



Minister of National Defence, Harjit S. Sajjan visits the HMCS *Scotian* at Canadian Forces Base Halifax on 12 June 2017 to make an announcement.

The Royal Canadian Navy in Peace Operations

by Corey Bursey

Commander C.A. Bursey, CD, BMASc, MA, *has been, in his own words, "...a proud officer of the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) since 1988." Bursey has served operationally on several HMC Ships, and on many operational deployments. Having also held numerous challenging and varied staff appointments, he is currently the Assistant Naval Advisor of the Canadian Defence Liaison Staff in London, England.*

Introduction

The Government of Canada, under Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, has committed to supporting international peace operations with the United Nations (UN) with specialized capabilities, headquarters' commanders and staff, civilian police, and an increased contribution to UN mediation, conflict-prevention, and post-conflict reconstruction.¹ More specifically, on 8 September 2016, while attending the UN Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial in London, England, Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan highlighted Canada's renewed commitment to international peace operations, reaffirming that Canada stands ready to deploy up to 600 Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) personnel for future UN Peace Operations (UN PO).² The details of where such a deployment might occur, the specifics of the missions that might be assigned, or the force composition

of the 600 personnel are still in the planning stages by CAF operational planners. Nevertheless, given that the CAF is a unified force made up of multiple environments – Army, Navy, Air Force, and Special Forces – we ought not to assume that any Canadian contribution to UN PO is necessarily going to be army-centric. There may very well be an impact on the other services, including the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN). Indeed, this article will describe how the RCN, or any navy for that matter, can support land and air PO, even if those forces are operating in a land-locked region. Equally, the RCN can deploy independently and undertake a UN PO without it needing to be in a supporting role. The RCN can deploy rapidly, be self-sufficient if deployed with the right logistics support, remain outside territorial waters, and deliver multiple effects at sea.

Intuitively, one might jump to the conclusion that navies do not have a clear role during PO, at least not in the traditional 'blue beret' sense that many Canadians have come to envision when thinking of UN missions. However, this article will argue that there can be a role for navies during UN PO, either as discrete military effectors, or as a support element to land and air forces. In doing so, it will cite examples of UN maritime PO over the lifetime of the UN, as well as identify the capabilities that are expected of a UN Maritime Task Force (MTF). Lastly, it will review the capabilities that the RCN can offer to such a MTF, and areas for

potential future development to fully meet the requirements of the UN. The intent is to create the foundation for a larger conversation reference the future of the RCN in UN PO, so that new capabilities, if any, can be identified and pursued.

Historical Perspective

The notion of Canada’s naval forces deploying on UN operations is not new. The RCN’s relatively short history is peppered with maritime operations that have been in support of UN missions dating as far back as the very infancy of the UN itself. On 5 July 1950, the Canadian Flag Officer Pacific Coast received the message that he was to sail HMCS *Cayuga*, *Sioux*, and *Athabaskan* from Esquimalt to Pearl Harbor in anticipation of receiving further direction for a wartime deployment to the Far East.³ That order came less than two weeks later, when the Canadian three-ship Task Group was transferred to the operational control of General MacArthur as Commander UN Forces Korea for operations in relation to the invasion of South Korea.⁴ From 1950 to 1953, UN Naval Forces Command helped prevent enemy build-up in Korea, which included interdiction along the coasts by surface blockade forces, harassment with supporting bombardment, ‘naval artillery’ support fire, and minesweeping.⁵

During the Cuban missile crisis of October 1962, the UN Secretary General acted as a mediator between American President Kennedy and Russian President Khrushchev in an effort to delay

Soviet shipment of arms to Cuba, thus easing international tensions enough for relative peace to resume.⁶ Despite a number of political challenges, the RCN was ordered to increase its readiness and deploy nearly the entire Atlantic Fleet to conduct Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) surveillance. The RCN Atlantic Command had 29 surface combatants in 1962, including the aircraft carrier HMCS *Bonaventure*.⁷ While the military activities during the

Cuban missile crisis did not constitute a UN mission *per se*, it is demonstrative of the role the UN plays in keeping peace even among superpowers, and the role navies have played in supporting that responsibility.

Just over thirty years later, the UN imposed an oil and arms embargo on Haiti in October 1993. Warships from several nations, including Canada under Operation *Forward*

Action, went to the area to enforce the embargo in a Multinational Force. Over the following year, the RCN rotated eight warships – several of which deployed on multiple occasions – to support the UN mission. By mid-1994, when political stability in Haiti had not improved, the UN Security Council authorized the Multinational Force to take whatever measures were necessary to bring about the return of then-President Aristide and to create an environment in which the UN Mission in Haiti (UNMIH) could take over the role of returning Haiti to democracy.⁸

After the 1991 Gulf War, the UN created the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM), empowered to ensure the destruction of all Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. After a brief period of compliance, Iraq refused to cooperate. This was quickly

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HMCS *Bonaventure*.

CFJC/DND photo HS02078647

countered by a build-up of coalition forces from 11 countries in early-1998 as part of Operation *Desert Thunder*. HMCS *Toronto*, already deployed from Halifax to join NATO's Standing Naval Force Atlantic (SNFL), was re-tasked to proceed at best speed to the Persian Gulf. On 26 February 1998, HMCS *Toronto* entered the Operational Theatre of the Persian Gulf and began its participation in Operation *Determination* (Canada's contribution to *Desert Thunder*), and conducted boarding operations until her return five months later.⁹

From 1999 to 2001, Canada participated in a major UN mission in East Timor. In September 1999, the UN Security Council authorized the International Force for East Timor (INTERFET) to restore peace and security in East Timor, and to protect and support the United Nations Mission in East Timor (UNAMET) in carrying out its tasks, and, within force capabilities, to facilitate humanitarian assistance operations. HMCS *Protecteur* departed Esquimalt in September with a *Sea King* helicopter embarked. The

ship arrived off East Timor in late-October, remaining in theatre until January 2000. During this period, HMCS *Protecteur* served as a floating supply base for the coalition forces ashore, and as an alternate command and control platform for the Canadian Joint Force Commander. The *Sea King* was employed in a transport role, transporting supplies ashore. The sailors aboard the ship also participated in several humanitarian projects, including the reconstruction of several schools.¹⁰

During the same period that the CAF were operating in East Timor, RCN ships began a protracted contribution in yet another UN mission in the Persian Gulf. Operation *Augmentation* was Canada's participation from 1999 to 2001 in the coalition fleet enforcing UN sanctions against Iraq in the Persian Gulf. Between June 1999 and October 2001, four RCN frigates deployed individually on Operation *Augmentation*, each integrated into a US Navy battle group. The battle groups were deployed to enforce the no-fly zone and import-export sanctions imposed upon Iraq by a UN Security Council Resolution.¹¹

The RCN returned to Haiti in 2008, and again in 2010, in support of UN efforts to deliver humanitarian aid and disaster relief after four successive hurricanes hit in 2008, and when a devastating earthquake ravaged the country in 2010, affecting over three million people. After the storms in 2008, HMCS *St. John's* was redeployed from a counter-narcotics mission in the Caribbean to help transport food supplies on behalf of the UN World Food Program. By the time the operation concluded, HMCS *St. John's* had delivered more than 450 metric tons of food and other relief supplies over a 13-day period. The ship's *Sea King* helicopter flew more than 20 sorties, reaching communities all along the coast of Haiti's southern peninsula.¹² After the 2010 earthquake, HMCS *Athabaskan* and HMCS *Halifax*, as part of the greater Joint Task Force Haiti (JTFH), delivered a wide range of services, such as emergency medical services, engineering expertise, sea mobility, and defence and security support.¹³

The final historical example does not actually deal specifically with a UN MTF or PO at all, but is important to mention in the context of a maritime contribution to an ongoing UN security concern, not to mention providing substantiation for any potential future deployment of the RCN in support of a UN mission. Since 2002, the CAF has participated in counter-terrorism and maritime security operations across the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden, the Gulf of Oman and the Indian Ocean as part of the over-arching Operation *Artemis*.¹⁴ Canada has been part of a Combined Maritime Force (CMF) of 30 navies in the international campaign against terrorism, which also includes counter-piracy operations. The RCN has regularly deployed



DND photo HS2008-1006-030

Humanitarian aid being delivered by ship's company, HMCS *St. John's*, Port au Prince, Haiti, 13 September 2008.

ships and personnel to operate with CTF-150 – an element of CMF – from 2001-2003 as part of Operation *Apollo* and since the beginning of Operation *Altair* in 2004 (from 2004-2008, seven RCN ships served with CTF-150). On several occasions, Canada has provided a leadership role to CMF: command of CTF 151 under Commodore Girouard in 2003; command of CTG 150 under Commodore Santarpia from December 2014 to April 2015; command of CTF 150 under Commodore Davidson from June 2008 to September 2008; and command of CTF 150 under Commodore Edmundson from December 2016 to April 2017.

Definitions

To help readers better understand the context of what militaries may be called upon to do in terms of PO, several definitions are warranted, as follows:¹⁵

- **Peace Operations:** field operations deployed to prevent, manage, and/or resolve violent conflicts or reduce the risk of their recurrence;
- **Peacekeeping:** a technique designed to preserve the peace, however fragile, where fighting has been halted, and to assist in implementing or monitoring agreements achieved by the peacemakers. Since its conception in the late-1940s, peacekeeping has evolved from a primarily military model of observing cease-fires and the separation of conflicting forces, to incorporate a more comprehensive mix of elements – military, police, and civilian – working together to help lay the foundations for sustainable peace. Today, the mandate and legal basis for peacekeeping is *predominantly*, but not *exclusively*, captured in Chapter VI of the UN Charter – the foundational document for all UN operations – which covers the “Pacific Settlement of Disputes”¹⁶;
- **Peacemaking:** generally includes measures to address conflicts in progress and usually involves diplomatic action to bring hostile parties to a negotiated agreement. These proactive measures to “Respect to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace and Acts of Aggression” are captured under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. The UN Secretary General, upon the request of the Security Council or the General Assembly or at his or her own initiative, may exercise his or her ‘good offices’ to facilitate the resolution of the conflict. Peacemakers may also be envoys, governments, groups or states, regional organizations, or the UN. Peacemaking efforts may also be undertaken by unofficial and non-governmental groups, or by a prominent personality working independently; and
- **Peace Enforcement:** involves the application, with the authorization of the Security Council, of a range of coercive measures, including the use of military force. Such actions are authorized to restore international peace and security in situations where the Security Council has determined the existence of a threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression. The Security Council may utilize, where appropriate, regional organizations and agencies for enforcement action under its authority.

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- **Peacebuilding:** Peacebuilding is an intervention that is designed to prevent the start or resumption of violent conflict by creating a sustainable peace. Peacebuilding activities address the root causes or potential causes of violence, create a societal expectation for peaceful conflict resolution, and stabilize society politically and socio-economically. It includes activities such as capacity building.

UN MTF

Even with a thorough understanding of these definitions, it may still be difficult to picture where a navy may fit in, given the nature of what navies do. Planners within the UN, however, have no such difficulty, and the following paragraphs are meant to help describe the maritime aspect of UN PO. In late-2015, the UN published its Peacekeeping Missions Military Unit Manual on the Maritime Task Force.¹⁷ It recognizes the evolving nature of threats, which have spread beyond the traditional land domain, and have defined the core capabilities needed and key roles intended for a UN MTF.

As with most navies, a UN MTF has the ability to arrive quickly to nearly any shore in the world, presenting a timely and potentially meaningful (yet unproven) international response, often before a significant deployment of land or air forces. It is notionally able to “contribute decisively ... by providing a wide variety of capabilities such as monitoring cease-fires, enforcing UN sanctions and embargoes (i.e., an embargo of arms or other military equipment that sustain fighting), or providing humanitarian relief.”¹⁸ The MTF can support land and air forces ashore by providing presence, deterrence, sea control, power projection, and maritime security. It could provide command, control, and communications (C3) to enhance situational awareness and force protection. The MTF can also patrol the territorial waters and offshore resources of a state lacking its own maritime capability, and support capacity building for emerging states. Finally, it can provide advanced platforms for military aviation and medical support to forces ashore.

To execute these missions, the UN MTF must have certain core capabilities. In keeping with the potential roles listed above, the capabilities expected of a UN MTF, based upon the Security Council mandate for each Mission, include the following:

- **C3:** Effective C3 with clear lines of accountability, responsibility, and authority; and, employing modern equipment interoperable with partner members;
- **Firepower:** Sensor and weapon systems capable of activities across the spectrum of operations, including protecting the innocent or deterring and defeating threats on land and at sea;
- **Maneuverability and Area Dominance:** The ability to conduct unimpeded day and night maritime operations, such as presence and deterrence, surveillance and reconnaissance, monitoring (i.e., oversight of peace arrangements), reporting, and interdiction. In a maritime context this *Sea Control* means that the UN MTF would have the freedom of action to use an area of the sea for its own purpose for a period of time, and, if necessary, deny its use to adversarial forces;

- Tactical Information: Situational awareness integrating technology, networking, and the necessary decision-making tools to gain tactical and operational advantage over potential adversaries; and
- Sustainment: The capacity to be self-sufficient to include provisioning, accommodations, mobility, maintenance, medical support, and underway replenishment during protracted operations.¹⁹

The UN MTF Manual further cites various vessel designs that meet those requirements.²⁰ Surface ships (carriers, destroyers, frigates, patrol vessels) are capable of conducting tasks, such as maritime security operations (i.e., patrolling, interdiction, and escort and protection operations), surveillance, and contingency operations (i.e., Search and Rescue). Sealift ships can be employed for logistical and personnel transport, carrying material ranging from humanitarian aid to combat equipment. Auxiliary and Replenishment Ships can resupply the UN MTF, particularly while at sea and distanced from fighting forces. Mine Counter Measure (MCM) vessels perform mine clearance, thus protecting the UN MTF and the littoral Sea Lines of Communication (SLOC).²¹ Depending upon their specific sensor or equipment fits, these same ships can also conduct surveillance and diving operations. Finally, helicopters (organic and shore-based), unmanned systems, and maritime patrol aircraft support the UN MTF with surveillance, force protection, medical evacuation, humanitarian aid delivery, and search and rescue. This list is not inclusive; it is a sampling of the capabilities provided by various naval platforms that may constitute a balanced, combat-effective, and adaptive MTF, either as an autonomous entity, or in support of forces ashore.

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The UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) MTF has been in operation since 2006. The first MTF formed as part of a UN PO, the UNIFIL MTF is tasked to monitor the cessation of hostilities between Lebanon and Israel, support the Lebanese Navy in monitoring its territorial waters, secure the Lebanese coastline, and prevent the unauthorized entry of arms or related materials by sea into Lebanon.²² It carries out its mission through maritime interdiction and surveillance operations. Another aspect of MTF’s mission is its contribution to the training of the Lebanese Navy, so that it may in time assume responsibility for its own security. This is done through operational, tactical, and joint exercises, as well as focused training, both alongside and at sea.²³

RCN Capabilities

The RCN is capable of meeting some of the UN MTF requirements today, with a future fleet projected to perform even more of the tasks described above by the mid-2020s. Today’s RCN fleet consists of 12 recently-modernized *Halifax* Class frigates; four *Victoria* Class [diesel] Submarines (VCS); and, 12 *Kingston* Class Maritime Coastal Defence Vessels (MCDV). Each of these classes of ships has capabilities that are well suited for meeting many of the capabilities and roles needed of a UN MTF. What’s more, shipbuilding is well underway for the *Harry DeWolf* Class Arctic Offshore Patrol Vessels (AOPV), with the first hull (HMCS *Harry DeWolf*) scheduled for delivery in 2018. A few years beyond that, the Navy is expected to take delivery of the first Joint Support Ship (JSS) renewing the RCN’s underway replenishment and sealift capabilities. Finally, design proposals are expected by 2017 for the Canadian Surface Combatant (CSC), which will replace the



Canadian Naval Task Group.

Halifax Class frigates and the recently-retired *Iroquois* Class Area Air Defence destroyers.

The *Halifax* Class frigates are colloquially known as the ‘work horses’ of the RCN surface fleet. The ships were originally designed for anti-submarine and anti-surface warfare, primarily in the open ocean. Since their delivery 25 years ago, the role of these frigates has changed through the recent *Halifax* Class Modernization program (2010-2016). Sensor and weapons enhancements, as well as innovations in procedures and tactics, have enabled the frigates to operate more effectively in the littoral threat environment, acknowledging that the RCN has operated, so far, in a largely permissive environment. The *Halifax* Class is capable of meeting the patrol, interdiction, escort and protection, surveillance, and contingency operations expected of the UN MTF.

The VCS are viewed as a strategic asset for the Government of Canada, performing a wide range of roles, including surveillance and support to maritime law enforcement, as well as domestic and international operations. Acquired from the Royal Navy in the 1990s, the long range VCS are the Navy’s *Special Forces*. They are capable of patrolling virtually undetected over vast distances, while their flexibility allows them to perform a wide range of unique naval missions. VCS can operate in the Arctic (albeit in ice-free areas), Pacific, and Atlantic oceans, and significantly extend the RCN’s, (and by extension the UN’s if so assigned), tactical and strategic capabilities.



HMCS *Chicoutimi* awaits People’s Liberation Army (Navy) ships visiting Victoria on behalf of the Chinese military, 13 December 2016.

The MCDVs are minor war vessels with a primary mission of coastal surveillance and patrol, including general naval operations, search and rescue, law enforcement, resource protection, and fisheries patrols. Although originally intended with a mine-sweeping role in mind, the ships were constructed to non-military specifications (Lloyd’s A1) standards. Thus, they could not, with the technology of the time, safely operate in a mine threat area. The advent of off-board naval Mine Counter Measure (MCM) technology largely re-validates the MCDV premier potential as an MCM platform, particularly in light of their extended range and endurance, upgraded communications, and active degaussing, to name just a few capabilities. Today, several types of mission specific payloads can be added to allow for rapid role change from one mission type to another, such as a mechanical minesweeping system, a route survey system, and a bottom object inspection vehicle. During the *Halifax* Class Modernization period, the MCDVs bore the brunt of operational commitments to counter



Concept design of the Joint Support Ship (JSS).

DND photo ET2016-0468-02 by Corporal Carbe Orellana

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narcotics operations in the Caribbean basin and western Pacific Ocean. Mission dependant, this ship class can be well-suited for low-to-medium intensity UN maritime security operations in the littorals.

The RCN has also developed an Enhanced Naval Boarding Party (ENBP) capability. This deployable high readiness unit – the Maritime Tactical Operations Group (MTOG) – provides the CAF and the RCN with an ability to conduct maritime interdiction operations in a high risk environment; advanced force protection duties; and, direct support to a Special Operations Task Force (SOTF). As demonstrated by a 2016 NATO exercise in Morocco, the MTOG can deploy on relatively short notice to support NATO or UN operations.²⁴

In the next decade, the CSC will replace and enhance the capabilities provided by the *Halifax* Class frigates and the *Iroquois* Class destroyers. Although the Request for Proposal for the design of these ships is still going through the bidding process, these new ships will ensure that the RCN can continue to monitor and defend Canadian and North American waters, and they will no doubt make significant contributions to international naval operations through interoperability with allies.

The JSS will replace the RCN's recently-decommissioned *Protecteur* Class Auxiliary Oiler Replenishment (AOR) vessels. The JSS will provide core replenishment, limited sealift capabilities, and support to operations ashore. They will increase the range and endurance of Naval Task Groups by allowing them to remain at sea for protracted periods without having to return to port for resupply and refuelling. The anticipated core capabilities

in the JSS – noting the project is still in the design phase – will likely include the following: provision of fuel, ammunition, spare parts, food, water, and other supplies; modern medical and dental care facilities, including an operating room; repair facilities and expertise to keep helicopters and other equipment functioning; and basic self-defence functions. Whether providing support to operations in any of Canada's vast ocean territories or supporting global deployments, the capabilities delivered by JSS are crucial for Canada and fully meet the logistical requirements, and partially meet the sealift requirements albeit to a limited extent, of the UN.

The *Harry DeWolf* Class AOPV will deliver ice-capable off-shore patrol vessels that will conduct sovereignty and surveillance operations in Canada's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), including in the Arctic. The RCN will also use the AOPV to support other units of the CAF in the conduct of maritime-related operations and to support other government departments in carrying out their mandates, as required. The capabilities of the AOPV will include the following: independent open ocean patrols; a Polar Class 5 international ice classification standard; be able to sustain operations for up to four months; a range in excess of 6000 nautical miles; sufficient C3 capability to exchange real-time information; a remote controlled 25mm gun; capable of embarking and operating a variety of helicopter types; and a capability of embarking and deploying a variety of boat types to support activities, such as boarding operations and transfer of cargo and personnel for ship-to-shore transfer, as well as arrangements for cargo and container storage. These are all important and welcomed capabilities for Canada in terms of domestic surveillance and expression of sovereignty, capabilities that are just as easily transferrable to meet many of the UN requirements for maritime security, surveillance,



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Concept design of the Arctic Offshore Patrol Vessel (AOPV) underway off the Nova Scotia coastline.

and contingency operations, including sealift, but again, to a limited extent.

The previous paragraphs describe Canada's current and future Navy. While not part of its permanent maritime arsenal, Canada will also be leasing an interim AOR (iAOR) capability through a contract with Project Resolve Inc., which will employ Quebec's Chantier Davie Canada to convert a cargo vessel to an AOR. The ship will be operated and maintained privately, with CAF/RCN mission specialists embarked in the ship when needed. These will include replenishment-at-sea (RAS) teams, command elements, maritime air detachments and medical and dental service teams. The iAOR will allow the RCN to bridge the gap in underway replenishment until the JSS is delivered.²⁵

Capability Gaps

Whether operating continentally or deployed further internationally, the RCN can make a meaningful contribution to UN maritime PO. Our current and future capabilities notwithstanding, there are also capability gaps which prevent the RCN from meeting all of the UN MTF requirements. Requirements such as Sealift, Sea Basing, Amphibious, and even our maritime helicopter capacity will not be fully met by the RCN planned for the coming decades.

As mentioned previously, the AOPV and JSS will be delivered with a limited sealift capability. These classes of ships do not come close to the capacity of similar types or sized ships, nor were they ever meant to be. This means, for example, that a UN MTF deployed with AOPV or JSS as its only sealift capability would be very limited in the amount of material it could transport into an area in need of significant humanitarian aid, for instance.

Sea Basing is not directly related to a platform type or class of warship, but to a capability to use the sea for deterrence, alliance support, cooperative security, power projection, and other forward operations.²⁶ A robust Canadian Task Group consisting of surface combatants, submarines, and auxiliary replenishment could be considered a sea base, as it provides the RCN the range and freedom of action to support its operations both independently or as part of a larger UN MTF. However, until the JSS is delivered, with only one-to-two operational VCS at any given time, and at a risk of having insufficient reserve capability in its domestic surface fleet, the UN mission would need to be a vital strategic interest to Canada to justify deploying such a Task Group.

Canada has no amphibious capability, nor does it intend to generate one. That was not the case over a decade ago when then Chief of the Defence Staff, General Hillier, pushed for an amphibious transport capability for Canada, such as the *San Antonio* Class in the US Navy.²⁷ An "unprecedented strategic opportunity" presented itself for Canada in 2014 when France withheld delivery of two *Mistral* Class ships to Russia.²⁸ These vessels are capable of sea power projection, C3, a larger helicopter capacity than any other RCN ship class, delivery of humanitarian aid, including onboard medical facilities, to name a few of their capabilities. Notwithstanding the capabilities that would have been injected into the RCN, and the CAF, Canada did not pursue the *Mistral*

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purchase, nor is this type of capability being considered as part of the ongoing National Shipbuilding Strategy.

While not a direct RCN asset, the *Cyclone* maritime helicopter is still several years away from its full operational capability. This means that with aging *Sea King* helicopters, the RCN's capacity for a ship-to-shore air connection is limited despite the valiant efforts of aircraft maintainers and aircrews to keep the current maritime air fleet operating.

Future UN Maritime PO

All the historic examples described earlier, and the capabilities inherent in a UN MTF, including those potentially provided by the RCN, illustrate the versatility of maritime forces in meeting the needs of the UN. While history is not necessarily indicative of what is required today, the current global security environment is fraught with potential hotspots that could easily evolve to a point needing UN intervention, with many of these locations in-or-near coastal regions. One such example is the Gulf of Guinea. Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea is a significant regional challenge. The UN Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) recorded 62 attacks on ships in West and Central Africa in 2011, and 60 in 2012. In fact, since 2002, the number of recorded attacks in this region has continued to multiply by a factor of ten.²⁹ Further, there is rising concern over the existing security environment in and around West Africa, particularly over the increasing terrorist and criminal activities in central and southern Mali; a deep concern within the UN Security Council over the continuous rise of political tensions in Guinea-Bissau; transnational organized crime and drug trafficking throughout West and Central Africa; and, a growing disregard for human rights in general.³⁰ In an effort to combat the piracy and Transnational Criminal Organizations' activities, there is recognition of the need for a cooperative regional maritime strategy. This may present just the opportunity Canada needs to provide a comprehensive maritime contribution to UN PO. UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2018 (2011) addresses "...the threat that piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf of Guinea pose[s] to international navigation, security, and the economic development of states in the region."³¹ The UNSCR further notes the need for international assistance as part of a comprehensive strategy to address piracy and armed robbery at sea, and encourages the international community to assist, upon request, regional States and relevant organizations and agencies in strengthening their efforts to counter piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf of Guinea.³²

If a maritime force as described above was assigned to a mission in the Gulf of Guinea, it could also provide support to potential land forces that may deploy to the region (depending upon their location) as part of the aforementioned Canadian commitment to supporting international peace operations. This support can cover a wide range of activities; indirect support through surveillance and intelligence reporting to direct support when evacuating personnel. Warships operating in littoral regions can contribute to land forces' battlespace by means of surveillance and intelligence reporting using organic assets, such as an embarked *Sea King* helicopter or Unmanned System. The results of this surveillance could provide vital indications and warning of



Western Africa presents a number of possibilities for Canada to contribute to UN PO. However, readers should not assume that an Africa Mission is a *fait accompli*. For instance, another region where the CAF can support PO is Colombia. Notwithstanding the rejection by Colombians for a peace accord with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), there was a report of talks held among senior government officials before the referendum which suggested that Canada and Mexico could join forces and conduct a joint operation "...once

any emerging threats originating along a coastline. For example, should a Canadian contingent to a UN PO occur in the vicinity of Western Mali and use Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, or Senegal as potential operational support hubs, the RCN can provide the necessary force protection for the SLOC into those hubs. Additionally, and dependant on the distance of friendly forces from the coast, warships can execute Non-combatant Evacuation Operations (NEO) to assist military personnel, Canadian citizens, or designated persons escape danger and relocate to an appropriate safe haven.

Another possibility for maritime operations in Western Africa is in Mali on the Niger River. The trafficking of people, narcotics, and other contraband has increased since 2006, through the Sahel and north into countries such as Algeria.³³ Traffickers often use the Niger River as a transportation route through hubs in Gao, Mopti, and even Bamako. Trafficking has become more than simply a criminal concern for police forces to deal with, but potentially facilitate terrorist activities that have become more prevalent in the region in recent years. The UN has a particular interest in countering terrorism and protecting human rights, which, in part, includes the mandate established for the Counter Terrorism Committee in 2001, and Security Council Resolution 1456 (2003), as well as later resolutions.³⁴ Counter-terrorism, combined with efforts to help the countries in the region re-establish state authority, the rule of law, and good governance can be a potential UN PO mission that is needed in Mali. As part of a hypothetical Canadian joint military and police contribution to such a UN PO, the RCN can be employed in maritime interdiction operations, albeit in a more confined riverine environment, and only if operationally supported inland by land forces. More specifically, the deployment of the MTOG can present an opportunity for capacity building for the Mali Ministry of Internal Security and Civil Protection, which regulates the National Police Force and Gendarmerie in policing illicit activity along the Niger River.³⁵

“Western Africa presents a number of possibilities for Canada to contribute to UN PO.”

a peace treaty is signed between the Colombian government and FARC.”³⁶ Canada’s relations with Colombia are expanding. A Defence Cooperation Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed with Colombia in 2012 to guide future bilateral relations. Furthermore, Colombia has been identified as an area of focus for CAF’s Military Training and Cooperation Program (MTCP) Peace Support programming, until at least late-2017.³⁷ All these initiatives may constitute an opportunity for Canada to play a meaningful role in UN PO while advancing foreign policy and the National Defence Global Engagement Strategy. As could be the case for a maritime mission to Western Africa, the RCN can potentially provide support to land forces that may deploy to the region. The nucleus of operations would not necessarily be located in a coastal region. Nevertheless, there is a role to play for a UN MTF in the Caribbean Sea and Northeastern Pacific Ocean. In fact, Canada has been heavily involved in counter-narcotics missions in this region for over ten years through Operation *Caribbe*. Operation *Caribbe* is Canada’s contribution of CAF ships and aircraft to Operation *Martillo* – a joint, combined and interagency effort by Canada, the United States, France, the Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom to prevent illicit trafficking in the Caribbean Sea, the eastern Pacific Ocean, and the coastal waters of Central America.³⁸ The connection between a counter-narcotics mission and a UN MTF is through the UN Convention on Transnational Organized Crime in 2000, and the UN Convention on Corruption in 2003, which establish the legal relationship between illicit trafficking, organized crime and corruption.³⁹ With a hypothetical deployment of frigates, MCDVs, organic aircraft, and eventual iAOR in support, Canada can take a leading role in a UN-sanctioned counter-narcotics mission in an effort to assist Colombia in suppressing corruption and furthering the peace process.

Finally, there is a school of thought that believes a Canadian PO ought to remain closer to home.⁴⁰ Established in 2004, the

DND photo ET2015-5121-006 by Leading Seaman Ogle Henry.



The Enhanced Naval Boarding Party from HMCS *Winnipeg* heads towards HMCS *Athabaskan* to conduct a boarding exercise during NATO Exercise *Trident Juncture* in Spanish coastal waters as part of Operation *Reassurance*, 24 October 2015.

UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) supports the “immediate recovery, reconstruction and stability efforts in the country.”⁴¹ However, UNSCR 2243 considers the possible “withdrawal of MINUSTAH and transition to a future [UN] presence beginning no sooner than 15 October 2016.”⁴² On the other hand, and in light of the slow recovery after the 2010 earthquake, the recent devastation inflicted by Hurricane *Matthew* in October 2016, and the continued human rights concerns (particularly sexual and gender-based violence), there remains an opportunity for Canada to demonstrate a leadership role, with supporting forces, in rehabilitating Haiti while maintaining peace throughout the process.⁴³ [As it has recently materialized, MINUSTAH’s mandate was extended for a final six months in April 2017, after which it will transition to a smaller, follow-up exercise – Ed.] This would not be a new mission for Canada or the CAF. We have a proven leadership history through MINUSTAH and a number of Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) missions. As part of a larger UN HADR and reconstruction mission in Haiti, the RCN can possibly provide ships to transport aid from the mainland, or escort larger transport vessels. It can provide personnel and expertise to support a larger CAF effort in reconstruction of Haiti’s infrastructure. If deemed necessary, the RCN can also provide *support to*, or *leadership over*, the future UN presence needed to assist with the peaceful implementation of a constitutional process.

Conclusion

With Canada’s commitment to contribute to a UN PO, this article proposes a number of possibilities that could be examined. Whatever contribution Canada chooses to make, the resultant force must be capable of roles and tasks across the spectrum of conflict, from benign to combat. To that end, there is a role for the RCN, either in support of land and air forces ashore, or as a stand-alone MTF. The RCN has demonstrated its unique capabilities on numerous occasions throughout the history of the UN, and it continues to consider the requirements of a UN MTF in its future ship design. If the UN MTF is considered the standard for requirements, then there are undoubtedly national capability gaps. However, recognizing the comprehensive capability provided by a multi-national UN MTF, most gaps can be mitigated by the collective UN organization, if not by individual nations.

A UN PO anywhere in the world must also consider the joint capabilities – maritime, air, land, and special forces – during the various planning stages. There are discrete capabilities that can be brought to bear by each of these components, which, when combined, make for a more powerful and influential force in either preserving or enforcing peace. Maritime capabilities, however, are not often viewed in the traditional peacekeeping paradigm and as such run the risk of being overlooked. Nevertheless, as this article has described, naval forces should always be considered when presenting UN PO options for the Government of Canada.



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