NONMILITARY PEACEKEEPING TASKS
IN AFRICA’S SECURITY ENVIRONMENT:
CAN THE AFRICAN CRISIS RESPONSE INITIATIVE ADAPT?

by

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# Nonmilitary Peacekeeping Tasks in Africa's Security Environment: Can the African Crisis Response Initiative Adapt?

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## Abstract

The end of the cold war revealed a Second Tier of countries whose internal wars are the source of nearly all the violence and instability in the new international system. The result is the deployment of multidimensional peace operations around the world on a scale unimaginable before 1990. The US National Security Strategy’s approach calls for fostering regional efforts to promote peace, particularly in areas where US national interests are marginal and the causes of conflict are deep rooted and complex. Such is the case in Sub-Saharan Africa, marked by as many as 20 violent conflicts raging throughout this decade. According to the Institute for National Strategic Studies, it is to Africa that US forces are most often deployed operationally, albeit generally on a small scale. Consonant with the National Security Strategy’s preference for regional efforts to promote peace in such environments, in September 1996 the Clinton administration proposed the African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI) to enhance indigenous African capacity to conduct peacekeeping and humanitarian operations. Through ACRI, the United States offers military-to-military training and equipment to select African nations that seek to enhance their crisis-response capabilities. But under increasingly complex conditions, Africa’s peacekeepers may face demands outside only traditional military functions. To develop an effective training program, ACRI planners must understand what those diverse operating duties may entail so they can appropriately prepare participating African militaries to respond to the challenging and difficult demands of their peacekeeping environment.

## Subject Terms

- Peacekeeping
- Multidimensional operations
- Sub-Saharan Africa
- African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI)
- Peacebuilding
- Conflict resolution
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Preface

As the contemporary strategic environment becomes increasingly complex, peace operations become increasingly multifunctional. The ability of professional military organizations to effectively respond to the myriad demands of multidimensional peace operations leads to their being called upon to perform a wide array of functions, including nonmilitary tasks. As military organizations prepare to respond to a growing number of peacekeeping needs, therefore, they must anticipate, plan for, and train for the nonmilitary tasks they may be expected to perform. This is certainly the case in Sub-Saharan Africa, where resources are scarce and military organizations are frequently called upon to perform nonmilitary tasks. As the centerpiece of US Department of Defense engagement in Africa, African Crisis Response Initiative training must take such nonmilitary tasks into account in designing the program of instruction, to adequately prepare Africa’s soldiers for future multifunctional peace operations.

The author is indebted to Dr. Karl P. Magyar, Air Command and Staff College, for crystallizing this topic as an area of study important to the peace operations debate and for his guidance in identifying the issues surrounding contemporary peace operations. His experience and insights into the unique characteristics of Africa’s security environment were invaluable.

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Abstract

The end of the cold war revealed a Second Tier of countries whose internal wars are the source of nearly all the violence and instability in the new international system. The result is the deployment of multidimensional peace operations around the world on a scale unimaginable before 1990. The US National Security Strategy’s approach calls for fostering regional efforts to promote peace, particularly in areas where US national interests are marginal and the causes of conflict are deep rooted and complex.

Such is the case in Sub-Saharan Africa, marked by as many as 20 violent conflicts raging throughout this decade. According to the Institute for National Strategic Studies, it is to Africa that US forces are most often deployed operationally, albeit generally on a small scale. Consonant with the National Security Strategy’s preference for regional efforts to promote peace in such environments, in September 1996 the Clinton administration proposed the African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI) to enhance indigenous African capacity to conduct peacekeeping and humanitarian operations. Through ACRI, the United States offers military-to-military training and equipment to select African nations that seek to enhance their crisis-response capabilities.

But under increasingly complex conditions, Africa’s peacekeepers may face demands outside only traditional military functions. To develop an effective training program, ACRI planners must understand what those diverse operating duties may entail so they can appropriately prepare participating African militaries to respond to the challenging and difficult demands of their peacekeeping environment.
Chapter 1

Introduction

Never before have the components of world order, their capacity to interact, and their goals all changed quite so rapidly, so deeply, or so globally. Whenever the entities constituting the international system change their character, a period of turmoil inevitably follows.1

—Henry Kissinger

The demise of the cold war brought the heralding of a new world order. Less than a decade later, however, “disorder” seems more the order of the day. While the specter of global war and nuclear annihilation has receded, new “zones of turmoil”2 have emerged, marking “the transition from military mega-dangers to smaller scale but more insidious threats.”3 No longer anchored by bipolar cold war restraints on ethnic, ideological, territorial, historical, and other types of conflicts, nation-states and powerful non-state actors became free to pursue policies and actions based increasingly on their clashing, immediate interests. The result is that armed conflict in the contemporary strategic environment is chiefly associated with “lesser states rather than with great powers, their motives stemming from ultranationalism, ethnocentrism, conflicts of religion and culture, and the search for economic and military security,” according to Larry Addington.4

The Significance of Second Tier States

As a result, Third World or developing nations, also called Second Tier states, have “taken on a different significance in the current and future international system,” according to Donald
M. Snow. “During the cold war, the developing world’s importance within the international system was derivative; it was a place where the superpowers competed for influence, and interest seldom extended beyond that competition to the real problems facing the Second Tier.”

By removing the veil that had framed problems in East-West, communist-anti-communist terms “that had very little to do with the real structure of problems,” Snow asserts, the end of the cold war revealed a Second Tier whose internal wars are “the source of nearly all the violence and instability in the new international system.” The facts support his statement; according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, of the 25 major armed conflicts in 1997, only one, between India and Pakistan, was interstate. All the others were internal conflicts. The national security issue that emerges is how the First Tier, specifically the United States as the world’s remaining superpower, will deal with the demands, developments, and instabilities of the Second Tier.

**National Security Strategy Implications**

The implications for US political and military interests are clear, for the “Imperative of Engagement” is a bedrock of our *National Security Strategy*, the alternative to which “... is not withdrawal from the world; it is passive submission to powerful forces of change—all the more ironic at a time when our capacity to shape them is as great as it has ever been.” The US *National Military Strategy* calls engagement “a strategic function of all our Armed Forces” as we help Shape the international environment and Respond to the full spectrum of crises, while we Prepare Now for an uncertain future. The US national military objective of promoting peace and stability, by reducing the likelihood of widespread conflict, allows the pursuit of US security interests by other instruments of national power. The shift to the new era of internal war further complicates that engagement by three factors, according to Snow: a higher level of atrocity and
inhumanity and less controllability by outside forces; a poor conceptual understanding of these conflicts; and the difficulty of devising policy toward these wars in Second Tier states about which little is known.¹⁰

The result is the deployment of multidimensional and complex peace operations around the world “on a scale unimaginable before 1990,” notes Edward Moxon-Browne.¹¹ US policy makers struggle with how to respond to increasing global demands for engagement, particularly in cases of what Snow calls an “interest-threat mismatch” in Second Tier regions where violence and instability do not threaten America’s vital interests. “The interests, in other words, are hardly threatened, and the threats are hardly interesting.”¹² The US National Security Strategy’s approach calls for fostering regional efforts to promote peace, particularly in areas where US interests are marginal and the causes of conflict are deep rooted and complex.

A case in point is Sub-Saharan Africa, ravaged by as many as 20 violent conflicts raging throughout this decade, while a growing number of African states are becoming increasingly resistant to outside intervention.¹³ According to the Institute for National Strategic Studies, it is to Africa that US forces are most often deployed operationally, albeit generally on a small scale.¹⁴ Consonant with the National Security Strategy’s preference for regional efforts to promote peace in such environments, in September 1996 the Clinton administration proposed the African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI) to enhance indigenous African capacity to conduct peacekeeping and humanitarian operations.

Through ACRI, the United States offers military-to-military training and equipment to African nations that seek to enhance their crisis-response capabilities and that are committed to democratic progress and principles and to civilian rule. But under increasingly complex conditions, Africa’s peacekeepers may face demands outside only traditional military functions.
To develop an effective training program, ACRI planners must understand what those diverse operating duties may entail so they can appropriately prepare participating African militaries to respond to the peculiar demands of their peacekeeping environment.

The following chapters will describe the nature of peacekeeping in the modern strategic environment and the purpose and training program of the African Crisis Response Initiative; the context of peacekeeping operations and tasks conducted in Cyprus, Liberia, and Somalia; and the nature of the African security environment. Finally, this analysis concludes with appropriate policy recommendations based on the potential for ACRI-trained peacekeepers to be expected to perform nonmilitary functions in complex peace operations.

Notes

2 The terms “zones of peace,” which include Western Europe, the United States and Canada, Japan, and the Antipodes and represent about 15 percent of the world’s population, and “zones of turmoil,” which comprise the rest of the world, are attributed to Max Singer and Aaron Wildavsky, The Real World Order: Zones of Peace/Zones of Turmoil (Chatham, N.J.: Chatham House Publishers, Inc.: 1993), 3.
6 Ibid., 10, 22-25. Defining characteristics of the Second Tier are: (1) The absence of common economic and political values from which to deal with the First Tier, “thereby almost encouraging a piece-meal approach toward the Second Tier”; (2) the fact that virtually all Second Tier states are peripheral to the overall international system; (3) the fact that the Second Tier is the primary locus of violence and instability in the international system; (4) economic dysfunction and a lack of economic common ground among themselves, contrasting with the growing interdependence of the First Tier; (5) limited military capability; (6) a lesser commitment to peace and stability; and (7) a general, if implicit, preference for collective defense rather than collective security. Snow believes “It will not take Second Tier countries long to realize that they will be not so much a part of the collective security system as the object of that system.” He further suggests that, within the UN, this will “be manifested in the effective
transference of the center of gravity from the Second-Tier-dominated General Assembly (where they are in the majority) to the Security Council, where the veto ensures First Tier domination.”


14 Ibid.
Chapter 2

Peacekeeping and the African Crisis Response Initiative

Things do not get better by being left alone. Unless they are adjusted, they explode with a shattering detonation.

—Winston Churchill

“After 40 years of relative clarity on the role and functions of ‘blue helmets,’” observes Mark Malan, “the 1990s have witnessed a peacekeeping debate of such complexity and intensity that it is difficult for the average person to comprehend exactly what peacekeeping is all about.”1 While the term “peacekeeping” does not appear in the United Nations (UN) Charter, over time certain characteristics of peacekeeping have emerged that characterize its doctrine. Peace operations launched before the 1990s, referred to as “classical” or “traditional” peacekeeping, consisted of primarily military tasks, such as monitoring cease-fires, separating hostile forces, and maintaining buffer zones. Peacekeeping was carried out on the basis of three key principles: the consent of the parties, the impartiality of the peacekeepers (who were tasked to monitor a political agreement that had already been reached), and the non-use (or reactive use) of force.2

But as cold war restraints that had suppressed conflict dissolved and security challenges shifted to the new era of predominantly internal war, new demands for conflict intervention surfaced. While 13 peace operations were established in the first 40 years of UN peacekeeping, the UN launched 36 new operations from 1988-1998.3
More significantly during this period, peacekeeping operations departed from tradition in terms of complexity, function, and objective. According to UN official Marrack Goulding, more than half of the peacekeeping operations before 1988 consisted only of unarmed military observers. Operations since then, often referred to as “second generation peacekeeping,” have been marked by a qualitative and quantitative increase in the types of activities carried out by peacekeepers; former International Peace Academy official Henry Wiseman has identified 29 broad categories of military, governmental/political, and civil functions in peacekeeping operations. They range from reconstituting military forces to assisting in the establishment of a viable government to training police. Expansion of peacekeeping operations into drug interdiction, naval peacekeeping (using maritime instead of land forces when the disputants are geographically separated by a body of water, as in the Middle East), disaster relief, environmental reclamation, and arms control verification has also been proposed.

In spite of the fact that the number of armed conflicts worldwide has declined for two consecutive years, “one in six countries continues to endure the trauma and devastation of war,” according to the 1998 Armed Conflicts Report of the Project Ploughshares Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies. The organization reports that during 1997, 37 armed conflicts, most of which were internal, were fought on the territories of 32 countries (compared to 40 in 34 countries the preceding year and 44 wars in 39 countries in 1995). What the numbers reveal is that the range and scope of conflicts around the world far exceeds the UN’s capacity to address them. Moreover, claims Edward Moxon-Browne, “As we move into an era of more differentiated conflict situations, the range of responses will similarly become more varied. It will not be in the interest of the UN for its peacekeeping machinery to be seen as the ‘pill for every ill’; along that road lies the slow destruction of UN legitimacy and a dilution of the classic principles of
peacekeeping . . . It may be appropriate for *regional organizations* [emphasis added] to shoulder responsibilities in certain circumstances . . .”

In fact, the end of what Malan calls the UN’s “brief and turbulent honeymoon” with multifunctional peacekeeping is reflected in the declining number of UN peacekeepers worldwide, from a high of 70,000 in 1995 to fewer than 14,400 today. The dwindling UN statistics, however, “belie the fact that the number of *non-UN* [emphasis added] ‘peacekeeping’ missions is increasing,” Malan observes.

The post-cold war global strategic environment’s increasing demands for a diverse range of peace operations has led to regional organizations to fill the void. In fact, the UN Charter specifically encourages regional bodies to try to consensually solve local peace and security problems before referring them to the Security Council. Regional organizations also play a prominent role in the Clinton administration’s Policy on Reforming Multilateral Peace Operations (Presidential Decision Directive 25).

**The African Crisis Response Initiative**

Since 1996 the centerpiece of US military engagement in Africa has been the African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI), which Ambassador Marshall F. McCallie, the US State Department’s special coordinator for ACRI, terms “the American portion . . . of a broader international effort to promote the enhancement of African peacekeeping capacity.” The US Department of Defense (DOD) describes ACRI (which is actually managed and funded by the US State Department with DOD executing its military training aspects) as an evolving multi-lateral training initiative to enhance existing capabilities of selected African militaries to enable their greater, and more effective, participation in peacekeeping or humanitarian relief operations. ACRI is a military-to-military training program using US Army special forces soldiers to train African soldiers in peacekeeping skills.
ACRI’s goal is the establishment of an interoperable capacity for peacekeeping within African militaries that could also be employed by international, regional, and sub-regional organizations. The US Foreign Assistance Act states that ACRI “should be utilized to foster the growth of democracy and the protection of human rights in Africa and should not be directed to undemocratic governments with a history of human rights abuses by their militaries.” Additional participation criteria include military acceptance of the supremacy of democratic civilian government, prior peacekeeping or humanitarian relief operations experience or a demonstrated interest in engaging in them, and a reasonable degree of professional military competence. McCallie stresses that ACRI “... is not a security assistance program. Our effort is not to build new military units. Our effort is to enhance the capacity of units that are already there, but enhance it directly and specifically with peacekeeping in mind.”

DOD envisions ACRI as a three- to five-year program. Its desired end state provides 10,000 trained African soldiers in 10+ battalions and 4+ companies able to conduct peacekeeping and/or humanitarian relief operations with limited support as part of a larger organization; 2+ brigades able to command and control two or more battalions and operate as part of a higher command and control element; a pool of staff officers with combined and joint staff training experienced in civil police and civil-military operations center functions; and the foundation necessary to allow for an easy transition to a follow-on sub-regional peacekeeping operation exercise program. ACRI was budgeted for $15 million in fiscal year 1997 ($1 million was spent in pilot team activities) and $20 million in fiscal year 1998. Since ACRI’s inception, training has been conducted with seven African states. Initial training has been conducted for one battalion each from Senegal and Uganda (July-September 1997); Malawi (September-November 1997); Mali (January-March 1998); Ghana (March-April 1998); Benin (October-December 1998); and Cote
d'Ivoire (November 1998). Battalions from Uganda, Senegal, and Malawi have also completed sustainment training. Initial training for two battalions in Ethiopia is on hold due to the Eritrean-Ethiopian border dispute. The first deployment of ACRI-trained troops was that of Senegalese soldiers to MINUCRA, the United Nations (UN) peacekeeping mission in the Central African Republic.

US European Command (EUCOM) is the executive agent for developing ACRI’s military concepts. US Central Command (CENTCOM), US Special Operations Command, US Atlantic Command, and US Transportation Command are designated as supporting commands. Training is conducted by the Army’s 3rd Special Forces Group (Airborne) in the EUCOM area of responsibility (AOR), which includes west, central, and sub-Saharan Africa. Training for east and north African countries in CENTCOM’s AOR has not yet been conducted but is assigned to the 5th Special Forces Group. US ACRI training forces come under the operational control of the Special Operations Command Europe. About 400 US instructors were involved in ACRI training during 1998.

Standardization is the key theme for ACRI training, while maintaining a degree of flexibility to tailor training to meet the needs of each individual participating country. The 60-day program of standardized initial training incorporates peacekeeping doctrine of the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations as well as that of other countries. The peacekeeping program of instruction trains forces to conduct operations to monitor and facilitate implementation of a negotiated peace agreement in a permissive environment and support diplomatic efforts to reach a long-term political settlement (UN Chapter VI peacekeeping). Humanitarian relief instruction trains forces to conduct operations to provide a more secure environment for either refugees or
internally displaced people and facilitate the wholesale delivery of humanitarian aid. It also includes training on human rights and dealing with civilian governments.

Overall training emphasis is on leadership (particularly noncommissioned officer leadership), communications, logistics operations (identified by several African leaders as the continent’s most crucial missing component for peacekeeping), and equipment maintenance. Training is based on long-term capacity enhancement, legitimacy, openness, and transparency.\textsuperscript{20} The capstone event of each initial training cycle is an eight- to ten-day field training exercise based on a peacekeeping scenario and integrating nongovernmental and private voluntary organizations, the media, and the local population.\textsuperscript{21} The exercise evaluates 10 tasks: establishment and operation of a series of observation posts; employment of a quick reaction force; establishment and operation of checkpoints; media relations; liaison with local authorities; negotiation with hostile parties; conduct of convoy escort operations; establishment of a lodgment; command and control; and force protection.\textsuperscript{22}

An integral element of ACRI is a “train the trainer” concept that is critical to both ensuring that Africans are capable of sustaining skills learned during initial training and to creating an indigenous capacity for African militaries. ACRI’s intent is that the next generation of African peacekeepers will be trained by Africans and then demonstrate their proficiency in multi-national peacekeeping exercises or actual missions. To maintain and improve skills learned during initial training, sustainment training is programmed in six-month intervals for three years following initial training. The modular, assessment-based sustained readiness training focuses on staff development, logistics, equipment maintenance, and continued enhancement of “train the trainer” skills. Assessments are based on the trained units’ ability to maintain the equipment
provided and demonstrate training proficiency against established standards. To achieve long-term sustainment, a sub-regional multi-national exercise program is being developed.

In both initial and sustainment cycles, command and control training, ranging from intelligence preparation of the battlefield to civil-military operations center management, is considered an essential element of ACRI training as building blocks for future combined joint task force leadership. Command and control structures are tailored to both the mission and the mandate and have both a political and a military level. The goal, testified EUCOM commander in chief Gen Wesley K. Clark, is to eventually “develop battalion staffs capable of conducting multi-echelon operations, and eventually, develop a brigade or joint task force headquarters capable of conducting multinational operations.”

ACRI training is designed to be compatible and complementary with ongoing African training efforts conducted by non-African nations and includes multi-national, multi-unit exercises. The initiative’s structure was developed in consultation with the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, a number of European states, and subregional organizations in Africa.

The United States provides about $1.2 million per participant nation for the purchase of non-lethal equipment interoperable with that commonly used in multinational operations. This includes command and control equipment (hand-held off-the-shelf VHF radios, repeaters, base stations, batteries and chargers, and generators), training ammunition (used under the supervision of US trainers and completely consumed during training)\textsuperscript{25}, individual soldier equipment (uniforms, boots, canteens, and load-bearing gear), and peacekeeping support equipment (mine detectors, water purification equipment, night-vision goggles, and flood lights). No weapons are included in the equipment package. Initial and sustainment operator-level maintenance and
maintenance management training is provided. Participating nations sign end-use, transfer, and security assurance agreements which stipulate strict conditions for use and disposition of US-provided equipment and training. The US maintains extensive end-use monitoring rights.

The intent of ACRI is to create capability, or what McCallie describes as a “clearinghouse” of states interested in peacekeeping in Africa; it does not create a standing force. The issue of employment remains one of the initiative’s greatest unknowns. McCallie states that the “political legitimacy of a particular operation would come from the structure of the operation.”26 The decision to plan, organize, and deploy a force could be made by the OAU, an African subregional organization (such as the Economic Community of West African States and the Southern African Development Community), the UN, or a multinational coalition.27 Organizations would have to solicit and coordinate forces from contributing nations. Nations that have received ACRI equipment and training have the sovereign right to commit or not commit forces as desired.

Notes

5 Peace operations that have reached “peace enforcement” are sometimes said to be in the “third generation” phase; see Kgomotso Monnakgotla, “The Naked Face of UN Peacekeeping: Noble Crusade or National Self-Interest?,” African Security Review 5, no. 5 (1996): 53-61. Malan suggests that the seemingly ineffective nature of “third generation” peacekeeping is leading to a “fourth generation” characterized by “reconstructing policing and justice systems as an essential part of the peace process” in which the professional police officer becomes the
Notes


14 Unless otherwise indicated, information on ACRI is taken from Headquarters US European Command unclassified briefing and background materials.


Notes


18 Each training cycle employs about 60 US soldiers. The US Army Special Operations Command contingent includes special forces soldiers from the 3rd Special Forces Group (Airborne) at Fort Bragg, N.C., where 36 special forces detachments are regionally oriented to Africa. Training forces also include soldiers from the 96th Civil Affairs Battalion (Airborne), 4th Psychological Operations Group (Airborne), and XVIII Airborne Corps support elements. Logistics experts from the 18th Airborne Corps in US Army-Europe are also utilized. See “US Soldiers Begin African Training Mission,” Army (September 1997): 77. Interestingly, an Army optometrist is also deployed. Of the 350 African soldiers checked during an ACRI deployment, about 70 needed and were prescribed eyeglasses. “We’re using the theory that good discipline starts with first being able to see what you think you’re looking at,” said 3rd Special Forces Group commander Col David E. McCracken. “Good soldiers, when they’re going to do live fire exercises, want to make sure the other guy can hit what he’s shooting at.” See McCallie and McCracken, n.p.


21 Medical and engineering civic action projects are embedded in each exercise, “designed to plough something back into the local community.” Jamerson, 46.


23 Training is currently conducted at battalion level. Recruiting for an African nation with brigade capability, which would then be trained in brigade headquarters staff capabilities to allow for easier ultimate transition to combined joint task force staff capability, is ongoing.


25 William J. Durch and J. Matthew Vacarro point out that, ironically, marksmanship is one combat skill that must be honed for peace operations. “Forces engaged in peace operations are more likely to engage a hostile party in the midst of noncombatants much more often than a combat soldier does.” See Durch and Vacarro, “The Environment and Tasks of Peace Operations,” in Peace Operations: Developing an American Strategy, ed. Antonia Handler Chayes and George T. Raach (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1995): 33. During early consultations, African leaders indicated that in peacekeeping operations they have participated in, their soldiers have had to execute some soldier skills to counter, for example, banditry. Unit force protection is also a consideration.

26 McCallie and McCracken, n.p.

Chapter 3

The Peacekeeping “Mission Creep” Dilemma

*Peacekeeping is no job for a soldier; but only a soldier can do it.*

—Dag Hammarskjold
UN Secretary-General

As the causes of conflict become increasingly complex and interwoven, peace operations become wider in scope. As Henk Vos and James H. Bilbray observe, “The new peacekeeping soldier is expected to perform tasks which might range from combat action to social work”\(^1\) Nowhere are the causes of conflict more complex than in Sub-Saharan Africa; therefore, its peace operations can be expected to be equally problematic.

In spite of admonitions like that of Kenneth D. Bush that “Just as nongovernmental organizations should not be expected to play a peacekeeping role, the military . . . should not be expected to play a peacebuilding role,”\(^2\) perhaps the most singular aspect of recent peace operations is their tendency toward “mission creep.” Peace operations may suffer from “vertical” or “horizontal” mission creep. Vertical mission creep refers to the unintended escalation in the use of force. Horizontal mission creep, according to *International Peacekeeping* editor Michael Pugh, is the “engagement of forces in nonmilitary activities such as police work, humanitarian relief and refugee protection.”\(^3\)

As ACRI’s doctrine and program of instruction evolve, organizers must be cognizant of the potential horizontal mission creep that threatens to tax African peacekeeping capabilities and
resources. Contemporary peacekeeping missions in Cyprus, Liberia, and Somalia are characterized here to describe three contexts in which nonmilitary tasks have been required of soldiers in peacekeeping operations.

Cyprus: A Generation of Peacekeeping

“It is indeed an unfortunate fact of life,” Alan James observes, “that some disputes, such as the one in Cyprus, resist settlement.”\(^4\) Thirty-five years after the establishment of the UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) for a three-month period,\(^5\) more than 1,250 peacekeepers remain entrenched on the Mediterranean island still confronting “hundreds of incidents per year.”\(^6\) UNFICYP is the longest-running armed force-level traditional peacekeeping mission.\(^7\)

UN peacekeepers were originally installed in 1964 following fierce intercommunal fighting between rival Greek and Turkish Cypriots over the implementation and interpretation of the Cypriot constitution. Ten years later, in response to a short-lived coup by Greek Cypriot ultranationalists, Turkey invaded and established a military presence in northern Cyprus.\(^8\) The result was a territorial division of the island into two ethnically unified areas. Since July 1974 UN peacekeepers have patrolled a cease-fire buffer zone, the “Green Line,” between the northern Turkish and Turkish Cypriot forces and the (Greek) Cyprus National Guard in the south. About 30,000 Turkish troops remain in northern Cyprus, controlling 37 percent of the island.\(^9\)

The militarily inferior Greek Cypriots, who maintain an active force of 10,000,\(^10\) continue their military infrastructure buildup in southern Cyprus. Greek Cypriot plans to protect a new airbase with a Russian S-300 missile air defense system were scrapped in December 1998 following international diplomatic pressure and Turkish threats of reprisal. The planned placement had prompted a six-month renewal of UNFICYP by the UN Security Council, which
expressed grave concern at “the continuing excessive levels of military forces and armaments” on the island. A unanimous UN resolution called for a reduction in the military presence in Cyprus and a resumption of peace talks, which had ground to a halt earlier in the year. The Security Council’s position is for a settlement based on a single, independent state made up of “two politically equal communities” not linked to any other country.

Nonmilitary Aspects of the Cyprus Peacekeeping Operation

UNFICYP’s original deployment was organized to coincide with Cypriot administrative districts, acknowledging that its function would be not only to provide a buffer zone between combatants but also to work within each community to achieve its mandate of restoring law and order and facilitating a return to normal conditions. According to James S. Sutterlin, “… both the military and civilian components of UNFICYP have been directly involved in what normally would be considered the functions of the local authorities, whether national or municipal.”

Over the course of its evolution, UNFICYP’s mandate, conducted by its military component, was expanded to specifically include the progressive disarming of all civilians, the reestablishment of the judiciary, controlling the smuggling of arms onto the island, providing humanitarian assistance, and curbing the excesses of the Cypriot police, among other functions.

The nonmilitary nature of the peacekeeping force’s tasks became more apparent after the Turkish invasion, when UNFICYP was reorganized and a “humanitarian branch” established. UNFICYP has in effect been the “administering authority” in the 180-kilometer-long buffer zone (which covers 3 percent of the island and includes five populated villages plus the capital) since 1974. UNFICYP monitors the buffer zone from about 150 observation posts, conducts foot and vehicle zone patrols, conducts aerial surveillance, and maintains a watch at sea.
However, even before 1974, Claus Heje maintains, quoting Robin Hay, “an important part of the work of the military peacekeepers in UNFICYP has been to ‘negotiate the restoration of public services and ensure that they operate efficiently.’”19 The unique partitioning of the island has required UNFICYP to provide extensive logistics assistance in the area of utilities, since the southern, Greek Cypriot part of the island supplies the electric power for the northern, Turkish Cypriot section, and water sources likewise crisscross the two sectors.20 Soldiers’ duties have included delivering mail to Turkish enclaves in the south and Greek enclaves in the north21 and pension and welfare payments to Greek enclaves in the north.22 In addition, they facilitate continued contact between relatives living in different parts of the island.23

Other nonmilitary duties performed by soldiers include establishing clinics and stocking them with medical supplies,24 and accompanying physicians on their rounds and patients crossing sectors to obtain health care.25 UNFICYP facilitates continued contact between relatives living in different enclaves26 and is responsible for issuing farming permits to landowners; every day peacekeepers must escort farmers to and from fields in the buffer zone.27

**Liberia: Making War and Waging Peace**

Liberia’s seven-year civil war is important for two reasons, according to the UN Association’s Comfort Ero. “First, it served as an important example of a new type of external intervention—intervention by a subregional organization. Second, it has led to a reexamination by African leaders of the policy of noninterference in the internal affairs of states.”28 The result is what Earl Conteh-Morgan calls a “veritable paradigm shift” in which independent African states are now willing, under extraordinary circumstances, “to organize a multinational military force to directly intervene in the affairs of another African state.”29
The war took root in December 1989 in response to the rampant corruption, brutality, and unpopularity of President Samuel Doe’s military regime. A dissident group, the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), headed by Charles Taylor, advanced on the capital of Monrovia, beginning a no-holds-barred struggle for power among eventually eight factions. The conflict ultimately involved an estimated 60,000 combatants, including child soldiers, in terrorism, looting and burning of villages, indiscriminate killing, and bloody reprisals against real and suspected opposition, attracting disaffected rebels and revolutionaries from other West African states. The conflict posed grave economic and security problems for the entire sub-region. There were significant humanitarian effects and staggering refugee flows; 1.2 million people were displaced internally, and about 750,000 fled to neighboring countries. Large-scale abuses of human rights were reported, yet the lack of credible security guarantees prevented effective humanitarian assistance.

In response, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) introduced a 3,000-man multinational force, ECOMOG (ECOWAS Cease-Fire Monitoring Group), in August 1990. Its formation, according to Ero, “...was the first major test of the subregion’s military capability to solve an internal conflict after all diplomatic avenues were said to have been exhausted.” The organization’s mandate was to restore law and order, impose a cease-fire, and help establish an interim government until elections could be held. However, within a month of ECOMOG’s deployment, the NPFL abducted Doe from the ECOMOG compound and killed him. As a result, Africa Watch reported, “ECOMOG was thrust into combat to push the NPFL out of Monrovia.” Its strategy became a conventional offensive as ECOMOG forcefully expelled Taylor’s army using peace enforcement operations. From November 1990, when a cease-fire was signed, until October 1992, an uneasy truce prevailed. During this period,
according to Janet Fleischman, “ECOMOG became the “de facto police” and “became involved in settling all sorts of disputes that bore no relation to their peacekeeping functions,” with its field commander also serving as ECOWAS’s political negotiator.\(^{36}\)

ECOMOG entered combat once more to repel the “siege of Monrovia” when Taylor’s NPFL forces again attacked in October 1992. ECOMOG’s actions included sinking NPFL supply ships and bombing and strafing raids of NPFL positions, including ports and towns through which the NPFL received arms and supplies. ECOMOG drew criticism for hitting civilian, medical, and aid installations and causing hundreds of civilian casualties.\(^{37}\) One official stated that ECOMOG had become a force of aggression and that in forgetting its role as a peacekeeping force, “it has become one of the belligerents in Liberia.”\(^{38}\) Moreover, by now ECOMOG had unofficially aligned itself with rebel factions also fighting the NPFL.

Negotiations in the summer of 1993 resulted in the Cotonou Agreement in July.\(^{39}\) (At the same time, the UN Security Council established and deployed an unarmed Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL), protected by ECOMOG. This was the first joint mission undertaken by the UN in cooperation with a regional organization peacekeeping mission already under way.\(^{40}\)) The peace accord’s implementation, however, was undermined by a “multiplication of warring factions who showed little commitment or political will.”\(^{41}\) Groups aligned and realigned themselves “depending on their short-term interests and the breakdown of command and control within factions.”\(^{42}\) A new transitional government was installed in March 1994, but subsequent peace negotiations ultimately broke down over factional representation.

On 19 July 1997, after a seven-year civil war that claimed 200,000 lives or about 5 percent of Liberia’s population, uprooted half its people, and left the country with a $3 billion foreign debt,\(^{43}\) Liberia elected Taylor president in its first national election in 12 years.\(^{44}\) Although its
mandate expired in February 1998, about 10,500 ECOMOG peacekeepers remain in Liberia to preserve order and train a minimal national army and police force. Reports of widespread corruption, flogging, arbitrary arrests, missing persons, and threats on journalists continue.45

Nonmilitary Aspects of the Liberia Peacekeeping Operation

While “ECOMOG did not succeed in its initial mandate to attain peace and stability,” Karl P. Magyar asserts, “...a great diversity of activities was undertaken during the lengthy presence in Liberia which gives its effort added dimension.”46 He reports that ECOMOG “spent considerable time on standard policing functions such as keeping public order, preventing rebel barricades from being erected, and enforcing curfews.” Peacekeeping forces were also employed in reinstituting the communications and transportation infrastructure throughout Liberia’s capital and in distributing food and medicine.47

Somalia: Peacekeeping in an Anti-Country

Perhaps no peace operations experience has so scarred the American psyche than that in “the prototype failed state” of Somalia in the early 1990s.48 Calling Somalia an “anti-country,” Strobe Talbott charged that its “implosion of civil authority ... created a black hole that sucks in help from the outside and crushes it before it can do much good.”49

In August 1990, open civil war broke out in Somalia as rebels united to oust dictator Siad Barre. By January 1991, Barre fell and the capital of Mogadishu was overrun by clan-based rebel factions engaged in an all-out struggle for power. According to Bush, “Because power was centralized in Barre’s hands over a span of almost 20 years, the few existing political institutions functioned principally as an extension of his personalized rule.” As a result, when he was overthrown, “there were no real state institutions to be taken over.”50 Nor was there any group
(or coalition of groups) powerful enough to seize control or popular enough to win it. Intense fighting raged through the city and soon spread to outlying areas. Meanwhile, food production plummeted to 30 percent of normal levels due to a severe drought in 1991. The result was a catastrophic famine, which humanitarian aid agencies were helpless to ameliorate as armed factions raided relief convoys. According to John Hillen, “Hundreds of thousand of Somalis had died, and the UN estimated that another 1.5 million lives were at risk in the spring of 1992.”

At the center of the problem was the clash between Somalia’s social structure and the modern notion of the nation-state as an object of identification and loyalty. The Somali are largely a pastoral people whose world view, according to Bush, is “deeply grounded in the clan, [which] constitutes the bedrock of social, political, and economic life.” Usually associated with a given territory based on the circuit of nomadic migration, clans managed their own internal affairs and formed alliances to enhance group strength because of drought, conflict, or other interests. A central authority thousands of miles away had no relevance. When there was a common enemy, national identity demanded that all Somalis unite to defeat it. But when the enemy became internal, in the shape of an oppressive regime, the situation became complicated. As Samuel M. Makinda notes, “Traditionally, Somali clans have played two apparently contradictory roles, as centrifugal and centripetal forces, whereby there has been solidarity against external threats and antagonism when the threat has vanished.” And because inter-clan conflicts had become militarized, the legacy of superpower rivalry, the results were devastating.

As Bush describes, “By 1990 . . . Somalia had built up a military force of over 65,000. In proportion to its population at the time (six million), the Somali military force was huge by African standards.” It was also the best-equipped armed force in Sub-Saharan Africa. For the last year figures are available (1983), the Somali defense budget comprised 29 percent of
government expenditures. Military recruitment and posting had polarized along clan lines over the course of the previous decade. Maintains Makinda, “As a result, by the late 1980s, there was no clear difference between regular army units and clan militias.”

In July 1992 the UN Secretary-General declared Somalia to be a country without a government and secured a cease-fire agreement with clan leaders. The underlying problem, as Donald M. Snow identified, “was how to end anarchy and bring out the emergence of a viable political authority.” Yet Somalia represented the classic “new internal war” in which there was “no common center of gravity” to which all the factions appealed and which would have moderated the violence. Nevertheless, the UN deployed a peace operations mission to an ungovernable state. The first UN Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM I), Hillen asserts, “could not be characterized as traditional peacekeeping, but rather, an observation mission with an enhanced security force.” Consisting of 50 observers and 500 Pakistani soldiers “that remained virtual hostages” at Mogadishu’s airport, it was powerless to change the tide of a security situation that deteriorated daily. Then, in December 1992, the UN authorized a US-led Unified Task Force (UNITAF) of 38,000 troops from 23 countries “to use all necessary means to establish as soon as possible a secure environment for relief operations in Somalia.”

In May 1993 the UN took back control of the multinational relief effort and established UNOSOM II. The two-year intervention was the largest and most costly UN peacekeeping operation in history (more than $4 billion). Operated directly under the control of the Secretary-General, it was, according to Bush, “the first UN peacekeeping operation to be given a mandate to employ force in the pursuit of UN objectives.” One official described UNOSOM II’s mandate as being expanded “to tackle underlying social, political, and economic problems and to put Somalia back on its feet as a nation.” Snow claims that the shift from passive
observation and monitoring of relief supplies ("a reasonable extension of the principles of traditional peacekeeping") to "active intervention in the political struggle through the act of disarming clan-based militias," was not merely mission creep, an incremental alteration of the mandate, but mission leap: "The international community leaped over the boundary separating peacekeeping from state-building without apparently fully appreciating the difference." The failure in Somalia was "allowing the mission to change without providing a process for accommodating that change."  

But with a UN military force smaller and less capable than UNITAF, and in spite of being supplemented by a US Quick Reaction Force, the "second generation" peacekeeping mission of UNOSOM, assessed Robert G. Patman, "did not live up to expectations." Instead it became embroiled in fighting the most formidable Somali warlord, Gen Mohamed Farah Aidid. There were widespread charges that the military operation had become an end in itself. As Bush asserts, "If a mission becomes so deeply embroiled in the security or military dimensions of a conflict that it is unable to pursue activities in the political or socioeconomic areas, it ceases to be a mission for peace at all." UN Undersecretary General for Humanitarian Affairs Jan Eliasson observed in July 1993 that the international community "was spending 10 dollars on military protection for every dollar of humanitarian assistance."  

After the US decision to withdraw following a disastrous assault on Aidid’s stronghold in which 17 US soldiers were killed on 3-4 October 1993, the UN revised UNOSOM II’s mandate to emphasize traditional passive tasks. As the humanitarian situation had become less critical as food production resumed, the security situation worsened, UNOSOM II’s military resources dwindled, and the international community became frustrated and weary, UNOSOM II forces were withdrawn by March 1995.
There is still no functioning government in Somalia. Somalia has no diplomatic representation in the United States or abroad. According to a 1998 report by the US State Department, as many as 32 factions vie for some degree of power in the country.\(^\text{74}\)

**Nonmilitary Aspects of the Somalia Peacekeeping Operation**

According to Makinda, Somalia “was the first time that a UN peace enforcement operation had been given the enormous task of providing relief supplies, disarming the combatants, undertaking political reconciliation and rebuilding a society.”\(^\text{75}\) Reconstituting a Somali police force (within legal parameters) and a judicial system were among UNITAF’s key functions.\(^\text{76}\) RAND’s Margaret C. Harrell reports that, using military peacekeepers, “schools were rebuilt, people were vaccinated, judicial systems were reestablished, and governing councils were established.”\(^\text{77}\) Soldiers staffed humanitarian operations centers, provided photo ID cards to relief workers, and coordinated medical and engineer civic action projects.\(^\text{78}\)

UNITAF soldiers alone built or repaired more than 1,200 miles of road, drilled 14 wells, built and repaired bridges, swept streets, and removed abandoned and destroyed vehicles.\(^\text{79}\) Soldiers ran newspapers as well as radio and television stations.\(^\text{80}\) UNITAF special forces published a daily Somali language newspaper (daily circulation 15,000-28,000 copies) that included public health information on treating common childhood diseases, reports on rebuilding the educational system and judicial institutions, and interviews with relief agency staff.

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5 UNFICYP was established through Security Council Resolution 186 (1964). Its three tasks, derived from a limited political objective, were “to prevent a recurrence of fighting and, as necessary, to contribute to the maintenance and restoration of law and order and a return to normal conditions.” UN Doc. SCR 186, 4 March 1964, para 5.


7 The most striking characteristic of the Cyprus peacekeeping mission, however, is its duration; see Chester A. Crocker and Fen Osler Hampson, “Making Peace Settlements Work,” in World Politics 97/98, 18th ed., ed. Helen E. Purkitt (Guilford, Conn.: Dushkin/McGraw-Hill, 1997): 243-251. No one suggests that the peacekeeping effort is unnecessary; UNFICYP peacekeepers react to on average 90 incidents per month. See Alan James, “The UN Force in Cyprus,” in A Crisis of Expectations: UN Peacekeeping in the 1990s,” Ramesh Thakur and Carlyle A. Thayer, ed. (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1995): 64. However, A.B. Fetherston notes that UNFICYP “paradoxically depicts many of the problems and drawbacks of peacekeeping missions as well as many of their positive aspects.” While its day-to-day functioning demonstrates the flexible and responsive potentialities of peacekeeping operations, he contends that “the fact that the operation has been in place for three decades with little movement toward settlement displays some of the most serious dilemmas of peacekeeping as it has been traditionally conceived.” See A.B. Fetherston, Toward a Theory of UN Peacekeeping (New York: St. Martin’s Press, Inc., 1994): 45. An unintended consequence of UNFICYP has been the prolongation of a dispute that both sides “genuinely find intractable,” in Alan James’ words. See Alan James, “The UN Force in Cyprus,” in A Crisis of Expectations: UN Peacekeeping in the 1990s,” Ramesh Thakur and Carlyle A. Thayer, ed. (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1995): 64. The political stalemate that has paralleled the generation-long UN presence shows no sign of breaking. As US deputy assistant secretary of state Daniel Kurtzer explains, “If you are a Greek Cypriot, time is going to work itself out because the European Union is going to save you. [The European Union, of which Greece is a member, is considering Cyprus for admission, an initiative the Turks view as another rejection of Turkey by the group of European nations.] If you are a Turkish Cypriot, time is going to be fine because you are under the protection of Turkey, a very strong power.” See Daniel Kurtzer, “The Cyprus Settlement and the Day After,” in The Cyprus Issue: The Scholarly Debate, 4 April 1997, n.p.; on-line, Internet, 20 October 1998, available at http://www.americanembassy.org.cy/debate.htm. Maintaining the cease-fire and preventing changes in the status quo has been UNFICYP’s predominant focus. But as Fetherston points out, since the status quo “was precisely those pre-war circumstances which had led to war in the first instance, reproducing them was not an appropriate goal.” See Fetherston, Toward a Theory of UN Peacekeeping, 53.

With the increase in peacekeeping commitments elsewhere, the world community has come to question the continuation of a mission which does not seem to be any closer to resolution than
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it was 35 years ago. See UN Document S/25492 (30 March 1993), para. 15; Fetherston, Toward a Theory of UN Peacekeeping, 48; and James, 55-56. Cypriots, James claims, are “increasingly . . . seen as the indulgent inhabitants of an emotional hothouse, spurning opportunities for a settlement and so tying up valuable peacekeeping resources.” See James, 51. Even the UN Secretary-General urged a “critical look” at UNFICYP and other longstanding operations, saying that in such situations “it has to be asked whether that (peacekeeping) force has a priority claim on the scarce resources that member states can make available to the organization’s peacekeeping activities.” UN Document S/23780 (3 April 1992), para 33. James, however, offers an alternate perspective: “With many states now supplying peacekeepers for the first time, the Cyprus force could . . . be looked on as a kind of training ground for traditional peacekeeping.” See James, 64.

The situation in Cyprus may best be described by UN official Marrack Goulding, who concludes that “a longstanding peace operation may sometimes be the least bad option available to the international community if renewed war is to be avoided.” See Marrack Goulding, “The Evolution of UN Peacekeeping,” International Affairs 69, no. 3 (1993): 457. The lesson for ACRI organizers is that peacekeeping in situations of irresolvable ethnic conflict marked by deep-rooted suspicion and insecurity may mean an extraordinary commitment of indeterminate duration.


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16 Gravelle views UNFICYP as having evolved through three phases to become what it is today. Initially (1964-July 1974) it was a peace monitoring or peace observing mission. From July-September 1974 it employed “peacekeeping by confrontation,” physically interposing itself between the combatants to try to negotiate cease-fires and creating a buffer zone it pledged to defend. Since then, UNFICYP has been a classical or traditional peacekeeping mission, controlling and supervising a buffer zone. Gravelle, 193-194.


18 Sutterlin, 5; and UN Department of Public Information, “UN Peacekeeping Notes Update” (May 1994): 9.


20 Sutterlin, 4-5.

21 Hillen, Blue Helmets, 105.

22 Fetherston, Towards a Theory of UN Peacekeeping, 57.

23 Ibid.

24 Heje, 2.


26 Ibid., 57.

27 Sutterlin, 5.


32 This force ultimately grew to about 10,000-12,000. Although ECOWAS was formed for economic integration among West African nations, its Protocol on Mutual Assistance on Defence, adopted 29 May 1981 (Document 3), empowered ECOWAS to initiate armed or collective intervention in cases of “internal armed conflict within any member state engineered and supported from the outside” and which was “likely to endanger the peace and security” in the region.” See Marc Weller, Regional Peacekeeping and International Enforcement: The Liberian Crisis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994): 19-24. Also, for an analysis of ECOWAS’s effectiveness more as a referent political forum rather than as an economic

33 Ero, n.p.


35 Fleischman, 7.

36 Ibid., 9.


38 Ero, n.p. While some explained ECOMOG’s role shift into peace enforcement as a result of legitimate self-defense, others, according to Scott, “viewed the erosion of neutrality as inevitable in such a regional undertaking, a West African version of mission creep” (emphasis in original). See Scott, Ibid., 11.

39 Alternating between peacekeeping and peace enforcement was problematic, Funmi Olonisakin notes. The fact that “troops who participated in an enforcement phase also had to keep the peace created immense difficulty because they were often unable to assume a conciliatory mood toward rebel forces whom they had earlier engaged in battle.” Yet West African politicians opposed rotating troops following each phase of operations, arguing that “those who did not participate in winning the peace are likely to be reckless with it.” Funmi Olonisakin, “African ‘Homemade’ Peacekeeping Initiatives,” Armed Forces and Society 23, no. 3 (Spring 1997): 361-362.

40 Report of the Secretary-General on the Question of Liberia, UN Doc. S/25402, 12 March 1993, para 40. This joint initiative, Ero said, “should be understood as a reflection of the different but complementary roles that regional and international organizations play in resolving localized conflicts.” (Ero, n.p.) Scott describes it as “a significant change in the security architecture because it marked the creation of a hybrid organization, with the separation of armed peacekeeping and unarmed observer roles.” The partnership, he believes, highlights two policy issues. “The first concerns relationships between regional and multilateral institutions. The troubled division of labor between the two reflected different points of entry into the crisis: for ECOWAS, a peace and security operation and, for the UN, a humanitarian initiative. The second issue concerns the management of tensions between political-security and humanitarian objectives, particularly within the UN system and the NGO (nongovernmental organization) community.” Scott, ix, 12.

41 Ero, n.p.

42 Ibid.

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47 Ibid., 61; see also 62 and 64-65. Also Scott, 10 and 14.


50 Bush, 61.


53 Bush, 59.


55 Bush, 60.


58 Makinda, Seeking Peace from Chaos, 24.

59 Snow, Distant Thunder, 195.

60 Ibid., 187.

61 Hillen, Blue Helmets, 186.

62 Ibid.

63 The UN Task Force (UNITAF) was established by Security Council Resolution 794, 3 December 1992.

64 Makinda, “Somalia: Lessons from the UN Experience,” 166.

65 Bush, 67.


67 Snow, Distant Thunder, 188.

68 Ibid., 196.

69 UNOSOM II, according to Hillen, “was composed of the disparate leftovers from UNOSOM I, UNITAF, and whatever volunteers the Secretary-General could mobilize during
UN peacekeeping’s busiest year.” Many of the “heavy-combat First World forces” were replaced with “lightly armed Third World forces.” See Hillen, Blue Helmets, 191-192.


71 Bush, 68.

72 Makinda, Seeking Peace from Chaos, 185.


Chapter 4

The Context of Peace Operations in Africa

*The African security environment of the 1990s has produced two prominent and interrelated trends: the withdrawal of international involvement in the continent, and increasing conflict within African states.*

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Institute for Security Studies

The US European Command’s regional strategy for engagement in Africa describes the continent as confronting “more political, economic, social, and ethnic challenges than any other region in the world,” citing instability as the common denominator. Stability of African nations is undermined by several factors, including governmental incapacity and corruption, economic collapse, overpopulation, endemic diseases, environmental degradation, arms proliferation, drug trafficking, and international crime. These factors are significantly interconnected, producing a synergy of negative effects and leading to what Karl P. Magyar describes as “a portrait of a continent perennially ablaze and verging on the point of perpetual anarchy.” Confronting this environment is the dilemma of the “interest-threat mismatch” in which the United States struggles to develop a coherent, long-term strategy that complements its interests in the region.

The sources of conflict in Africa reflect the continent’s diversity and complexity in terms of history, geography, economic development, public policies, and patterns of internal and international interaction. Dan Henk and Steven Metz characterize the African security environment as possibly “the most complex on earth, with a sometimes bewildering array of
actors, shifting affiliations, and unique characteristics.” The UN Secretary-General’s 1998 summary on conflict in Africa reported that since 1970, more than 30 wars, mostly intra-state, have been fought on the continent. In 1996 alone, 14 of Africa’s 53 countries were embroiled in conflict, accounting for more than half of all war-related deaths worldwide. The 1997 World Refugee Survey reported these conflicts resulted in refugee flows of some 3,684,000 people.

John P.J. Brooks suggests that “The fact that independence was won by many Africa countries through armed struggle reinforces a tendency to resort to arms to solve problems.” Cold war rivalry entangled most African states and resulted in gross militarization that left the continent, Steven Metz contends, “awash in arms, allowing many ethnic, religious, or tribal organizations to field militias or insurgencies.” Militarization not only refers to the size and equipping of the military but also, according to Kenneth D. Bush, describes “a phenomenon in which “political” problems come to be represented as “military” problems. And, by extension, military problems are seen to require military solutions.”

Runaway population growth also threatens stability; Deputy Assistant Secretary for African Affairs Regina C. Brown calls the continent’s growth rate “probably the single-most important force shaping Africa’s economic, social, and political future.” The World Bank reports 2.5 to 3.5 percent annual growth rates that have caused Sub-Saharan Africa’s population to double over the past 25 years and will cause it to double again in the next 25. RAND’s Margaret C. Harrell reports a study that projects a 75-percent population increase between 1990 and 2025 in some less-developed areas. The severity of the problem is compounded by dismal economic conditions that show little prospect for improving. An unsustainable burden of debt ($328.9 billion in 1995) with little to show for it, worsened by financial mismanagement and poor development strategies, have resulted in highly dependent or even collapsed economies.
The prominence of sub-state actors is another contributor to instability. Theo Neethling submits that Sub-Saharan Africa “is the region where the nation-state’s roots are the shallowest.” According to Gavin Cawthra, as post-colonial states became corrupt and increasingly irrelevant to the condition of its citizens, “the referent level of [African] security has moved away from the state to substate formations, such as communities or ethnic groups and to individuals.” Primal conflict, in which subnational identities such as ethnicity or tribalism are the basis for discord, creates a particularly difficult situation. As Metz explains, “Because the enemy in such struggles is a people rather than a regime or states, nothing they can do, no change of policy or position, can diminish the threat they pose to their enemies.”

Non-state actors play a larger role in Africa than in most other regions of the world; Henk and Metz point to “conflict between states and sub-state political movements” as the leading cause of armed violence on the continent, with many African states facing internal separatist or rebel movements. Clan systems and traditions of local self-government among tribal-nomadic peoples are at odds with the concept of the highly centralized ruling authority of the nation-state. Post-colonial political boundaries formed “in defiance of any cultural criterion” compound a widespread perception among Africans of a lack of need for central state governments.

Despite frequent reminders of arbitrarily drawn boundaries, however, Joseph S. Nye Jr. points to “. . . a paradoxical stability in interstate relations in Africa that might be attributed to a “glass house” theory—“people who live in poorly integrated states do not throw tribes.” One of the major roles of the Organization of African Unity has been as a reinforcer of state sovereignty based on a norm of nonintervention. In fact, Robert H. Jackson suggests that it is unnecessary for Sub-Saharan governments to devote much thought, effort or resources to the problem of [external] national security because “they occupy a peripheral region to which the
world is largely indifferent.” There is, however, a persistent and widespread problem of internal security. But as Henk and Metz observe, the fact that most African borders are permeable and weakly controlled “blurs the distinction between what would normally be external and internal security matters. In fact, most African conflicts are predominantly internal, but have a strong external dimension” (emphasis added).

At the root of the internal security problem is Africa’s political system of personal rule. “After more than 30 years of self-rule,” charges Kisangani N.F. Emizet, “African leaders emerge as the single most important cause of the current crisis of government.” Because state power is the major arena of privilege in African states, political victory assumes a “winner take all” form with respect to wealth and resources, patronage, and the prestige and prerogatives of office. As a result, traditional emphasis on nation-states and national interests as drivers of foreign policy and security strategy do not apply. Instead of the customary linkage of a ruler with his subjects, personal rule is more a system of linking rulers with patrons, associates, clients, supporters, and rivals, who constitute the “system.” Henk and Metz observe that because “personal ties and friendships as well as regional, ethnic, and religious considerations” help define strategic interests, objectives, and partners, “... a change of leadership sometimes brings a fundamental change in foreign policy and national security strategy.”

Informal methods and procedures, consensus building, and shifting coalitions, rather than formal alliances, are characteristic of Africa’s security system.

African militaries reflect the comparative weaknesses and poverty of African states. Henk and Metz portray African militaries as being generally unable “to build consensus on the nature of the security threat faced by the nation, then to construct and sustain a security establishment designed specifically to deal with that threat.” In fact, their origin in colonial security
police forces or victorious rebel armies, combined with a lack of external enemies, results in an *internal focus*, with many officially responsible for internal security. African militaries are therefore often viewed as tools of a regime rather than servants of the people. Ethnic, familial, or personal loyalty often prevails over military discipline and obedience among soldiers.\(^{29}\)

According to Roy May and Gerry Cleaver, one of the most pertinent points to make in characterizing African military capacities “is that the armies of most sub-Saharan African states are small, both in absolute terms and as a percentage of the population.”\(^{30}\)

There is also wide disparity among militaries across the continent. In light of Africa’s history of military intervention in politics, some civilian regimes deliberately keep their armed forces weak or divided, fearing coups. In other cases, Cawthra observes, security forces are “the only institutionally sound organs of government” and “one of the few reservoirs of surplus organizational capacity available to weak states.”\(^{31}\) The result is that the police assume essentially bureaucratic tasks and defense forces take on internal security and policing. Finally, the composite picture is complicated by the use of private “security firms” of mercenaries, available to anyone from democratic heads of state to warlords.\(^{32}\)

Harrell summarizes the outlook for Africa’s security environment by assessing that “The miserable living conditions of most Africans, the lack of political legitimacy, . . . the perpetuity of a “winner takes all” mentality that encourages uprisings and coups, and the rapid population growth in Africa provide both the motivation and the manpower for continued conflict.”\(^{33}\)

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14 In a study of 102 African leadership successions from 1963-1988, researchers concluded that long-term economic weakness is also a major contributing factor in unregulated succession; see Rodger M. Govea and John D. Holm, “Crisis, Violence and Political Succession in Africa,” Third World Quarterly 19, no. 1 (1998): 129-148.
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17 Metz, n.p. Metz also cautions that this feature creates an image of “evil” that makes Americans want to intervene “but will debilitate us if we do.”

18 Henk and Metz, 3. However, Abiodun Onadipe recently asserted that the “prevalence of conflict has created a new phenomenon in Africa: the projection of power by African states into neighboring countries when they believed that their security interests were at stake.” See Abiodun Onadipe, “Africa and the Search for Democracy,” *Contemporary Review* 272, no. 1586 (March 1998): 118.

19 Emizet, 53-54.


21 Jackson, 88.

22 Henk and Metz, 7.

23 Emizet, 67.


25 Govea and Holm, 131.

26 Jackson and Rosberg, 19.

27 Henk and Metz, 11.

28 Ibid., 9.

29 Jackson and Rosberg, 35-36.


31 Cawthra, 59, 61.


33 Harrell, 310.
Chapter 5

Summary and Conclusion

Peacekeeping is the millennium mission of the armed forces.¹

The new world order—which US Army Chief of Staff Gen Dennis J. Reimer says may best be described as “long on new, short on order”²—has resulted in the deployment of ambitious multidimensional peace operations on a massive scale. As Antonia Handler Chayes and George T. Raach suggest, “… what is needed now is a larger repertoire of policy options, not more limited ones, to ease the difficult and complex transitions from the cold war.”³ One option, the use of regional peacekeeping organizations, has gained prominence in recent debates.

In 1996 the Clinton administration proposed the African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI) to enhance indigenous peacekeeping capacity in Sub-Saharan Africa, which, Denis Venter observes, “has acquired a reputation for the intractability of its problems, and [where] outside sources are showing a particular reluctance to be drawn into its peacekeeping operations.”⁴ Whereas current US deliberation is on enhancing peace operations “by expanding the resource base for such operations beyond the military” [emphasis added], as Chayes and Raach propose,⁵ African nations, whose armies are often their strongest institution, may be more likely to place the peace operations role squarely on the shoulders of their armed forces. Moreover, it appears that Africa’s peacekeeping forces will have ample opportunity to exercise
their ACRI-enhanced skills. Karl P. Magyar maintains that because of the tendency of the continent’s numerous civil conflicts to become internationalized, it “may be argued that most conflicts in Africa have a regional context.” As a result, Africa’s leaders are taking a second look at the region’s traditional bedrock principle of noninterference in internal affairs.

**Challenges of Nonmilitary Peacekeeping Tasks**

This situation is exacerbated by the fact that the continent’s security environment, which is likely to require complex and prolonged interventions, increases the probability that African peacekeepers will be expected to perform a wide range of nonmilitary functions, as peace operations in Cyprus, Liberia, and Somalia show. As Magyar explains, “Prolonged external intervention is marked by the inevitable widening of responsibilities which accrue from the failures of early peaceful conflict resolution efforts. Peacekeepers tend to assume increased governmental and administrative functions in the absence of effective authority, but with success in supplying such services, it makes the departure of peacekeepers all the more precarious.”

Augustus Richard Norton and Thomas G. Weiss observe that, “Once established, . . . peacekeeping operations often take on lives of their own.” Not only are mandates expanded, but so are time lines. “The temporary stopgap of peacekeeping . . . ends up being confused with a solution,” they add. Furthermore, James C. Wise suggests that in the guise of “normalization,” the functions of peacekeepers “tend to become intermingled with the functions of other . . . agencies and international humanitarian organizations.” Part of the reason for this, as John Hillen observes, is that “peacekeeping in particular is a military activity that is more political in nature than it is military.” Thus it is no surprise that nonmilitary activities such as restoring infrastructure, negotiating with nongovernmental entities, monitoring elections, or managing refugee flows often expand to eclipse military functions.
Military peacekeepers, therefore, must enter the arena prepared for the situation at hand. According to *International Peacekeeping* editor Michael Pugh, the problems of moving from “mission cringe” (defined as “restricting operations according to the means and financial resources available” and which may doom a peacekeeping operation to failure) to mission creep “should not be underestimated. A messy environment is not repaired by a messy intervention; on the contrary, mission creep is worrying precisely because it is likely to add to the mess.”¹¹ As Henry Wiseman observes, military, governmental/political, and civil functions of peace operations “are each becoming more frequent, more elaborate, and more interrelated . . . and will require the formation of clearer guidelines, more training, more resources, and more complex machinery”¹² (emphasis added).

The combination of these factors means that African militaries will have to find new ways to leverage their capabilities to meet the peacekeeping demands they will face. Training programs such as ACRI are one way to develop greater capacity, but will only be valuable if they prepare soldiers for relevant and realistic tasks across the full range of peacekeeping operations. Specifically, Africa’s peacekeepers must be trained to plan, coordinate, and perform the growing number of nonmilitary tasks associated with contemporary peace operations.

The problem is genuine and widespread. William J. Durch and J. Matthew Vacarro identify the predominant tasks of contemporary peace operations as guarding facilities; self-protection in static positions; escorting and guarding convoys; negotiation, mediation, arbitration, and diffusion of tension; civic action¹³; providing humanitarian assistance¹⁴; psychological and informational operations; police duties; providing logistics support to nonmilitary organizations; civil affairs interaction in local political processes; and area and route reconnaissance.¹⁵ Training for many of these tasks, however, is inadequate. A.B. Fetherston calls attention to the gap
between the “emphasis placed on military aspects of peacekeeping” training (in which, he claims, 90-95 percent of the time is spent learning how to fill in UN forms, handle four-wheel drive vehicles, and recognize land mines) and “the range of activities peacekeepers are expected to undertake which are explicitly nonmilitary.” For example, a case study analysis by RAND in 1996 identified critical tasks performed in peace operations that are not included in the standard training of an infantry unit. RAND concluded that “in a world where infantry is the most common type of unit available for multinational peace operations, even the best-trained unit will not be fully prepared for the range of tasks it will confront in a peace operation.”

It appears that ACRI’s program of instruction suffers from this shortcoming, as well, as at this point in time it fails to adequately address the nonmilitary aspects of peacekeeping that African militaries are likely to confront. Resource, legal, diplomatic, and other limitations obviously constrain the breadth and scope of ACRI’s instructional content. However, ACRI officials should carefully examine nonmilitary functions likely to arise in African regional peacekeeping operations and imbed the most operationally significant into ACRI’s program of instruction to the maximum extent possible. The areas of staff development and command and control training also demand attention.

**Other Challenges**

Even aside from its instructional content, ACRI has serious challenges. The foremost derives from Africa’s security environment. ACRI has been criticized as being purely a “band-aid” approach to Africa’s problems; it addresses the symptoms, not the cause, ultimately failing to address the difficult policy issues. Ultimately, ACRI does not fundamentally alter Africa’s security environment. ACRI directly addresses Africa’s *military* capability to confront crises; it fails to address political, economic, and informational capabilities. As Magyar asserts,
economically devastated countries “offer little prospect for a stable peace” unless their fundamental economic problems are first addressed. Regardless of peacekeeping interventions in Sub-Saharan African countries, he charges, “No logic argues that they will subsequently live in peace.”20 Fetherston identifies the “basic paradox” of contemporary peacekeeping as “the fact that it is a peaceful third party intervention but is often carried out on the ground by military personnel. The military functions of peacekeeping are important and necessary, but the underlying raison d’etre of a peacekeeping force is the third party role.”21 ACRI is just one element of peacekeeping training efforts ongoing; it must be woven in with other military efforts as well as with other endeavors targeting nonmilitary instruments of power. ACRI training also inevitably bears a US orientation and approach to problem solving, command and control, and civil-military relations. ACRI needs increased involvement in training development by Africans. And as with any program seeking to build capacity, ACRI will require sustained commitment and engagement over time by both the United States and participating nations.

Although designed to shore up the continent’s ability to respond to its own crises, analysts doubt that African states can do it their own. The most prominent reason is resource constraints. The Liberian peacekeeping operation, for example, cost $1 million a day to sustain.22 It may be unrealistic to expect African states, relatively new in their independence, to be actively and effectively involved in conflict resolution as members of a regional organization, itself immature in terms of experience as well as resources. For example, the Organization of African Unity has involved itself in conflict management only since 1993, putting it nearly 50 years behind the UN in terms of doctrinal and organizational capacity.

The ultimate measure of merit is the effectiveness of ACRI-trained soldiers in future operations. Measured against that standard, the characteristics of Africa’s security environment
pose at least three challenges. First, experience suggests that the more multifaceted and intransigent the dispute, as one may find in Africa, the more nonmilitary tasks will be required. Second, the nature of a conflict is the factor most closely related to the success of a peacekeeping intervention, and internal conflicts, such as those that wrack Africa, are less likely to be resolved than are interstate conflicts. Third, in spite of certain advantages of regional peacekeeping organizations, experience shows that regional organizations are least effective in dealing with internal conflicts. These factors suggest the need to integrate ACRI-trained force deployment with UN operations.

**Future Considerations and the Need for Further Study**

With insufficient operational capacity and increasing First Tier reluctance to become embroiled in the problems associated with the Second Tier’s instability, ACRI appears to be a viable US policy option to address regional crises in Sub-Saharan Africa. Moreover, the use of indigenous African forces reduces the potential need to employ US forces—used 13 times in Sub-Saharan Africa between 1986 and 1996—in response to African crises. The initiative’s range, scope, and level of commitment match the current degree of US government interests in the region. The United States should take advantage of the current climate of willingness of African leaders to assume a greater role in peacekeeping and humanitarian relief operations on their continent. The willingness and capability of African states to provide the majority of a ready peacekeeping force for use by the UN may stimulate increased UN responsiveness to conflict resolution and humanitarian needs on the African continent, reversing what has been called a trend of removing African problems from the UN agenda. ACRI’s value in the short term may lie in preparing African forces for an active role as part of an international effort, a stepping stone to a subsequent, more robust leadership function in responding to conflict in their
homeland. Peacekeeping operations such as that in Liberia, however, highlight the need for future study to specifically identify the problems inherent in melding African regional organization interventions with UN efforts.

In any case, in order to enhance ACRI’s effectiveness in peace and humanitarian operations, it must be structured to prepare Africa’s soldiers for the wide range of nonmilitary tasks that the region’s challenging security environment will impose. Ultimately, as ACRI matures, it should also identify and emphasize mechanisms to integrate military operations with the societal and political issues woven into the crisis, while recognizing the importance of consensus and coordination and taking care not to impose Western solutions on African problems that may require a different approach. Only through an integrated approach that addresses underlying causative factors will ACRI, or any intervention, contribute to a greater potential for long-term conflict resolution and greater self-reliance among African nations.

Notes

1 Author identification withheld due to Air Command and Staff College Nonattribution Policy. Lecture, Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., 11 December 1998.
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Conteh-Morgan continues, “The ECOMOG operation has helped to underscore the interconnectedness of economic and military security. Regional economic integration schemes would now view their defense protocols in a new light, especially after fully realizing that the development of a sound regional economic base is often closely linked to a stable politico-military superstructure.”

7 Magyar, Peacekeeping in Africa, 63.


10 John Hillen, Blue Helmets: The Strategy of UN Military Operations (Washington, D.C.: Brassey’s, 1998): 82. See also Geoff R. Berridge, who claims that a peacekeeping mission “is not conceived principally as a military mission at all, but rather as a political one,” International Politics: States, Power and Conflict Since 1945, 2nd. ed. (New York: Harvester-Wheatsheaf, 1992): 210. Andrei Raevsky notes that “the arrangements of most peacekeeping operations are shaped with prevailing political rather than military considerations . . . in an environment in which military considerations are secondary to political priorities.” Furthermore, consensus on proposed administrative and quasi-governmental courses of action may be harder to achieve than on traditional military tasks, complicating the peacekeeping environment even further. Andrei Raevsky, “Peacekeeping Operations: Problems of Command and Control,” in Ramesh Thakur and Carlyle Thayer, eds., A Crisis of Expectations: UN Peacekeeping in the 1990s (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1995): 194. Another implication of the preeminence of political considerations is that they also affect purely military operations, leading to political rather than tactical decisions. For example, according to Operation Restore Hope commander Lt Gen Robert Johnston, US military forces were assigned to areas of operation built around the requirements of the nongovernmental organizations, “rather than doing what might have been tactically appropriate” to deal with Aidid and other warlords. Lt Gen Robert Johnston,”United
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14 “In a hostile environment or other situations where nonmilitary providers are scarce, the military may be tasked to prioritize humanitarian relief needs, transport and protect the relief supplies, and distribute them in an orderly manner,” note Dürch and Vacarro. Therefore, “Negotiating with local peoples on the tactical level—including local armed elements—is always part of this job, either as an explicit objective, or as an implicit requirement to increase the safety of one’s forces.” Dürch and Vacarro, 32.

15 Dürch and Vacarro, 35.


18 Ibid., 11-12. Other researchers observe that modification of traditional military tasks is also required. As Dürch and Vacarro note, “Many tasks of peace operations are similar to combat tasks, but due to the different environment and objectives of peace missions require appropriate modification,” primarily relating to the use of force and the need for restraint in peace operations. For example, rather than using the accepted combat technique of blowing open a door, peacekeepers need to persuade occupants to open the door. Dürch and Vacarro, 32.

19 This could be a significant factor in ACRI’s long-term success, since one of the initiative’s most often identified shortcomings is the lack what Theo Neethling calls “the ‘command and control’ element, or clarity on the higher headquarters that can direct and sustain efforts to bring Africans from several nations together in order to train them and to achieve a common purpose on the continent.” See Theo Neethling, “The US Response to African Peacekeeping Requirements: Perspectives on the African Crisis Response Initiative and Beyond,” Strategic Review 20, no. 1 (May 1998): 109. Also see Gen James Jamerson, “A United States Contribution to Capacity-Building: The African Crisis Response Initiative,” ISS Monograph Series, no. 21, ed. Mark Malan (February 1998): 46.

20 Magyar, 181.


23 For a thoughtful analysis of the US role in global security—which John Hillen suggests should be to “attend to larger security problems worldwide while [supporting] its allies and like-minded countries who have responded first to global security needs in their own regions”—see John Hillen, “The US Role in “Global Security: The Mayo Clinic, Not the Emergency Room,” Strategic Forum 134 (February 1998): 1-4.

24 Headquarters US European Command unclassified briefing and background materials.
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