

by a civilian staff that includes a political and legal advisor, and a press information officer.

In some cases, especially those where political problems are paramount or where peacekeeping entails a joint military/civilian initiative (e.g. Namibia), the Secretary-General may appoint a civilian Special Representative to lead the operation. In such instances the Special Representative usually outranks the Force Commander, though it may be that they share equal status, each reporting to the Secretary-General about their respective area of responsibility.

## NON-MILITARY TASKS AND PEACEKEEPING

Armed peacekeeping troops were first deployed by the UN during the Suez Crisis in 1956 to *secure* and *supervise* the ceasefire between Egypt, on one side, and Britain, France, and Israel on the other. Peacekeeping has been identified with this kind of activity ever since. It is usually divided into four main categories: *internal pacification*, to prevent the renewal of fighting in an intra-state conflict; *buffer forces*, separating warring parties in an inter-state conflict; *border patrol*, involving ceasefire supervision, fact-finding, reporting, and patrolling; and *observation*, unarmed supervision of a truce, ceasefire, or armistice line.<sup>3</sup>

Peacekeepers are normally forbidden from using force except in self-defence; still, deterrence and reassurance, their overriding mission, gives their work a distinctly military cast. The *ad hoc* and unpredictable nature of each peacekeeping operation, however, has meant that troops have sometimes engaged in activities that are best described as non-military. This is not unusual. With every major conflict military forces have been used to bring stability to the theatre of operations, allowing the rebuilding of the civilian infrastructure until the proper legal authority could be re-established.<sup>4</sup>

This type of undertaking has been especially evident in two operations, one in the Congo (now Zaire) from 1960 to 1964, and the ongoing operation in Cyprus. Also characteristic of these operations has been the employment of non-military or civilian personnel and agencies, alongside the peacekeeping force, to deal with humanitarian or public service problems arising from the conflict. In contrast are missions such as the United Nations Temporary Executive Authority (UNTEA) in West New Guinea (1962-63), and the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) in Namibia (1989-90), where civilians played the predominant operational role.

### THE CONGO OPERATION

The United Nations Operation in the Congo (ONUC) was precipitated by the mutiny of the Congolese Army following that country's independence from Belgium in June 1960. In reaction to the mutiny, Belgium deployed its

own armed forces, ostensibly to protect its citizens still living in the Congo. At the request of Congolese Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba, a UN peacekeeping force was established in order to bring about the withdrawal of the Belgians and help restore law and order. ONUC's task was complicated by the secession of the southern province of Katanga and the collapse of the central government in the Congo.

The largest peacekeeping operation ever undertaken — involving upwards of 20,000 military personnel — ONUC is notable for having worked side-by-side with a large civilian operation. The military component of ONUC, however, was involved in supporting and sometimes carrying out tasks at the request of the Chief of Civilian Operations.

For example, the UN soldiers helped in the relocation of refugees and provided medical and humanitarian assistance to civilians. The headquarters hospital of the peacekeeping force and its field clinics were made available to the general population. The peacekeepers shipped food and medicine to the famine-stricken Kasai province and to other areas when the need arose.

Furthermore, ONUC helped to maintain law and order in the Congo. The force undertook joint patrols with the local police and, in areas where they no longer operated, carried out the full security duties of the Congolese authorities. Though one of the most controversial peacekeeping operations in UN history, the protection of countless civilians from the effects of political strife and tribal warfare was one of the significant successes of ONUC.<sup>5</sup>

### ONUC: Civilian Operations

An important part of ONUC was *Civilian Operations*, which was directed and executed by civilians and was separate from the military component. It was charged with leading the relief and civil reconstruction operation in the Congo, and remained after the military peacekeeping forces had left.

A large civilian operation was necessary because of the widespread internal disorder caused by the intra-state conflict. The situation was exacerbated by the flight from the country of Belgian citizens, virtually emptying the Congo of its technical workers and professional class and causing an almost complete breakdown in public services.

In response, the Secretary-General convened a Consultative Group consisting of senior officials of the UN's specialized agencies to determine the requirements for public service restoration in the Congo. Reporting to the Chief of Civilian Operations, who had status equal to the ONUC Force Commander, the long-term task for this group was to advise the Congolese government on social and economic programmes and planning, and to help train Congolese replacements to fill those positions abandoned by the Belgians.