

Somalia: Intervention in Internal Conflict¹

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October 12, 2001

Massive international efforts beginning in 1992 to ameliorate the devastating effects of the Somali civil war and to reconstitute a functioning government in that country brought some notable achievements but they were overshadowed by grievous failures. This paper in section I provides background information on the Somali conflict that precipitated the international intervention. In section II, it delineates the special problems for military intervention in the current era in civil wars like Somalia's. In sections III-V, it develops three points, listed here, that have implications for future international interventions in civil wars.

* Early decisive diplomatic attention to the Somali crisis, backed by fiscal and military threats, probably could have nipped the civil war in its bud, averting the catastrophe that followed.

* The goals of the humanitarian relief mission, while impressively fulfilled, undermined the chances for a political settlement, and therefore set the stage for an ignominious exit by the international gendarmerie.

* The strategic situation in the United Nations Security Council, between the leading permanent missions (the P-5) and the Secretary General (SG) creates a bias towards ambitious goals combined with paltry resources. The UN's Somali operations reflected that unfortunate bias.

In section VI, an evaluation of the international effort in Somalia is offered.

I. Background Information

In the late 1980s, President Maxamad Siyaad Barre's inner coalition of three clans (Marreexaan, Ogaadeen and Dhulbahante, called "MOD") were in full scale war against the Isxaaqs of the former British colony in the northwest (organized into the Somali National Movement, the SNM), the Majeerteens in the northeast

1. This paper is based on research that went into my chapter "Somalia -- Civil War and International Intervention" published in Barbara Walter and Jack Snyder Civil War, Insecurity, and Intervention (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999).

(organized as the Somali Salvation Democratic Front, the SSDF), and the Hawiyas to Mogadishu's immediate west and south (organized as the United Somali Congress, the USC). The USC army drove Siyaad out of the country in 1991 and a Hawiya businessman (Cali Mahdi) was installed as President, with the encouragement of the Italian ambassador. The Isxaaq and the Majeerteen armies refused to accept Hawiya rule (proximity to the capital and old colonial ties to the Italians were not sufficient justification for non-Hawiyas), and continued to fight. The issue was especially complex for the SNM. The Isxaaqs fought Siyaad Barre with the greatest loss in personnel (and their major metropolis, Hargeisa, leveled) and were angry that their army did not get to Mogadishu (where Isxaaqs had major land holdings) before the armies of the USC. They were thus reluctant to return to their homeland in the north, but eventually did, creating a rump state. Meanwhile, a military leader of the USC army, Maxamad Faarax Aideed, from a different sub-clan than Cali Mahdi's, challenged Mahdi's right to the presidency. By late 1991 not only was there an inter-clan war for control over Somalia, but an intra-clan war for control over Mogadishu. Throughout the south, and in Mogadishu especially, warlords (waraanle) claimed control over bands of well-armed youths, who with their armed Land Rovers (called "technicals") roamed the cities and roadways plundering, extorting and killing. By late 1992, due to the civil war, the entire infrastructure of the country was ruined, mass killing, starvation and disease afflicted much of the population, there was no central government that could negotiate on behalf of the state, and international relief workers were nearly as vulnerable to attack as was the Somali population.

The United Nations, more than a year after Siyaad fell from power, brokered a cease-fire in February 1992 between Cali Mahdi and Maxamad Faarax Aideed. Six weeks later, the Security Council established the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM I) to monitor the cease-fire and to provide emergency humanitarian assistance. The Secretary General appointed Mohamed Sahnoun, a well-respected Egyptian diplomat, as his special representative (SRSG) and he was provided with a staff of fifty unarmed monitors. The UN promised in its Resolution 751 (April 1992) to send as well a 500-man security force, but it was not until September when lightly armed Pakistani troops arrived. The cease-fire did not last. Continued fighting in this impoverished country created massive numbers of starving and diseased victims. The unspeakable horrors of the war, broadcast through international media, gained international attention. Reports on this situation led US President Bush to commit US forces to airlift relief supplies to the civil war's victims. In this US-support operation of UNOSOM I, called "Provide Relief," more than 28,000 metric tons of relief supplies were delivered to Somalia.

By November, President Bush agreed to up the ante, and to offer US troops to lead a UN military action to avert an even greater human tragedy. On December 3, the Security Council, combining language of Chapters VI (on peacekeeping) and VII (on peace enforcement) of the UN Charter, passed Resolution 794, creating the United Task Force (UNITAF), with a mandate to create, once the UNITAF ameliorated the human tragedy, a permanent UN peacekeeping operation to provide humanitarian assistance and to restore order to southern Somalia. From December 1992 through May 1993, UNITAF had about 38,000 troops from 21 nations, including 28,000 Americans, whose parallel operation during the UNITAF period was called "Restore Hope". President Bush insisted that "Restore Hope" be seen merely as a humanitarian mission to save civilian lives and promised that the mission would be over in a few months' time.

The UN was reluctant to manage the transition in which UNITAF would be replaced. But in March 1993, with Security Council Resolution 814, crafted by President Clinton's foreign policy team, UNOSOM II was mandated to replace UNITAF. This was an ambitious resolution calling for the rebuilding of state institutions. Moreover, it was the first ever Chapter VII resolution that was explicit about enforcement, including the disarming of Somali clans. Aideed took advantage of weak administration of the mission in June, 1993 when some of his supporters ambushed and killed 24 Pakistani soldiers. In response, the UN authorized (through Security Council Resolution 837) US Rangers to apprehend those responsible. This led to a disaster for UNOSOM II. In an operation conducted on October 3, 18 Americans were killed and 75 wounded in their manhunt for Aideed. President Clinton forthwith announced the phased withdrawal of American troops that would be completed by March 1994. Thus ended the role of the international gendarmerie in the Somali civil war.

II. A New Kind of Mission

The collapse of weak states in the post Cold War world and the concomitant humanitarian tragedies bring new challenges for diplomatic and military operations. For one, many actors involve themselves in these operations, each with its own program, leading to considerable coordination issues. Second, the goals of any operation are ambiguous from the beginning, and tend to change in the course of its implementation. Third, rarely do these wars affect the interests of the intervening powers in a direct way. Humanitarian horrors rather than national threat drive the intervention. Therefore, goals are often more ambitious than resolve.

The most evident operational problem (clearest in UNOSOM II) for this new type of intervention comes from the divided command structure, with each part of the command having somewhat different goals. UNOSOM II was under nominal UN control. However, the US had its own parallel command structure. US Major General Montgomery was both Commander of US Forces Somalia (USFORSOM) and a deputy to the UN Force Commander in Somalia, Lieutenant General Cevik Bir. Furthermore, the US command was itself divided, with a complex command structure that for example separated the land forces inside Somalia from the Navy and Marine Corps forces that remained under CENTCOM. When the Task Force Ranger was deployed to capture Aideed, it had its own chain of command that did not go through either the US or the UN channels in Somalia.

Then there was a problem of command over a diverse multinational army. Several countries besides the US provided troops to these UN operations. In UNOSOM I, a brigade of uniformed but unarmed Pakistani troops was stationed at the airport, unable to carry out its mission. With US troops leading UNITAF, support contingents from France, Canada, Belgium, Italy, Australia, Pakistan, Botswana, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the UAE, and six other countries were sent to Somalia. UNOSOM II included troops from Italy, France, Belgium and Pakistan. In UNOSOM II, different national armies interpreted the Rules of Engagement differently, as to whether technicals should be engaged without provocation or whether they should first be asked to surrender weapons voluntarily first. But the bigger problem was the tendency of national contingents to seek guidance from their governments before carrying out orders. This reached levels of near treachery when the commander of the Italian contingent opened negotiations with Aideed when the SC had instructed UNOSOM II to hunt him down. There was no way the Italians could be policed, or punished. Nearly all of the problems in plan implementation can be traced at least in part to this ambiguous command structure.

The coordination issues that stymied military command were equally problematical in relations between the military command and the humanitarian operations. Foreign NGO personnel were ubiquitous. Throughout the period, thirty NGOs were active in providing humanitarian relief. These included CRS (Catholic Relief Services), IMC (International Medical Corps), AWO (Abu Dhabi Welfare Organization), DCG (Diakonic Care Germany), CARE (CARE International), ADRA (Adventist Relief and Development Agency), AMA (Africa Muslims Agency), CCOVS (Coordination Committee of Organizations for Voluntary Service), AICF (International Action Against Famine), SOS (Children's Emergency Services), MERCY (Mercy International), MSF (Doctors Without

Borders), MCF (Muwafaq Charity), PSF (Pharmacists Without Borders), RIHS (Revival Islamic Heritage), SCR (Swedish Church Relief), NORCROSS (Nordic Red Cross), ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross), FRCS (Federation of the Red Cross Society), OXFAM (Oxford Famine Relief), CWS (Church World Services), ACORD (Agency for Cooperation and Research Development), AFSC (American Friends Service Committee), IARA (Islamic African Relief Agency), IIRO (International Islamic Relief), IDRA (International Development and Relief Agency), DAWA (Munzamai Islamic Society), MAUK (Muslim Aid UK), SCF (Save the Children), and ACSSOM (African Charity Society for Maternity and Childhood). In October 1992, Philip Johnston, president of CARE, helped to create a security co-ordination mechanism for all NGOs, and this became the US-led Civilian-Military Operations Center (CMOC). Besides the NGO's, several UN Humanitarian Agencies were also active during the civil war, including the UNHCR, UNICEF, UNESCO, UNDP, UNCTAD and ECOSOC.

The goals of the NGOs have rarely been examined in a systematic way. Based on the stinging exposé of these goals written by Michael Maren, we can say that oftentimes their publicly stated humanitarian goals get overshadowed by their organizational desires to raise private money and to procure international contracts for their activities.² Somalia for several of these organizations was a perfect site for advertising to potential donors the need for greater financial support. Their personnel were there despite an inability to provide the aid that would have justified their presence. In reality, personnel from these humanitarian contingents were constantly in danger from their own (Somali) personnel as well as from militias. There was no clear way that the military command could provide security services to the NGOs. Giving ID's to registered NGO personnel only created a market for such ID's and these ID's were considered a license to bear arms. In this case, UNITAF set up a Civil-Military Operations Center (CMOC) in December 1992 that ameliorated some of these problems. But the larger problem was that military commands had to expand goals or be faced with the blood of humanitarian relief workers on their hands. The multiplicity of humanitarian agents without a clear structure of command is a constant in military/humanitarian interventions, and participating organizations need to adjust to this new reality. The CMOC is evidence that the US armed forces are cognizant of the problems and able to adjust to this new reality.

2. Michael Maren (1997) The Road to Hell: The Ravaging Effects of Foreign Aid and International Charity (New York: Free Press)

III. Missed Opportunities for Early Decisive Action

In retrospect, it seems clearer than it did at the moment, that decisive diplomatic action backed by fiscal and military promises and threats, could have cauterized the Somali civil war. There were several propitious points for significant diplomatic intervention, but they were squandered.³

(1) In 1988, when only small insurgencies were evident, the international community had an opportunity to stem the civil war in its bud. In that year, Somalia made a formal agreement with its arch-enemy Ethiopia, forming the Inter-Governmental Agency on Drought and Development (IGADD). Ethiopia was then housing insurgents from Somalia's north (the Isxaaq-led SNM). In light of this "conflict management agreement" between Mengistu and Siyaad, Ethiopia forced the repatriation of the SNM into Somalia. The SNM was thereby pressured into military action for survival. Meanwhile, Siyaad brutally bombed Hargeisa, the commercial capital of the Isxaaqs. At this point, the US could have condemned the massacre in Hargeisa, withheld financial support for Somalia, including arms shipments, to compel a cease-fire and an internal dialogue for reconciliation. In part because the US remained interested in Berbera for CENTCOM, it ignored the signs of disaster.

(2) In 1990, an Abgal-led "Manifesto Group" wrote an open letter to Siyaad calling for national reconciliation and democratization. The writers were arrested, but when their trial began, riots broke out, and they were released. Italy quietly tried to negotiate on behalf of the Manifesto Group. And the US, had it understood the severity of the crisis, might have pushed the opposition groups to accept mediation, and not wait for military victory. Instead, the US maintained its support for the Siyaad régime.

(3) In January 1991, Siyaad and his entourage escaped from the Presidential compound, and the forces of the USC took control over what was left of the administrative apparatus. In the chaos of governmental collapse, the US airlifted its personnel to Kenya. Italy maintained a shadow mission, and its ambassador urged Ali Mahdi to declare himself President. (Italy was for a long time an ally of the Abgal clan, going back to the days of the Colony and the Trusteeship). If the Cold

3. I. William Zartman, in a chapter in press, develops some of these themes more fully. Terrence Lyons and Ahmed I. Samatar (1995 Somalia: State Collapse, Multilateral Intervention and Strategies for Political Reconstruction (Washington D.C.: Brookings) also emphasize missed diplomatic opportunities that could have forestalled the civil war.

War were still being fought, Mahdi would have then declared himself an ally of either the West or East, and received consequential military backing from either the US or the Soviets. The other superpower (having learned the lesson in Congo-K in 1960 that African states are not worth fighting over) would have acquiesced. All parties in Somalia would then have had to reconcile themselves to procuring positions in an Abgal-led government. No democracy would have resulted, but there would have been order. That Mahdi received no more external support than his opponents meant that there was no preferred leader who could decisively defeat opposition. This opened the possibility for a war of attrition, in which all parties, to prove their resolve, refuse to negotiate a solution, as showing interest in a cease-fire would be an unwanted sign of the lack of resolve. The Cold War tactic of backing the first leader to occupy the presidential palace and then mollifying opposition was not taken, and this created the conditions for a war of attrition.

(4) In June 1992 (and reconvened in July with wider participation) there was a reconciliation conference in Djibouti with Saudi financial support. Despite widespread Somali public opinion that the time was ripe for a negotiated settlement, the Djibouti conferences failed. The UN did not participate. The organizers (a group of mediators from *inter alia* Italy, Egypt, and Djibouti) were all interested parties one way or another. The conference reaffirmed the 1960 constitution and the unity of Somalia (thus alienating the SNM), and sought to build a fair transitional government around Mahdi (and thus the Habar Gidirs refused to join in). There was no sufficiently skilled negotiator to capitalize on the de facto cease-fire, and to overcome the presumption of Ali Mahdi's presidency so that Aideed could attend. And there was no backing of any sort of military force to enforce any agreement. This was an opportune moment squandered due to lack of leadership.

(5) The secretary-general's special representative, Mohamed Sahnoun, was entrusted with the administration of Security Council Resolution 751, creating UNOSOM I. While working in Somalia, he learned that his superiors had allowed a Russian plane with UN markings to deliver shipments to Cali Mahdi, thus undermining the UN's impartiality. Later, the UN announced a deployment of 3,000 troops to Somalia while he was in delicate negotiations concerning the first 500. Exasperated with the UN's inability to articulate and sustain any policy, Sahnoun quit in October 1992.

Sahnoun has argued that more decisive international involvement in mediating the political crisis after the fall of Siyaad Barre would have enabled the installation of a regime capable of legitimate domination, and thereby forestalling a

civil war. There is clear merit to Mr. Sahnoun's argument. If decisive support were given to one of the faction leaders, or to a coalition group, shortly after the collapse of the Siyaad Barre government, it is likely that other factions would have bargained for positions in the Cabinet rather than fought a war of attrition.⁴

In retrospect, the Somali faction leaders were weak, and were desperate for a compelled solution. They would have yielded early on to a deal brokered by the US or the UN, if it had substantial fiscal and military backing. But once the war of attrition got underway, none of the parties could accept a negotiated settlement without appearing to have lost resolve, thus making them more vulnerable to attack by rival clans.

IV. Humanitarian Relief and a Political Solution

From an operations point of view, UNITAF was a success. In this operation, 986 airlift missions moved over 33,000 passengers and more than 32,000 short tons of cargo to Somalia. Eleven ships moved 365,000 tons of cargo as well as 1,192 containers of sustainment supplies. To be sure, there were logistical problems. The Mogadishu airport had limited capacities and there was no central airlift control coordinating US Government and NGO charters. Additional problems were incurred with the supply of hazardous cargoes on chartered planes, and the issue of diplomatic clearance. Furthermore, documentation of sustainable supplies was subject to different accounting systems and failure to have consistent documentation wasted airlift assets. Equally complex problems occurred with the sea-lift, and a lack of clear priorities when only one ship could be unloaded at a time led to confusions. But overall, what Allard calls extensive "work-arounds" enabled the UNITAF command to pursue its mission with impressive skill.⁵

However, humanitarian success required compromises that undermined political reconciliation. The biggest problem for the relationship of military to non-military aspects of the intervention is that the military goal of providing rapid distribution of food and medical supplies required accommodation with warlords. The civilian goal of establishing legitimate government in Somalia required challenging those warlords. This dilemma, often posed as one of an "exit strategy", was never successfully resolved in UNITAF (which emphasized the need to

4. Mohamed Sahnoun (1994) Somalia: The Missed Opportunities (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press)

5. Kenneth Allard (1995) Somalia Operations: Lessons Learned (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press), p. 51.

cooperate with the warlords, and therefore empowered them) and in UNOSOM II (which sought to diminish the power of those warlords).

There was never a clear exit strategy for the UN operation. Amid the early discussions within the US State Department, John Bolton wrote a memo called "Somalia: Easier to Get into than to Get Out of." He was correct, and for two reasons. First, the goal of providing immediate relief tended to undermine the later goal of building legitimate authority. Oakley faced a difficult decision in his attempt to "restore hope." The warlords had the capacity to terrorize anyone who ventured into the countryside. Although the anarchy in the bush made the success of humanitarian efforts precarious even with warlord acquiescence, they were the principal threats to the security of the refugee centers that the humanitarian agencies sought to reach. Eliminating the warlords would be a major military and political undertaking, and if that were the first step in a US plan, nearly the entire population of the south would have been put in jeopardy. And such a strategy would have been counter to the presidential admonition that all US troops be gone from Somalia within three months. Although Oakley made several efforts to trim the warlords' sails, for example in the appointment of governors in the localities and in the appointment of women in all local councils, he necessarily became hostage to the order that the warlords could provide, as this order was the key to the success of the humanitarian effort. The long term consequence of such a strategy was to make legitimate governance of Somalia (or even illegitimate governance by a hegemonic warlord) virtually impossible. Thus the best strategy for restoring hope undermined a reasonable strategy of exit under peaceful conditions.

Second, the need for a peaceful effort led to mission creep (even by the Oakley team), and expanded goals made exit ever more distant. By the end of January 1993, Oakley's mission had already expanded beyond relief. Oakley had engaged in building local councils, and engaging in some level of mediation. Brigadier General Anthony Zinni (UNITAF Deputy for Operations) said, "We did creep outside our mission a lot...I think we went as far as we could go given what we were." General Johnston said: "To the extent that the hand-off was becoming more difficult to execute, the prospect of mission creep became greater...I resisted it strongly, but I also knew that the standup of a police force...were stabilizing actions by themselves." Bush resisted for a while, but after the first US casualty, a marine shot in an alleyway, Oakley wrote a stinging message saying that a Somali police force would be crucial for US troop security. Bush relented. The UN was against this, as it was too minimal, but they went along. By late February, interim police forces were operating not only in Mogadishu, but in dozens of towns, and

courts began to take shape. Oakley later tried to extend the cantonment program to the outlying areas, but DOD objected, and only wanted cantonment near US troops. Oakley lost this battle. The greatest controversy was on the issue of disarmament, and UNITAF refused a proactive disarmament program. One relief official said, "The fact that weapons were cantoned and then not destroyed probably sent quite a message of comfort to the warlords that, well, yeah, we're just temporarily on hold while these guys are here."⁶

UNITAF believed that its mission had succeeded by January, 1993 as the deaths in the camps had stopped. With hostility toward Americans beginning to be felt, many in UNITAF believed this was the opportune time to go. But Boutros-Ghali refused to allow his people to engage in many of the police and civic programs until UNITAF left the scene, so there was no transition for these efforts. Neither the US nor the UN were thinking about a viable exit strategy at this time.

The US mission under the UNOSOM II rubric (which, if it succeeded, would have enabled exit) was led by Admiral Jonathan Howe. Given pressure from the Secretary General, from the international lobby of humanitarian agencies, and from the realization that the Oakley strategy provided no easy exit, Howe became further implicated in "mission creep" -- the move from humanitarian intervention to nation building. But with entrenched war-lords surviving on predation, UNOSOM II did not have civilian leaders with sufficient authority to negotiate a political solution. Those with authority -- earned by force and recognized by UNITAF -- had little interest in legitimate governance.

V. The Fundamental Strategic Dilemma in International Peace Keeping Operations

The fundamental strategic dilemma for international peacekeeping operations is that the leading members of the P-5 have an interest in mandating operations that they do not want to fulfill. This leads to systematic underfunding of ambitious mandates. To see how this operates, it is first crucial to analyze the goals of the major actors.

In regard to Somalia, the United States' goals must be broken down into two periods. From the viewpoint of the President, the original US intervention into UNOSOM I and UNITAF was principally for humanitarian purposes, to address

6. Quotes from Susan Rosegrant (1996) "A 'Seamless' Transition: United States and United Nations Operations in Somalia--1992-1993" Case Program, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, CO9-96-1324.0 (Part A), pp. 26-28.

the massive starvation and illness that resulted from the Somali civil war. The US Ambassador to Kenya, Smith Hempstone, Jr. had sent a cable to Bush called "A Day in Hell" on a visit to a Kenya refugee camp. Bush was moved and told Acting Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger to be "forward leaning" on Somalia, with an eye to airlifting supplies. At the US Department of State, there developed a consensus (as opposed to the DOD, which was largely against such a mission) that the US could help save several hundred thousand people's lives, and no one else could, so the US should do it. Eagleburger later said, "There was no one in the Bush administration who thought of this as anything other than fundamentally a humanitarian mission...we were prepared to concede that once we fed people and left, it could turn into a mess again. But we consciously were unprepared to try to solve the political mess." And although there was some initial ambiguity about the goals of the mission, eventually President Bush wrote to secretary-general Boutros-Ghali, "I want to emphasize that the mission of the coalition is limited and specific: to create security conditions which will permit the feeding of the starving Somali people and allow the transfer of these security functions to the UN peacekeeping force."⁷ The expectation of the Bush administration was that after UNITAF finished its mission, UNOSOM II would deal with the issue of disarmament of the factions and a transition to civilian administration.

From the point of view of the US armed services, led by General Powell as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, there was a grudging acceptance of the mission. Powell was reluctant to have the US intervene in Bosnia, a much more dangerous operation, and he might have felt that the operation in Somalia would take political pressure off of quick entry into the Bosnian war. He therefore was much more positive to the UNITAF operation than was the DOD. It might be said, then, that a secondary goal of the US in its entry into Somalia, replacing UNOSOM I with UNITAF, was to deflect public pressure for a military intervention into Bosnia.

In the second period, the Clinton administration was handed the extraordinarily delicate task of exit. This required a rethinking of goals. It decided that the best way to exit would be through a reconstitution of a legitimate government in Somalia under conditions of peace. This was the goal as set in UNOSOM II, a document largely drafted by members of the Clinton administration. Some commentators associated with the Bush administration (e.g. John Bolton) exaggerated the differences in philosophy of the Clinton administration, calling it "assertive multilateralism." While there is some truth to this charge, the change

7. Quotes from Rosegrant (1996), Part A, pp. 13-15.

was also due to an inexorable logic of mission creep and to the extraordinary difficulty of developing an exit strategy. When the Aideed forces took advantage of poor surveillance by UN forces, killing twenty-four ill-equipped Pakistani soldiers, the goal of the Clinton administration changed, in support of revenge. When revenge turned into disaster for American Rangers, the goal changed again to immediate exit without any concern for the implications of that exit for Somalia.

The United Nations had its own perspective. Despite the Charter that mandated that the UN act to end the scourge of war, the UN initially was against any operational involvement in Somalia. The OAU advised against such an operation because there was no sovereign government requesting help, and thus could not be justified within the context of the UN Charter. Article 2(7) of the UN Charter, OAU representatives further argued, prohibits intervention in the internal affairs of member states. secretary-general Pérez de Cuéllar showed little interest in a proactive policy.

De Cuéllar's successor as secretary-general, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, had a keener interest in Somali affairs. Furthermore, the new secretary-general was adamant that the international community react to crises in Africa with the same concern as in Europe, and shamed the Security Council into active consideration of the crisis in Somalia. In February 1992, the two faction leaders went to UN Headquarters and agreed to a cease-fire. In April, through UN Resolution 751, the Security Council established UNOSOM I to monitor the cease-fire. Mohamed Sahnoun was deputized as the SRSG. But the Secretary General several times undermined the authority of his Special Representative, who eventually resigned. (The resignation illustrated some internal differences in goals within the UN. The secretary-general, who had as Foreign Minister in Egypt worked closely with Siyaad Barre, was despised by faction leader Aideed, and the feeling became mutual; meanwhile Sahnoun was negotiating closely with Aideed, and this created friction between the SG and the SRSG).

With the chaos in Somalia when the cease-fire broke down, the Bush plan (as demanded by Powell) called for a massive military operation. Boutros-Ghali had reservations, but given the catastrophe, he had no choice but to accept the US plan. On December 3, the Security Council passed unanimously Resolution 794, under Chapter VII, allowing for "all necessary means" to get relief food to the refugee camps. This set the basis for the US-led UNITAF. Once in the field, the SG sought to enlarge UN goals, seeking to change the UNITAF mandate to include the disarmament of all factions.

Some consideration should be given to the goals of the P-5, the permanent representatives in the UN Security Council. UNOSOM I was created by Security Council Resolution 751 on April 24, 1992. It was a compromise. It established a peacekeeping operation, but it was modest. It called for 50 unarmed UN observers to overlook the cease-fire, a longer term commitment to 500 armed peacekeepers to protect relief supplies, and a 90 day plan to be created to coordinate humanitarian aid. Ambitious resolutions but low funding has been endemic for UN PKOs. In part this was caused by the failures in the Somali intervention, but even UNOSOM I was ambitious in words and quite modest in support.

We can infer P-5 goals from their consistent actions. At least in the past decade, and with the horrible failure of the Somali operation in their minds, the rich states have been mindful of five goals in mandating UN peacekeeping policies. First, they (and this is especially true of the European states) don't want refugees. Civil wars produce refugees in large numbers, who can become threats to the efficient provision of social services and the national self-images of the developed states. Second, the leading powers in the West will not countenance "private" rule in foreign countries by mercenary armies such as "Executive Outcomes". Therefore, it is desirable that countries suffering from civil wars be "on track" to some form of self-rule. Third, leaders of liberal societies increasingly empathize with civilian victims of civil wars, massacres, and genocides, and cannot callously sit and watch these horrors (e.g. on CNN) without taking ameliorative action. Finally, in light of the psychological effects of media coverage of civil wars, leaders of rich states at least want to be "seen" by their populations as "doing something" about the human tragedy in whatever country is facing massive civilian starvation and death. These goals need to be pursued under a remarkable constraint, especially when military operations are called for. Leaders of rich states do not want body bags of their own citizens as a consequence of their playing the role of international gendarme. If peace is to be bought through combat, the troops whose lives would be on the line should not be from the rich states. The death of US Rangers in Somalia was sufficient cause for the President to end US military engagement. The result of these goals along with the no-deaths constraint is to push for missions under the auspices the DPKO, but to underfund them, as showing interest and stemming refugee flows is more important than sustaining peace. And furthermore, if combat troops are needed, it is best to recruit battalions from the Group of 77 (third world) armies rather than from the countries that are mandating the mission. While the Somali PKOs were in part the cause of the goals now pursued by the P-5, even in 1992, there was a clear reluctance by the permanent representatives to the SC to fund and to man fully what they mandated.

In light of the unconscionable mismatch between mandates and resources, the UN showed itself unable to assume leadership of an international military engagement. It could not take the lead when member states entrusted it with leadership. This was not merely a failure at the top. The UN's staffing was at that time an international embarrassment. During the negotiations between the US and the UN over the establishment of UNITAF, for example, the secretary-general did not develop a serious plan (as Resolution 794 called for) for transferring power to UNOSOM II after UNITAF's withdrawal. When a US interagency team went to New York to connect with the UNOSOM team, they were shocked that the secretary-general had virtually no staff working on the problem. The best the UN team could do is drag its feet, in the expectation that if it did nothing, the Americans would continue keeping guard. There was no command center in the UN committed to getting the operation done correctly. Under UNOSOM II, no UN planners were sent on site before the arrival of the Commander (Admiral Jonathan Howe) and his Deputy Commander. With the UN Command operating with 12,000 fewer troops than authorized, and many of the troops under strong restrictions as to what kinds of activities they could legally engage in, there was no way Admiral Howe could develop a coherent tactical plan. Furthermore, Howe was authorized to have a staff of 800, but it took months to reach 100, and he described the applicant pool as a bunch of "people that nobody else wants." Stories of UN incompetence in the field are legion. Major-General Lewis Mackenzie, a Canadian and former head of UN forces in Sarajevo, made this comment about UN managerial capacity: "a UN commander in the field should not get into trouble after 5 p.m. in New York, or Saturday and Sunday. There is no one to answer the phone."⁸

A far more powerful intervention force was needed for UNOSOM II success. UNOSOM II was asked to carry out with about 18,000 troops a much more complex mission than UNITAF, which had about twice that number of troops. Furthermore the UNITAF troops were better trained and equipped, and under a more coherent command structure. The basic point here is that a disarmament mission is far different from arms control. In the words of Allard, "Removing or limiting the major weapons of an inferior or defeated military force can be thought of as a form of arms control, *but to commit military forces to the mission of forcibly disarming a populace is to commit those forces to a combat situation that may thereafter involve them as an active belligerent.*" He later concludes, "*If the disarmament of the population becomes an objective, then there should be no*

8. Ramesh Thakur (1994) "From Peacekeeping to Peace Enforcement: the U.N. Operation in Somalia" Journal of Modern African Studies 32, 3, p. 393. This changed a bit in 1993, with a 24-hour Situation Room phone in New York.

*mistaking the fact that the troops given this mission have been committed to combat.*⁹

It should be asked if the failures in Somalia are inherent in UN operations or are they just examples of poor management that can be fixed? Under the leadership of Secretary General Kofi Annan, the UNDPKO has been strengthened, and the Brahimi Report issued in August, 2000, went a long way to identifying the problems that were evident in Somalia, but repeated in Sierra Leone. Suggestions for improvement were both feasible and useful. While the UN seems to be on the road to improvement, I have serious doubts as to whether it should have command and control power in chapter VII type operations.¹⁰

Despite the Brahimi Report's acute analysis, bold recommendations, considerable Security Council (and less so, the General Assembly) support, and renewed optimism at the DPKO, several problems lie ahead. First, there is a P-5/Secretary General commitment problem that remains unsolved. In humanitarian crises, the Secretary General will face enormous pressures to seek some form of provisional settlement (as in the Mahdi/Aideed cease-fire of February 1992). If he achieves one, no matter how papered over it is, the Security Council cannot say no or else their members look callous. So instead they say yes, but underfund a mission with little concern for its success. Once the Security Council agrees, even with underfunding, the Secretary General can hardly turn his back. After all, he had only a thin strand of a peace agreement originally. In the words of Stephen Stedman, "The Secretary General reasons that once we get a PKO on the ground, "I can shame [the great powers] to give me the resources to save the day."¹¹ This is mission creep. At best, the Secretary General will hope for "mission creep" to get more resources.

The logic of "mission creep" weakens Brahimi recommendations. Suppose there is a rebel group that signs a peace accord, but sees itself being squeezed by the UNPKO forces (as was the case with Aideed). The rebels can then renounce the agreement and become "spoilers". By the terms of the original mission, one that requires agreement on both sides, the UN should leave once there is a spoiler. But when the rebels have caused real damage to the UN troops, the option of just pulling out looks like an ignominious defeat for the UN that would undermine its reputation and credibility in other PKOs. So there is a strong temptation to expand,

9. Allard (1995), pp. 64, 90.

10. "Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations" A/55/305, S/2000/809, chaired by Lakhdar Brahimi.

11. In remarks delivered at the annual meeting of the Association for the Study of Nationalities, New York, April 5, 2001.

even without the necessary resolve, to assure success. This logic explains the call for the US Rangers after Aideed's men ambushed UN troops.

This critical analysis of the logic of mission creep needs to be modified a bit. As one DPKO staff person analyzed the strategic situation of Mr. Annan, "The Secretary General does not have an incentive to misrepresent the costs, as doing so plays directly back into his office. So the idea that he would be motivated by an ideology of "give peace a chance" is not correct. He has discouraged any mission to Congo-B, and has been cautious with MONUC, and pulled out of Angola when the mission was going nowhere. He catches the flak when things go really wrong." This response is not wholly convincing. The logic of mission creep is more immediate and short-term, and thus more decisive than the long term worries about the integrity of the Secretariat.

The UNDPKO's answer to the spoiler issue is a doctrine of deterrence that reads like the Powell Doctrine in the US. The UN force should be strong enough so that no group has an incentive to be a spoiler. Furthermore, no original party to the agreement should have the resources to compel the UN mission to leave. Thus, even though an agreement between warring parties still serves as a near necessary condition for a new UNPKO, if one of the parties pulls out from the agreement, the new doctrine of deterrence requires the PKO to hold its course. With sufficient force and presence, the doctrine goes, spoilers disappear into the proverbial woodwork.

The international gendarmerie is demonstrating this more aggressive approach to peacekeeping in Kosovo and even Sierra Leone. In Kosovo, with the UN, NATO and OSCE involved in operations there, it has become clear that the international presence will not disappear even if the Provincial Government demands that all international organizations leave the country. Under these conditions, radicals cannot successfully play spoiler, and they have increasingly agreed to accept the electoral game. UNAMSIL after its May 2000 debacle faced a similar situation in Sierra Leone. The UN effectively ignored the RUF when it played the role of spoiler, and would not leave even if RUF demanded it. Meanwhile, the UN has enlisted the help of Guinea in fighting the RUF. The UN has also helped to corner Charles Taylor, such that even he is reducing Liberia's intervention in favor of the RUF.

However successful UN deterrent effects, these strategies take resources and long term commitments that the P-5 states are reluctant to provide. And since failures of the UN due to mission creep won't be consequential for the P-5, they

will already have been seen to have “done something”. Furthermore, the UN will take the heat from a gaggle of critics that will sustain its image as an inefficient organization. Under these conditions, the UN does not provide a credible deterrent.

In light of this analysis, the best role for the UN is to vote for interventions, whether of Chapter 6 or 7 (or some hybrid), and then to subcontract the operation out to a state or regional organization capable of carrying it out. This is how UNITAF as opposed to the two UNOSOMs was organized. An equitable share-the-burdens taxation scheme for member states would of course be necessary, and this might be facilitated by the Secretariat. But the UN should not be directly involved in the command and control over combat operations.

VI. Conclusion

The initial humanitarian goals of UNITAF achieved some success, but at enormous cost. A ballpark figure is hard to come by. Hansch et al. provide reasonable statistical evidence that UNITAF input saved between 10,000 and 25,000 lives, with total lives saved by international efforts during the course of the civil war amounting to 110,000. Supporters of American efforts have given wildly inflated figures. Crocker gives a figure (without any empirical support) of 250,000. Mandelbaum gives the figure of 500,000, again without any empirical justification. Meanwhile, detractors of the policy err in the other direction. De Waal asserts without statistical evidence that the rains of 1991 were the principal cause of the miracle that saved thousands. The overall cost of the operation for the US from 1992-1994 was \$2.3 billion, as estimated by Sommer.¹² We should not be embarrassed or defensive about the costs paid. UN- and US-led efforts showed a profound respect for human life.

However, in part the result of a mismatch between goals and resources, the goals of bringing peace to Somalia and nation-building were failures. Somalia remains without a state. Two regions of Somalia (Somaliland in the North, and Punt in the Northeast) have seceded from Somalia, and have attained a degree of peace and prosperity without any UN attention. In the South, where most of the international action took place, the two factions remain entrenched in different parts of Mogadishu. There is a modicum of peace but as yet no government. While

12. See: Steven Hansch et al. Excess Mortality and the Impact of Health Interventions in the Somalia Humanitarian Emergency (Washington, D.C.: Refugee Policy Group and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, August 12, 1994); Chester Crocker "Lessons of Somalia" Foreign Affairs 75, 3 (1995); Michael Mandelbaum, "Foreign Policy as Social world" in Foreign Affairs 75, 1 1996, p. 30; Alex de Waal (1995) Times Literary Supplement (December, 29); and John G. Sommer (1994) Hope Restored? Humanitarian Aid in Somalia 1990-1994 (Washington, D.C.: Refugee Policy Group, Center for Policy Analysis and Research on Refugee Issues).

the goals of UNITAF were partly albeit expensively met, the goals of UNOSOM II were not attained.

The analysis herein of the international intervention into the Somali civil war yielded three insights that can be applied in future episodes of state breakdown. First, decisive diplomatic action in constituting state authority can help avert a costly and gruesome civil war. In the Somali case, the international community put insufficient diplomatic pressure, and none backed with fiscal and military threats, to reconstitute state authority in the late Siyaad and the early post-Siyaad periods. Second, humanitarian missions should not be planned in absence of a strategy of reconstituting political authority once the humanitarian crisis is solved. In the Somali case, reliance on warlords to implement the humanitarian program certainly eased the crisis in an efficient way. But the cost was the ceding of authority in Somalia to military units whose leadership had little interest in legitimate government. Third, the P-5 powers have an interest in creating mandates for the UN that P-5 countries have little interest in implementing. This means that missions are underfunded and weakly staffed. In the Somali case, the mandate for UNOSOMII was far more ambitious than the resources provided to fulfill it. This wasn't a mistake, but it is built into the structure of the relationship between the P-5 and the SG. Addressing this issue is crucial for the success of future peace-keeping missions.