

Preliminary Observations about the US Process for Deciding to Support UN Peace Operations

Briefing for Committee on International Relations US House of Representatives

October 4, 2000



UN troops in
Cambodia



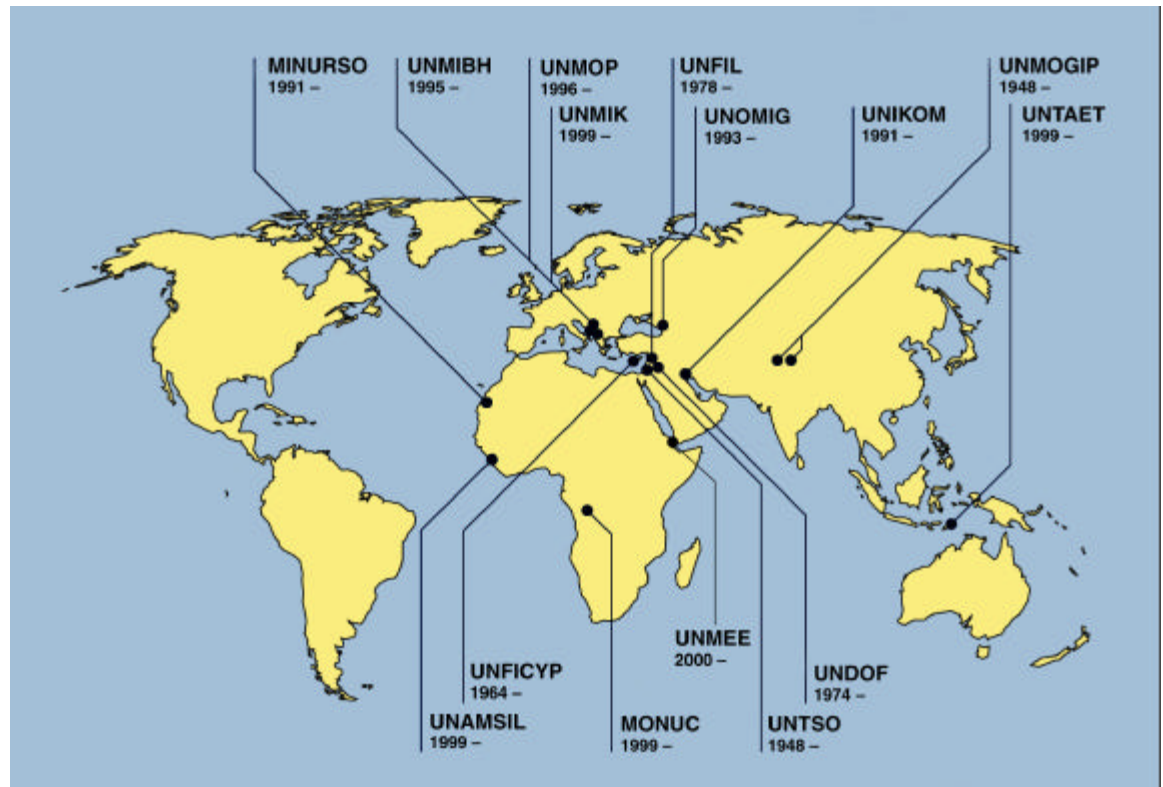
UN patrol
in Bosnia

U.N. Peacekeeping Operations

15 active worldwide as of October 2000

US has supported a dramatic increase in the size and scope of UN peacekeeping since June 1999

- Authorized number of troops and police increased from 15,000 to 48,000.
- UN operations undertook complex, new tasks in Kosovo and East Timor.
- Annual UN peacekeeping costs increased from about \$800 million to estimated \$2.7 billion for 2001.



Introduction

- **Concerned about these developments, the Chairman asked GAO to examine how Presidential Decision Directive 25 was applied in deciding to support new or expanded UN operations.**
- **Our study is focused on US decisions to support new or expanded UN operations in four locations.**
 - **Kosovo, East Timor, Sierra Leone, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.**
 - **Decisions made between January 1999 and June 2000.**

Questions You Asked Us to Discuss at this Briefing

- **Does GAO have sufficient access to agency records to conduct the study requested by the Chairman?**
- **How was Presidential Decision Directive 25 used when deciding to support new or expanded UN operations?**
- **How did the executive branch consult with Congress during the Directive 25 decision process?**

Does GAO have sufficient access to agency records to conduct the study requested by the Chairman?

- **GAO lacks full and independent access to agency records needed to complete its work.**
 - **No access to key records that would show whether Directive 25 factors were considered when deciding to support some operations.**
 - **No independent access to records. Compromises the integrity and reliability of GAO's work.**

Status of GAO's Access to Agency Records

| Documents agency officials identified as relevant to study | Current access | Date of access | Access needed |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Congressional notification letters | All identified | June 1 | None |
| Congressional contact logs | Substantial | Jul 29 | DOD |
| Decision memorandum | Substantial | Aug 3 | DOD |
| Directive 25 analyses | All identified | Sep 8 | None |
| Political-military plans | Substantial | Sep 18 | State |
| Summaries of conclusions | Partial | Aug. 17 | NSC |
| Discussion/options papers | None | None | NSC |

How was Presidential Decision Directive 25 used when deciding to support new or expanded UN operations?

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| Intent | <p>Ensure selective and effective use of peacekeeping as a tool for advancing US interests.</p> <p>Help ensure coherent and disciplined choices made about which operations to support</p> |
| Process | <p>Establish factors to help assess whether US support for an operation is appropriate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•operations are finite and advance U.S. interests;•have clear objectives and realistic endpoints;•have the means necessary for success, including appropriate forces, financing, and mandate. |

Preliminary Observations About the Use of Directive 25 in Deciding to Support Operations

- **Directive 25 factors considered in deciding to support initial operation in East Timor.**
 - Cannot determine whether factors were considered in deciding to support two subsequent operations.
- **US supported operations in East Timor, Sierra Leone, and the Congo despite lack of some factors.**
 - Factors used to highlight shortcomings and develop plans to address these risks.

How did the executive branch consult with Congress during the Directive 25 decision process?

- **Briefings, notification letters, testimonies, and other communications provided extensive information about**
 - **situation “on the ground”**
 - **proposed operations’ cost, size, mandate, and relationship to US interests**
- **However, communications provided little information about (1) the risks and weaknesses of operations identified by Directive 25 analyses and (2) plans for addressing these risks and weaknesses.**

Remaining Work to Complete Study for Committee

- **Obtain full and independent access to records .**
- **Complete review of decision process.**
 - Analyze documents; align with decisions
 - Interview decision makers about process
- **Complete work on consultation process.**
 - Analyze executive branch consultation with Congress
 - Interview Congress and executive branch officials about consultation requirements and concerns