

Appropriate equipment and supplies are imperative for the effective functioning of HROs. Logistics is a key component of any phase of any UN field operation. It involves getting what the 'customer' needs, to the right place at the right time and for the right cost. It includes procurement, goods in/out inspection, warehouse management, and inventory control. UN procurement is particularly problematic because the recent exponential growth in UN field operations (eg. peace-keeping, human rights) and the pressures this has put on UN secretariat support capacity. In 1994, the UN's High-Level Expert Procurement Group produced a very forceful report which noted that the system remains "firmly stuck in a time warp in organizational, procedural and process terms."<sup>221</sup> They felt that the Secretariat procurement process "had also suffered the classic compartmentalization of functions where over the passage of time each and every manager with a vested interest in keeping his job tried to build an empire around himself. Each empire was solely interested in itself and not in its duty to the whole."<sup>222</sup>

The Group came up with a number of recommendations including a strong call for delegation down to the lowest practical level. Failure to do so "prevents the efficient...and timely actioning of User needs." For example, "consideration should be given to greater imprest purchase orders without order paperwork (just receipts) for the one off needs at Sector level. A figure of up to \$5,000 should be made available which may appear inconsistent with accountability but at present the United Nations is concerned about protecting cents but are actually wasting and losing millions of dollars."<sup>223</sup>

HRO should look at using contingency contracting arrangements, for many outside civilian contractors or NGOs can, more quickly and more cheaply, pull in the right combination of staff and resources from a much larger logistics pool.<sup>224</sup> There might even some role for having reserve stocks of basic equipment, including "start-up kits" maintained for immediate shipment. In the area of coordination, another possible option is the Integrated Logistics Support Program which has been initiated both within the Secretariat and in a number of peace-keeping operations. The idea is that military and civilian field components can identify some common logistics support services.

*Recommendation #70*

**It is recommended that HRO logistics procedures be streamlined and enhanced by increased delegation at all levels of the field operation, along with possible contingency contracting arrangements.**

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<sup>221</sup> paras 2-3, High-Level Expert Procurement Group, Procurement Study, Report December 1994.

<sup>222</sup> *ibid*, para 6.

<sup>223</sup> *ibid*, para 15.

<sup>224</sup> This is already increasingly common for UN humanitarian operations, and the EU used a German firm to provide logistics support for its contingent to HRFOR.