

accounted for over 500 personnel early in 1991, as part of the longest-standing of all of Canada's major peacekeeping operations. Canada has also provided smaller contingents of ground troops, communicators, helicopter units and others for about twenty observer and truce supervisory missions serving with the United Nations or other multilateral bodies.

The main commitment of the Army since 1950, however, has been to NATO. One full infantry (later mechanized) brigade group was maintained on the Central Front in Germany, headquartered at Soest, until the late 1960s, providing about 8,000 front line and support troops for the defence of a critical sector of the allied line. Two brigade groups of the Regular Army in Canada as well as some of the land forces reserves were also dedicated to providing back-up and reinforcements for this Canadian force in Germany during the 1950s and 1960s, although there were doubts about how many reserves would actually be available to serve in Europe once a crisis arose or a war actually broke out. Also, serious difficulties were anticipated in moving these reinforcements across to Europe in time to participate in any battle, given the fact that a war in Europe was expected to last only a short time before going nuclear.

At the end of the 1960s, the tasks and deployments of Canadian land forces committed to NATO in Europe changed significantly. Troop levels in Germany were cut in half at the turn of the decade, and Canadian Forces Europe were moved from a front-line role in Northern Germany to a strategic reserve role based on Lahr in the Black Forest. Instead of a full mechanized brigade group with three infantry battalions and a solid range of supporting units, the main Canadian land contribution to NATO defences on the Central Front was reduced to one light mechanized brigade group of less than 4,000. Canada, however, committed itself to send augmentation personnel from home to join the brigade group in a crisis and to send reinforcements to replace casualties or build up Canadian Forces Europe in the case of warfare. Canada also remained committed to providing support for the Northern Flank of NATO during a crisis. The armed forces remained ready to supply a battalion for ACE Mobile Force (North) in the event of a