

VI. United Nations

UN Peacekeeping

Introduction

The 8 years of the Clinton administration coincided with turbulent changes in UN peacekeeping. The United States influenced many of these developments, and the provision or withholding of U.S. resources and political often influenced the UN's actions on a particular issue. Throughout this time period the administration served both as an ardent proponent of UN peacekeeping and one of the fiercest advocates for peacekeeping reform.

Soon after the Clinton administration took office, the United Nations was deploying more peacekeepers around the world than ever before, continuing a trend that began during the last 2 years of the Bush administration. There were 78,000 peacekeepers in the field in June 1993, reflecting large missions such as those in Mozambique, the former Yugoslavia, and Somalia. However, the UN did not sustain this level of deployment; in fact, by January 1999, only 12,000 UN peacekeepers were deployed worldwide. Over the last 2 years of the Clinton administration, the scope and size of peacekeeping missions increased once again, largely due to the establishment of major missions in East Timor, Sierra Leone, and elsewhere.

The story of the Clinton administration's involvement in UN peacekeeping is tied to these trendlines. In the early 1990s, peacekeeping failures in Bosnia and Somalia were key factors in the UN Security Council's inclination to be more selective in approving and designing new missions. The United States became one of the most important voices in this movement to reform UN peacekeeping. Moreover, the United States favored action by regional organizations or "coalitions of the willing" in places like the Balkans or Haiti.

To analyze the Clinton administration's involvement in UN peacekeeping, one must first examine the peacekeeping failures in the early 1990s, followed by U.S. efforts to reform UN peacekeeping. Then it is useful to review the developments of the last 2 years of the administration, which saw a revitalization of the peacekeeping instrument, coupled with a renewed interest in peacekeeping reform.

Troubled Peacekeeping Operations in the Early 1990s

President Clinton came into office with a strong belief that the United Nations played a key role in the maintenance of international peace and security. In September 1993, about 8 months after his inauguration, he elaborated upon his views in a speech to the General Assembly. Noting that "UN peacekeeping holds the promise to resolve many of this era's conflicts," the President stated that the United States supported UN peacekeeping not in order to "subcontract American foreign policy," but "to strengthen our security, protect our interests and to share among nations the cost and effort of pursuing peace."

At the same time, the President also discussed the limitations of peacekeeping. In pointing out the UN's inability to become involved in all of the world's conflicts, the President stressed the need to subject all proposals for new peacekeeping operations to

“the rigors of military and political analysis.” To that end, he said, in evaluating proposals for new peacekeeping missions, the United States had begun asking, and the UN should ask, “Is there a real threat to international peace? Does the proposed mission have clear objectives? Can an end point be identified for those who will be asked to participate?”

These questions would soon take on a more pointed tone when, less than 2 weeks after the President made these comments, 18 U.S. soldiers operating in support of the UN operation were killed in Somalia. This tragedy, coupled with the death of 24 Pakistani peacekeepers 4 months earlier, led many of the member states with troops in the UN Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) to begin withdrawing their personnel.

At the same time as the tragic events in Somalia, the Security Council was struggling with the situation in the former Yugoslavia. In the end, after many resolutions and ineffectual actions, the United Nations by itself proved to be ineffective in addressing the violence in the Balkans. UN peacekeepers in the UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in Bosnia were taken hostage, and 207 total UNPROFOR personnel lost their lives in this mission. In the well-documented attacks on UN “safe areas” at Srebrenica and elsewhere, thousands of citizens were killed, along with the majority of the UNPROFOR soldiers who lost their lives in Bosnia. This incident became a clear example of the perils of peacekeeping, such as “mission creep” and the failure to match a mission’s mandate with enough resources or personnel.

Rebuilding the UN's Peacekeeping Capacity

Because of these peacekeeping setbacks, the United States led the charge to reform multilateral peacekeeping missions. The movement began within the U.S. Government. In May 1994, President Clinton, after extensive consultations with the Congress, signed a Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) on Reforming Multilateral Peace Operations. The purpose of the directive was to improve UN management and to rationalize America’s own process for deciding when and how to support and participate in UN peacekeeping. Some elements of the PDD were: requiring that questions about cost, size, risk, mandate, and duration be addressed—both within the U.S. Government and at the Security Council—before operations were started or extended; a proposed reduction in the share of UN peacekeeping costs assessed against the United States; and confirmation of the long-standing policy that the President, as Commander-in-Chief, would never relinquish ultimate command authority over U.S. armed forces, to the UN or anyone else.

While the United States took steps to refine its own policy approach to UN peacekeeping, the Clinton administration, along with Congress, recognized the need for a revitalized peacekeeping capacity within the organization. Indeed, after Bosnia, Somalia, and the genocide in Rwanda, many members of Congress criticized the UN’s peacekeeping department as ineffective and poorly equipped for the challenges it faced in administering peacekeeping missions. Thus, with U.S. assistance, the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) evolved into a more fully integrated operation with improved management, planning, analytic and logistics skills. Beginning in 1994, the United Nations substantially expanded and reorganized DPKO to better integrate most major components of peacekeeping planning and management.

Steps taken by the UN to bolster its peacekeeping capacity included:

- Giving the Secretariat an effective, state-of-the-art situation center for running peacekeeping missions.
- Simplifying operations and reducing costs through a contingent-owned equipment system, which helped missions get the materials they need at the time they need them.
- Improving mission planning by conducting thorough "lessons learned" reviews of past peacekeeping operations.
- Working to improve recruitment, training, deployment and logistical support of civilian police operations.
- Improving rapid deployment capabilities by establishing the UN Logistics Base and standby arrangements system.

Many of these developments stemmed from U.S. pressure on the UN to reform its peacekeeping capacity. With the U.S. position and veto on the Security Council, the Clinton administration was able to wield considerable influence over the decision-making process on peacekeeping. As a result, not only did the United Nations initiate reform efforts in New York, but these efforts also paid off with peacekeeping successes in the field.

Peacekeeping Successes

UN peacekeeping missions have a variety of goals, which include repairing a breach of international peace and security, averting an urgent humanitarian disaster, stopping gross and systematic violations of human rights, supporting public security, or implementing a settlement leading to democratic government and the rule of law.

In supporting missions that furthered these goals, it was the administration's intention that UN peacekeepers provide breathing room and help peace agreements take root. Also, peacekeeping missions were designed to allow refugees to go home, disarm combatants, enable citizens to live without fear of being caught in the crossfire, help bring war criminals to justice, and assist national leaders build democratic institutions. These objectives serve U.S. national interests. For this reason, the Clinton administration continued to support peacekeeping operations that met the considerations outlined in the PDD on multilateral operations.

By these standards, many of the operations carried out during the Clinton administration were successful. Some examples were:

- In Mozambique, the UN mission which ended in December 1994 served U.S. aims by: separating, demobilizing, and reintegrating combatants; monitoring the cease-fire; and observing and verifying all stages of the election process. Mozambique remained democratic and at peace at the end of the Clinton administration.
- In Macedonia, the UN Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) served U.S. aims by containing the spread of ethnic conflict, which allowed the Macedonians to establish democratic institutions and join the European community.

- Similarly, the UN Mission of Observers in Prevlaka (UNMOP) successfully and effectively monitored the demilitarization of the Prevlaka peninsula, a strategic area disputed by Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.
- In Eastern Slavonia, the UN transitional administration provided for the peaceful integration of that region into Croatia, setting a positive precedent for peace throughout the former Yugoslavia. At the conclusion of the mission in January 1998, the United States joined the Security Council in welcoming the progress made in the peaceful return of displaced persons in the region.

These missions and others demonstrated that by the late 1990s, while the United Nations and the United States had significantly scaled back both the scope of peacekeeping operations and the number of deployed peacekeepers, UN peacekeeping missions could still make valuable contributions to the maintenance of international peace and security. In the final 2 years of the Clinton administration, the United States reaffirmed its commitment to peacekeeping by supporting both a drastic increase in peacekeeping deployments and renewed efforts at reform.

Revitalization of the Peacekeeping Instrument

From January 1999 to December 2000, the United Nations increased deployments of peacekeepers from about 12,000 to almost 40,000, with 52,000 projected for 2001. Similarly, U.S. contributions to UN peacekeeping rose from just over \$200 million in FY 1999 to over \$800 million (projected) in FY 2001. This trend reversed the decline in peacekeeping commitments discussed above and signaled a more expansive presence for the United Nations in specific areas of the world.

Much of the increase in peacekeeping deployments and costs resulted from the Security Council's establishment or augmentation of major peacekeeping missions in Sierra Leone, Kosovo, East Timor, and Lebanon. The United States supported these actions by the Council, because they served U.S. interests. For instance:

- The U.S. interest in Kosovo stemmed from long-standing U.S. support for a stable, democratic, and multi-ethnic Europe, no longer threatened by Soviet power, and the need to help the emerging, democratic nations under a stable NATO-Russian cooperative security arrangement.
- American interests in East Timor were humanitarian and democratic, related to U.S. security, political, and commercial interests in Indonesia. The United States also wanted to support Australia, a close ally.
- In Sierra Leone, the United States had a clear humanitarian interest in helping to consolidate the peace and in supporting the British in a key country for them. The war in Sierra Leone not only generated refugee flows and economic displacement, but it also led to the direct military involvement of several neighboring states.

The UN missions in these areas and elsewhere gave rise to increased attention to peacekeeping within the U.S. Government, in both the executive and legislative branches. Operations such as the UN Interim Administration in Kosovo (UNMIK) and UNTAET had broad mandates which basically placed the missions in charge of administering particular regions. This was a new breadth of mandate for UN operations, and the future

vitality of UN peacekeeping would depend largely on the long-term stability of these regions.

The increase in UN peacekeeping costs and personnel intensified the need for a sustained commitment to reform. As it had since the beginning, the Clinton administration pursued reform on many levels. First, the United States continued to express its concern that DPKO was stretched too thin. Despite the increased peacekeeping commitments made by the Security Council, the UN did not increase its peacekeeping capacity accordingly. Secretary General Kofi Annan told the Security Council so in early 2000. As a result, the United States actively supported the Secretary General's review of permanent DPKO staff and ways that they could be supplemented to provide surge capacity and specific expertise. This was especially important in view of the internal nature of many conflicts and resultant tremendous increase in demand for civilian police (CIVPOL).

In fact, the United States placed a high priority on improving UN CIVPOL capacity. To demonstrate this, in February 2000 the President signed Presidential Decision Directive 71 (PDD-71). PDD-71 directed the administration to enhance U.S. CIVPOL capacities and help enhance the CIVPOL capacities of the United Nations and other member states.

Fortunately, Secretary General Annan continued to promote his own reform efforts. He demonstrated this most clearly in early 2000 when he appointed a blue-ribbon panel, headed by Ambassador Lakhdar Brahimi of Algeria, to look closely at how the UN could improve its performance in peace operations. The panel's focus included the nuts and bolts of UN peacekeeping—getting the structure right, proper planning, improved organization.

In light of past failures in UN peacekeeping operations, the panel was charged with assessing the shortcomings of the existing system of UN peacekeeping and proposing frank, specific and realistic recommendations to render UN peacekeeping more efficient and effective.

The so-called "Brahimi Report," released on August 23, 2000, was a valuable, candid, and credible report on what was needed to make UN peacekeeping more effective and efficient. The Panel's 57 recommendations focused on measures designed to:

- enhance the UN's ability to engage in conflict prevention;
- enhance UN capacities for information management and strategic analysis;
- ensure that Security Council mandates were clear, credible and achievable;
- integrate the UN's disjointed mission planning system;
- improve rapid deployment capabilities and mission leadership effectiveness;
- ensure that troops and other mission personnel were adequately trained and prepared prior to deployment;
- enhance the ability of the UN to procure equipment on a timely basis;

- restructure and strengthen the poorly staffed UN DPKO, to include adding a new deputy position;
- enhance military planning capabilities in DPKO;
- strengthen the role and capacities of the Civilian Police Unit; and
- apply modern information technology to enhance coordination between headquarters and the field.

Many of these recommendations echoed reform themes emphasized by the United States throughout the 1990s. The United States welcomed the Secretary General's initiative to make UN peacekeeping viable for future conflict resolution challenges. At the end of the Clinton administration, the State Department was working with the Secretariat and the UN membership to ensure expeditious implementation of the Brahimi Report in line with U.S. interests. The Department planned to work with Congress to ensure compliance with U.S. policy concerning the UN regular budget and funding of peace operations in general.

Conclusion

U.S. policy toward UN peacekeeping as of January 2001 was much different from U.S. peacekeeping policy in January 1993. During the Clinton administration, both UN peacekeeping missions and the manner in which the United States participated in them changed drastically. One thing about UN peacekeeping remained constant, however: it will be judged by results. The Clinton administration realized this and took U.S. policy toward UN peacekeeping very seriously throughout its tenure. The United States greatly influenced UN peacekeeping developments during this period, and was poised to continue to play a key role at the UN in the future.

UN Reform

Challenges of UN Reform

Throughout the Clinton administration, the United States consistently pressed hard for reform of the United Nations and its operations, with the objective of creating a more efficient, streamlined, and effective organization, equipped to cope with the emerging challenges of the 21st century.

Although the United States had significant influence at the UN during the Clinton administration, reform measures were not easy to implement. The member states were concerned that reform proposals, regardless of their target, would result in further cuts to UN programs and activities supported by the majority of member states. Also, a certain weariness existed among the membership and the Secretariat about repeated calls for reform, mainly from the United States. Building momentum for reform required making the links between reform objectives and tangible, positive outcomes for the membership and the organization clear and concrete.

In addition, the highly democratic nature of most UN decision-making structures could tend toward lengthy debates that could delay or kill even popular proposals. Pushing ideas through required laying extensive groundwork among the membership before proposals were considered in formal UN decision bodies. Despite these

difficulties, the Clinton administration took its reform mission seriously and was able to impel the UN to take real steps.

Reform Successes

One of the most significant reforms was carried out on July 29, 1994, when the United Nations established an Inspector General function for the first time, under the authority of the Secretary General. This act represented a major success for the United States, which had been in the forefront in calling for the establishment of an independent office in the United Nations to improve accountability and oversight. Following adoption of the resolution, U.S. Permanent Representative to the UN Madeleine Albright made a statement to the UN General Assembly expressing the significance of this resolution:

the passage of this resolution constitutes an historic step forward for the United Nations. The new Office of Internal Oversight Services will make this organization more efficient, more effective, and more accountable. That will be good for the United Nations; it will be good for millions around the world who rely upon the United Nations for services; it will be good for those who do business with the United Nations; and it will be good for those—our taxpayers—who pay the UN's bills.

During the Clinton administration, OIOS made remarkable progress in developing a management culture aimed at accountability, efficiency, and effectiveness. Its auditors saved the United Nations and its member states millions of dollars by identifying duplication and mismanagement throughout the organization, and its investigators greatly enhanced the deterrent value of oversight by successfully pursuing cases of fraud and abuse.

Another area where the United Nations made progress, at U.S. urging, was in eliminating redundancy. The UN economic and social affairs departments were consolidated and restructured, resulting in better coordination and efficiencies. Also, by the end of the 1990s the UN established a website to distribute information among program managers in an effort to reduce redundancies. The United States pushed hard to incorporate performance indicators into the UN's plans and budgets with the aim of producing information for program managers and member states on progress in achieving agreed-upon goals. By improving the planning, budgeting, and evaluation process, more information became available about program activities, both their successes and failures. This, in turn helped the United States and the United Nations determine where program reforms were needed.

Thereafter, the United States did not cease its call for reform. At the opening of the 49th General Assembly in September 1994, President Clinton proposed that the United Nations create a working group to develop a concrete plan to revitalize the organization. UN General Assembly President Amara Essy promoted this idea with strong support from the U.S. delegation. In September 1995, the General Assembly established a "High-Level Working Group on Strengthening the UN System," with a mandate to develop proposals for reform drawn from studies by UN bodies and member states, independent commissions, nongovernmental organizations, scholars, and other experts, taking into account the conclusions of other UN working groups such as the Working Group on the UN Financial Situation.

The "Essy Group," as it was known, produced modest proposals for expediting and streamlining the work of the General Assembly and reforming management of the Secretariat. On controversial issues, the United States successfully overcame attempts in the Group to have NGOs and the General Assembly play larger roles, such as NGO participation in UN deliberations and a possible General Assembly role in selecting the Secretary General. Even though work in the Essy Group moved slowly, the group gave a political impetus to reform and triggered parallel activity throughout the UN system.

Secretary General's Reform Efforts

In late 1996, the Security Council adopted by acclamation a resolution recommending that Kofi Annan be appointed Secretary General for a term of office from January 1, 1997 through December 31, 2001. In and of itself, this appointment was an important step and a victory for U.S. reform efforts, as Secretary General Annan proved himself to be truly committed to reform of the United Nations.

Secretary General Annan incorporated many U.S. ideas on improving UN economic and social institutions, activities, and programs into his two 1997 reform packages ("Track One" and "Track Two" reforms). The United States worked to generate member state support for their prompt implementation. In December 1997, the General Assembly adopted the Track One measures and most of the Track Two recommendations by consensus.

In March 1997, the Secretary General announced ten administrative, budgetary, managerial, and personnel reforms that he could undertake on his own authority ("Track One"). The UN budget remained essentially flat for several years; over 900 personnel positions were abolished within the United Nations; a Code of Conduct was adopted; and administrative costs were reduced.

In July 1997, the Secretary General proposed a more comprehensive set of reforms ("Track Two"), which streamlined some departments, improved administrative activities, and effected major improvements in development, humanitarian relief, human rights, and peacekeeping activities. Key measures included creating a Deputy Secretary General; adopting a cabinet-style management structure that brought together senior officials responsible for core UN functions; enhancing coordination of UN development activities at headquarters and in the field; improving delivery of humanitarian assistance; and integrating human rights concerns throughout all UN activities.

Other important steps taken at the Secretary General's urging were the implementation of a code of conduct that helped foster a culture of accountability and implementation of a performance appraisal system that linked employees' work to the achievement of program objectives. The United States supported all of these measures as major contributions to the ongoing UN reform process.

Measured Progress

The final 2 years of the Clinton administration brought some real reforms as a result of U.S. pressure, but the United Nations retained some of its inefficiencies. On the plus side, during 1999 UN Secretary General Annan continued to move forward with his program of administrative and budgetary reforms. The 2000-2001 UN budget came in at virtually the same level as the initial budget approved for the previous biennium, 1998-

1999; administrative overhead costs were steadily reduced; and the Office of Internal Oversight Services identified millions of dollars in cost savings.

By the end of the Clinton administration, however, the General Assembly had not acted on other recommendations put forward by the Secretary General that were priorities for the United States: results-based budgeting, which used performance indicators to assess progress toward specific objectives, and sunset provisions for new UN programs. The United States continued to press for implementation of these measures.

The most prominent of U.S. reform efforts was the package of reforms embedded in what became known as the "Helms-Biden" legislation. By tying reform efforts to payment of U.S. arrears, this legislation provided concrete benchmarks as the United States worked to achieve UN reform in budgeting, in personnel and management, and most prominently, in the scales of assessment for both the UN regular budget and the peacekeeping budget.

In December 2000, the United States succeeded in its campaign to get the United Nations to revise its scales of assessment for both peacekeeping and the regular budget. On the regular budget, most importantly, the United States achieved a reduction in the ceiling from 25 to 22 percent, the first such change since 1973. The new scale reflected the changes in the new global economy, such as the economic strength of large developing countries like China, Brazil, Korea, and Singapore, while ensuring that the ceiling reduction did not impact the poorest countries which lacked the means to pay more. The membership also agreed to keep the agreed methodology in place for 6 years, avoiding a wasteful and protracted debate in 2003.

The reforms of the peacekeeping scale were complex as well as groundbreaking. Under the new scale there were five intermediate groups, allowing countries to transition gradually to higher brackets of payment. The scale would be updated every 3 years to reflect economic changes. As soon as the revised scale would go into effect, in July 2001, the U.S. rate would decline to 27.58 percent, a reduction of nearly 4 percentage points from what the United States would have paid absent a new scale, or over \$100 million in U.S. assessments. The U.S. rate would continue to decline progressively, and it was expected that it would reach 25 percent by 2006 or 2007.

Conclusion

The Clinton administration worked diligently to make the United Nations more effective and responsive. As a result, the organization was much different in January 2001 than in January 1993. Significantly, at the Millennium Summit and General Assembly in September 2000, many nations mentioned UN reform as one of their top priorities among the broad scope of multilateral issues.

Both President Clinton and Secretary Albright emphasized reform in their addresses that month. Secretary Albright eloquently expressed the need for sustained reform efforts:

I remember when I came to New York in 1993, I was told by cynics that the UN was too bureaucratic to change, and too big ever to achieve consensus on measures to improve its governance. Those cynics were wrong. With support from many countries, we have made impressive progress. Compared to seven

years ago, the UN accomplishes more and wastes less. Accountability has increased and duplication diminished...A culture of transparency and results is slowly but surely taking hold. (See Document VI-1)

And, as the President pointed out, however difficult reform efforts were, those in the United States or elsewhere "who believe we can do without the UN, or impose our will upon it, misread history and misunderstand the future." For this reason, the Clinton administration worked hard to make sure the United Nations would continue to play an important role in the conduct of foreign policy in the future.