



USE OF FORCE BY UN PEACEKEEPERS: APPLICATION OF THE MEDAK AGREEMENT IN SEPTEMBER 1993

by Kathia Légaré and Lisa Tanguay

Introduction

At the end of the Second World War, the United Nations (UN) committed itself to maintaining international peace and security. This organization has various ways of carrying out that mandate, and peacekeeping is one of the methods of conflict resolution it favours. Minimal use of force is an inherent characteristic in the peacekeeping operations it oversees.¹ In spite of this fact, since the first armed peacekeeping operation in 1956, the norm concerning the use of force within UN missions has evolved as events have developed, according to the interpretation of the traditional notion of self-defence. Moreover, the use of force has, on several occasions, contradicted the ideal of non-violence embodied by peacekeeping. There is no official UN doctrine governing the use of force. Certain operations led by UN peacekeepers have turned out to be inefficient because their mandates and their means did not correspond to the contexts in which they were carried out. However, the use of force, or at least the possibility of using coercion to defend themselves, gives UN peacekeepers the credibility necessary for them to be efficient: “The failure of UN troops to use force even to defend themselves leads to

a loss of credibility both for the UN and for its peace operations and contributes to the widespread view that peacekeepers are paper tigers who can be pushed around and manipulated.”² Within the framework of traditional peacekeeping operations as they were understood in 1956, the use of force was likely to be minimal. However, during complex conflicts within the context of the post-Cold War period, use of force during peace operations has increased.

This article maintains that, when arising from a judicious choice between the credibility of a mission and preserving the consent of the parties, the use of force by UN peacekeepers can lead to important benefits and increase the efficiency of peace operations. However,

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it requires military and political conditions that are difficult to assemble. The use of force is conditional, and this apparent possibility to choose is detrimental. With the help of a case study, namely, the Medak Operation, which was carried out in September 1993 in Croatia, and in order to test the hypothesis being defended, we will analyze the conditions for efficient use of force during a complex peace operation in the context of the post- Cold War period. In the absence of a UN doctrine governing the use of force during the period under examination (1956-1993), the gradual broadening of the notion of self-defence will be studied in order to define a prescriptive framework for the Medak Operation. First, this part of the article will allow the reader to understand that the main effect of the widening of that notion was efficiency of UN missions. Second, it will define the theoretical framework and the international situation surrounding the case study presented thereafter. Putting the peace operation in its context will highlight its specificity. The theoretical framework, or, in other words, the doctrinal context, will cast light on the importance of decentralizing decision-making power as far as the use of force is concerned, in order to compensate for the absence of an official standard. This approach is interesting for three reasons. First, it illustrates the transition in peace operations from peacekeeping to peace enforcement. Second, it underlines the difficulties related to adapting the concept of self-defence to a context that more and more frequently requires the use of force. Finally, it is based upon a demonstration of the circumstantial usefulness of coercion by UN peacekeepers in attempting to make up for the absence of a policy that is midway between peacekeeping and peace enforcement.

The UN and minimal use of force

From its beginning to present day, the UN has not had a doctrine governing the application of force during peace operations. In 1956, during the first armed peace operation orchestrated by the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF I), the fundamental principles defining traditional peacekeeping operations were established. They were as follows: impartiality, consent of the parties involved, and minimal use of force. The parties in conflict then consented to the presence of a mediating force with a UN mandate, provided that the force in question was impartial. As for the consent of the parties, it was indispensable to the Westphalian tradition of the inviolability of sovereign states perpetuated by the UN.³ That first peacekeeping operation was carried out in the midst of a conflict between states, and the UN peacekeeping forces were operating in a previously pacified area where their main tasks were to intervene between clearly identified forces and to maintain the ceasefire. Provision was made for a fundamental right to self-defence, in the strictest sense of the word. It recognized the inherent right of a soldier, as an individual, as well as the right of the UN, as a state, to defend themselves against any aggression.⁴ The policy governing the use of force was well established: it was not to be used unless justified by an attack, and, in such a case, it was to be used minimally and as a last resort. This apparently simplistic solution was rapidly and drastically affected when it became necessary during ensuing conflicts to interpret the notion of self-defence in relation to situations of increasing complexity.

Broadening of the policy relating to use of force

The use of force by peacekeepers is a sensitive issue that entails risks. Peacekeepers could be perceived as being parties in the conflict, which would jeopardize their impartiality. They might harm one of the players, which would jeopardize the consent of the parties. Furthermore, they might wrongly interpret the situation requiring the use of force, which could generate injustices likely to set off an escalation of violence. Historically, the norm relating to the use of force has been adapted to the nature of the conflicts where it was applied.



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The policy set up in 1956 for the UNEF I mission was suited to the Suez Canal crisis because it was specially modeled upon that conflict. However, the traditional definition of peacekeeping only suited a small number of situations, particularly when the ‘blue berets’ intervened in conflicts where there was no political agreement.

The war being waged in the Congo beginning in 1960 brought about the first involvement of the UN in a conflict where there was no ceasefire line, political settlement, or stability.⁵ The troops of the United Nations Operations in the Congo (UNOC) were deployed in the midst of a civil war. The contradiction between the means used and the tasks to be accomplished posed a problem. The fundamental principles established in 1956 were outdated, and the idea of self-defence was reinterpreted in order to allow the peacekeepers to defend themselves and to defend their mission when jeopardized. The Congo crisis highlighted the fact that a lack of doctrine and flexibility as to the use of force by the UN peacekeepers were obstacles to the smooth running of complex peace operations. In order to avoid the deadlock encountered by UN peacekeepers in the Congo, and to ensure greater efficiency in peace operations in traditional and complex theatres of operations, the UN undertook to redefine the use of force, based upon a widened notion of self-defence. Beginning in 1964, when the UN created the United Nations force in charge of keeping the peace in Cyprus (UNFICYP), the Secretary General of the UN, U Thant, took into consideration the lessons learned from the experience in the Congo by extending the authorization for using force. Force could thus be used against “...any attempts by force to prevent UNFICYP soldiers from carrying out their responsibilities as ordered by their commandant.”⁶

The most significant widening of the notion of self-defence arose from the mandate given to the United Nations Emergency Force II (UNEF II). In an attempt to define the mandate of UNEF II, an operation created on 25 October 1973 further to resumption of the conflict between Egypt and Israel, the concept of *mission defence* was introduced. In spite of the traditional character of that peace operation when it was created (impartiality; consent of the parties; minimal use of force), Secretary General Kurt Waldheim proposed the adoption of the new concept when the initial mandate of the UNEF II was drawn up. Mission defence broadened the notion of self-defence to include “...any resistance to attempts by forceful means to prevent a contingent from discharging its duties under the mandate of the Security Council.”⁷ Some analysts see, in the possibility of defending a mission’s mandate, a clear shift from peacekeeping to peace enforcement, which is usually orchestrated under Chapter VII of the UN Charter: “Allowing a force to take positive action in defence of its purpose is no different from allowing them to enforce it”⁸ In spite of

that shift, the notion of mission defence arises directly from the broadening of the concept of self-defence as it was understood by the UN in 1956. Although the means are similar to those used in peace enforcement, the concept of mission defence is basically associated with that of self-defence. Theoretically, in the case of a policy of peace enforcement according to Chapter VII of the UN Charter, the consent of the parties would not be required, whereas a peace operation authorized to use force to defend its mission is obliged to act with the consent of the parties. This notion also affords greater control to the UN Security Council concerning the use of force, since the Council, rather than the commander of an operation, holds decision-making power.⁹ However, once the use of force has been authorized by the Security Council, the commander of an operation has considerable latitude as to the interpretation of the conditions requiring its use. Thus, the use of force is regulated on the *strategic* level (the UN Secretary General) and on the *operational* level (the force commander).¹⁰ This is among other factors that explain the decentralization of power to decide as to when and in what circumstances force will be used.

In less than two decades, the norm relating to the use of force in peace operations went from self-defence to mission defence. This new notion served as a prescriptive framework in ensuing UN operations. Although not in contradiction with the notions of impartiality and the consent of the parties, mission defence, however, moves away from minimal use of force, which is nonetheless a traditional characteristic of peacekeeping. This distance offers certain advantages. Among others, it allows for a greater adaptability of peace operations to whatever theatres of operations are involved. In the context of the post-Cold War period, and in spite of official doctrine, this notion allowed the commanders of the different UN forces greater flexibility. Furthermore, the notion of mission defence was the only compromise between the notions of traditional peacekeeping (Suez – Chapter VI of the UN Charter) and peace enforcement (Korea, Gulf – Chapter VII of the UN Charter), which explains why it is often designated by the unofficial title of ‘Chapter VI ½.’

The favoured instrument for peace operations is negotiation. However, given that negotiations are conducted by armed forces, fire power remains a means of last resort. Thus, it seems justified to advance the hypothesis that a balanced combination of what David Last designates as “*combat skills*” and “*contact skills*,”¹¹ or, in other words, a good balance between military means and political and diplomatic means, can, once certain conditions are brought together, make the use of force by UN peacekeepers efficient in peace operations. This article will now advance the validity of that idea, which, thanks to a certain doctrinal latitude combined with specific political and military determination, was confirmed by the Medak Operation.

“From its beginning to present day, the UN has not had a doctrine governing the application of force during peace operations.”



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Canadian soldiers assuming responsibility for the Psychiatric Hospital in Fojnica, Bosnia.

The “Medak Pocket” Operation

The Medak Operation took place two years after the creation in 1991 of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), assembled to help restore the peace that had been jeopardized by the Yugoslavian Federation dismemberment crisis. Although dependent upon the suspension of confrontations between the parties, and conditional to their assent, the beginnings of UNPROFOR's operations in Croatia were characterized by numerous violations of the ceasefire. Deployed in March 1992 with a mandate to supervise the retreat of the Yugoslav People's Army, demilitarize the parties, and ensure protection of three protected areas of Croatia (in eastern and western Slavonia and in the Krajina), UNPROFOR was obliged to manage on the ground the consequences of a political deadlock.¹² The *United Nations Peacekeeping Plan* (or Vance Plan), negotiated between the governments of Zagreb and Belgrade on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the Serbian authorities of Knin in the Krajina, was, in fact, simply an interim agreement substituting for a political solution to the crisis in Yugoslavia. It was aimed at putting into place the conditions for peace and security required by negotiations, so the peace operation implemented to apply it would not be in any way prejudicial to the outcome of those negotiations.¹³ In concrete terms, UNPROFOR was to maintain the status quo while the Conference on Yugoslavia resolved the political impasse. However, the conflict worsened when hostilities broke out in Bosnia-Herzegovina in April 1992.

The situation at that time was very dangerous. The declarations of major powers and international organizations contrasted sharply with the reality of the situation on the ground. While emphasis was placed upon restoring

Croatia's sovereignty, the strategies used and the means deployed by Western countries were visibly insufficient to overcome the determination of Serbian rebels to maintain their control of the *Republika Srpska Krajina*. In January 1992, the European Communities recognized the international sovereignty of Croatia, an initiative considered by the UN Secretary General to be “explosive,” but which did not stop the country from being admitted into the UN in May 1992.¹⁴ This international recognition was to afford further legitimacy to Croatia's claims and to reinforce Zagreb's determination not to let the status quo become an established fact. In practical terms, Krajina remained separate from Croatia, with its independence effectively guaranteed by the presence of UN troops. The complete absence of cooperation from Serbian rebels, and their categorical refusal to recognize Croatia's sovereignty, at least in the short term, had made a negotiated solution unlikely. In September 1992, the Secretary General recognized that there was a deadlock. The situation became more and more intolerable. “Attempts by the Knin authorities to use the United Nations' presence as a way of establishing their ‘independence’ are therefore inconsistent with the intent of the plan. [On the other hand] ...the Croatian side creates the impression that it is Zagreb's intention to resolve matters by military action rather than at the negotiating table.”¹⁵ A military settlement of the disagreement already seemed likely; Zagreb was exhibiting more and more signs of impatience and war-mongering.

In that precarious strategic context, the absence of a political settlement, even in an embryonic stage, had important repercussions at the tactical and operational levels.¹⁶ Managing the violence on the ground quickly became complicated. Although UNPROFOR had been vested with the right to self-defence and the right to defend its purpose, as defined in 1973,¹⁷ contingents were required to use force as little as possible. They were to evaluate which situations required force and to bring together the conditions necessary for their own defence and the defence of their mission.¹⁸ Actually, in the absence of an official doctrine and a clear mandate, the use of force is governed by the *agreements on the status of the forces*, the *permanent operations instructions*, and the *rules of engagement*.¹⁹ Those rules represented the principal means by which the UN could give directions to its commanders with respect to the use of force, when the political messages as to direction of the mission were contradictory.²⁰



its military front in action. Trusting in its new army, and impatient to reintegrate the recognized territories, the government set in motion a military campaign that was to be interrupted following the Medak Operation. Launched on 22 January 1993 while negotiations for the extension of UNPROFOR's mandate were at their height, the Maslenica offensive quickly attained its objectives, in spite of official protests and the presence of UN troops on the ground. Croatian troops then took hold of strategic positions in the Maslenica region and pushed back the Serbian forces toward the interior.²¹ This incursion was aimed at testing the resistance

Croatia's two-faced strategy

In spite of the UN's official warning, Croatia was increasingly disposed toward a military resolution of the conflict with its Serb minority. Above all, the Croatian government wanted to prevent the creation of a Serbian proto-State that would cut Croatia in half. Since the summer of 1991, Serb militia effectively controlled a quarter of Croatia and constantly threatened to isolate the southern part of the country. Led by a coalition (including radical ultranationalist groups displaying symbols of the Fascist Ustasi Regime from the Second World War), the Croatian government, having obtained a position of power, was going to attempt to tip the scales in its favour using military means.

Zagreb was 'hedging its bets,' playing the diplomatic card and the military card. On the diplomatic level, the Tudjman government was pursuing its test of strength with the Security Council, which was seeking to renew the mission's mandate. Renewal was subject to a series of conditions, most notably requiring that the Security Council be more forceful and apply its own resolutions recognizing Croatian control of protected zones. In a series of letters sent to the Security Council, Croatian authorities urgently reiterated those requests and vehemently denounced the absence of progress on the ground. The mandate was extended from one day to the next and from month to month, until October 1993, when the Tudjman government finally agreed to an extension of the mandate of the UN Force to 21 March 1994.

Confident that international legitimacy was provided by its status as victim of the Serbian aggression and by international recognition of its sovereignty, Croatia set

of the Serbian forces, weakened by redeployment of the forces from Belgrade toward Bosnia-Herzegovina, but also by the tolerance of the international community, especially as demonstrated by the UN peacekeepers. Reacting to this incursion, the Serbs besieged the arms depots supervised by UN forces, who watched, powerless, as the protected zones were remilitarized. At the same time, this remilitarization was to destroy the fragile confidence the Serbian groups had in the United Nations.

The Security Council reacted immediately to this violation of the peace agreement by demanding an immediate end to hostilities and withdrawal from the protected zones.²² Resolution 807 (19 February 1993) invoked directly, for the first time, Chapter VII of the Charter, and reaffirmed the right of UN forces to freedom of movement.²³ Then began a round of negotiations for a ceasefire, once again characterized by the dishonesty of both parties. The Serbian forces refused to give up their arms, and the Croatian forces refused to give UN peacekeepers access to the zones occupied in January 1993. The fragile Erdut agreement, signed in July 1993, was not to last very long. Faced with the Croatian refusal to withdraw from the positions seized, the Serbian rebels bombarded the Maslenica Bridge, setting in motion, once again, a process of escalation of the violence.

While discussions were going badly, the Croatian forces recommenced actions to regain territory piece by piece, this time by launching an offensive on the Medak Ridge. From this vantage point on the line of confrontation, Serbian rebels regularly attacked the city of Gospić, the Croatian headquarters for this zone, which gave Zagreb its justification for attack. On 9 September, while

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Photo by Kathia Légaré and Lisa Tanguay.



The Maslenica Bridge has since been rebuilt.

UN peacekeepers were preparing to apply the terms of the agreement, Croatian troops attacked the ridge. Then, in a pincer movement, they occupied the Serb villages located there.

Although it did not have great strategic importance, this 'pink zone' bordering on the protected zone had an uncertain status that was to be regularized by a joint commission.²⁴ These zones were, in fact, to be reintegrated into Croatia by negotiations, in the same way as the 'protected zones.' In the meantime, they had also been placed under the surveillance of the UNPROFOR.²⁵ Among the areas under UN supervision at the time, the southern sector was by far the most unstable. While the western area (in Slavonia) had been relatively pacified and demilitarized, Krajina remained volatile and highly militarized.²⁶ As Lieutenant-Colonel Jim Calvin, commander of the battalion, described it to the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs (SCONDVA), it was a complex operational environment in which open war was being waged, punctuated by regular shooting from mortars and tanks.²⁷

Restoring the mission's credibility

Obviously, having succeeded in routing the peacekeepers in January 1993, the Croatian troops believed they could carry out the same feat at Medak, progressively recovering Krajina without any major political consequences. The Croatian authorities were thus testing the determination of UNPROFOR and the international community to apply the peace agreement. Croatian military actions were threatening to put an end to a situation of relative peace.

General Jean Cot, commander of UNPROFOR, was not about to allow the Croatian authorities to destroy the months of effort invested in stabilizing the sector. He put into place a defensive (among others, Operation *Backstop*) strategy and an offensive strategy in order to restore the mission's credibility. In his opinion, a demonstration of force seemed essential to continuation of the mandate. The UN had until then been unable to carry out its promises. This time, the situation had to be corrected and the organization's wishes respected.²⁸ General Cot decided to use a Canadian infantry battalion, the Second Battalion of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (2PPCLI), as well as two mechanized French companies, well-equipped and trained troops who were then finishing off their tour of duty in Yugoslavia and had already demonstrated their ability in the western sector. They were moved from one sector to another in record time (according to some people, in order to impress the Croatian troops) in anticipation of the signing of the Erdut agreement. The assault on 9 September put an end to those peace negotiations, but the Serbian bombings of Karlovac and the use of FROG long-range missiles against Zagreb forced the Tudjman government to sign the Medak agreement.²⁹ This new ceasefire created the anticipated opportunity to put an end to the escalation of violence by UN forces. By demonstrating to the Croatian authorities the UN peacekeepers' resolution to end the illicit military activities, the force commander hoped to restore the mission's credibility, which had been undermined by the inability of political organizations to resolve the conflict. This intervention strategy pushed the principles of peacekeeping to their limit, because while it preserved



The Medak house that served as a headquarters for the 2PPCLI.

not recognized by Zagreb authorities. In the face of pressure, the Croatians finally withdrew their troops from the Medak Ridge, not without having made use of different manoeuvres of obstruction and intimidation in order to slow down the advance of UN troops. That delay allowed them to carry out their sorry undertaking: the systematic destruction of occupied Serbian villages. In spite of signs of ethnic cleansing, UN forces were unable to intervene because they had to respect the arrangements made with the Croatians. Despite that failure, the subsequent inquiry by the peace forces at least made it possible to charge three high-ranking officers of the Croatian army, thus striking a hard blow to the county's reputation.

the overall consensus of the parties and the neutrality of the peacekeepers, it forcefully applied the mandate with which it had been entrusted.

In order to succeed in creating a buffer zone between the parties, UN forces had recourse to a four-phase scenario: two companies would replace the Serbian forces on their line, then a passage point would be opened between the enemy troops. Two companies would then take the place of the Croatian troops, thus re-establishing the 9 September line.³⁰ The operation, involving a battalion, began the morning of 15 September 1993, but while the UN peacekeepers were completing the first phase of the plan, the Croatian units, unaware of their superiors' commitment, attacked the platoons that were reaching their positions. Rapidly enough, during the course of the manoeuvre, the UN troops noted that the Croatian units were not intending to abide by the plan. For more than 15 hours, they would be the target of Croatian troops firing light arms, heavy machine guns and 20 mm cannons. The UN units, until then the indirect victims of Croatian troops bombing the southern sector, found themselves in their line of sight. According to Lieutenant-Colonel Bailey (then a major), there was no possibility it could have been a mistake: "I was convinced it was no mistake, they would have known these were UN troops ... No doubt in my mind it was impossible."³¹ Finding themselves in a combat situation fighting units of the Croatian army at distances of between 150 and 800 metres, the UN peacekeepers took advantage of their right of self-defence by replying proportionately to the Croatian fire.³²

The confrontation ended following a meeting between the chiefs of the Croatian operations and the heads of the UNPROFOR in Gospić. There had reportedly been 27 losses on the Croatian side, a figure which was, however,

According to General Cot, he had anticipated the necessity of using force. Furthermore, he had informed the battalion commander of his suspicions during a short visit, which occurred several hours before the intervention.³³ The commanders therefore chose to launch the operation knowing that the order to withdraw had probably not been given to the Croatian troops on the front line. In their opinion, it was necessary to defend the mission and to maintain the soldiers in their positions, thus creating a balance of power that would allow for negotiating the Croatian withdrawal. The UN peacekeepers used force to intervene between the two belligerents in order to carry out their mandate, thus adopting a broad interpretation of the policy of self-defence.³⁴

The conditions for resorting to force

In the case of the Medak Ridge operation, the peacekeepers of UNPROFOR resorted to force in order to put an end to the Croatian army's acts of recapturing territory. Due to a combination of political and military pressure, negotiations, and combat tactics, the operation made it possible to put a stop to the escalation of violence. Moreover, it is quite exceptional to see such a well-coordinated response on the political as well as the military level.³⁵ It was a case of an "offensive defusing action," and not simply a peacekeeping operation.³⁶ The successful application of the Medak agreement is the result of a combination of conditions. One of the factors that proved to be crucial is, without doubt, the determination of the commander to act in order to restore the mission's credibility, as well as his personal involvement in the operation. In actuality, the commander of the force plays a very important role because of the decentralization of decision-making power concerning the use made of the



DND photo CRJJC: 1130-IMG0083

Jim Calvin later after promotion to full colonel.

explains the danger of operations such as the Medak initiative, in which the norm of self-defence was interpreted very broadly.

First, resorting to force made it possible to apply the Medak agreement. Second, it showed the Croatian government that UNPROFOR was not about to allow the conflict to be settled by force. Finally, it contributed to restoring, if only slightly, the overall credibility of the mission. This demonstration of force certainly played a role, however small it might have been, in the subsequent suspension of Croatia's military activities that began in January 1993. David

force.³⁷ As was pointed out by Lieutenant-Colonel Jim Calvin: "It was initiative and good decisions in a timely fashion that got us through Medak."³⁸

As was documented in the Canadian report on the operation, the instructions directly transmitted by the force commander during his visit on 14 September were very important, particularly the fact of communicating what was the general intention of the mission and the acceptable degree of risk.³⁹ Setting up a flexible chain of command also gave commanders the ability to make decisions rapidly. As a matter of fact, the normal chain of command had been bypassed through the use of *ad hoc* arrangements, made possible by exceptional circumstances.⁴⁰ Additionally, taking advantage of that opportunity, as identified by the force commander, was made possible by his ability to rapidly mobilize and concentrate adequate forces; that is, troops that were sufficiently equipped (better-equipped than UN peacekeepers usually are) and free of unofficial national restrictions.

Last writes: "... the fighting in the Medak pocket was in defiance of an agreement to withdraw. Effective handling of incidents was to reinforce the agreements, and reduce the likelihood of further incidents."⁴² Although a broader context explains the change in Croatia's strategy, UN negotiators were able to take advantage of the dissuasive impact of forceful application of the Medak agreement. Through an approach of gradual engagement, they succeeded in obtaining the cooperation of both parties in a general ceasefire in March 1994. The operation of applying the agreement thus made it possible, temporarily, to reinforce the consent granted by the parties at the time the force was deployed.⁴³

The use of coercive means can have positive effects on the course of a peace mission, particularly if integrated into a political strategy with clearly defined objectives. It is therefore crucial that the political bargaining be consistent with practices, and vice-versa. In Yugoslavia, the failure to adjust the theoretical principles of peacekeeping to the reality on the ground harmed peace doctrines. Developed in order to prevent the escalation of violence in situations of relative peace, those principles were applied to an environment of latent war. Radical evolution of the conflicts during the decade of the 1990s caught the peacekeeping agents unaware, unable at that time to face the military demands on the ground, to issue mandates accordingly, and produce plans allowing for an efficient combination of contact and combat skills.⁴⁴ The Medak operation is one of the rare examples of successful adaptation of peace operations to this new reality. Thanks to their initiative, the commanders were able to 'get around' the deficiencies in the peacekeeping doctrines. Under those circumstances, the

Conclusion – An appraisal of impacts and lessons

In spite of relative hostility of the Croatians towards the Canadian troops stationed in the area, the benefits of resorting to force seem to have outweighed its disadvantages. On the other hand, resorting to force involves major risks for the pursuit of the mission and the security of the soldiers on the ground. One must always take into consideration the danger of escalation, because when they lose their impartiality, UN peacekeepers can become parties in the conflict as well as possible targets,⁴¹ which

“The Security Council reacted immediately to this violation of the peace agreement by demanding an immediate end to hostilities and withdrawal from the protected zones.”



What is left of the Medak hamlet.

most decisive variables in formulating a coherent reply to a problem of security are the operational abilities of the contingents, and the will to act by the individuals concerned.⁴⁵ On the other hand, the fact is that leadership of commanders cannot compensate for deficiencies in doctrine, because it does not allow for standardized and uniform recourse to force, a situation that is likely to give the parties the impression that force is being used arbitrarily. For that reason, the UN still urgently requires clear directions on this subject.

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NOTES

1. Trevor Findlay, *The Use of Force in UN Peace Operations* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 355.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 356.
3. Territorial sovereignty is actually guaranteed under Article 2, Paragraph 4 of the United Nations Charter.
4. Trevor Findlay, "The Use of Force in Self-Defence: Theory and Practice", p. 53, in Alex Morrison, Douglas A. Fraser, and James D. Kiras, *Peacekeeping with Muscle: The Use of Force in International Conflict Resolution* (Clementsport, NS: The Lester B. Pearson Canadian International Peacekeeping Training Centre, The Canadian Peacekeeping Press, 1997), p. 53.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 60.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 55.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 100.
8. N. D. White, *The United Nations and the Maintenance of International Peace and Security* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1990), p. 201, quoted in Simon Chesterman, *The Use of Force in UN Peace Operations* (New York: Peacekeeping Best Practice Unit, 2004).
9. Findlay, 1997, p. 101.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 56.
11. David Last, *Theory, Doctrine and Practice of Conflict De-Escalation in Peacekeeping Operations* (Clementsport, NS: Canadian International Peacekeeping Centre, The Canadian Peacekeeping Press, 1997).
12. United Nations Security Council, Document S/23280, p. 5.
13. Report addressed to the Security Council by the Secretary General applying Resolution 721 (1991) of the Security Council, Appendix III, S/2380, 11 December 1991.
14. In a letter dated 10 December 1991, addressed to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands.
15. New report presented by the Secretary General in accordance with Resolutions 743 (1992) and 762 (1992) of the Security Council, S/24600, 28 September 1992.
16. Last, p. 3.
17. Findlay, 2002., pp. 417-419.
18. Report addressed by the Secretary General to the Security Council applying Resolution 721 (1991) of the Security Council.
19. Findlay, 1997, p. 52.
20. Findlay, 2002, p. 417.
21. Maslenica Bridge, Peruca Dam, Zemunik Airport, and Milivaki Ridge.
22. United Nations Security Council, Resolution 802, January 1993.
23. United Nations Security Council, Resolution 807, February 1993.
24. United Nations Security Council, Report S/24600, p. 8.
25. United Nations Security Council, Resolution 762, June 1992.
26. Interview with Lieutenant-Colonel Bryan Bailey, 16 March 2006.
27. Testimonies of Colonel (ret'd) Jim Calvin before the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs (SCONDVA), Monday, 27 April 1998.
28. *Ibid.*
29. *2PPCLI Operation Harmony ROTO 2 After Action Report*, dated 31 October 1993.
30. *Ibid.*
31. Interview with Lieutenant-Colonel Bryan Bailey, 16 March 2006.
32. "...using .50 and C9 machine guns, their own C7 machine guns..." testimony of Lieutenant Colonel Jim Calvin before the SCONDVA Committee, 27 April 1998.
33. *Ibid.*
34. Last, pp.105-107.
35. *2PPCLI Operation Harmony ROTO 2 After Action Report*, 31 October 1993.
36. Free translation of David Last's expression.
37. Findlay, 2002, p. 354.
38. SCONDVA Committee testimony, 27 April 1998.
39. *2PPCLI Operation Harmony ROTO 2 After Action Report*, 31 October 1993, Point 35.
40. *Ibid.*, Points 32 and 36.
41. See the remark by Marrack Goulding, then UN Joint Secretary for Special Political Affairs, quoted in Trevor Findlay, 2002, p. 355.
42. Last, p. 111.
43. Idea defended by Charles Dobbie, "A Concept for Post-Cold-War Peacekeeping," in *Survival*, Vol. 36, No.3, Autumn 1994.
44. Last.
45. Chesterman, p. 3.