

long-time President of the International Peace Academy, General Indar Rikhye, puts it bluntly:

...from the beginning it [The Korean force] was a US operation, led and supported by that power. The facade that this operation is a UN Command has been kept up to the present day; the UN flag flies over all military installations, and all vehicles and troops carry the UN insignia. But the Command reports to the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the Pentagon and not to the UN.

To correct simplistic misreading of the Korean peace-enforcement command model is not to call into question its legitimacy, but merely to set the record straight and to re-establish some perspective on how much we are moving into untested ground with the UN actually trying to exercise the role its founders had designed for it forty-five years ago. The Charter does not even outline a procedure for setting up a Command and clearly envisages strong continuing control by the individual governments concerned. To insist, at this stage, on the formal ratification of a UN Command would provide no real benefit, while possibly jeopardizing both the hard-won global consensus against aggression and the unusual willingness of Washington to work with and through the UN.

It is highly doubtful that the Soviet Union and China would yet be willing either to take a full military part in an international police and enforcement action or to give it the full measure of Security Council backing unless they were playing such a part. Remarkable as the progress has been in East-West relations, these Governments will not yet be prepared to give a blank cheque to a force inevitably dominated by the Saudis and the West, although even this is not inconceivable if the current process is properly continued and does not achieve a turnaround in the Iraqi position.

Nor would a UN command structure now do anything of substance to ease the challenge of operational coordination among the many national armed forces that are being mustered to this task. These challenges are probably misunderstood and oversimplified in any event by lay-people who fail to recognize that many military commanders have substantial experience in such coordination and will be fully seized of the problem.