



achieving full operational capability of approximately 5,500 persons within six days. Follow-on logistics supplies for up to 30 days are subsequently delivered by air and sea into the theatre. With the requisite planning and resources, HQ AMF(L) provides NATO with an effective and rapidly-deployable multinational force of more than 5,000 personnel capable of conducting operations within six days of the order to move.

An Assessment

The UN does not require a large-scale rapid-reaction force capable of moving into war-like situations. Nevertheless, some of the basic principles of rapid reaction can be deduced from the three rapid-reaction examples discussed above. First, these arrangements must be sufficiently flexible that they can meet a wide variety of possible contingencies, ranging from humanitarian assistance to operations in which there are high risks to personnel. Second, in order to obtain maximum flexibility, rapid-reaction forces must be organized in a "modular" fashion, lending themselves to quick organization in accordance with the requirements of a specific mission. Third, elements of these forces, generally widely-dispersed among separate organizations and in various locations, must be mobile, and thus capable of rapid concentration in a single location. In these and other examples examined in the course of this study, a standing operational headquarters organizes these forces on the basis of contingency plans and coordinates their deployment. Fourth, all of the key elements of a rapid-reaction force must stand at a high degree of readiness. They must be capable of assembling and transporting personnel and equipment quickly, and immediately upon debarkation be able to conduct the type of operation for which it is deployed. Finally, a deployed force should be self-sufficient, having all of the elements necessary to support and sustain itself for the initial stages of an operation.

In addition to these general principles there are six basic, "generic" components or elements which are fundamental to the success of virtually any rapid-reaction capability. These components would have to be reflected in the UN system if its aspirations towards an effective rapid-reaction capability are to be realized.

First, there must be an **early-warning mechanism** to provide advance notice of impending conflict or crisis. For the most part, this involves a capability to acquire, analyze and distribute the type of information which can then trigger concurrent activities: decision-making at the political and strategic levels, contingency planning at the strategic and operational levels, and the implementation process at the strategic, operational and tactical levels. To be effective, this early-warning mechanism must be linked to individuals and organizations capable of acting on such information.

Second, there must be an **effective decision-making process** to facilitate contingency planning and the implementation of an operation. Timely decisions are essential if rapid reaction is to be achieved. These are based on comprehensive assessments of what is required to achieve political objectives and on the mobilization of the means to implement contingency plans. Once a decision to take action has been taken, political objectives are translated into operational plans. Assuming the existence of the rapid-reaction capabilities examined in this report, extensive advance planning should already have taken place. It usually consists of two tiers. The first is contingency planning, based on information supplied by way of the early-warning