

The rapid increase in the number of countries offering troops to the UN brought its own problems. Many of the new TCNs offered troops ill equipped and trained for peacekeeping duties. These contingents required crash introductions to peacekeeping culture - very much at odds with much military training. Furthermore, linguistic limitations and, occasionally, attitudinal problems led to serious constraints on the inter-operability of national contingents, a constant headache for Force Commanders.

The UN's Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) gamely sought to cope with the instructions of the Council, the direction of the Secretary General and the requirement to provide politically sensitive guidance simultaneously to a variety of operations in the field, but it was clearly, at times, overwhelmed by the scale of the challenge.¹⁹ Anxiety over the safety of personnel serving under the UN flag led TCN governments to seek to influence instructions to national contingents channelled through the UN chain of command. This interference hampered inter-operability of contingents and threatened unity of command. It also called into question a PKO's unity of purpose.

Constraints on UN Decision-Making

The financial situation - the most obvious constraint on the UN - has been exacerbated by recent trends. The bill for peacekeeping increased from US\$400 million in 1991 to \$3.5 billion in 1994. Cambodia alone cost \$1.1 billion over eighteen months. While these figures are small relative to defence spending around the world, each PKO requires the allocation of additional spending by Member States in these fiscally straitened times. The US owes over \$ 1 billion.²⁰ In 1995, it paid below 50% on its regular budget assessments - less in absolute terms than Japan, which has a much smaller share.

The mood in Congress does not bode well for US funding this year: suggestions by the EU countries for a reduction in the American share of peacekeeping were rejected by the US Administration in January, 1996, because Congress had unilaterally mandated an even lower share. The hope remains that the drubbing the U.S. received during the UN's fiftieth anniversary ceremonies in New York in October, 1995, might yet prompt the Administration and Congress to negotiate seriously with each other on this issue. The trade-off for a more co-operative congressional stance would be Administration

¹⁹ The performance of DPKO personnel throughout this period was widely praised by UN Delegates in interviews. They recognized that the heads of DPKO in the 1990s, first Marrack Goulding, then Kofi Annan, had to struggle - ultimately with success - to build up DPKO's military and civilian staffs against the often bewildering opposition of the General Assembly's committee responsible for administrative and financial issues. They also fell victim to the consistent and, on balance, extremely ill-advised double-guessing of the powerful Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. Both Goulding and Annan were among the most highly regarded UN senior officials of this period. Their Military Adviser from 1992 to 1995, Major General Maurice Baril, was also much praised.

²⁰ On May 15, 1996, the US owed \$ 690 million for the US regular budget and had \$ 890 owing for past and current peacekeeping dues, according UN Press Release Contributions to the Regular Budget, International Tribunals and Peacekeeping Operations of May 15, 1996.