

the UN admin and finance side. However, a large number of perceived failures come from misunderstandings by both sides as to what the other's needs are. To a degree the operations side of any field operation must be cognizant of the accountability and time requirements of the UN system. The UN system like any large system, must and will have some inherent functional constraints that must be learned if one is to operate within it.

Commenting on non-UN personnel brought in to staff ONUSAL, the Lawyers Committee noted that "these functionaries cannot be expected to know UN administrative procedures.", and that "Future missions should seriously consider how best to integrate and make effective use of non-UN functionaries."²¹⁹ Clearly the onus is on the UN to consciously train or educate incoming staff as to the UN administrative field procedures that are *essential* to effectively function within the UN system. The word essential imposes further demands on the UN.

UN rules for many field operations must change dramatically. Financial/administrative officers for example have to understand the complexity and speed at which operations shift and change their goals and needs. They must have a better awareness of local operational demands and constraints. In turn, the UN system must allow them to minimize the standard financial reporting needs of the system. There must be looser financial procedures for CAOs and their staff, particularly in the start-up phase of human rights operations. A related study by the UN's Field Administration and Logistics Division, showed that 75% of UN headquarters procurement for peace-keeping operations involved materiel costing between \$1,000 and \$70,000. Delegation to the field for such amounts would reduce the load of an already stretched HQ procurement capacity, reduce delays, and more effectively meet operational requirements.

Quite apart for a need for greater freedom for operations' CAOs and their immediate staff, there is a need to delegate financial authority, and the operational flexibility that goes with it, to HRO operations staff. "Financial authority and accountability should be commensurate with responsibility at each level."²²⁰ One possible example to follow would be that taken by UNHCR which has highly developed procedures for Emergency Response Teams, with concise and easily used field expenditure authorization tools such as ABODs (Administrative Budget and Obligation Document) and ELOIs (Emergency Letters of Instruction).

Recommendation #69

It is recommended that financial and administration officers for HROs be trained to meet the operational demands of the HRO while at the same time meeting essential UN accountability procedures. UN HQs must delegate them sufficient financial authority and procedural flexibility, including the authority to further sub-delegate to operations staff.

²¹⁹ p.17, *Improvising History: A Critical Evaluation of the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador*, Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, December 1995.

²²⁰ p.25, E/AC.51/1994/3 14 March 1994 PROGRAMME QUESTIONS: EVALUATION, Progress report on the in-depth evaluation of peace-keeping: start-up phase, Report of the Secretary-General