

whatever its basis and nature, should be seen as a vital investment for the future, and one which by its very nature, is designed to act at the point where action can be most effective, thus eliminating or reducing the necessity for later, larger, less effective, more costly options."¹¹⁵

Although the proposed UN volunteer elements would put approximately 6,500 new personnel on the UN payroll, and entail considerable expenditures for new equipment, administrative and managerial requirements, the overall costs incurred would decrease with the ongoing participation of national elements. Acquiring a redundant military base capable of hosting 14,000 personnel might also reduce the start-up costs. While it is beyond the scope of this study to provide even an estimate of total costs, it is noteworthy that The Netherlands' study estimated the recurring costs for a permanent UN brigade of 5,000 personnel at \$380 million US per annum. Standardisation of equipment and vehicles would also cut overall costs in terms of manpower and overhead. To acquire equipment for a UN volunteer capability of brigade size would likely entail an expenditure of approximately \$700 million U.S. Financing will inevitably be construed as a significant problem in the prevailing environment; yet, when compared to global military expenditures exceeding \$670 billion annually, the financial burden would be modest if shared proportionally among 188 member states.¹¹⁶ As noted, the potential cost-returns of the investment are increasingly apparent, as are the costs of 'too little', 'too late'.

Obviously, a host of related issues will have to be addressed before any standing capability becomes a reality. Financing is one major concern. Developing the organisational and operational capacity of the United Nations to the point where it has the confidence of member states is another. Securing appropriate national capabilities and a political commitment to the process appears to pose a far greater challenge. But these issues hardly preclude the need to consider new approaches or the need to design a compelling sequence of steps that will facilitate the transition to a viable, permanent UN capability.