During this search for a political solution, consultations across the Atlantic were far from optimal. Germany was the only European ally directly involved in the negotiation of the Federation, a fact that created some unhappiness among Europeans as they were effectively 'cut out of Bosnia diplomacy'.⁸¹ It was alarming that the lines of division cut right through NATO, with some allies siding with Russia and others with the United States. Unable to agree on one peace plan, the countries involved focused on measures to mitigate and

contain the conflict. However, even then, the United States and various European countries favoured not only differing, but to a great extent, contradictory strategies.

NATO's role in measures to relieve human suffering

As the numerous attempts to negotiate peace in 1993 were unsuccessful, the humanitarian situation in Bosnia deteriorated rapidly. This led to public outrage in many countries and harsh criticism from the US Congress. In April 1993, the Senate opposition leader, Robert Dole, described the US policy in Bosnia as a disaster and advocated a 'lift and strike' policy, which involved the removal of the arms embargo against the Bosnian government and air strikes against Serb military targets. The Democrat chairman of the Senate Sub-Committee on European Affairs supported the call for air strikes against Serb artillery,⁸² whereas the US military leadership remained largely opposed. Nevertheless, pressure on the administration to adopt a more forceful policy towards the Serbs led to an American push for the stronger enforcement of sanctions. NATO first felt the consequences of this when the organisation was asked to enforce the no-fly zone over Bosnia-Herzegovina. On 31 March, the UN Security Council authorised member states

acting nationally or through regional organisations or arrangements, to take, under the authority of the Security Council and subject to close co-ordination with the secretary-general and UNPROFOR, all necessary means in the airspace of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the event of further violation to ensure compliance with the bans on flights.⁸³

In a letter dated 8 April 1993, NATO's Secretary General, Manfred Wörner, informed the UN Secretary General that NATO had taken the necessary measures to ensure compliance with the ban, and the operation began on 12 April 1993. However, the ban on flights did not stop the fighting on the ground.

Another, and far more controversial measure to mitigate the humanitarian consequences of the war was the establishment of 'safe areas', which were to cause tremendous problems for both the UN and NATO throughout the UNPROFOR period. Safe areas were created as a result of a series of events and several unfortunate compromises between conflicting interests within the UN Security Council.⁸⁴ The safe area concept had initially been launched in 1992, but failed to gain the support of the five permanent members of the Security Council. At that time, the international negotiators, Owen and Vance, argued that safe areas would facilitate, rather than hamper, ethnic cleansing. However, as the humanitarian situation in the isolated Muslim enclaves deteriorated during the spring of 1993, the Security Council was confronted with a stark choice: either evacuate the enclaves, and thus stand accused of facilitating ethnic cleansing, or attempt to improve conditions for the people living there. To complicate matters, the Bosnian government was opposed to evacuation, which would entail surrendering territory to the Serbs. In addition, the removal of refugees from the enclaves would weaken pressure for an international humanitarian intervention.

Pressure mounted in favour of more assertive international action for reasons largely unconnected to developments in the refugee enclaves. The US administration's reservations regarding the Vance-Owen plan led to a search for alternative strategies that would demonstrate action without committing to the deployment of US forces. Transatlantic bickering over the Vance-Owen Plan and the pressure from Congress for a 'lift and strike' policy also made it necessary to find an alternative which could re-establish NATO unity.

On 14 April 1993, a Serb offensive threatened to overrun the Muslim enclave in Srebrenica. Two days later the UN Security Council demanded that 'all parties and others concerned treat Srebrenica and its surroundings as a safe area which should be free from any armed attack or any other hostile act'.⁸⁵ On 6 May, Sarajevo, Tuzla, Zepa, Gorazde and Bihac were given the same status by the UN Security Council.⁸⁶

NATO became involved one month later when the Security Council extended UNPROFOR's mandate to

*deter attacks against the safe areas, to monitor the cease-fire, to promote the withdrawal of military or paramilitary units other than those of the Government of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and to occupy some key points on the ground, in addition to participating in the delivery of humanitarian relief to the population.*⁸⁷

In order to carry out its new mandate, UNPROFOR was authorised

*acting in self-defence, to take the necessary measures, including the use of force, in reply to bombardments against the safe areas by any of the parties or to armed incursion into them or in the event of any deliberate obstruction in or around those areas to the freedom of movement of UNPROFOR or of protected humanitarian convoys.*⁸⁸

In order to enable UNPROFOR to perform these new tasks, the UN Security Council also authorised that

*Member States, acting nationally or through regional organisations or arrangements, may take, ... all necessary measures, through the use of air power, in and around the safe areas in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, to support UNPROFOR in the performance of its mandate.*⁸⁹

This highly unclear mandate meant that NATO's role was limited to the support of UNPROFOR. UNPROFOR's mandate was inherently contradictory in that UNPROFOR was to deter attacks against the safe areas - not protect or defend them, which would have required troops that no-one was willing to offer - but force should only be used when acting in self-defence. The failure to define the safe areas geographically also meant that they were basically indefensible from a military point of view. Furthermore, to 'promote the withdrawal of military or paramilitary units other than those of the Government of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina' meant that only the Bosnian Serbs were to withdraw, and that withdrawal would have to be

based on consent. The non-aligned countries wanted to extend UNPROFOR's mandate to *the defence* of the safe areas, and would only support the resolution if the Bosnian forces were allowed to remain within the safe areas. Consequently, in order to secure the support of the non-aligned countries, the Bosnian government forces were not obliged to withdraw from the safe areas. However, by allowing the government forces to remain, the safe areas would not be demilitarised, and UNPROFOR would end up defending one army against the other. Consequently, the UN in practice departed from the principle of impartiality.

Probably realising the weakness of this strategy, all the major powers declined to contribute troops for deployment in the safe areas. The Security Council dismissed as excessive an assessment by the UN secretariat, which estimated that 34,000 troops would be needed for the implementation of the safe area resolution. As the UN secretariat was under considerable pressure to come up with a solution, a 'light option' of 7,600 troops was submitted, and subsequently accepted by the Security Council.⁹⁰ The combination of an inherently contradictory and unclear mandate, which one of the parties did not view as impartial, and grossly insufficient resources for its implementation, would soon undermine the credibility of both NATO and the UN.

'Towards the abyss' – use of force in a political vacuum

As there was no agreement on a comprehensive political solution, NATO's military operations became largely detached from the political deliberations. NATO operations were in response to separate incidents on the ground, without an overall strategy, and were a compromise between numerous actors with differing interests and agendas. Two main lines of conflict soon became apparent; first between NATO and the UN, and second between the United States and the NATO countries with troops on the ground in Bosnia (in UNPROFOR). The struggle between the UN and NATO was over the control of the NATO operation, whereas the struggle between the United States and its European allies was about the choice of policy. Both struggles came to a head over the question of the use of air strikes against the Bosnian Serbs.

At the North Atlantic Council meeting on 10 June 1993, NATO gave its support to the establishment of safe areas and offered protective air power in case of attack against UNPROFOR, 'if it so requests'.⁹¹ This seemingly unproblematic formulation became known as the 'dual key' arrangement, requiring the approval of both the UN and NATO in order to launch NATO air strikes. However, this command and control procedure would soon create problems for NATO's reputation as an effective military organisation. An important step was taken on 2 August when NATO decided 'to make immediate preparations for undertaking, in the event that the strangulation of Sarajevo and other areas continues, including wide-scale interference with humanitarian assistance, stronger measures including *air strikes against those responsible*, Bosnian Serbs and others, in Bosnia-Herzegovina.'⁹² The decision implied an extended interpretation of the UN resolutions, as the UN had only authorised use of force in self-defence, not punitive air strikes against one of the parties. NATO's independent decision was modified by stating that the new measures were to be conducted in full co-ordination with the UN, 'within the framework of relevant UN Security Council resolutions'.⁹³ The decision was made under considerable pressure from the Americans, who had drafted the initiative.⁹⁴ The Europeans, on the other hand, were concerned that punitive air strikes would entail the loss of UNPROFOR's impartiality, but gave in to pressure. However, the discussion regarding the criteria for actual use of air power was far from finished. One week later the North Atlantic Council approved the 'Operational Options for Air Strikes in Bosnia-Herzegovina', and specifically stated that the first use of air power in the theatre should be authorised by the UN Secretary General.⁹⁵ Even though the Europeans had accepted in principle an extended use of air power, they had been able to secure continued UN control over the new instrument. As a compromise between the US demand for a tougher stance against the Bosnian Serbs and UNPROFOR's need for consent from all parties, it was stated that the decision should 'not be interpreted as a decision to intervene militarily in the conflict'.⁹⁶

In a letter to the UN Secretary General in late July 1993, the US Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, made it clear that the United States would ask its

NATO allies to consider the use of air power 'against Bosnian Serb targets *at times and places of NATO's own choosing* ... consistent with authority already provided by Resolution 770 and 836'.⁹⁷ At the NATO meeting on 4 August, where the request was discussed, the Americans insisted that the UN should only retain direct control in cases where 'aircraft were called upon to protect UNPROFOR but not with regard to other uses against Bosnian Serb targets'.⁹⁸ The European allies and Canada opposed the US proposal, which they felt threatened to turn 'the whole UN operation from neutral peacekeeping to peace-enforcement',⁹⁹ something which UNPROFOR was neither equipped nor dimensioned to do. The US finally had to accept that 'the choice of targets for air strikes must be approved by both NATO and the UN, and ultimately, that the first such attack required approval by the UN Secretary General'.¹⁰⁰ The US concession was immediately criticised by Bob Dole, the Senate Republican leader, who argued that 'the American people did not elect Boutros-Ghali to run U.S. foreign policy'.¹⁰¹

NATO's resolve is put to the test

Disagreement over the use of air power did not really surface until the following year. Throughout 1994, however, NATO was repeatedly challenged by the Bosnian Serbs, resulting in punitive air strikes on six different occasions, close air support to UNPROFOR on one occasion and use of force to enforce the no-fly zone on another occasion. The air strike operations brought tensions between NATO and the UN over command and control arrangements to a head, as NATO went one step further by dictating conditions to the warring parties, and intervening directly in the war on the ground.

The first incident that provoked NATO into action was the mortar attack on Sarajevo market place, on 5 February 1994, which killed 68 civilians. Having repeated the promise to 'carry out air strikes in order to prevent the strangulation of Sarajevo, the safe areas and other threatened areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina' less than a month earlier, NATO's credibility was on the line.¹⁰² In a letter dated 6 February 1994, Boutros-

Gahli requested that the North Atlantic Council

*authorise the Commander-in-Chief of NATO's Southern Command to launch air strikes, at the request of the United Nations, against artillery or mortar positions in and around Sarajevo which are determined by UNPROFOR to be the responsible for attacks against civilian targets in that city.*¹⁰³

NATO's response on 9 February went one step further by demanding that all heavy weapons within a 20-kilometre exclusion zone should be withdrawn, and threatening to launch air strikes against any weapons remaining after the 10-day deadline had expired. The air strikes were to be conducted in 'close co-ordination with the UN Secretary General'.¹⁰⁴

Following more than 12 hours of discussion at the North Atlantic Council meeting, the decision was clearly a compromise between different views. The ultimatum entailed a new qualitative expansion of NATO's role, as such an intervention was, by its very nature, bound to be seen 'as a decision to intervene militarily in the conflict',¹⁰⁵ which was exactly what NATO had stated it would not do in August the previous year. The ultimatum was also a very broad interpretation of the UN Security Council resolutions, and provoked Russian reactions. Russia argued that the demand to hand over control of heavy weapons to UNPROFOR and withdrawal from a 20-kilometre radius around Sarajevo, required a new mandate from the Security Council. NATO countries, on the other hand, argued that this approach entailed a change of method not a change of policy.¹⁰⁶ But NATO was also forcing itself into a corner by setting an ultimatum without having the authority to fully control its own response to any violations of the ultimatum. The UN was still responsible for deciding whether there had been a violation, and whether air strikes should therefore be launched. This resulted in what former Special Assistant to the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping operations, Shashi Tharoor, called the problem of competing credibilities.¹⁰⁷ Whereas the credibility of the UN was based on established principles developed during the Cold War – the most important being impartiality,

consent and minimum use of force – NATO's credibility was linked to military effectiveness. If NATO failed to carry out its threat, one newspaper commented that NATO would 'lose what little credibility it still has and might as well pack its bags and admit that it has no further role to play as an effective security organisation in a post-Cold War Europe'.¹⁰⁸

In an attempt to clarify the command and control arrangements, Manfred Wörner stated that air strikes taking place before the deadline would need the approval of the UN, but once the deadline had expired, attacks would take place simply 'in close co-ordination' with the UN.¹⁰⁹ The Commander of the UN troops, General Sir Michael Rose, was of a different opinion, and contended that he had the authority to request the air strikes.¹¹⁰ However, the fight between the UN and NATO was postponed. After some controversy over the interpretation of the term 'control by the UN', and the deployment of Russian peacekeeping troops in the exclusion zone, it was decided that the Serbs had complied with the ultimatum, and the air strikes were called off.¹¹¹

The limits of NATO's effectiveness are revealed

While NATO's deterrence strategy worked in Sarajevo, it was less successful in Gorazde only a few months later. First of all, the vulnerability of NATO's close air support to UNPROFOR was effectively revealed, when UNPROFOR troops in Gorazde requested close air support on 10 and 11 April 1994. In response to this request, NATO bombed a Serb artillery command bunker and a group of tanks and armoured personnel carriers outside the city.¹¹² However, the NATO air strikes were ineffective for three main reasons. First, strikes against mobile tactical targets proved to be extremely vulnerable to bad weather conditions. In order to locate the targets, NATO planes had to descend below the clouds, and flying at such a low altitude left only seconds to identify targets as they overflew Gorazde. Secondly, flying this low also made the planes vulnerable to counter attacks by Serb forces on the ground, and one British Sea Harrier was in fact shot down. Finally, the vulnerability of the combination of air strikes and lightly armed peacekeepers on the ground was demonstrated when the Bosnian Serbs took 150 UN soldiers and aid

workers hostage and demanded that the air strikes be called off.¹¹³

The continued Serb offensive led to the second NATO ultimatum designed to protect the safe areas, issued on 22 April 1994.¹¹⁴ NATO's ultimatum to the Serbs surrounding Gorazde demanded that they immediately cease all attacks, pull back their forces to three kilometres from the city centre within two days, and provide free entry for UN forces, humanitarian relief convoys, and medical assistance teams. Failure to comply would be met with air strikes against Bosnian Serb heavy weapons and other military targets within a 20-kilometre radius from the centre of Gorazde. NATO also introduced a military exclusion zone around Gorazde, from which all heavy weapons had to be withdrawn within five days. Whereas the Sarajevo ultimatum had demanded that all parties withdrew their weapons from the exclusion zone, this time the demand was directed at the Serbs alone.

In the same ultimatum NATO also made an attempt to gain more control over its own ability to act. It was specified that NATO military authorities 'may recommend the initiation of additional air attacks, to be carried out in co-ordination with UNPROFOR',¹¹⁵ which meant that NATO would no longer only act on the request of the UN. Moreover, 'once air attacks have been carried out against a specific target set pursuant to these decisions, the NATO Military Authorities may continue to carry out, in co-ordination with UNPROFOR, the attacks against that target set until NATO Military Authorities judge the mission to be accomplished'.¹¹⁶ In other words, when an attack had been initiated, NATO's military leadership could decide when to call it off without consulting its political leaders. Even though the phrase 'in co-ordination with UNPROFOR' was still in place, the procedures attempted to effectively cut the UN out of the chain of command.

However, once again the situation ended without any clarification of who was really in charge. It was agreed that the Bosnian Serbs had complied with the ultimatum, but the decision was contested, and Serb paramilitary personnel, claiming to be policemen, not soldiers, were still observed within the three-kilometre limit.¹¹⁷ Some observers concluded that NATO's ultimatum had been respected, and the threat of using air power had been sufficiently credible to prevent its use.¹¹⁸ Others claimed that the Serbs had achieved their

goal of effectively encircling the enclave and that 'air strikes ... had come and gone with no effect on the course of the war'.¹¹⁹

UN-NATO struggle over command and control

Several lessons were learned about the relationship between the UN and NATO from the Sarajevo and Gorazde incidents in 1994. One lesson was that any attempt to make NATO 'the muscle' of a UN operation meant that the perception of each organisation would become largely indistinguishable from that of the other. The fact that NATO air strikes had been directed by forward controllers on the ground in UN uniforms, meant that the UN could not distance itself from the partiality entailed in air strikes conducted against one side only. NATO, on the other hand, had learned that its military strength was paralysed if the UN Special Representative, whose approval was required for launching air strikes, simply made himself unavailable on the phone. The two organisations, which depended on fundamentally different principles to retain their credibility, had become closely interlinked. Consequently, both organisations felt the need to retain control over the use of force.

But the NATO-UN disagreement was only to some extent the result of competing credibility; it was also a result of an internal disagreement between allies. The air strikes and exclusion zones (which would have to be defended by air power) were American initiatives, pushed through against the will of important allies such as Britain and France.¹²⁰ The air strike policy also caused controversy within the US administration. General John M. Shalikashvili, the new Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, stated on 7 April that '[r]ight now, it is our judgement that conditions in Gorazde do not lend themselves to the use of air power'.¹²¹ He was supported by the Defence Secretary, William J. Perry, but rebuked by State Department officials who maintained that air strikes were needed as leverage against the Serbs.¹²² The reason for the restrictive attitude of the US military was that air strikes were unlikely to have any military impact on Serb forces outside Gorazde. The rationale behind the use of air power was always the political, and not the military effect it would have on the Serbs. Though it was hoped that air strikes would demonstrate

Western resolve, this resolve proved to be limited, and the Serbs were not deterred. When the bluff was called, the air strikes had the opposite effect of revealing internal differences which weakened the bargaining position of the Western powers.

The relationship between NATO and the UN remained strained through the spring and summer of 1994, as did the relations between the United States and its European allies. A new dimension was added when the US administration, under intense pressure from Congress, repeated the threat to lift the weapons embargo against the Bosnian government. In response, Europe threatened to pull out of UNPROFOR.¹²³ In September 1994, the UN Secretary General noted:

the use of 'disincentives' such as the general imposition and stricter enforcement of the exclusion zones around the safe areas in order to influence the outcome of the conflict, or the lifting of the arms embargo in favour of the Government of B-H, would change the nature of the United Nations presence in the area and imply unacceptable risks to UNPROFOR. The former action would place UNPROFOR unambiguously on the one side of an ongoing conflict. The latter step would be tantamount to fanning the flames of that the United Nations is deployed to extinguish. In both cases the result would be a fundamental shift from the logic of peacekeeping to the logic of war and would require the withdrawal of UNPROFOR.¹²⁴

In the same report Boutros-Ghali made it clear that he had instructed that plans for the withdrawal of UNPROFOR at short notice were to be finalised, and that this operation would require 'the temporary introduction of a significant number of highly combat-capable ground forces provided by Member States outside the United Nations framework.'¹²⁵

But NATO was also becoming increasingly unhappy about the partnership. In September 1994, NATO was embarrassed following a UN-ordered pinprick air strike against an empty and immobilised Serb tank outside Sarajevo. Besides selecting an already immobilised target, UN commanders also gave the

Serbs warnings of the air strike. As a result, NATO requested that its mandate be changed in order to allow for multiple targets and no advance warning.¹²⁶ The UN Secretary General and Russia were reluctant to give NATO an increased military role, but finally gave in by the end of October. Advance warning would no longer necessarily be given before an air strike, and NATO would be authorised to strike against three or four targets each time.¹²⁷ NATO had succeeded in extending its mandate once again, but political disagreement within the Alliance had deepened, rendering these changes temporarily irrelevant.

The end of transatlantic unity

At the same time that transatlantic tensions peaked, the United States declared its intention to lift the arms embargo if the Serbs failed to endorse the Contact Group's peace plan launched on 15 October. Following a by then familiar pattern, the Europeans then threatened to withdraw from Bosnia. The American refusal to send troops to protect withdrawing allied troops, who were then likely to suffer severe losses, added new tensions.¹²⁸ Then, on 11 November 1994, the United States unilaterally announced that it would no longer participate in the enforcement of the arms embargo against former Yugoslavia and would cease to share intelligence concerning such shipments with the allies. The US order cut sharply across allied command arrangements and revealed an American disregard for the aims and constraints of its European allies.¹²⁹ On the other hand, the Clinton administration was under intense pressure from Congress to lift the embargo altogether, and the decision to stop enforcing it did alleviate some of that tension. Nevertheless, the decision prompted *The Economist* to ask whether in five years NATO governments would look back at the US decision, as their first formal parting of ways, and the beginning of a widening rift that would fatally weaken their alliance.¹³⁰

The fact that the allies were informed about the decision through a leaked newspaper story before any official notification had been given, indicated that NATO consultations over which policy to pursue in Bosnia had broken down.

The United States was also becoming more militarily involved in Croatia and the Bosnian Federation through agreements on military co-operation,¹³¹ which caused further criticism from its allies who favoured an even-handed approach. It was later revealed that the Americans had decided to turn a blind eye to Iranian arms shipments through Croatia earlier on in 1994.¹³²

With transatlantic relations below freezing point, Serb jet planes once again violated the no-fly zone and the safe area resolution by dropping napalm on the Bihac enclave, which was protected by 1,000 lightly armed soldiers from Bangladesh.¹³³ The subsequent NATO air strikes had limited effect, and only destroyed runways that were easy to repair. The Serbs responded by taking several hundred UN peacekeepers hostage.¹³⁴ The incoming Republican majority leader in Congress, Bob Dole, called for the withdrawal of UN forces, and the lifting of the arms embargo. Dole argued that NATO's military actions had so far been more or less irrelevant to the conflict, and that the Alliance was heading for 'a complete breakdown'.¹³⁵ Responding to the critics, the US Defence Secretary, William J. Perry, promised that the administration would consult carefully with Congress before committing any forces to a rescue operation in Bosnia, thus making it painfully clear that the United States would not automatically assist in the withdrawal of UNPROFOR.

The breakdown in consultation procedures was also evident in the Contact Group, which was managing the paralysed peace negotiations. At a meeting on 2 December, the Americans emphasised the need to continue to isolate the Bosnian Serbs and to maintain a united front within the Group. However, during the very same meeting the US representative received a message that Charles Redman, the US special envoy, was on his way to Pale to meet Radovan Karadzic, the Bosnian Serb leader.¹³⁶

The year ended with a number of questions hanging in the air. *The Financial Times* commented that while new models of 'burden-sharing' were being discussed, the general nature of the same burdens remained unclear,¹³⁷ and NATO had come to be viewed as a luxury rather than a necessity by many on both sides of the Atlantic.¹³⁸ Summing up the situation, one would have to conclude that NATO had not been able to influence the war in Bosnia. The UN-NATO struggle for control over the joint operations remained

unsettled. Transatlantic unity, 'the underlying political compact that binds North America's fate to Europe's democracies' as stated in NATO's first declaration in the post-Cold War era,¹³⁹ had almost collapsed. Over the next year, NATO's members managed at least to find temporary solutions to all these problems. However, it would get worse before it got better.

NATO crosses the line - from peacekeeping to enforcement

In 1995, NATO formally decided to 'cross the Mogadishu line'¹⁴⁰ by moving from peacekeeping to peace enforcement. At the same time NATO abandoned the role as a UN support organisation, and took complete control of its own operation. Both changes took place without a formal extension of the mandate from the UN Security Council. These important NATO decisions were once more a reaction to more or less unpredictable events on the ground in Bosnia. The turning point was the fall of Srebrenica in July 1995. After UNPROFOR was forced to abandon this so-called safe area to Bosnian Serb forces, the impossibility of upholding a peacekeeping operation in the midst of a war became clear to everyone.

The build-up to the crisis

The first months of 1995 were relatively calm as a cease-fire, brokered by former US president Jimmy Carter, lasted over the winter. However, both parties used the time to prepare for new rounds of hostilities and by the end of March fighting had resumed. A new confrontation between NATO and Bosnian Serb forces came to a head in late May. Once more a mortar attack killed a large number of civilians in Sarajevo, and NATO retaliated by striking at ammunition depots near Pale on 25-26 May,¹⁴¹ a retaliatory attack with no influence on the situation in Sarajevo. The Serbs responded by intensified attacks on Tuzla, another safe area, and also took several hundred UN troops and observers hostage. In addition, the strangulation of all the safe areas, including Sarajevo, was tightened. The Serbs appeared unaffected by both the

air raids and the strong condemnations from the North Atlantic Council. Consequently, international media commented that once more the Serbs had called the bluff of the United Nations and NATO.¹⁴² As the Bosnian Serbs continued to violate NATO-imposed ultimatums, and humanitarian conditions in the safe areas deteriorated even further, NATO's credibility as an effective military organisation was suffering badly.

Throughout the spring of 1995 the situation became more and more untenable for all those involved. It became increasingly clear that the UN operation was failing to fulfil its humanitarian mission, and serious preparations began for withdrawal. However, the plans for withdrawal also created transatlantic tensions. US reluctance to commit ground troops in support of a withdrawal resulted in a new transatlantic row over the NATO plan for UNPROFOR assistance. The situation changed decisively in June when France, Britain and the Netherlands agreed to reinforce UNPROFOR with 10,000 troops in a separate Rapid Reaction Force.¹⁴³ The new force would be subject to UN command, but would operate in national uniforms without blue UN helmets.¹⁴⁴ The contributing nations stated:

The purpose of the RRF would be to give the commander a capacity between 'strong protest and air strikes'; it would increase tactical operational flexibility and would be intended to have a deterrent effect but it would not change the United Nations role to peace-enforcement; the status of UNPROFOR and its impartiality would be unaffected.¹⁴⁵

The impartiality, which was the basis of the UNPROFOR operation, was thus maintained on paper, but from the perspective of the Serbs, the UN and NATO were siding with the Federation forces. At the same time *The Economist* pointed to another dilemma, when it asked whether turning a better-armoured cheek to Bosnian Serb provocations could camouflage the fact that it remained unclear what the new force was going to do.¹⁴⁶ However, the new force was the first indication of a change in Western policy. The deployment of the RRF-force caused concern in Washington, which feared that NATO and the United States would be sidelined in Bosnia.

A new transatlantic row broke out when an offer of US air and logistical support was made conditional on the US support not being subject to UN control.¹⁴⁷ However, a few weeks later, the NAC endorsed Operation Plan 40104, which obliged the United States to assist in the eventual evacuation of UNPROFOR.¹⁴⁸ The effects of Plan 40104 were twofold. First, it introduced a deadline making it impossible to continue the indefinite efforts to keep the fighting just below boiling point. The evacuation process was estimated to take six months, and would have to be completed before winter conditions made the use of air force difficult and roads impassable. Consequently, evacuation had to start soon, or wait until next spring. Furthermore, the evacuation plan raised the stakes of the external actors dramatically. The plan entailed the deployment of 20,000 American troops, and the US administration was suddenly confronted with a worst-case scenario: US forces deployed on the ground in Bosnia in an operation which was likely to be met with open resistance by the warring parties as well as by the civilian population. In the case of a UN withdrawal Washington's options were thus drastically narrowed: either to assist the operation or withhold its support, which would undermine the US role in European security policy.¹⁴⁹ According to Carl Bildt, who had replaced Lord Owen as the EU representative, confidence in NATO and its member governments would be severely damaged if the evacuation process led to horrifying pictures of Bosnian women and children trying to stop the NATO-assisted withdrawing forces. However, as the implementation of the plan implied political disaster, it also gave considerable political impetus to find a solution.¹⁵⁰ According to Richard Holbrooke, the US negotiator in Dayton, the United States was forced to find a policy that prevented UN withdrawal, and thus to get more heavily involved.¹⁵¹

The UN operation collapses – the fall of Srebrenica

Any hopes of a continuation of the hard-pressed UNPROFOR operation were finally shattered by the fall of Srebrenica on 11 July 1995. The same event effectively destroyed any illusions that may have remained as to what could be achieved by NATO air power, as were any illusions about the willingness of

UNPROFOR states to accept losses in defence of Bosnian civilians. The tragic events are well known. After days of intense shelling by the Serbs, the Dutch forces in Srebrenica requested NATO air strikes, which were finally approved by UNPROFOR after some bureaucratic entanglement. As soon as the air raids began the Serbs issued an ultimatum: 'if the attacks were not stopped forthwith they would kill the captured Dutch soldiers and shell the refugees and Dutchbat indiscriminately'.¹⁵² The Serb message was communicated to the UN Headquarters in Sarajevo and then directly to The Hague. The lightly armed and isolated Dutch troops were in no position to defend the enclave against the attacks, and the Dutch Defence Minister, Joris Voorhoeve, reacted immediately. Bypassing regular UN and NATO channels, he called NATO's Air Operation Co-ordination Centre in Vicenza directly and called off the air operation.¹⁵³ Consequently, the UN troops were forced to become passive bystanders as Serb forces entered the city and separated men and women.

The fall of Srebrenica had several consequences. Horrifying reports of the massacre of several thousand men in Srebrenica led to a public outcry and calls for a more robust international intervention. The fact that the UN Security Council declared that Srebrenica should be restored as a safe area¹⁵⁴ only served to highlight the gap between the words and deeds of the members of the UN Security Council. It was estimated that recapturing Srebrenica would require a force the size of a division. Given the situation it would be completely unrealistic to assemble such a force, and EU envoy Carl Bildt called the UN resolution 'absurd'.¹⁵⁵ In the United States, Congress finally carried out its threat to pass a vote ending the US participation in the arms embargo against Bosnia. Clinton vowed to veto the vote, but a two-third majority in each house of Congress could overturn the veto.¹⁵⁶ If this were to happen, the flow of weapons to the area would force Europe to withdraw its troops. In that case, the United States would have to fulfil its obligations according to Operation Plan 40104. In any event the transatlantic relationship would be severely damaged.

As both Europe and the United States were in a desperate position, they were able to agree on a new policy. NATO decided to take tougher actions against Serb attacks on the safe areas and the 'dual key' arrangement was

therefore revised. The UN civilian authorities were cut from the chain of command, despite Russia's objections.¹⁵⁷ The UN 'key' was delegated to the Force Commander of a strengthened UNPROFOR, the French General Bernard Janvier, who was authorised to delegate it further to the Commander of UNPROFOR, 'when operational circumstances so require'.¹⁵⁸ New rules of engagement were also agreed, allowing pre-emptive strikes on a wide range of targets in order to protect NATO planes from the Serb air defences.¹⁵⁹ NATO was determined to demonstrate its force - all it needed was new provocation from the Serbs.

Peace enforcement

The provocation came in late August when a new mortar hit the Sarajevo marketplace killing 37 people.¹⁶⁰ In retaliation NATO planes attacked Bosnian Serb positions around Sarajevo on 30 August. The ensuing Operation Deliberate Force lasted several weeks. There seems to be general agreement that the operation had a psychological effect on both sides and made international threats of the use of force more credible. The major advantages of the Serbs forces, which were superior mobility and firepower, also suffered, as NATO's bombs targeted the Serb lines of command and ammunition and fuel depots. However, the military effect of the air campaign was contested and it would be simplistic to argue that the air campaign ended the war. At the end of the campaign, NATO had almost exhausted its list of targets, which had been chosen carefully in order to minimise collateral damage and carnage.¹⁶¹ The commander of NATO's southern air forces, General Michael E. Ryan, recognised the limitations of the air operation, when he admitted that '... if NATO had committed an atrocity from the air, then we would be seen in the same light as those who were committing the atrocities in the ground. And that would have brought the operation to a dead halt'.¹⁶² Taking this into account, it seems unlikely that air operations alone could have ended the war. In fact, NATO was about to exhaust its 'Option Two' target list (ammunition dumps, communication equipment, arms factories and strategic bridges) when the Serbs complied with NATO's ultimatum and

agreed to a cease-fire.¹⁶³ If NATO had moved to 'Option Three', which included military bases, infrastructure and economic targets, the Serb casualties – both military and civilian – would inevitably have risen.¹⁶⁴

However, the air campaign boosted the morale of the Croat and Bosnian forces, who launched a new successful offensive on the ground.¹⁶⁵ By then, the situation on the ground had changed completely. The safe areas of Srebrenica and Zepa had already fallen. The UN force had withdrawn from Serb-controlled areas and had been reinforced by the Rapid Reaction Force, making it less vulnerable to Serb retaliation. Following the well-planned Croat offensive against the UN protected area of Krajina, which fell within days and created 200,000 Serbs refugees, the frontlines became clearer and intervention on behalf of one of the parties was thus made easier. The lack of reaction to the Krajina offensive by Belgrade and the important Western powers also demoralised the Bosnian Serb forces. Economic sanctions against Serbia had already resulted in a split between Belgrade and Pale, which fatally weakened the Bosnian Serbs, who were now effectively without allies. Consequently, on 20 September 1995, CINCSOUTH and the UN Peace Force Commander concluded that the Serbs had complied with the conditions set out by the two organisations: no attacks on Sarajevo and other safe areas, withdrawal from the Sarajevo exclusion zone and freedom of movement for the UN and NGOs and unrestricted use of the Sarajevo air port.¹⁶⁶ The air campaign was therefore called off.

Operation Deliberate Force was the last step in the informal extension of NATO's authority during the UNPROFOR period. The mandate for NATO's use of force was still vested in Security Council Resolution 836, issued in April 1993. Bearing in mind that NATO was only authorised to protect UNPROFOR and that UNPROFOR was only to use force in self defence, one must conclude that NATO had strayed considerably from the original mandate.

Why did NATO air power fail to deter Serb aggression?

NATO's use of air power during the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina continues to be a matter of discussion. Some are of the view that it was ineffective due to the 'wetness' of the UN secretariat which was primarily concerned with the

safety of its own troops. The UN's dilemma is illustrated by the much quoted statement by Yasushi Akashi, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General, who denied NATO air support on several occasions: 'the man you bomb today is the same man whose co-operation you may require tomorrow for the passage of a humanitarian convoy'.¹⁶⁷ Other people have blamed the complex and bureaucratic decision-making procedure vested in the 'dual key' arrangement. The procedure was clearly less than optimal, judging by military effectiveness standards. However, when the Dutch Defence Minister cut directly through both UN and NATO command chains to stop NATO attacks in order to save Dutch troops in Srebrenica, it demonstrated that the ineffectiveness of NATO air strikes could not have been solved by technical improvements. The problems were far more fundamental.

The original mission - close air support to protect UN forces under direct attack - was hampered by operational and technical difficulties. Close air support was only to be applied when the UN troops were already under attack. Due to cumbersome decision-making procedures and the fact that the air base was as far away as Italy, the Bosnian Serbs were able to call off the attack before NATO aircraft arrived. Attacks were also hampered by bad weather conditions and mountainous, forest-covered terrain which favoured the ground forces. Finally, as fighting took place in densely populated areas, the risk of air strikes causing collateral damage was considerable.

By using punitive air strikes, which became a major part of NATO's air operation, NATO avoided some of these difficulties (such as responding only to an on-going attack), but created new ones. First of all, as the air strikes were directed at only one party, NATO and the UN departed from an impartial role. As the safe areas were not demilitarised, they became strategically important in the ongoing war. The Bosnians used the safe areas for military installations, for troops to rest, train and equip themselves, and to fire at Serb positions. The safe areas thus permitted the Bosnian Government Army to launch new offensives against Serbs. According to the UN, the Headquarter of the Fifth Corps of the Government Army was located in Bihac, and that of the Second Corps in the town of Tuzla. The General Command of the Government Army was situated in Sarajevo, and a substantial number of

troops remained in Srebrenica, Gorazde and Zepa.¹⁶⁸ In such a situation, the UN Secretary General concluded, 'the efforts of UNPROFOR to defend the safe areas make it necessary to obstruct only one of the hostile forces, which considers itself to be merely reacting to offensives launched by the other.'¹⁶⁹ Intervention in the war proved impossible to combine with UNPROFOR's humanitarian mission, the success of which depended on the consent of all the parties.¹⁷⁰ In addition, lightly armed and thinly scattered peacekeepers on the ground were taken hostage in retaliation for the air strikes, which effectively paralysed NATO.

Any overall conclusion from the UNPROFOR period must take into account that the UN peacekeeping operation in Bosnia-Herzegovina was introduced even though there was no peace to keep. Continuous cease-fire violations, the absence of clear front lines and legitimate political authorities in the mission area all seriously challenged the UN's ability to carry out its mandate. The introduction of NATO as a 'muscle' behind the UN-led operation did not solve any of these problems and proved difficult for both organisations. As a result, NATO finally took control of the entire operation and adopted an independent enforcement role outside NATO territory. During the UNPROFOR period NATO's operations took place in a conceptual vacuum. Neither NATO as an organisation nor many of its members had a political-military doctrine for 'out-of-area' operations.¹⁷¹ Consequently, problems connected to the application of force in situations other than war were seriously underestimated in this first attempt to convert a collective defence alliance into an instrument for crisis management and peacekeeping.

Preparing for IFOR in Dayton

Operation Deliberate Force ended the Serb siege of Sarajevo, but the fighting continued in Western Bosnia where Croat and Bosnian forces were conquering lost territory and creating new refugee flows (this time consisting of Bosnian Serbs). After a month of brutal fighting on the ground in order to gain the most favourable position prior to the up-

coming peace talks, a cease-fire entered into force on 11 October and peace talks began at Dayton, Ohio, on 1 November 1995.

NATO's role at Dayton

NATO's role in the implementation of the peace plan was perhaps the least contentious issue during the peace negotiations in Dayton. According to the head of the British delegation at the peace talks, Pauline Neville-Jones, there was a 'high degree of underlying agreement' on this issue.¹⁷² The fact that the UN Secretary General had rejected the idea of an independent peacekeeping role for NATO only one year earlier illustrates how radically the situation had changed.

The idea of a NATO implementation force had been on the table since the negotiation of the Vance-Owen plan in 1993. However, it was not seriously assessed before July 1994, when Boutros-Ghali considered three options for the implementation of a peace agreement in Bosnia-Herzegovina based on the assumption that such a force would require 60,000 troops and would operate under Chapter VII of the UN Charter.¹⁷³ The three options were (1) a normal UN field operation; (2) a NATO force responsible for military operations combined with a UN operation responsible for police and civilian functions; and (3) an *ad hoc* unified task force comprising resources from interested member states and regional organisations.

The first option was ruled out for two reasons: a lack of the necessary personnel and funds, and insufficient capacity to command, control and manage such an operation. The Secretary General also decided against the second option, arguing that contingency planning had thrown light on a number of difficulties that militated strongly against this option, notably:

*the question of how some degree of United Nations political control could be exercised over the Force in the field and how adequate co-ordination could be effected between the military elements which would be under NATO command and the police and civilian elements which would be under United Nations command.*¹⁷⁴

Boutros-Ghali also pointed to Russia's reservation about NATO's role in the implementation of a negotiated settlement. He therefore recommended an *ad hoc* International Task Force, which would draw up its own financial, logistical and administrative arrangements. The task force would receive a mandate from the UN Security Council, which in turn would decide which arrangements were necessary to ensure that it received adequate information about the operation. Nevertheless, when the final peace talks began in Dayton, the only thing that was certain was that NATO would implement the comprehensive settlement. Consequently, an arrangement similar to the second option was chosen. However, at least some of the difficulties predicted by the UN Secretary General proved valid. In a discussion paper presented to NATO in September 1996, the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) concluded that the relationship between the UN and IFOR had been 'excellent in theory but poor in practice' and that, for instance, 'military information of political significance is not very well shared by IFOR thus affecting the effectiveness of the civilian implementation process'.¹⁷⁵ On the other hand, it seems unlikely that such problems could have been avoided by replacing the NATO force by an *ad hoc* force comprised of 'interested states'.

The Dayton Agreement – return to transatlantic unity?

To many, the Dayton Agreement was proof that the transatlantic tensions of the UNPROFOR period were a thing of the past. According to Pauline Neville-Jones 'The greatest relief of all [at Dayton] was that the Alliance had a basis on which to pull together'.¹⁷⁶ First of all, NATO members agreed that the credibility of the Alliance would have to be restored by an effective peacekeeping operation. Consequently, NATO's rules of engagement were the least controversial point in the negotiations. It was generally agreed that the new force needed robust rules of engagement and wide-ranging authority to use force in order to prevent a repetition of the humiliating UNPROFOR experience. As cease-fire agreements had been broken repeatedly over the last few years, compliance with Dayton was not expected to be optimal.

Consequently, NATO would not only observe and monitor compliance with the peace agreement, it would also enforce it. There was also a general understanding that the 'dual key' command should not be repeated, and that the new force would be commanded by SACEUR exclusively.

At closer range, the newfound NATO unity appeared to be rather fragile. Disagreements that arose during the peace negotiations indicated that not all transatlantic tensions had been alleviated. Some of the transatlantic disagreements in Dayton were nothing more than the usual squabbling between players who were looking to maximise leverage and minimise expenditure and risk. Such tensions were illustrated by disagreements over who was to oversee the planned elections, and the sharing of the financial burden of the peace implementation. However, at a more fundamental level, British negotiator Neville-Jones also admitted that 'policy differences between Europe and the US remain, albeit latent,' and that there was a very real risk that these could re-emerge.¹⁷⁷

Perhaps the most difficult point was the minor role assigned to the Europeans in Dayton, as the negotiations were, for all practical purposes, run exclusively by the Americans. The European allies were 'informed but not consulted' and their primary role was to assist as far as needed but not to interfere.¹⁷⁸ Whereas the lack of US engagement had caused great frustration in Europe during the war, the US solo-diplomacy from mid-1995 alienated many European governments. The US delegation, on the other hand, was frustrated by the lack of cohesion among the Europeans, which in their view made the decision-making procedures too slow and cumbersome.

But disagreement went beyond procedural matters. One example was the controversy about the relationship between the military and civilian peace implementation processes. During the peace negotiations, the Americans primarily focused on two closely connected issues: the division of Bosnian territory and the military implementation of the separation of the armies. According to Bildt, who had been appointed as leader of the civilian operation, the United States put its energy into drawing up a detailed description of how Bosnia was to be militarily and territorially divided.¹⁷⁹ The Europeans, on the other hand, paid more attention to the civilian implementation and

constitutional arrangements, which were to build bridges across the lines of separation between the two entities. It is not easy to say whether these differences merely reflected a division of labour between the Americans and the Europeans, or more profound conflicting views on the peace settlement. An initial disagreement regarding the overall purpose of NATO's deployment reflected two fundamentally differing views on how peace should be created in Bosnia. The original US implementation plan, presented to NATO in early September 1995, proposed that a NATO force, with broad mandates for the use of force, should be deployed only on Federation territory, and should remain in Bosnia until the Federation army had been sufficiently rearmed to defend itself.¹⁸⁰ Even though the US administration abandoned this plan, after pressure from the Europeans and the State Department,¹⁸¹ the idea materialised again in the 'train and equip' programme, which was negotiated exclusively between the US and the Federation government. The Europeans strongly opposed the programme, which consisted of US military aid to the Federation. According to its advocates, who were largely situated in Congress, the purpose of the 'train and equip' programme was to level the field and create a balance of power within Bosnia-Herzegovina, which in turn would allow the Americans to withdraw their forces within a relatively short time frame.¹⁸² This view differed radically from that of the Europeans, who feared that arming the Federation forces would encourage them to restart the war, and that NATO's impartiality would be jeopardised.¹⁸³

There was some disagreement regarding the co-ordination of the military and civilian implementation processes. Whereas the US military leadership wanted to limit the authority of the leader of the civilian peace process, the European military leadership advocated strong leadership of the civilian process. The European view was based on the UNPROFOR experience, which had demonstrated that most military issues had a political side to them as well.¹⁸⁴

Another point of disagreement was how to re-establish civil law and order in Bosnia. It was widely agreed that NATO/IFOR should not be given such tasks, and that there was a need for an international police force. The United States called for a robust force, which would enforce Bosnian laws and arrest

war criminals.¹⁸⁵ The Europeans, on the other hand, argued that such a force would be difficult to establish within the short time available, and more importantly, that *international* law enforcement would be extremely difficult as long as the laws would be formulated and administered by the *national* authorities. An international police force could then end up in a situation where it had to execute laws with which it disagreed, and arrest war crimes suspects, knowing that the national courts were likely to release them immediately.¹⁸⁶

The US focus on an exit strategy revealed a difference in the European and US approach to military operations 'other than war'. The latter tradition was influenced by the Vietnam experience, and centred on 'a deeply entrenched belief in the efficacy of technology and firepower as a means of minimising one's own casualties'.¹⁸⁷ The Vietnam heritage was reflected in the US demand for an exit strategy, which in this case equalled a fixed exit date. In retrospect, the folly of a fixed exit date after a year-long operation, may seem striking. The problems connected to a fixed exit date were also pointed out bluntly by former US State Secretary, Lawrence Eagleburger, among others: 'If you have a clear exit point in a place like Bosnia, it is like telling the parties that when our people get killed, we will leave. And that is exactly what the opponents of our presence would like. Instead of reducing the danger to our forces, it invites attack.'¹⁸⁸ But the US administration was under considerable pressure from Congress, and from the fact that polls showed that 70 per cent of the population opposed the deployment of US troops in Bosnia. It was therefore unlikely that Congress would have approved the deployment of US troops without being reassured that the mission would only last one year, no matter how unrealistic this might have been.

Congress' demand for an exit strategy was probably the main reason for the US insistence on the 'train and equip' program. As a bargaining point, the Republican leaders of the Senate and the House of Representatives, Robert Dole and Newt Gingrich, threatened to withhold support of US participation in the implementation force on the ground,¹⁸⁹ and the House of Representatives voted 243-171 to withhold funding of US troops unless legislators specifically endorsed the mission.¹⁹⁰ The Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, pledged

to consult with Congress on the matter, but stated prior to the Dayton negotiations that a US refusal to participate 'would be the end of Nato'.¹⁹¹ The final peace settlement was therefore a compromise, not only between the warring parties in Bosnia, but also between Europe and the United States and between the Pentagon, the State Department and Congress.

The Dayton Agreement ended the period where NATO acted as an assistant to the UN. Neither of the organisations were likely to want to repeat the experience, recognising that their roles and operational procedures differed too much. However, through the adoption of a more independent role in international crisis management, NATO could not escape the need for legitimisation of its operations by an authoritative body like the UN Security Council.

1995-1999: Independent enforcer

Introduction

NATO's first fully independent 'out-of-area' operation was deployed to Bosnia at the end of 1995. Since then, NATO as such or some of its members have been directly involved in several 'out-of-area' conflicts. During 1996 and 1997, NATO appeared to be stretched to its limits by the Bosnia operation. Consequently, internal instability in Albania and new confrontations with Iraq were handled through the traditional Cold War mechanism of ad hoc coalitions of the willing. However, the eruption of violence in Kosovo prompted a new joint NATO response, and this time NATO acted without UN authorisation. The air strikes against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) therefore marked the last step to date in the development of NATO's new 'out-of-area' role.

In this chapter, the experience of the first two years of NATO's operation in Bosnia will be analysed. It will be argued that the overall lesson from this experience is that there are clear, and often underestimated, limits to what can be achieved by the use of military force in inter-communal conflicts like the one in Bosnia. Secondly, NATO's two other ways of handling 'out-of-area' problems will be analysed, through the experience of the ad hoc coalitions in Albania and Iraq, and the use of NATO's new Partnership for Peace programme (PfP) in Albania. It will be argued that by using these flexible and low profile means of intervention, NATO was able to avoid attaching the overall reputation of the Alliance to the outcome of an 'out-of-area' conflict. However, confronted with a new large-scale humanitarian disaster in Europe, NATO was compelled to launch several new 'out-of-area' operations, realising that the credibility and relevance of the Alliance would be measured against its ability to resolve the Kosovo crisis.

NATO's first out-of-area ground operation

On 20 December 1995, NATO finally took centre stage in the international effort to end the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, when NATO's Implementation Force (IFOR) replaced UNPROFOR. By the same move, the Alliance also took another step in the piecemeal development of an independent role for NATO outside its own treaty area. The new force was under the political direction of the North Atlantic Council, commanded by NATO's Supreme Allied Commander, and the majority of troops came from NATO member countries. After a gradual disentangling from UN command and control throughout 1995, NATO was finally in complete control of both ground and air operations in Bosnia.

NATO's first 'out-of-area' ground operation succeeded in ending the war in Bosnia. However, NATO's operation ran into many of the problems that UNPROFOR had faced. The most difficult challenge, how to impose a unitary state in Bosnia, proved to be as difficult for NATO as it had been for the UN. The failure to do this gave rise to a new challenge as the peacekeeping operation had to be extended, first by 18 months and then indefinitely. Sustaining a considerable military engagement 'out-of-area' over a longer period proved to be difficult, and caused new tension between the United States and Europe.

NATO's mandate - peacekeeping or peace enforcement?

The mandate for NATO's operation was set out in UN Security Council Resolution 1031, which was adopted on 15 December 1995. The Resolution marked a significant change in the relationship between NATO and the UN. Bearing in mind the experience of NATO's support role in connection with UNPROFOR, NATO planners wanted to ensure that the Alliance would not find itself in a position where its ability to act was restrained by civilian interference in the chain of command. In order to prevent this, those parts of the Dayton Agreement to be implemented by NATO had been prepared by the Alliance's military planners, and were negotiated with the active participation

of US General Wesley Clark, who later became SACEUR. Consequently, Article 1 of Annex 1A of the Agreement invited the UN Security Council to adopt a resolution authorising the establishment of the implementation force. It further stated that 'It is understood and agreed that NATO may establish such a force, which will operate under the authority and subject to the direction and political control of the North Atlantic Council through the NATO chain of command'.¹⁹² The Security Council responded by adopting Resolution 1031, authorising

*the member states acting through or in co-operation with the organisation referred to in Annex 1-A of the Peace Agreement to establish a multinational implementation force (IFOR) under the unified command and control in order to fulfil the role specified in Annex 1-A and Annex 2 of the Peace Agreement.*¹⁹³

The same member states were also authorised to take

*all necessary measures to effect the implementation of and to ensure the compliance with Annex 1-A of the Peace Agreement*¹⁹⁴

and to take

*all necessary measures, at the request of IFOR, either in defence of IFOR or to assist the force in carrying out its mission, and recognises the right of the force to take all necessary measures to defend itself from attack or threat of attack.*¹⁹⁵

What the UN Security Council really did was to relinquish UN authority over NATO's operation in Bosnia Hercegovina.¹⁹⁶ Rosalyn Higgins has correctly argued that even though the degree of UN control has sometimes been a reality and at other times marginal, the arrangements for IFOR went one step further by delegating all political and operational control to NATO.¹⁹⁷ Furthermore, whereas UNPROFOR could only use force in self-defence,

IFOR was authorised to use force also in response to non-compliance with the commitments undertaken by the parties in the Dayton Agreement. Some observers noted 'the irony that NATO, an organisation that rightly prides itself in its military effectiveness, will now implement an agreement to which all parties have formally bound themselves, while the UN for more than three years has been called upon to keep a peace in the midst of a continuing war'.¹⁹⁸

However, overall, the IFOR operation differed quite radically from established peacekeeping principles. Even though it was based on consent inasmuch as all three parties had signed the peace agreement, all the parties signed under heavy pressure, and the Serb wartime leaders had been effectively excluded from the peace negotiations. It was therefore probable that compliance with the agreement would have to be enforced. Another important peacekeeping principle – that of impartiality – was formally in place in the Dayton Agreement, but in practice biased military and economic support to one of the entities entailed that the Bosnian Serbs were unlikely to see the peacekeeping force as impartial. The heavy involvement of major powers and the fact that costs in connection with the peacekeeping operation were borne by the participating nations individually also deviated from traditional UN peacekeeping principles.

Obligations pursuant to the Dayton Agreement

IFOR's primary task was the implementation of the military aspects of the peace settlement specified in Annex 1-A of the Dayton Agreement. Annex 1-A committed the signatories to

*an immediate cessation of hostilities;
redeployment of all forces behind a 4 kilometre-wide zone of separation along the agreed Inter-Entity Boundary Line within 30 days (with some exceptions where land areas had to be swapped);
withdrawal of heavy weapons and forces to cantonment and barracks areas designated by IFOR within 120 days.*¹⁹⁹

These measures were to be enforced by IFOR.

In addition, IFOR would have the right (not obligation) to fulfil 'supporting tasks, within the limits of its assigned principal tasks and available resources'.²⁰⁰ Among the supporting tasks that were to cause the greatest difficulties were:

*to help create secure conditions for the conduct by others of other tasks associated with the peace settlement, including free and fair elections; to observe and prevent interference with the movement of civilian populations, refugees, and displaced persons, and to respond appropriately to deliberate violence to life and persons.*²⁰¹

If necessary these tasks were also to be implemented through the use of force.

However, these tasks were only one part of the Dayton Agreement, which included inconsistencies and some outright contradictions.²⁰² Ivo Daalder of the National Security Council staff, who was responsible for co-ordinating US policy on Bosnia between 1995 and 1997, correctly observed that the Dayton Agreement remained ambiguous on the core issue of Bosnia's identity.²⁰³ This ambiguity was reflected in the military and civilian implementation procedures, which were strictly separated. Whereas the purpose of the military tasks was to separate the two armies and create a military balance between them, the purpose of the civilian arrangements was to build political institutions, which in the long run would integrate the two entities into one state. Representation in these bodies was to be based on ethnicity, which undermined the intended integrating effect of these structures. The allowance of triple citizenship (of either one of the Bosnian entities, of Bosnia itself, and of a third state) not only acknowledged, but also reinforced the importance of ethnicity. These ambiguities would create serious problems for both the military and civilian implementation processes, and it soon became clear that it was impossible to treat them separately.

Implementation

NATO's operation, Joint Endeavour, commenced on 20 December 1995. The deployment of 60,000 troops went relatively smoothly, and was met by no armed resistance. One of the most remarkable features of the operation was that eighteen non-NATO countries also placed their troops under NATO command. Russia was one of them. According to a special agreement between the United States and Russia, the Russian brigade was directly subordinated to a Russian deputy to SACEUR, and placed under the tactical control of the US-led sector in the north-east.²⁰⁴

The implementation of the military aspects of the Agreement - the separation of the two armies along the Inter-Entity Boundary Line - was largely a success. The time limits were kept, and the cease-fire was respected. In retrospect, the lack of resistance to the military arrangements has led some to question whether 60,000 troops were excessive and unnecessary.²⁰⁵ The British negotiator, Pauline Neville-Jones, has argued that the Serbs were unlikely to put up any resistance, as they favoured partition, and hoped that it would become permanent. On the other hand, the fact that NATO's resolve was not challenged was probably connected to the demonstration of force. This in itself must have discouraged all parties from armed resistance, and a smaller force would not have had the same deterring effect.

Regrettably, the success of the first 120 days did have some grave side effects. The most disappointing occurrence was, undoubtedly, the ejection of the Sarajevo Serbs from one of the remaining multi-ethnic areas in Bosnia. According to the Dayton Agreement, Sarajevo was within the Federation's territory. In compliance with the requirement to withdraw all troops beyond the Inter-Entity Boundary Line, the Serb forces located in four Sarajevo suburbs had to be withdrawn within 45 days after the signing of the Agreement, i.e. 3 February 1996. After a further 40 days (until 19 March), Federation forces were to assume authority over the former Serb-controlled area. However, the Federation planned to close off the area as soon as possible and then move in with a large police force and conduct house

searches in order to register the entire Serb population. An internal report from IFOR and the International Police Task Force described the plan as 'conscious ethnic cleansing based on terrorism'.²⁰⁶ As a result of the Federation's aggressive attitude, coupled with Serb propaganda and harassment, nearly the entire Serb population fled from the previously multi-ethnic capital. Attempts to postpone the transfer of authority to the Federation were rejected by Washington, where the administration was determined to stick to the Dayton schedule.²⁰⁷ The tragic event also dealt a serious first blow to NATO's reputation as an effective peacekeeper, as IFOR's commanders rejected the pleas for military intervention.²⁰⁸ Instead of trying to provide the security required to encourage minorities to stay, IFOR's commanders chose to assist in the evacuation. Hence, whereas IFOR's implementation of the Inter-Entity Boundary Line was effective from a military point of view, it created almost 100,000 new refugees, and completed the ethnic division of Bosnia.

Finding a balance between 'mission creep' and 'mission cringe'

The reasons for NATO's restrictive attitude to the supporting tasks which were listed in the Dayton Agreement was, primarily, the US emphasis on force protection, based on a well-grounded fear that US public support for the mission would evaporate if there were any US losses. Second, there was general concern that NATO would become entangled in non-military tasks, which it was neither equipped nor trained to handle, and which could undermine its ability to perform the military tasks effectively. IFOR's commanders had to find a balance between what Michael Pugh called 'mission creep' and 'mission cringe',²⁰⁹ that is between getting too involved or not getting involved enough. On the one hand, NATO was criticised for doing nothing more than assisting and segmenting ethnic cleansing, appeasing bullies and avoiding all the difficult but necessary issues connected to creating sustainable peace. It was argued that the Bosnia deployment resembled 'nothing more than the moon landings, with the principal objective being to

send men far away and bring them back safely'.²¹⁰ On the other hand, if NATO had become too heavily involved in the supporting tasks listed in the Dayton Agreement, it might have ended up in the same situation as UNPROFOR, with its resources being over-stretched, making it unable to perform its basic tasks effectively.

At the heart of the matter was the question of how to apply force in order to impose peace. In fact, NATO ran into many of the same problems that UNPROFOR had encountered, and was eventually forced to adjust its operation accordingly. The first principle that had to be yielded was that of a fixed exit date.

Changing the exit date

In December 1995, Clinton promised that if US troops were deployed in Bosnia, it would be to fulfil a mission with clear and realistic goals that could be achieved within one year. The legacy of previous US missions which had been open-ended and based on vague and ambiguous goals, such as Vietnam and more recently Somalia, weighed heavily on the Clinton administration. At the outset, the official US argument was that the presence of a NATO peacekeeping force would, after one year, provide the Bosnians with a peace that they could then choose to sustain. The reasoning, although designed to gain Congress' approval of US participation in IFOR, seemed surprisingly naive. Believing that peace could be attained in such a short time following a four-year brutal war with no clear winner, which ended through a settlement forced upon the parties with no real consent, would mean disregarding the evidence of any number of peacekeeping operations in the past. However, the Clinton administration and the Defence Department in particular were probably genuinely concerned that an unlimited international presence would create a 'dependency culture' in Bosnia and remove the motivation for the parties to take responsibility for implementation of the Dayton Agreement themselves.

Only six months into the IFOR operation, the problems connected with the US arguments could not be concealed. Four years of war had created deep

feelings of resentment and insecurity in the Bosnian population, which made it impossible to 'choose peace' after such a short period. The general elections in September only served to reinforce the division of the country along ethnic lines, as people voted largely in support of the hard-liners. When Robert Frowick, head of the OSCE mission in Bosnia, recommended that the municipal elections be postponed until the following year,²¹¹ it became obvious that NATO would not be able to 'create peace' within one year. By the end of 1996, US Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General John Shalikashvili, admitted that the one-year limit had been a mistake and that previous statements as to when NATO would be able to withdraw had been far too optimistic.²¹² As the IFOR operation was coming to an end, it became clear that a withdrawal according to schedule would only lead to a resumption of war. In that case, NATO's first 'out-of-area' operation would be seen as a complete failure.

After months of speculation about an extension of the operation, the formal decision to stay a further 18 months was made soon after the US presidential election in November 1996. The follow-on force was given a new symbolic name – the Stabilisation Force (SFOR) – and was scaled down to some 30,000 troops.

Status at the end of the first year

IFOR's strict attitude to the many supporting tasks listed in the Dayton Agreement provoked heavy criticism of NATO throughout the first year. According to the US negotiator Richard Holbrooke, the commander of the operation, US Admiral Leighton Smith, chose to take a minimalist approach to all aspects of implementation, much to the frustration of both the Washington administration and those responsible for the civilian implementation process.²¹³ IFOR's effective presence prevented a new spring offensive but there were many important problems which remained unresolved. The two major ones were the continued freedom and influence of wartime leaders like Radovan Karadzic, and the threat to the civil security of ethnic minorities in all parts of the country. Several smaller problems were listed by the UN:

*the large number of unauthorised weapons among the population; continued ethnic tensions – for instance in Mostar, where Bosnian Muslims had been evicted from their homes; illegal mobile check-points which prevented the freedom of movement; only 10-11 % of the known minefields had been cleared, and mines continued to hamper the freedom of movement and economic reconstruction.*²¹⁴

Even though these problems had not been mentioned in IFOR's mandate, there was a growing realisation that NATO would not be able to exit from Bosnia before these problems had been solved and a more stable peace had been established.

SFOR – an extended interpretation of the Dayton mandate

NATO's implementation of the Dayton Agreement changed radically during the second year of operation. Only a few months into the SFOR period, the mandate for the NATO force again became a matter of discussion in NATO. It had become obvious that NATO had done little to enhance or support the civilian peacebuilding process, the success of which was a prerequisite for NATO withdrawal. IFOR had remained a bystander to civil law violations, and received much criticism for its passivity.²¹⁵ The 18-month extension would be meaningless if the civilian measures in the Dayton Agreement were not implemented effectively. NATO's role in this process was to ensure secure conditions for the civilian agencies, to prevent interference with the freedom of movement, and to respond appropriately to deliberate violence to life and property. Consequently, NATO adopted a more active approach to its supporting tasks. Six months into the second year of operation, NATO's member states declared their intention to ensure that SFOR's mandate was carried out to the fullest. At the end of 1997 the new approach was summarised by referring to new lines of action in a number of areas:²¹⁶

In August 1997, the head of the civilian implementation process in Bosnia,

Carlos Westendorp, requested NATO assistance to suspend or curtail the broadcasting of anti-Dayton propaganda. Consequently, SFOR took control of transmitter sites used by the Srpska Radio in Pale in order to stop Serb anti-Dayton propaganda.

Also in August, SFOR announced a new policy for the control and restructuring of a paramilitary Special Police. SFOR's Operation Secure Beat was designed to ensure that these forces were disbanded and incorporated into the armed forces or civil police. In November, SFOR took military action to shut down a non-compliant Special Police unit in Doboje.

In September, SFOR, temporarily reinforced by some 4000 soldiers, helped to ensure that the municipal elections took place peacefully. SFOR also provided substantial logistic assistance to the OSCE.

From August, SFOR began to help the UN International Police Task Force to inspect police stations, confiscating thousands of unauthorised weapons.

Besides these new tasks, SFOR continued to monitor a large number of weapon storage sites. However, NATO's new active approach created new problems.

Arresting war criminals

As the IFOR mandate was coming to an end it became apparent that wartime beneficiaries were only waiting for the international force to leave in order to resume their criminal activities. These wartime leaders had nothing to gain from peace. On the contrary, many of them were facing charges of war crimes and if arrested, were likely to be sentenced to years in prison. As long as they, in practice, continued to run the Serb entity, a sustainable peace was unlikely. Using their influence to encourage mistrust and hostilities, they effectively ensured that freedom of movement across the country and the right of refugees to return to their pre-war homes remained only rights on paper.

The most public figure among these leaders was Radovan Karadzic, based in Pale in the north-east of the Serb entity. The leader of the Bosnian Serbs had been politically isolated since Dayton, and had been indicted for war

crimes by the International Tribunal for former Yugoslavia. However, it soon became obvious that Karadzic was still running the Serb entity in all but name, which hampered any steps towards reconciliation. Several sightings of Karadzic passing comfortably through IFOR check points had undermined the credibility of NATO's commitment and caused an outcry in the Western press.²¹⁷ However, NATO leaders were reluctant to initiate manhunts, for fear of retaliation and of undermining IFOR's ability to co-operate with both parties. Some of the IFOR forces had participated in UNPROFOR and experienced how the impartiality and credibility of the UN forces on the ground were undermined when NATO air strikes hit only one of the conflicting parties. NATO proved to be just as helpless as the UN in the face of this dilemma.

Criticism of NATO's inaction grew throughout the first months of the SFOR mission and by mid-1997 the character of the NATO operation had changed. On 10 July, British Special Air Service (SAS) troops surprised everyone by arresting one and killing another Bosnian Serb, both indicted for war crimes. Tensions increased following the arrest and there were several incidents involving explosions where international military and civilian staff were injured, but no one was killed. On 18 December the same year NATO made its second arrest of two Bosnian Croat war crime suspects.²¹⁸ However, the fact that important figures like Karadzic and the leader of the Serb army, Ratko Mladic, were not arrested showed that NATO had not found an effective solution to this problem.

Use of force in support of democracy

The continued prominence of Radovan Karadzic and his accomplices also led to active NATO support of his political opponent. In 1997, Biljana Plavsic established an alternative and more moderate leadership in Banja Luka, in the south-west of the Serb entity, and prior to the 1997 elections Plavsic entered into an open power struggle with the Pale group, headed by Karadzic. In August, NATO troops intervened directly in the struggle by taking control of several police stations in Banja Luka, replacing pro-Pale police officers with

officers loyal to Biljana Plavsic.²¹⁹ Some weeks later, a similar incident led to attacks on NATO troops by Serbs loyal to Karadzic.²²⁰ NATO also took control of radio and television stations which were broadcasting hardline propaganda, and in September NATO threatened to jam and even bomb the Pale broadcasting station. In November, SFOR again seized a police station in Doboij in the Serb entity in a move intended to punish hard-line Serbs who had been involved in clashes with rival police factions.²²¹

However, NATO's new activist approach caused a wide range of reactions, demonstrating the difficulties connected with imposing democratic goals by military means. Criticism of NATO's new policy came from many angles. *The New York Times* pointed out that the use of force to control the media would make Bosnians 'doubt the difference between democracy and dictatorship'.²²² The Russian NATO envoy, Vitali Churkin, used the same argument.²²³ Moscow warned NATO against pressuring the Bosnian Serbs and threatened that intolerable use of force could imperil the whole mission.²²⁴ Additional warnings referred to already strained NATO-Russia relations caused by NATO's decision to expand. If the Russian threats were credible, both Russian participation in IFOR and the fragile NATO-Russia relationship could be endangered by an extended use of force.

Finally, NATO's new policy provoked counterattacks by Serb mobs. An attempt to seize several police stations in Brcko on August 28 collapsed when a well-organised and disciplined crowd threw firebombs and attacked SFOR soldiers with thick wooden planks.²²⁵ No firearms were seen or used, even though they were widely available.²²⁶ The Serbs were effectively exploiting the limits set by the mandate of the peacekeeping force, making sure that the heavily armed soldiers could not counter the attack from the crowd. As NATO's overwhelming force could not be applied against unarmed civilians, the SFOR troops were forced to retreat to their bases and thereafter resorted to mobile patrols of the town.

In the final analysis, NATO was criticised if it failed to act against the hardliners, and if it sought to restrain them. On the one hand, if NATO did not act to remove or pacify individuals refusing to adhere to the Dayton requirements, there would be no peace. On the other hand, if NATO went too

far in imposing its will, it would soon end up as the enemy. Besides the obvious threat to the security of its troops, its credibility as a peace force would be imperilled, as the general support for the hard-liners would then increase, resulting in a lack of support for the peace process.

Use of force to provide civil security

NATO was also criticised for failing to provide common security for the Bosnian population. The ejection of the Sarajevo Serbs was only the first of many incidents in which military force proved ineffective in solving civil security problems. According to the Dayton Agreement, the safety of the population was primarily the responsibility of the local law enforcement agencies. However, the police forces had been heavily involved in the war, and consisted partly of paramilitary forces in police uniforms, and were by no means neutral actors. In the hostile climate that persisted after Dayton, the police forces were unlikely to provide security for certain groups, for instance ethnic minorities reclaiming their pre war homes in areas held by the other group.

As a result of the war, there were several hundred thousand refugees and internally displaced persons inside and outside Bosnia. According to the Dayton Agreement, these people had the right to return to their homes. The difficulties connected to NATO's supporting role in this process were demonstrated in several similar incidents in early 1997. In a typical situation, unarmed mobs would harass returning refugees or burn their houses. As long as the crowds were unarmed and no civilian lives or SFOR troops were directly threatened, the situation was judged to be outside SFOR's mandate. Instead of intervening directly in these incidents, NATO chose to increase its presence in the area in order to defuse tensions for a while. By doing so NATO was able to prevent the resurgence of war, but not to create the conditions necessary for the safe return of refugees.

In February 1998, the United States, responding to the unresolved law enforcement problem, proposed that a 1,600-strong armed 'paramilitary' force should be established for the main purpose of undertaking tasks such as

crowd control. The establishment of a 'robust' police force was advocated by the US administration already at Dayton and had since then continued to reappear on the NATO agenda. However, NATO was unable to agree on the issue.

A specially trained police force would have been better prepared to handle such problems than NATO but the more fundamental problems connected to the law enforcement responsibilities would hardly have been solved by replacing one type of force by another. First, such a force would have had to enforce laws created by Bosnian legislators. This meant that the force would have to enforce laws which may have been unacceptable by Western norms and standards. Furthermore, they would have to hand violators over to the local courts, whose practice may also conflict with Western norms. In other words, by taking on a law enforcement role, the so-called international community would enforce legislation over which it had no influence.

Imposing peace

As described above, the supporting tasks set out in the Dayton Agreement proved to be extremely difficult for NATO, partly due to a lack of technical skills and training, and partly because the use of force to achieve these goals could sometimes even be counterproductive. Until the Bosnia operation, NATO had been a combat organisation, trained and equipped for fighting large-scale wars. The organisation was inexperienced in civil-military co-ordination and unprepared for tasks like riot control. In spite of a broadly defined mandate to use force in order to ensure compliance with the peace agreement, there was no enemy to beat in Bosnia. Above all, casualties among the local population had to be kept to a minimum, out of concern for both the security of SFOR troops and continued support for the peacekeeping operation from the Bosnian population, preferably on both sides of the division line. Due to these restrictions, an effective military alliance with an overwhelming force at its disposal proved unable to perform at least two main tasks that were expected of it.

In March 1997, NATO was harshly criticised for its inability to prevent

recurrent violent episodes in Bosnia. *The Washington Post* commented that NATO appeared as ineffective as the UN troops, which had been widely criticised for failing in their peacekeeping mission previously. Morton Abramowitz, the president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, when reflecting on the evolving debate over NATO expansion and the evolving Albanian disintegration in 1997, commented that NATO appeared to be good at dealing with problems that didn't exist but showed great difficulty in facing up to the destruction at its doorstep.²²⁷ Well into the second year of its first 'out-of-area' ground operation, the relevance of the Alliance in the post-Cold War era was again questioned.

Abandoning the exit date policy

Despite the postponement of the first exit date, the belief in a fixed date for departure seemed deeply entrenched in the US defence establishment. The new Defence Secretary, William Cohen, seemed determined to stick to the new timelimit and stated firmly in his confirmation hearings that US troops would withdraw from Bosnia by mid-1998 at the latest. General H. Hugh Shelton, nominee to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, reiterated the argument as late as September 1997. However, under Cohen's first visit to Europe in March 1997, his suggestion of a European follow-on force after SFOR was firmly rejected by the Europeans. Michael Portillo, the British Defence Minister, expressed the European policy with the slogan: 'In together, out together'.²²⁸ The Europeans were determined to avoid a repetition of a situation similar to UNPROFOR with European troops on the ground and US calls for a tougher policy at a safe distance. The first indication of a shift in US policy came in May when Clinton, during a visit to Europe, stated that he wanted to stop talking about an exit date and start talking about what had to be done before NATO could leave Bosnia.²²⁹ Independent US commentators also pointed out the problems connected to the fixed exit date policy. The Clinton administration's policy was criticised for showing 'an extraordinary concern about casualties, at least as much emphasis on getting out as

getting in, and at least as much emphasis on what you are not going to do as what you are going to do'.²³⁰ It was argued that US policy would ultimately mean that US participation in future peacekeeping missions was at the mercy of local factions. Any faction wanting to get rid of the peacekeepers in order to resume fighting just had to out-wait the peacekeepers' departure or, alternatively, to target US soldiers in order to make this happen. At the same time, the Clinton administration had initiated the debate on NATO expansion. Political commentators asked rhetorically what, precisely, was to be expanded – referring to NATO as a 'toothless, spineless version of the Washington DC motor vehicle bureau, a bureaucratic labyrinth in which paper goes in and never comes out'.²³¹

The municipal elections in Bosnia in September left little hope for an easy exit for the international force. Even though a slightly reinforced SFOR had prevented violent episodes during with the elections, the results showed that Bosnia remained as ethnically divided as ever. In October, several options involving US presence on the ground beyond mid-1998 were discussed by the US administration. The weightiest argument for prolonged US participation was that the United States could not retain operational command of the force if it had no troops on the ground.²³² Control of NATO's most important operation would thus have to be taken over by Europe, and the US' leading position in NATO would effectively be undermined. As the second deadline drew nearer, the arguments of the Clinton administration changed completely. In a testimony to the House Committee on International Relations on 12 March 1998, Defence Under-Secretary, Walter R. Slocombe, argued that a civil war in Bosnia would threaten US national interests.²³³ Furthermore, this civil war could easily spread and endanger the interests of allies such as Greece and Turkey, and could also threaten the credibility and unity of NATO as it had once before. Therefore, there would be 'No artificial deadlines, but benchmarks to focus efforts, measure progress, and permit steady reduction in force levels'. Three 'benchmarks', in particular, were mentioned; 1) a restructured, integrated and retrained local police force with a capacity to deal with civil disorder; 2) a phased and orderly process for the return of

refugees and displaced persons, also to minority areas; 3) the regaining of media control from hard-liners.

Transatlantic burden-sharing in Bosnia

Many of the problems discussed above were related to an ongoing debate about burden-sharing between the United States and its European allies. The burden-sharing debate had taken place since the establishment of the Alliance, both in connection with the engagement of some allies in conflicts outside Europe and defence of own territory. Transatlantic tension over this issue erupted again in May 1996 when the chief US and British negotiators at Dayton, Richard Holbrooke and Pauline Neville-Jones, had a public row over who was to blame for the lack of progress in the civilian implementation process.²³⁴ Burden-sharing continued to be an issue throughout the operation, and came to the fore again in the discussion of a European follow-on force after June 1998. When presented with a supplementary defence budget request in March 1998 which was linked to US operations in Bosnia and Iraq, members of the Senate Appropriation Committee expressed dissatisfaction with the contributions of the allies. The Committee's chairman, Ted Stevens, announced plans for a trip in order to explain to the allies that Congress might call for withdrawal from some operations if the United States did not receive more help from Europe.²³⁵

From the European perspective, on the other hand, Dayton was primarily a 'US-designed agreement' which Washington was not free to 'dump on others to implement at a time of their choosing'.²³⁶ It was pointed out that Europe and other partners had provided three times as many troops as the United States in Bosnia, five times as much economic assistance, nine times as many international police personnel, and received ten times as many refugees. However, even though the Americans were eager to make the Europeans carry a greater part of the burden, they were reluctant to relinquish their control of the operation. Defence Under Secretary, Walter Slocombe, argued that '[i]t is clear that NATO must continue to lead that force. No other institution could do so effectively. And America, as the leader of NATO, must

participate in that force, because the record shows that the U.S. has to join in any such force if it is to be successful.'²³⁷

Lessons learned from the IFOR/SFOR experience

The historic importance of the NATO operation in Bosnia has been underlined repeatedly, being 'NATO's first-ever ground force operation, its first-ever deployment 'out of area' and its first-ever joint operation with NATO's Partnership for peace and other non-NATO countries.'²³⁸ It has been hailed as 'tangible proof' that 'NATO's military forces have the flexibility to be used outside the NATO area, for operations under the authority of the UN Security Council'.²³⁹ However, the operation has also revealed some of the limits of NATO's ability to conduct peace operations outside its own territory

First of all, imposing peace by military means has proved to be almost as difficult for NATO as it was for the UN. Three-and-a-half years into the operation, Bosnia looks as divided as ever, and the prospect of a swift withdrawal seems remote. Whereas military force can be used to separate armies, it is incapable of reconciling warring parties and even of providing civil security and freedom of movement as a basis for reconciliation. If NATO's operation in Bosnia continues indefinitely, the problem of sustaining manning requirements for long-term 'out-of-area' deployments may become acute. As recognised by Deputy SACEUR, General Sir Jeremy MacKenzie, 'the alliance is big enough to deal with contingencies. But it is not really good for long-haul operations.'²⁴⁰ Furthermore, compared with other peacekeeping operations, NATO's operation in Bosnia has been very intensive and therefore also very expensive. It has been argued that providing and funding forces of this dimension and sophistication is probably not sustainable as a general approach to peacekeeping.²⁴¹ It may be neither desirable nor necessary for NATO to undertake traditional peacekeeping operations based on minimum use of force which the UN is capable of performing.

NATO's out-of-area engagement after Dayton

Since the establishment of IFOR in December 1995, NATO has faced several new challenges in the form of conflicts erupting within the sphere of interest of at least some of NATO's members. In response to these conflicts NATO has adopted strategies ranging from 'hands-off' in Albania in 1997 to a large-scale bombing campaign against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1999. NATO's response to 'out-of-area' conflicts over the last few years can be divided into three broad categories: NATO-operations as such, coalitions of the 'able and willing', and assistance through Partnership for Peace. The advantages and disadvantages connected with each of these will be briefly discussed below in the light of the experiences of the last few years.

Coalitions of the able and willing: Albania 1997

NATO's first 'out-of-area' challenge after its deployment in Bosnia came from Albania, a country bordering two of NATO's members. In March 1997, not long after the controversial extension of the IFOR mandate by another 18 months, Albania disintegrated into chaos and anarchy. Immediately thereafter, Albanian refugees started pouring into Italy. If NATO's declaration of its willingness and capacity to intervene outside its own area was to be credible, one would think that it had to encompass conflicts so close to NATO's own area. However, NATO intervention did not appear to be a realistically considered option.

Instead France, Greece, Austria, Spain, Denmark, Turkey and Romania joined Italy which led the establishment of a Multinational Protection Force for Albania. The ad hoc coalition was given a mandate by the UN Security Council, authorising

*Member States participating in the multinational protection force ... to ... facilitate the safe and prompt delivery of humanitarian assistance, and to help create a secure environment for the missions of the international organisations in Albania.*²⁴²

Compared with IFOR, the force which consisted of approximately 6,000 troops was given a strictly limited mandate. It should neither disarm rebel factions, nor protect the Albanian population against any threats. Its mission was to ensure the safe delivery of humanitarian aid. Force should only be used 'to ensure the security and freedom of movement of the personnel of the said multinational protection force'²⁴³ – i.e. only in self-defence. In this respect, the mandate was similar to the much-criticised UNPROFOR mandate.

Operation Alba was deployed in Albania in mid-April 1997. The original three-month mandate was extended once by 45 days,²⁴⁴ and the force withdrew on the expiration date on 12 August.²⁴⁵ The operation was largely regarded as a success, as internal riots settled down without any major incidents between the force and local factions. The force kept a low profile and did not attempt to promote any political solution to the Albanian anarchy. It was criticised for paying too much attention to its own security, only arriving at conflict spots after the local gang wars had been settled.²⁴⁶

Regardless of its actual achievements, Operation Alba was significant in that it was an attempt to launch a third approach to peacekeeping. With the UN still discredited by UNPROFOR and NATO preoccupied in Bosnia, a third solution was found in the establishment of a coalition of 'the able and willing'. This was in many ways a return to the Cold War solution of ad hoc coalitions assembled for a specific and limited purpose. The only remarkable thing about this solution in the post-Cold War era was that both NATO and the WEU had declared their willingness to undertake exactly these types of tasks. In this respect, Operation Alba was a considerable blow to the credibility of the WEU's claim of an independent peacekeeping role, as well as to NATO's new Combined Joint Task Forces (CJTF).²⁴⁷ Even though it could be argued that Operation Alba, to all intents and purposes, if not in name, was a CJTF,²⁴⁸ it was remarkable that NATO deliberately chose not to have its name attached to the operation in any way. The most likely explanation was that NATO's 'out-of-area' capacity was stretched to its limits by the Bosnia operation, and that the conflict was not considered serious enough by several NATO members. A new NATO operation would have raised the question of US participation and leadership, and it was unlikely that the US Congress would have accepted

another ground deployment in Europe so closely after the decision to extend the IFOR operation. All in all, there was simply not enough 'common alliance interest' to justify NATO intervention.

At the time, the 'Albania-solution' – an ad hoc coalition of the willing – seemed the most viable alternative for future engagements by NATO's members outside the treaty area. The large operation in Bosnia began to appear as a 'once in a lifetime experience', unlikely to be repeated in the near future. The risks attached to linking NATO's reputation to the outcome of complex internal conflicts, and the difficulties of establishing a common NATO policy in such operations, implied that more flexible coalitions would probably be preferred in the future. At the same time, however, it was also evident that ad hoc coalitions had some limitations. First, if too much of the NATO members' military engagement took place outside the NATO framework, integrated NATO structures could be undermined in the long run, and questions about NATO's relevance could resurface. Second, if humanitarian conditions in Albania had deteriorated further, NATO could not have escaped calls for a more forceful intervention, being the only organisation with such a capacity. This point was effectively proven in 1999 when the flow of Kosovo-Albanian refugees into north Albania created a humanitarian disaster and a highly volatile situation in the border area between Albania and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. In response to this situation, NATO rapidly established a NATO-led Albania Force (AFOR), consisting of 6,000 troops, tasked to assist the humanitarian operation and to stabilise the situation in the border area. Thus, what had seemed impossible in 1997, was implemented without much discussion in 1999. Whereas NATO's 'out-of-area' capacity had appeared stretched to its limits in 1997, it proved to be quite flexible when the situation in Albania became more severe.

Partnership for peace – a viable supplement to out-of-area operations?

Following the withdrawal of the Multinational Protection Force in August 1997, NATO became more directly involved in Albania, though not through a

joint military operation. Instead, NATO's new programme for co-operation with former East-block countries was invigorated. Partnership for Peace (PfP) had been introduced at NATO's summit in January 1994. Originally accused of being designed to keep aspiring members at a comfortable distance without shutting them completely out in the cold, the programme could easily have become a paper tiger. However, in Albania PfP provided a flexible framework for a less ambitious and more anonymous NATO involvement in a volatile situation right outside NATO's borders. Through PfP NATO could become involved in Albania without investing its overall reputation and credibility in one operation, as it had been forced to do in Bosnia.

The Albanian PfP programme comprised defence-related bilateral assistance from NATO members and Partner countries (other members of PfP) and NATO assistance as such. PfP exercises were also conducted in Albania, making NATO's presence temporarily more visible. Partly in response to the eruption of violence in Kosovo and subsequent Albanian uneasiness, NATO approved an Individual Partnership Programme for Albania in May 1998. The programme covered 'immediately relevant' activities, such as the reinforcement of border forces with equipment, means of transport and communication, the security of munitions and weapons dumps, and the evaluation of Albanian's potential needs by a NATO civil emergency assessment team in case of a further deterioration of the situation. NATO was also to send eight teams of experts to Tirana to help restructure the Albanian forces.²⁴⁹

Although the primary goal of the PfP assistance to Albania was to promote internal stability, NATO also used the PfP framework to send signals to Albania's neighbour Yugoslavia. In connection with the growing tension in Kosovo, NATO increased its activities in Albania, hoping that a demonstration of force in the region would deter Milosevic from further harassment of the Kosovo-Albanian population.

Whereas NATO clearly failed to achieve this last goal, the enhanced use of PfP assistance to Albania contributed, at least temporarily, to internal stability, and to preventing the crisis in Kosovo from spreading to neighbouring Albania. All in all, though far less noticeable than NATO's other 'out-of-area' activities,

the PfP programme has probably contributed significantly to the enhancement of stability in Eastern Europe by engaging aspiring NATO members in practical military co-operation with the Alliance.

Iraq - the global role of the United States and NATO allies

The next incident involving a military response by some of NATO's members was caused by the expulsion of US inspectors participating in the UN Special Commission's (UNSCOM) surveillance programme in Iraq in late October 1997. After a few fruitless diplomatic rounds, the United States and Britain threatened to use force against Iraq if Saddam Hussein continued to deny UNSCOM free access to suspected weapons sites, and started to build up forces in the Gulf. A confrontation was temporarily avoided as the UN Secretary General was able to negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Iraq, assuring UNSCOM's access. However, in December 1998 the chief UN inspector, Richard Butler, concluded that Iraq had continued its obstruction of UNSCOM's work, and the United States and Britain launched a first wave of air strikes against Iraq in Operation Desert Fox.

Like Operation Desert Storm in 1991, Desert Fox was not a NATO operation, and the lessons to be learnt about NATO's 'out-of-area' capacity are perhaps few. Most significant was the fact that, as in Albania the previous year and in the Gulf War in 1991, NATO intervention never became an issue. Operation Desert Fox followed a familiar Cold War pattern of an *ad hoc* coalition of the 'able and willing'. However, a comparison between Operation Desert Storm and Operation Desert Fox also reveals some striking differences. Whereas Operation Desert Storm was conducted by a broad international coalition with a clear mandate from the UN Security Council, Operation Desert Fox had only two participating countries. The question of whether the operation was properly legitimised by the UN was highly contested, and important members of the 1991 coalition, such as France and Russia, did not support the new operation in 1998.

The UN Security Council resolution of March 1998, which approved the Memorandum of Understanding between Iraq and the UN, was deliberately

ambiguous, reflecting clear disagreement over the question of use of force. Acting pursuant to Chapter VII of the UN Charter, the Council endorsed the MoU, and stressed that any violation of the demand for 'immediate, unconditional and unrestricted access' for UNSCOM, would have the 'severest consequences for Iraq'.²⁵⁰ According to US interpretation, the resolution was 'drafted so it is perfectly clear that any member can take unilateral action if it feels there is a grievous violation'.²⁵¹ This interpretation was contested by Russia, France and China which argued that the resolution meant that military action against Iraq could not be taken without the adoption of a new resolution in the Security Council.²⁵² When the United States and Britain finally decided to launch air strikes against Iraq they argued that they were acting in response to an Iraqi breach of Security Council resolution 687 from 1991.²⁵³ This seven-year-old resolution had dictated the conditions for peace following the Gulf War. However, the resolution only authorised use of 'all necessary measures' in connection with a violation of the Kuwaiti-Iraqi border.²⁵⁴ The mandate to establish UNSCOM was issued in the same resolution, but there was no direct reference to a response in case of Iraqi obstruction of this part of the resolution. The legal grounds for military intervention were therefore disputed, and the decision to launch the operation in spite of this indicated disillusionment with the post-Cold War hopes for an expanded role for the UN Security Council.

The air strikes did not succeed in changing Iraqi policy, and by mid-1999 the situation in Iraq was still unsolved. However, the response to the resurgence of the Iraqi crisis in 1998 indicated some lessons with regard to NATO's ability to act outside Europe. Despite the French decision not to join any military strike against Iraq²⁵⁵ the overall impression was one of broad support from most NATO allies. France's decision to oppose the attacks obstructed complete allied cohesion, but the situation did not escalate into large-scale conflict, in which case the French decision to oppose its allies could have proved much more difficult to sustain. On the other hand, very few allies participated in the actual operation, which implied that the military and financial burden had to be shared by the United States and the United Kingdom alone. The most significant change since 1991, however, was the

very limited support for the operation from the rest of the world. Thus, in most aspects, Operation Desert Fox resembled 'out-of-area' operations conducted by NATO members during the Cold War.

Kosovo – going to war against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

Following the Albanian and Iraqi crises, which were both handled outside the NATO framework, the favoured alternative for future responses to 'out-of-area' conflicts appeared to be ad hoc coalitions of the willing and flexible use of military assistance through PFP. However, the eruption of violence in Kosovo during 1998 and 1999 eventually led to the deployment of several new NATO 'out-of-area' operations. Most importantly, however, NATO expanded its 'out-of-area' role even further through its decision to launch air strikes against a sovereign state without explicit authorisation from the UN Security Council.

When the fighting between Serb military and police forces and the Kosovo Liberation Army (UCK) escalated in early 1998, NATO's first reaction was to express deep concern over the situation. The UN Security Council condemned 'the use of excessive force by Serbian police forces against civilians and peaceful demonstrators in Kosovo, as well as acts of terrorism by the Kosovo Liberation Army', and introduced a comprehensive weapons embargo against FRY (Resolution 1160, adopted 31 March 1998). As mentioned above, NATO also intensified its PFP activities in Albania in order to enhance stability in the surrounding areas of Kosovo. However, the fighting continued, and in June 1998 NATO instructed its military staff to assess and develop 'a full range of options with the mission ... of halting or disrupting a systematic campaign of violent repression and expulsion in Kosovo'.²⁵⁶ The same month NATO conducted Exercise Determined Falcon in Albanian and Macedonian airspace. A total of 80 planes from 13 NATO countries participated in the exercise, the objective of which was to demonstrate NATO's capability to project power rapidly into the region.²⁵⁷ According to the British Defence Secretary, George Robertson, the exercise sent a 'clear and

unambiguous message' from NATO to Milosevic to 'think again'.²⁵⁸ However, NATO's explicit and implicit threat to use force only seemed to stiffen the resolve of the UCK, which refused to negotiate any other solution than full independence.

As media attention faded, the pressure on NATO eased, and during the summer of 1998 Milosevic was allowed to pursue his repression of the Kosovo population more or less undisturbed.²⁵⁹ However, 50,000 Kosovo-Albanians were driven from their homes and when the humanitarian situation for the refugees deteriorated with the onset of winter, criticism grew stronger. On 23 September, the UN Security Council was able to agree on Resolution 1199 demanding a cessation of all actions affecting the civilian population, the safe return of refugees and free and unimpeded access for humanitarian organisations in Kosovo.²⁶⁰ If these demands were not met, the Security Council would consider 'further action and additional measures to maintain or restore peace and stability in the region'.²⁶¹ Despite obvious disagreement in the Security Council over what these additional measures should be, NATO decided to start preparations for air strikes against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY). At an informal meeting of defence ministers in Portugal the same week, NATO issued an ACTWARN decision which entailed that NATO Commanders would begin to identify the assets required for a limited and a phased air campaign in Kosovo.²⁶²

Use of force was avoided once more when FRY accepted the deployment of the unarmed civilian OSCE-led Kosovo Verification Mission (KVM) to Kosovo. The Mission was tasked with verifying that the parties adhered to UN Security Council Resolutions 1160 and 1199, and deployment began in late October 1998. KVM did manage to prevent an immediate humanitarian disaster for the 50,000 refugees, but its presence did not hinder an escalation of fighting in early 1999. The last attempt to reach a peaceful settlement failed when the negotiations in Rambouillet ended without agreement on 18 March 1999. The following day, the OSCE chairman, Norwegian Foreign Minister Knut Vollebæk, ordered the withdrawal of KVM, which was completed without hindrance from any of the parties the next day. Three days later, on 24 March 1999, NATO commenced an extensive air campaign against FRY.

The campaign lasted for 78 days, until Milosevic accepted a peace agreement with NATO on 9 June 1999. The agreement was sanctioned by the UN Security Council in Resolution 1244 the day after. The outcome of the war was basically in line with the terms set out during the negotiations in Rambouillet. While Kosovo would remain a part of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the agreement and the resolution paved the way for the withdrawal of Serbian forces from Kosovo, and for the deployment of the Kosovo Force (KFOR).

It is too early to draw any final conclusions from NATO's latest 'out-of-area' operation. However, it is fair to conclude that the final, and from a NATO viewpoint reasonably successful, outcome stemmed first, from the ability to maintain a united front against the Milosevic regime. Secondly, the use of military force against FRY probably played an important role when Milosevic in the end accepted an agreement. At the same time, the air campaign revealed some dilemmas with regard to NATO's 'out-of-area' role in general.

The first dilemma is connected with the potential effects of NATO threats to use force in order to intervene in a conflict between two external parties. Whereas threats to use force are intended to have a calming and deterring effect on an adversary, the effect may in fact be the opposite when the threat is made by an external actor against one party in an internal conflict like the one in Kosovo. By declaring a potential willingness to intervene, NATO increases the likelihood of having to do just that, as the weaker party in the conflict is likely to gain the most by NATO intervention. In fact, a NATO intervention may be its only option to achieve its political goals. The weakest party is thus likely to try to provoke a reaction by NATO through an escalation of the fighting, preferably involving civilian suffering, which is the least tolerable situation for NATO governments. On the other hand, and adding to the dilemma, if NATO were to state that it was unwilling to intervene, the stronger party in the conflict would be likely to interpret this decision as a silent acceptance by NATO's members of the atrocities which follow in war. The third option of sending mixed signals – which is often chosen in lack of a better alternative – will most likely only fuel the hopes of both parties of either

being able to engage NATO or escaping NATO involvement. Consequently, in such situations NATO has to choose between options which all have different negative consequences.

Another effect of the threat to use force is that NATO's overall credibility will become linked to its ability to carry it through, and thus to the resolution of a conflict between two parties which may have inherently contradicting political goals. As summarised by *The Economist*, after NATO made its first threat to use force in response to the Kosovo crisis: 'If, after a final warning, Mr Milosevic fails to yield to NATO's demands, the alliance will have to send in the bombers or risk becoming a laughing-stock. Further indecision could turn NATO's summit in Washington next year – intended to endorse the expansion of the Alliance eastward and prepare for peacekeeping in the next century – into an embarrassing non-event.'²⁶³ This is not a NATO problem as such, but applies to all states or coalitions that threaten to use force. However, the fact that NATO is an alliance between 19 countries implies that the gap between the decision to issue a threat and the decision to actually apply it is widened. Ideally, the decision to use force if necessary, and an analysis of in what way and towards which goals, should be made before the first threat is issued. However, NATO's cumbersome decision-making procedures, and the difficulties of reaching internal consensus among 19 countries, makes it unlikely that the final decision to intervene will be made before the situation has become critical. Consequently, some of the members may agree to issue a threat without having fully considered the implications of carrying the threat through. However, when the threat has been repeated several times the stakes may have been raised so high, making it virtually impossible for NATO to back down. As a result, NATO is inclined to become captured by statements issued before their implications were fully considered.

One more permanent dilemma connected to NATO's 'out-of-area' interventions is the question of legitimisation in situations where the consent of the conflicting parties is lacking. In such cases, many would argue that NATO intervention would have to be authorised by the UN Security Council or the OSCE. However, in that case, NATO's ability to

act would become dependent on the consent of non-NATO countries, and the Alliance might in fact become completely paralysed. This brings us over to the future implications of NATO's new 'out-of-area' role which is the subject of the next chapter.

It is unlikely that the debate over whether NATO's decision to launch an air campaign against FRY was legitimate, and whether the campaign increased or diminished human suffering in Kosovo, will ever reach one final conclusion. The incompatible goals of the conflicting parties and the inherent difficulties connected to any attempt to settle such disputes should caution against simple answers.

Implications for the future

This study has described NATO's incremental and unplanned adoption of a new role outside the North Atlantic treaty area. The basic argument is that the Alliance's new 'out-of-area' policy has been developed through ad hoc responses to occurring events, and that the official policy statements were made after new policy had been put into practice on the ground. NATO's new Strategic Concept, adopted at the 50th anniversary summit in Washington in April 1999 was the latest document in line with this development. The bombing of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which began in March 1999, had made it clear that NATO was willing to play a fully independent 'out-of-area' role and to attack a sovereign state without an explicit mandate from the UN Security Council. The 1999 Strategic Concept formalised this new policy by stating that the Alliance was 'to stand ready, case-by-case and by consensus, ..., to contribute to effective conflict prevention and to engage actively in crisis management, including crisis response operations'.²⁶⁴ Previous references to support of operations under the authority of the UN or the OSCE were left out, marking NATO's independence of other international organisations in this issue. The geographical limits to NATO's new task were defined by a reference to enhancement of security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area.²⁶⁵ However, the Concept also referred to the global context, listing acts of terrorism, sabotage, organised crime, the disruption of the flow of vital resources and uncontrolled movement of large numbers of people as security risks that might affect the Alliance. It was further stated that 'Arrangements exist within the Alliance for consultations among the allies under Article 4 of the Washington Treaty and, where appropriate, co-ordination of their efforts including their responses to risks of this kind'.²⁶⁶ The geographical limits to NATO's 'out-of-area' engagement are thus rather loosely defined.

The implications of this expanded role are not easy to identify, as NATO's

'out-of-area' engagement affects almost every aspect of the Alliance. Furthermore, whereas conflicts in the Balkans are at the focus of NATO's attention at the end of the 1990s, the challenges of the next decades may be completely different. Nevertheless, based on the experience gained in several 'out-of-area' operations during the last decade, three fundamental issues stand out as particularly important and deserve to be mentioned.

The search for common alliance interests outside the NATO area

In 1990 Manfred Wörner asked for 'an internal Alliance understanding whereby ... the degree of engagement in dealing with a given [out-of-area] problem might vary from Ally to Ally, but the assets of the Alliance would be available for co-ordination and support.' Such an agreement has been hard to obtain. Wörner probably fully recognised the coming difficulties when he added that such an understanding could only operate in places or situations where common Alliance interests needed to be defended.²⁶⁷ Despite the dramatic steps taken by NATO over the last few years, a quick glance at the world map reveals that common Alliance interests beyond NATO territory may be difficult to find. They are far from obvious in any part of Africa, and in most cases probably not vital enough to be considered 'in need of defence by the Alliance'. European participation in military interventions in East Asia or Latin America is also more than unlikely. In the Middle East all NATO's major members have vital interests, but they do not frequently coincide. Diverging interests may become more active and cause greater tension if a declaration of an independent Palestinian state is recognised by Europe but not by the United States. Moreover, the European reluctance to share what the United States sees as the burden of containing Saddam Hussein, could over time lead to considerable resentment in Congress.²⁶⁸

Finally, NATO intervention in any of the many troublespots on the territory of the former Soviet Union would most likely provoke enormous resentment in Russia, and imply the risk of direct confrontation between NATO and Russia. This leaves the rest of the European continent as the most realistic

operational area for future NATO 'out-of-area' engagement. At the moment, the instability in the Balkans suggests that NATO will be fully occupied in the near future. The experience from Bosnia, where it took three years to agree on a common policy, suggests that it might be difficult to identify common NATO interests even in this part of the world. On the other hand, it was firmly established in NATO's new Strategic Concept that the Alliance will play this role, and NATO's willingness to intervene at an early stage in Kosovo appeared to demonstrate this new-found agreement.

Nevertheless, if 'out-of-area' operations are to become a primary NATO occupation in the future, the lack of common 'out-of-area' interests may slowly erode the 'underlying compact that binds North America to the fate of Europe's democracies'.²⁶⁹ An increased reliance on *ad hoc* coalitions of the willing is not likely to solve this problem. First, the Europeans are still dependent on US technical capabilities, such as airlift and intelligence, in large-scale operations. Secondly, the policy of the United States – as the only remaining superpower – is bound to have heavy bearings on any international event. Even in Bosnia, where the Americans chose to remain disengaged for a long time, US failure to commit to any of the peace plans before Dayton undermined the credibility of the peace negotiations. Due to this 'international law of gravity', some sort of transatlantic agreement is likely to be a precondition for any military intervention which may place the credibility of NATO or European troops at risk. Moreover, another powerful lesson from Bosnia is that equal exposure to threats, in terms of both loss of troops and military prestige and credibility, seems to be a precondition for being able to agree on a common policy. Consequently, 9 years after Wörner launched the idea of separable but not separate forces, NATO's new Secretary General, Javier Solana, stated his conclusion on this discussion at a conference on security policy in Munich in the first week of February 1998 as follows: 'Our operation in Bosnia has shown that we can make most progress if we act as a unit, not as a coalition of the willing. To act in solidarity should remain the rule, not the exception'.²⁷⁰

However, whereas united action may be necessary to retain NATO cohesion, the need for a collective approach may effectively paralyse the

Alliance. The reluctance of the US Congress to place US troops in harm's way has at times, as during the Bosnian conflict, been a major obstacle to joint NATO operations. Added to this problem is the US unwillingness to place its soldiers under non-US command by the UN or even other NATO members. If US troops are involved, the United States is likely to demand to be in command, which will only be acceptable to Europe if the US contribution is substantial. As a result, resentment may grow on both sides of the Atlantic over the distribution of influence and the sharing of burdens.

Imposing peace

The second major difficulty connected to NATO's 'out-of-area' engagement is the limit to what can be achieved through use of force in inter-communal conflicts, which have been predominant during the last decade. In such conflicts, the use of force is to some extent ineffective and, in the view of many, also illegitimate. This is not a NATO problem as such, but applies equally to all countries or organisations that try to intervene in this type of conflict. However, the fact that NATO is an alliance of 19 (more or less) democratic states may add some particular restraints on how force can be used.

One obvious restraint on the use of force by most NATO members is domestic opinion's low tolerance of civilian casualties and collateral damage caused by NATO's actions. Moreover, this restraint will always be well known and probably effectively exploited by any opponent. The stationing of mobile military targets inside towns and villages, or use of civilians as human shields can effectively paralyse or at least seriously hamper the effectiveness of NATO. Even though tolerance levels may rise rapidly if NATO were to engage in a war on the ground, NATO is likely to be subject to such restraints also in war-like situations.

A second restraining factor on NATO's ability to use force effectively is the low tolerance of own casualties in out-of-area operations. In 1993, pictures of US soldiers being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu made public support for US intervention in the civil war in Somalia evaporate

overnight. Since then, US preoccupation with force security has led to a heavy reliance on air power, which as already mentioned may have limited effect on events on the ground.

Other problems connected with the use of force in such situations have to do with the characteristics of the conflicts, rather than NATO itself. The resolution of these conflicts often involves reconstruction of an entire society, but whereas force can be used to monitor or enforce a cease-fire, it is far more difficult to 'take military action to impose a unitary state'²⁷¹ after civil war. As NATO experienced in Bosnia, it is both unacceptable and ineffective to apply military force against unarmed civilians who are obstructing the peace process. The crude instrument of military force is simply not suited to this task. Moreover, providing civil security in war-torn societies has been one of the most difficult challenges in the new peace operations, and NATO is probably neither willing nor trained to implement law and order in a society.

Last, but not least, NATO's threat to use force in such conflicts may not have its intended calming effect. Quite to the contrary, NATO threats to use force against one of the parties may create a new dynamic in the war on the ground. The experience from Bosnia and Kosovo suggests that NATO threats to use air strikes against the Serbs altered the aims and strategies of the Federation forces and the Kosovar-Albanians, as provoking a NATO reaction became an important goal for both the Bosnian government and the leadership of the UCK. In order to achieve this, their aim became an escalation of the conflict. Consequently, rather than having the calming and deterring effect NATO intended, threats to use force may just as well lead to intensified fighting.

The question of legitimisation and NATO's relationship with the rest of the world

At the risk of ending on an overly pessimistic note, one final difficulty connected with NATO's 'out-of-area' engagement must be briefly mentioned. The geographical limitations caused by a lack of common Alliance interests have already been pointed out. The preference for UN authorisation poses

equally strict geographical limitations on NATO's range of action. During the last months, NATO has made it evident through both practice and policy that UN authorisation is not required for NATO operations. Whereas the perception of the legality of such unauthorised operations may vary, the resentment caused in both domestic opinions and other parts of the world is unquestionable. The inability of the UN Security Council to agree on a common policy towards domestic or international conflicts is nothing new, but rather the normal situation. The question of legitimisation thus poses a serious dilemma for NATO. On the one hand unauthorised operations may undermine broad domestic support in many NATO countries and also undermine NATO's internal consensus as domestic opposition may vary between members. Another effect of NATO's disregard of other countries' objections to its new role may be the stirring of anti-western feelings in the disillusioned populations of not only Russia but also Belarus and Ukraine. An 'expanding and aggressive NATO' may in a worst-case scenario lead to increased support for anti-western and anti-democratic candidates in future elections in these countries. On the other hand, always requiring a UN or OSCE mandate for an 'out-of-area' operations, would entail a *de facto* Russian or Chinese veto over NATO's decision-making process.

Temporary transformation problems versus structural problems

The discussion above has pointed to the many strains on NATO - on its internal cohesion, its military credibility and its relations with the rest of the world - caused by its new 'out-of-area' involvement. Less attention has been paid to the ability of the Alliance to survive strong disagreements and repair deep rifts in its internal relations and its relations with other countries. Despite the many difficulties encountered by NATO in the performance of its new role, support of NATO membership remains high among the political establishments and public opinion in its member countries, and several new states are seeking NATO membership. It should also be kept in mind that the transformation process that NATO is currently undergoing normally would be

characterised by ad hoc decisions and 'learning by doing'.

Furthermore, even though many lessons have been learned from Bosnia and more will be learnt from Kosovo, the challenges posed by the current conflicts in the Balkans may not resemble the security challenges of the next decade. The fundamental question of whether NATO's members have sufficient common interests to maintain the Alliance in the absence of a unifying external threat will to a large extent depend on the nature of these new threats, and NATO's ability to handle them.

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Notes

- ¹In the 1980s, policy was relaxed somewhat, and NATO began to issue political statements which expressed a common view on 'out-of-area' issues, e.g. on the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.
- ²Gnesetto & Roper 1992, p 4.
- ³'The Alliance's Strategic Concept', North Atlantic Council in Rome, 7.-8.11.91.
- ⁴Speech by the Secretary General at the 36th Session of the North Atlantic Assembly, NATO, Brussels, 29.11. 90.
- ⁵Zelikow & Rice 1995, p 175.
- ⁶Zelikow & Rice 1995, pp 298-301.
- ⁷Baker 1995, p 92.
- ⁸UN Security Council Res. 678, 29.11.80.
- ⁹Taylor & Blackwell 1991, p 327.
- ¹⁰Liland 1999, pp. 113-124.
- ¹¹Stuart & Tow 1990, p 95.
- ¹²Ibid.
- ¹³Kaiser & Becher 1992, p 55.
- ¹⁴Kaiser & Becher 1992, p 43.
- ¹⁵Marc Fisher, 'NATO to Send Warplanes to Defend Turkey', in Washington Post, 03.01.91.
- ¹⁶Brenner 1991, p 665.
- ¹⁷Sked 1991, pp 54-56.
- ¹⁸Kaiser & Becher 1992, p 43.
- ¹⁹Ibid. p 53.
- ²⁰Brenner 1991, p 669.
- ²¹Heisbourg 1992, p 26.
- ²²Ibid., p 27, *emphasis added*.
- ²³The fragility of popular support was demonstrated on 12.-13.02.91, when coalition planes killed 300 Iraqi civilians who had taken refuge in a bunker outside Baghdad, Mason 1991, pp 220-221.
- ²⁴Other European insufficiencies were a lack of long-range heavy transport air-craft and limited inflight refuelling capability.
- ²⁵Heisbourg 1992, p 21.
- ²⁶Heisbourg 1992, p 25.
- ²⁷Sked 1991, p 54.
- ²⁸Kaiser & Becher 1992, p 69.
- ²⁹Taft 1991, pp 7-11.

- ³⁰Brenner 1991, pp 676-677.
- ³¹de Wijk 1997, p 23.
- ³²Para. 20, *The Alliance's New Strategic Concept*, issued at the NAC in Rome 08.11.91
- ³³Para. 32, *The Alliance's New Strategic Concept*, issued at the NAC in Rome 08.11.91, *emphasis added*.
- ³⁴de Wijk 1997, p 27.
- ³⁵Ibid., p 42.
- ³⁶Woodward 1995, p 2.
- ³⁷Richard Cohen, 'The U.S. Can't Demand a Bigger NATO While It's Turning Tail in Bosnia', IHT, 12.09.97.
- ³⁸Martin Woollacott, 'Nato puts its future on the line in Bosnia', Guardian Weekly, 20.07.97.
- ³⁹Cohen, note 43.
- ⁴⁰Robert E. Hunter, 'Future of a NATO in Transition', IHT, 02.12.96.
- ⁴¹For a thorough analysis of the forces behind the dissolution and the international response, see Woodward 1995, Silber & Little 1995 and Macdonald 1996. "When the international mediators entered the fray, they behaved as though war were self-evidently futile and irrational; as though all they needed to do was to persuade the warring parties of this truism and, once the scales fallen from their eyes, the guns would fall silent. What the diplomats often failed to realise is despite the appearance of chaos, the wars have been prosecuted with terrifying rationality by protagonists playing long-term power games." (Macdonald 1996, p 9).
- ⁴²Ibid., p 167.
- ⁴³Silber & Little 1995, pp 216-225.
- ⁴⁴The role of the US in the Lisbon negotiations is a matter of controversy. In Lisbon, the three parties agreed to a 'cantonisation' of Bosnia according to ethnic lines of division. However, the Bosnian president withdrew his support on the return to Sarajevo. According to the New York Times, the withdrawal of support was encouraged by the US ambassador, Warren Zimmerman. He has later denied that.
- ⁴⁵Baker 1995, p 648.
- ⁴⁶See Zimmerman 1996, p 51, and Macdonald 1996.
- ⁴⁷For a detailed examination of German motives, see Maull 1995-96 and Woodward 1995, pp 177-178.
- ⁴⁸Zimmerman 1996, p 176.
- ⁴⁹Zimmerman 1996, pp 130-131. According to Zimmerman, 'the Congress made the implementation of a consistent strategy toward Yugoslavia nearly impossible'.
- ⁵⁰Glitman 1996-97, p 68.
- ⁵¹Baker 1995, p 637.

- ⁵²However, the introduction of a UN peacekeeping force was negotiated by UN envoy, Cyrus Vance, after the war broke out in Croatia.
- ⁵³*Ibid.*, p 85.
- ⁵⁴Zimmerman 1996, p 158.
- ⁵⁵Ministerial meeting of the NAC in Oslo, 04.06.92, *Final Communiqué*, para. 11.
- ⁵⁶de Wijk 1997, p 59.
- ⁵⁷Jeonne Walker, 'The Wordy West Fiddles While Ex-Yugoslavia Burns', IHT, 21.05.92.
- ⁵⁸*Ibid.*
- ⁵⁹Joseph Fitchett, 'West Fears a Quagmire in Yugoslavia', IHT, 26.05.92.
- ⁶⁰Roger Boyes, 'Future of Bosnia rests on Western might', Times, 07.05.92.
- ⁶¹Leonard Doyle and Andrew Marshall, 'UN may urge WEU to take role on peace', 30.04.92.
- ⁶²Petersberg Declaration, WEU Council of Ministers, 19.06.92.
- ⁶³Edward Mortimer, 'Bosnia's tragic example', Financial Times, 27.05.92.
- ⁶⁴Sarah Lambert, 'Nato paves the way for a future peacekeeping role', Independent, 28.05.92.
- ⁶⁵Hella Pick, 'Nato accepts wider peacekeeping role', Guardian, 05.06.92.
- ⁶⁶Heraclides 1993, pp 94-95.
- ⁶⁷Higgins 1997, p 3.
- ⁶⁸The US also wanted to include enforcement of the no-fly zone, but at the time France and Britain refused to accept the use of air force (O'Ballance 1995, p 109).
- ⁶⁹Leurdijk 1997, p 24.
- ⁷⁰Drew 1996, p 9.
- ⁷¹UNSC Res. 781, 09.10.92.
- ⁷²UNSC Res. 787, 16.11.92.
- ⁷³UNSC Res. 816, 31.03. 93, para. 4.
- ⁷⁴UNSC Res. 836, 04.05.93.
- ⁷⁵Leurdijk 1994, p 39.
- ⁷⁶NATO Press Release, 'Statement by the Secretary-General of NATO', 30.08.95.
- ⁷⁷Stoltenberg & Eide 1996, pp 140-141.
- ⁷⁸Michael R. Gordon, 'U.S. Military Chief on Bosnia: Stay Out', IHT, 29.09.92. For more a detailed discussion of differing views on the usefulness of air power in Bosnia, see Deborah D. Avant 1997.
- ⁷⁹Quoted in Woodward 1995, p 307, see also Silber & Little 1995, p 288.
- ⁸⁰The negotiation process is described in Silber & Little, pp 319-323.
- ⁸¹Neville-Jones 1996/97, p 46.
- ⁸²John Palmer, 'EC ministers brace for clash with US over Bosnia action', Guardian, 26.04.93.

- ⁸³Para 4, UNSC Res. 816, 31.03.93.
- ⁸⁴For a detailed account, see Honig & Both 1996, pp 69-137.
- ⁸⁵UNSC Res. 819, 16.04.93.
- ⁸⁶UNSC Res. 824, 06.05.93.
- ⁸⁷Para 5, UNSC Res. 836, 04.06.93, *emphasis added*.
- ⁸⁸Para 9, UNSC Res. 836, 04.06.93, *emphasis added*.
- ⁸⁹Para 10, UNSC Res. 836, 04.06.93.
- ⁹⁰Additional troops still failed to materialise. Finally, a Dutch battalion was offered by mistake by the Dutch UN ambassador, as the Dutch Defence Minister had failed to make it clear that the offer to deploy the battalion did not include the safe area assignment. (Honig & Both 1996, pp 122-123).
- ⁹¹Para 3 of the Final Communiqué, Ministerial meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Athens, Greece, 10.06.93, *emphasis added*.
- ⁹²Para 3 of the press statement by the Secretary General following the special meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Brussels on 02.08.93.
- ⁹³Para 4 of the press statement by the Secretary General following the special meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Brussels on 02.08.93.
- ⁹⁴Barton Gellman and Thomas W. Lippman, 'Clinton Said to Embolden Bosnia Strike Plan for NATO', IHT, 02.08.93.
- ⁹⁵NATO press release, 'Decisions taken at the meeting of the North Atlantic Council on 9th August 1993'.
- ⁹⁶NATO press release, 'Decisions taken at the meeting of the North Atlantic Council on 9th August 1993'.
- ⁹⁷Letter by Christopher is quoted in Helmut Freudenschuss, 'Between Unilateralism and Collective Security: Authorizing the use of force by the UN Security Council', European Journal of International Law, Vol. 5, No. 4, 1994, p 510, *emphasis added*.
- ⁹⁸Freudenschuss, p 511.
- ⁹⁹Freudenschuss, p 511.
- ¹⁰⁰Freudenschuss, p 511.
- ¹⁰¹Richard L. Berke, 'Dole Rebukes Clinton and UN', IHT, 18.08.93.
- ¹⁰²Para 22 of the Declaration of the heads of state and government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council held at NATO Headquarters, Brussels, on 10-11.01.94.
- ¹⁰³Letter from Boutros-Ghali to Manfred Wörner, 06.02.94.
- ¹⁰⁴Para 10, NATO press release, 'Decisions taken at the meeting of the North Atlantic Council on 9th February 1994'. According to the same press release NATO also threatened to launch air strikes against artillery or mortar positions which were responsible for attacks against civilian targets, but these strikes would only be launched at

the explicit request of the United Nations.

¹⁰⁵NATO press release, 'Decisions taken at the meeting of the North Atlantic Council on 9th August 1993'.

¹⁰⁶David Owen 1995, p 284.

¹⁰⁷Shashi Tharoor, 'United Nations Peacekeeping in Europe', *Survival*, Vol. 37, No. 2, Summer 1995.

¹⁰⁸Robert Mauthner, 'West creates new uncertainties', *Financial Times*, 11.02.94.

¹⁰⁹Quoted by Lion Barber and Robert Mauthner, 'NATO orders Serbian pull-back', *Financial Times*, 10.02.94.

¹¹⁰Robert Mauthner, 'Guns wait for the war of words', *Financial Times*, 16.02.94.

¹¹¹Only a few days after the deadline, NATO planes shot down two air planes violating the no-fly zone over Bosnia Herzegovina. The operation was the first military engagement ever undertaken by the Alliance and was endorsed by Russia and the UN.

¹¹²Silber & Little 1995, p 327.

¹¹³Daniel Williams, 'Bosnian Serbs Are Testing the West, and Winning', *IHT*, 20.04.94.

¹¹⁴NATO Press Release, 'Decisions taken at the meeting of the North Atlantic Council on 22 April 1994 ((1))'.

¹¹⁵NATO Press Release, 'Decisions on the protection of the safe areas taken at the meeting of the North Atlantic Council on 22 April 1994', para. 9 (d).

¹¹⁶NATO Press Release, 'Decisions on the protection of the safe areas taken at the meeting of the North Atlantic Council on 22 April 1994', para. 9 (e).

¹¹⁷Roger Cohen, 'Bosnian Serbs in Standoff With NATO', *IHT*, 29.04.94.

¹¹⁸Leurdjik 1994, p 50.

¹¹⁹Silber & Little 1995, p 332.

¹²⁰Silber & Little 1995, p 322.

¹²¹Michael R. Gordon, 'State Department Balks at Pentagon's Hands-Off View of Force in Bosnia', *IHT*, 07.04.94.

¹²²*Ibid.*

¹²³See for instance, Martin Walker, 'West in disarray as US tries to lift Bosnian arms embargo', *Guardian*, 12.05.94.

¹²⁴S/1194/1067, 17 September 1994, Report of the Secretary General pursuant to resolution 908 (1994), para. 43, emphasis added.

¹²⁵*Ibid.*, para. 45.

¹²⁶Roger Cohen, 'NATO's Angry Plea to UN: Lengthen Leash in Bosnia', *IHT*, 11.10.94.

¹²⁷NATO Press Release (94) 103: 'Press statement issued jointly by UN and NATO', 28.10.94.

¹²⁸Martin Walker and John Palmer, 'NATO at odds on Bosnian policy', *Guardian*, 22.09.94.

¹²⁹Frederick Bonhart, 'America Strikes a Body Blow to the Trans-Atlantic Alliance', *IHT*, 14.11.94.

¹³⁰*Economist*, 'Patching up NATO', 19.11.94.

¹³¹Ian Traynor, 'US upset allies in Bosnian deals', *Guardian*, 18.11.94.

¹³²Maynard Glitman, 'US Policy in Bosnia: Rethinking a Flawed Approach', *Survival*, Vol. 38, No. 4, p 73.

¹³³Craig R. Whitney, 'NATO Strikes Authorized in Croatian Area Until Friday', *IHT*, 21.11.94.

¹³⁴John Pomfret, 'Shrugging off NATO Attack, Serbs Repair Airfield', *IHT*, 06.12.94.

¹³⁵William Drozdiak, 'At NATO, Dole Adds Fuel To Arms Embargo Feud', *IHT*, 30.11.94.

¹³⁶Stoltenberg & Eide 1996, p 254.

¹³⁷Editorial, 'Allies of circumstance', *Financial Times*, 24.11.94.

¹³⁸Editorial, 'Save the alliance', *Financial Times*, 29.11.94.

¹³⁹Para. 11 of The London Declaration on a transformed North Atlantic Alliance, issued at the North Atlantic Council in London, 05-06.06.90.

¹⁴⁰The phrase refers to the US-led operation in Somalia in 1993, in which US forces decided to hunt down the leader of one of the fighting parties, and were thus effectively drawn into the war.

¹⁴¹NATO Basic Fact Sheet, 'NATO's role in bringing peace to the Former Yugoslavia', March 1997.

¹⁴²The *Economist*, 'High stakes in Bosnia', 03.05.95.

¹⁴³Annex to S/1995/470, 'Letter dated 9 June 1995 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council'.

¹⁴⁴The deployment of the new force also created transatlantic tension on several issues such as logistical support, command arrangements and financing. Andrew Marshall and David Osborne, 'Europe and US squabble over plan for withdrawal', *Independent*, 14.05.95.

¹⁴⁵Annex to S/1995/470, 'Letter dated 9 June 1995 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council', emphasis added.

¹⁴⁶The *Economist*, 'High stakes in Bosnia', 03.05.95.

¹⁴⁷Andrew Marshall and Rupert Cornwell, 'Bosnia Crisis: New force raises hackles in US-Allied Rift', *The Independent*, 08.05.95.

¹⁴⁸*Bildt* 1997, p 71. See also NATO Press release: 'Statement by NATO spokesman following NAC', 28.05.95.

¹⁴⁹Holbrooke 1998, pp 66-67.

¹⁵⁰*Bildt* 1997, pp 72-73.

¹⁵¹Holbrooke 1998, p 67.

¹⁵²Honig & Both 1996, p 25.

¹⁵³Ibid., p 26.

¹⁵⁴UNSC Res. 1004, 12.07.95.

¹⁵⁵Bildt 1997, p 94.

¹⁵⁶Bernard Gray, Laura Silber and Harriet Martin, 'US Senate votes to end arms embargo on Bosnia', Financial Times, 27.07.95.

¹⁵⁷S/1995/623, 01.08.95, 'Letter dated 26 July from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council'

¹⁵⁸S/1995/623, 01.08.95, 'Letter dated 26 July from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council'

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¹⁶⁰NATO Press release, 'Statement by the Secretary-General of NATO' 30.08.95.

¹⁶¹General Michael E. Ryan, then-commander of NATO southern air forces to Air Force Magazine, October 1997, p 43.

¹⁶²Ibid.

¹⁶³The members of the US delegation who were negotiating with the Serbs, were fully aware that the bombing would probably end in a few days when all 'Option Two' targets had been hit. Chief negotiator Holbrooke considered it unlikely that the European NATO members would agree to an escalation into 'Option Three'. (Holbrooke 1998, p. 151).

¹⁶⁴Bruce Clark, 'Bombing raids damage diplomatic bridges', Financial Times, 14.09.95.

¹⁶⁵Bruce Clark, 'Bosnian Peace Signing: West's antidote for Balkan war fever', Financial Times, 14.12.95.

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¹⁶⁷Original statement in Yasushi Akashi, 'The limits of UN diplomacy and the future of conflict mediation', Survival, Vol. 37, No. 4, p 96. Quoted in Honig & Both 1996, p 181.

¹⁶⁸'Draft report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the mandate of UNPROFOR', para. 23.

¹⁶⁹Ibid., para. 25.

¹⁷⁰The delicate balance between UN's need to maintain co-operation with the parties and NATO's need to intimidate resulted in differing interpretations as to what constituted a violation of NATO's exclusion zones. While the UN was rather flexible in their interpretation, NATO wanted a more resolute response.

¹⁷¹de Wijk 1997, p 59.

¹⁷²Ibid., p 49.

¹⁷³Letter dated 24.07.94 from the Secretary General to the President of the Security Council. The conditions happened to be exactly the conditions under which NATO's

Implementation Force (IFOR) was deployed.

¹⁷⁴Letter dated 24.07.94 from the Secretary General to the President of the Security Council.

¹⁷⁵Judas Bell, Deputy Head UN Liaison Office, Zagreb, 'UN-IFOR Cooperation in the Former Yugoslavia. Discussion Paper for the NACC/PJP Meeting', 13.09.96.

¹⁷⁶Pauline Neville-Jones, 'Dayton, IFOR and Alliance Relations in Bosnia', Survival, Vol. 38, No. 4, p 45.

¹⁷⁷Pauline Neville-Jones, 'Washington Has a Responsibility Too', Survival, Vol. 49, No. 4, p 24.

¹⁷⁸Pauline Neville-Jones, 'Dayton, IFOR and Alliance Relations in Bosnia', Survival, Vol. 38, No. 4, p 48.

¹⁷⁹Bildt 1997, p 218.

¹⁸⁰Bildt 1997, p 167.

¹⁸¹Holbrooke 1998, pp 221-222.

¹⁸²Bildt 1997, pp 182-183. The arms programme would also undercut influence from other countries like Iran, and contribute to gaining US Congressional support.

¹⁸³Holbrooke 1998, p 277.

¹⁸⁴Bildt 1997, p 201.

¹⁸⁵Holbrooke 1998, p 251.

¹⁸⁶Bildt 1997, p 203 and Neville-Jones, p 52.

¹⁸⁷Mats Berdal, 'Fateful Encounter: The United States and UN Peacekeeping', Survival, Vol. 36, No. 1, 1994, p 42.

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¹⁹²General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Annex 1, Article 1, para. 1 (b).

¹⁹³UNSC Res. 1031, 15.12.95, para. II, 14.

¹⁹⁴Ibid., para. II, 15.

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¹⁹⁶Higgings 1997.

¹⁹⁷Ibid.

¹⁹⁸'A comprehensive peace for Bosnia and Herzegovina', IISS Strategic Comments, No. 10, 13.12.95, p 2.

- ¹⁹⁹General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Annex 1-A, Articles II-IV.
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- ²⁰¹Ibid.
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- ²⁰⁴NATO Fact Sheet No. 11, 'NATO's role in the implementation of the Bosnian Peace Agreement', September 1996.
- ²⁰⁵Neville-Jones 1996/97, p 54.
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- ²³⁴Sharp 1997/98, pp 124-125.
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- ²³⁶Neville-Jones 1997/98, p 24.
- ²³⁷Statement of the honorable Walter B. Slocombe, Under Secretary of Defence for Policy, before a hearing of the House Committee on International Relations on "Prospects for implementation of the Dayton Agreements and the new NATO mission in Bosnia", USIS Washington File, 13.03.98.
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- ²⁴¹Neville-Jones 1996/97, p 63.
- ²⁴²UNSC Res. 1101, 28.03.97, para. 4.
- ²⁴³UNSC Res. 1101, 28.03.97, para. 4.
- ²⁴⁴UNSC Res. 1114, 19.06.97.
- ²⁴⁵Kostakos and Bourantonis 1998, p 53.
- ²⁴⁶Mema 1998, pp 61-62.
- ²⁴⁷The concept of Combined Joint Task Forces was introduced at an informal meeting of NATO's defence ministers in Travemünde in 1993, and endorsed at the NATO summit in January 1994. The CJTF is intended to be a mechanism through which NATO can create 'separable but not separate' forces, that is multinational and multi-purpose formations generated and tailored for specific contingency operation. The overall purpose of the CJTFs is to make it possible for an ad hoc coalition of some NATO's countries or the WEU to draw upon common NATO resources in a non-NATO operation.
- ²⁴⁸An Italian Commander who received political guidance from a Steering Committee consisting of the political directors of the troop-contributing states (with a Secretariat based in Rome) led the force. (Kostakos and Bourantonis 1998, p 53).
- ²⁴⁹Atlantic News, 25.03.98.

- ²⁵⁰UNSC Res. 1154, 02.03.98.
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- ²⁶⁵Ibid.
- ²⁶⁶Ibid., para 24.
- ²⁶⁷Speech by the Secretary General at the 36th Session of the North Atlantic Assembly, NATO, Brussels, 29.11.90.
- ²⁶⁸For a broader outline of this argument, see Philip Gordon, 'The Transatlantic Allies and the Changing Middle East', pp 74-77, Adelphi Paper 332, Oxford University Press, 1998.
- ²⁶⁹This argument has been made by Stephen Walt, 'The ties that fray', National Interests, No. 54, Winter 1998/99.
- ²⁷⁰Atlantic News, 11.02.98.
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