

## Purchasing

Buying remote sensing systems and aircraft platforms is the more expensive option open to the United Nations because of the capital costs involved. If the sensors are to be installed into a new aircraft, there is a considerable cost to modify the aircraft before sensor integration can occur. (Of course, this capital cost could be reduced if a suitable aircraft platform or sensors was contributed by a member state.) Another expense that the United Nations would incur with buying sensors and aircraft would be the cost of training pilots, sensor operators, engineers and image interpretation specialists. Proper and adequate training of personnel is a time consuming venture with an expected duration of three to four months required for a staff of fifteen to twenty people. The skills required would also require very specialized training.

Other costs to consider if a remote sensing system were purchased and operated by the United Nations would be annual carrying costs of the capital equipment, miscellaneous sensor and aircraft parts and spares costs, aircraft operating costs and staffing costs. Table 4 summarizes the estimated costs for the provision of two aircraft outfitted with a SAR, a FLIR, an infrared linescanner and an optical camera system. The cost includes the aircraft, the sensors (including sensor integration), and parts and spares.

A principal disadvantage with the purchasing option is the problem of keeping the aircraft and related systems busy when not directly involved in a United Nations peacekeeping program. One possibility could be to utilize the systems and the imagery provided for environmental monitoring or mapping applications.