

New Multilateralism and the Reform of Peacekeeping Operations

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Summary

After the collapse of the bipolar world, multilateral initiatives and organizations got into a crisis, but at the same time their importance increased. The author analyses one form of multilateral involvement, the UN peacekeeping operations. In the last five years, their number has significantly increased. The most important among them is the one on the territory of the former Yugoslavia. Although many aspects of that operation are negative, in the future they might prove useful for the reform of the concept of peacekeeping operations. The author particularly emphasizes the necessity for these peacekeeping operations to make a shift from the prevention of hostilities towards the enforcement of peace as well as the need to separate this objective from humanitarian activities which should be assigned to specialized international organizations. The peacekeeping operations should evolve into a sort of multilateral interventionism which resolutely restricts individual states' sovereignty and strives at establishing order. They could be supplemented with other means of pressure at the UN's disposal: sanctions, diplomatic isolation or arms control.

The slow evolution of "the new world order" after the collapse of communism and the lack of consensus on new global relations have sent shockwaves through international organizations and triggered off a crisis of multilateralism. However, that turmoil is not a consequence of a diminished need for the expansion of international relations, rights and organizations. On the contrary, the implosion of communism, the big thaw in international relations following the cold war, and the creation of numerous new states, intensified the need for the globalization of fundamental issues of security and development while the international interaction and interdependence broadened. The cold war bipolarity, in the course of which, according to the words of American UN ambassador Madaleine K. Albright, "the biggest portion of what we were for was dictated by what we were against", evaporated.¹

International community has increasingly, legally and politically, been encroaching upon internal affairs of individual states, particularly regarding ecology, common heritage of mankind, individual and collective rights, internal democratization, disarmament, standardization, etc.

¹ From her speech at North Carolina State University, Raleigh, 13 February 1995.

Nevertheless, the conceptual sketchiness of the reform of international relations and mechanisms, particularly that of the United Nations, is not the result of intellectual blockades but of the lack of a global consensus and particularly of the agreement among the great powers as to what kind of a brave, new world we want.

The crisis on the territory of the former Yugoslavia broke out at a very inopportune moment in international relations, the fact which stood in the way of its solution; it was the period when regional and global relations were thrown out of balance following the unification of Germany, the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the creation of new states as well as internal weaknesses and leadership crisis in major centers of world power.

America feels uncomfortable in the new role of the sole superpower. It does not want to be the world policeman. It constantly bobs and weaves in its regional focus of its foreign policy interest. With a weary eye it watches the political and economic upheavals in Russia. It is torn between geopolitics and geoeconomics, rights and interests, principles and pragmatism.

Russia today — traditionally torn between modernism and traditionalism, Europhilia and Asiaticism, openness and autarchy, democratization and despotism, the individual and the collective — is more than ever internally divided in the search of its identity and dignity.

China — striding with giant leaps of economic growth — has been rapidly destroying its resources. By freezing the political while speeding up the economic reform, this vast country has been building up the tension of future political tectonics.

Japan has been looking for a more respectable international role which would correspond to its level of self-confidence and power, but at the same time uses a double standard in defending its narrow interests, particularly economic ones.

The countries of the European Union have been vacillating between the priority of the in-depth integration and the geographical expansion. The cold-war concepts of the European regional security have proved totally inadequate in the face of the humanitarian and security disasters that have shredded the European fabric. European rivalries and fickle alliances have been rekindled. The attitude towards Russia is increasingly ambivalent.

The problems of underdevelopment, the destruction of basic resources and the population boom in the developing countries plus the growing contrasts between the world's North and South have been completely pushed back. An entire continent, Africa, seems to have been left out in the cold. As the reaction to similar developments in the developed world, civilisational-religious blocs have been emerging in other regions.

Despite all the mentioned contradictions there is a general consent about the need to reform the system of international relations and their mechanisms by means of democratization and debureaucratization, the affirmation of international law, the prevention of blockades, the restriction of the use of vetoes, bigger efficacy and expertise, informalities, streamlining protocol, etc. However, the approaches to the methods and the priorities in achieving these aims have remained inherently different since each reform of the international relations requires a thorough redistribution of power, new and more realistic distribution of privileges and duties within the developed as well as between the developed and the underdevelopment world.

The need for a more efficient, cheaper and less obscure functioning of the United Nations has raised the question of the distribution of power in the world organization as well.

The reform of the Security Council strives at increasing the number of permanent members or at introducing semi-permanent members, better regional representation, particularly of the Third World, the abolition or the restriction of the right of veto, higher visibility of its operation, a change in funding peacemaking operations and so on. The changes in the UN Charter, the Codex and the role of the General Assembly have been called for as well as greater powers for ECOSOC within its domain, comparable to the latitude that the Security Council enjoys in the field of international security.

The role of the UN Secretariat and Secretary-General is to be redefined. Better coordination among UN agencies should be achieved, and wasteful duplication of activities of numerous agencies within the UN should be avoided. Apart from the democratization of international relations, a greater "depolitization" of common interest issues has been called for.

The expansion of the peacekeeping operations was the result of the fact that the great powers at long last showed readiness to cooperate in the Security Council. A comparison of the 1994 dynamics with that of 1988 shows a drastic increase of peacekeeping operations: 78 Security Council Resolutions versus 15; 28 conflicts with the UN as mediator versus 11; 17 peacekeeping operations versus 3; 7 sanction regimes versus 1; monitoring the electoral process in 21 countries versus 0; 76 countries providing the troops versus 26; a budget of 3.610 million dollars versus 230 million; 73.395 blue helmets versus 9.570; and so on.²

² Source: Dun and Bradstreet Economic Analysis Department, published in *The New York Times*.

According to Brian Urquhard³, peacemaking began as an improvisation in solving the problems of Kashmir and Palestine. Nobody ever thought it could become a therapy for international or internal conflicts. During the cold war, peacemaking atrophied into an instrument of preventing the escalation of local conflicts into a clash of the great powers and blocs.

The process of a thorough reconstruction of international relations, particularly of the United Nations, will probably take years and be a painstaking process, further slowed down by dilly-dallying in deciding on the directions the reform should take. It is more probable that the existing practices will be legalized than a consent about the character and the mechanisms of the new international order achieved.

In such international circumstances it was unrealistic to expect a resolute response of the international community to the crisis on the territory of the former Yugoslavia. Nevertheless, it might be said — if we are to compare the efficacy of the UN in solving other regional crises at the time of bipolarity — that there was a willingness for a strong presence of all relevant global and regional organizations in this hotspot, though not always with purest of motives. The disappointment which many countries, including Croatia, have expressed in connection with the indecisive role of the UN, can partly be attributed to the unwarranted notion that the UN is the absolute guarantor of peace, which it never has been nor can be.

The mediation of the UN and other regional organizations on the territory of the former Yugoslavia has brought to the fore all the weaknesses of the undefined international system in transition, particularly of the slavery to the traditional, “neutral” concept of peacekeeping. UNPROFOR in Croatia and Bosnia was given an absurd task of keeping peace where there was none, while the international community threatened to use force without intending to fulfill the promise. More than in other hotspots in the world, UNPROFOR also served as the instrument of foreign policy of many countries who had sent their peacekeeping troops.

On the other hand, the experience gained on the territory of the former Yugoslavia has led to certain innovations and determined the shape of all future peacemaking efforts of international organizations. For example, although NATO’s involvement on the territory of the former Yugoslavia has been limited, it nevertheless has been the first time it was put to a military use outside its domain with the permission of the Security Council, under the “dual-key” command. The first two things will probably have a positive effect on the future concept of European collective security and the expansion of NATO, while the “dual key” command has

³ From 1974 to 1986 Undersecretary General for political issues and one of the architects of the peacekeeping operations.

proved destructive for the credibility of the most powerful military alliance in history.

Another characteristic of the specific approach to this crisis is the unprecedented concurrence of diplomatic and military activity of major international organizations (UN, EU, NATO, WEU, OSCE, OIC, and so on) and their cooperation with humanitarian and humanistic campaigns of specialized organizations. Never in the history of diplomacy have the political efforts been combined with economic pressures and isolation. Although comprehensive, these measures have been superficial, designed to avoid a military intervention, because of the unforeseeable escalation due to the newly created power vacuum on European soil, the balance of interests of global powers and a conceptual crisis of international relations.

Thus the interest of Western countries in Bosnia and Croatia has been directed to four objectives:

- a) to prevent an out-of-hand large-scale humanitarian catastrophe by solving the urgent problems *in situ* (localization of the refugee crisis);
- b) to prevent the conflict to spill into other Balkan and European regions (localization of the war);
- c) to create the conditions for a long-term solution of the conflict without a military intervention (crisis management);
- d) to prevent sour notes in the relations among the great powers and the negative effects on broader European and global concepts of the emerging collective security (reflections on the new world order).

Shashi Tharoor⁴ defined the conceptual limitations of traditional peacekeeping: "The world says: do not just stand idly by, do something. But peacekeeping best functioned when we did nothing, just stood idly by."⁵

Marrack Goulding⁶ advocated even more openly the static and neutral peacekeeping on the territory of the former Yugoslavia.⁷ Goulding made a clear distinction between the traditional peacekeeping whose aim is to freeze conflicts and the deterrent diplomacy and the creation (even enforcing) peace. He said that the recent reports about the involvement of the Yugoslav and the Croatian governments in Bosnia and Herzegovina would not change the UN Secretariat's view on the situation, which is: this is an internal conflict with foreign powers' involvement. Whether the

⁴ UN Assistant Undersecretary for peacekeeping operations, responsible for UNPROFOR.

⁵ *NYT Magazine*, January 2, 1994.

⁶ Undersecretary for peacekeeping operations until 1993.

⁷ At the "round table" in New York, 31 January 1994.

UN is to change this approach to the crisis depends on the Security Council.⁸

Although Goulding voiced support for the peacekeeping operation in Croatia, where an agreement between the warring sides on the cessation of the hostilities and political negotiations was signed (the Vance plan), he recommended to the Security Council not to extend UNPROFOR to Bosnia-Hercegovina, where there was no agreement of this kind nor peace which should be kept. Besides, in Bosnia-Hercegovina peacekeeping has gone hand in hand with the delivery of humanitarian aid, the limited NATO activity (in controlling the no-fly zone, protecting UNPROFOR troops and the safe areas), and the presence of regional military and civil monitors.

Goulding set forth five stages in shaping the UN's deterring and mediatory peacekeeping role in crises: gathering information, political analysis, recommendation by Secretary-General, intergovernmental approval, recommendations and implementation of the approved policies.

In a word, the UN do not consider themselves obliged and responsible for taking part in the solution of every local, regional or global crisis. Political decisions should be made as to where the UN is to get involved. A multilateral consensus in line with the political and other interests of various states should be achieved, particularly of great powers. The UN involvement in a crisis should not follow the automatism of international law, the extent of the humanitarian tragedy or the crisis' media coverage.

UN Secretary-General doggedly claimed that it is not the UN responsibility to protect the integrity of Bosnia or any other state, and least of all the concept of a multiethnic society, if that is not approved by member countries.

UN Secretary-General described the war in the former Yugoslavia as an internal conflict. Following an increasing US involvement in the resolution of the crisis, Ghali vociferously opposed any large-scale activities against Bosnian Serbs, hiding behind neutrality and the safety of the deployed peacekeeping forces. In his well-publicized letter to NATO Secretary General of March 1994, he proposed that NATO took over from UNPROFOR, probably knowing that it would be extremely hard to reach a consensus on this, but deflecting criticism about the dual-key command and the intermingled UNPROFOR and NATO activities.

The UN Secretariat, and particularly the Security Council, avoided to acknowledge that the root of the crisis on the territory of the former Yugoslavia was Serbian aggression on Croatia and Bosnia-Hercegovina, since the concomitant UN responsibilities and the policies of the great powers towards that crisis would have to change radically and run counter

⁸ *IPA Roundtable Series*, February 1994.

to the earlier resolutions of the Security Council (arms embargo, for example).

Despite the unwillingness to define the conflict on the territory of the former Yugoslavia as an act of aggression on a sovereign UN member country, the Croatian diplomacy managed to secure such a statement from the General Assembly. Under the item on the agenda "The situation on the occupied territories of the Republic of Croatia", in November of 1994, the General Assembly, with 142 votes for and none against, passed a resolution denouncing Belgrade as a *de facto* occupying force of parts of Croatia. The prospect of branding "SRY" a *de facto* aggressor had been bandied about before in the General Assembly but due to the ferocious fighting between Muslims and Croats in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia might have also been branded as such. That is why such a diplomatic move could be met with success only after the Washington agreements.

Aware of these obstacles and searching for a way to force the peacekeeping forces to fulfill their obligations envisioned by the Vance plan and later UN resolutions by using force, Croatia attempted everything, even the separation of the UNPROFOR mandate for the three new countries in which UNPROFOR forces had been deployed, since they had originally been deployed in Croatia. In this Croatia met with only a partial success (a symbolic separation of commands was effectuated), despite the differences in the tasks in these three states (ensuring a stalemate, supporting humanitarian operations, deterrent deployment).

Americans were interested in the separation of the mandates in order not to get involved into a conflict in Macedonia (if it breaks out) where the USA had sent a deterrent contingent of soldiers.

However, the European powers were not in favour of the separation of the mandates since this would give the local governments greater autonomy in solving the crisis. The Secretariat justified this by harping about the financial cost of the separation and the logistic and operational reasons for the status quo.

The Croatian diplomacy, by pushing the Resolutions 871 and 970 in the Security Council, later opted for the opposite approach: the linking of the sanctions and the normalization of the international position of SRJ not only with the resolution on the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina but in Croatia as well. The constant pressure created politically favourable conditions for sending back home the ineffective UN peacekeeping forces in Croatia.

By terminating the UNPROFOR mandate, Croatia got itself exposed to political (though not legal) criticism that it had renounced the Vance plan on basis of which the Security Council approved the UNPROFOR mandate in 1992. However, the original Vance plan was later "amended" by later Security Council resolutions, particularly Resolutions 815, 871 and

820, which defined the political solution for Croatia (integrity + autonomy). Moreover, Zagreb and Knin accepted several agreements such as the Erdut agreement, the Zagreb agreement and the Economic agreement, which entirely or partly ran counter to the Vance plan. However, at the time when it accepted the Vance plan, Croatia was not a UN member. Moreover, peace plans are not a purpose in themselves, so Croatia based its decision not only on the right to sovereignty but also on the fact that the central precepts of the plan had not been implemented (guarding borders, reinstatement of the Croatian government, disarming paramilitary troops, return of the refugees) and that Serbs had been refusing even to talk about the political solution.

Early in September of 1993, America announced a serious possibility that NATO was to take up the responsibility for enforcing the UNPROFOR mandate in Croatia as well, by splitting it into the military sector headed by NATO (cease-fires, separation of forces, removing landmines, control of the "blue thoroughfares") while UNPROFOR would hold on to the civilian sector (humanitarian aid, civil police, monitoring local and general elections, confidence-building measures, rebuilding infrastructure and institutions, etc.). Under such circumstances NATO could not risk credibility and fail the test of its capability to transform from a system of collective defense into a system of collective security. It would also prove that NATO was capable of accepting the responsibility for the future security and stability in the region. It was a step in the direction of NATO turning into an instrument of a broader collective security in Europe and a guarantor of stability in the Balkans and a form of an "extrainstitutional" cooperation between Croatia and NATO as a transitional stage towards the full membership.

In the former Yugoslavia a most remarkable shift from the cessation of hostilities (separation, stalemate, creating conditions for negotiations) towards a partial peace enforcement, the merging of humanitarian and political operations and deterrent diplomacy has been effectuated. Such a shift could not have gone unnoticed by great powers and left no trace on their attitude towards the reform of peacekeeping forces.

Although in Croatia, and particularly in Bosnia, the humanitarian and the peacekeeping mission of the international community have actively merged, this has proved counterproductive since the success of a humanitarian operation requires neutrality while enforcing the peace requires establishing who the aggressor is, otherwise there is no solution or it is postponed and unnecessarily complicated with no end in sight. Apart from delivering supplies to the aggressor as well, this combination of the traditional mandate and a humanitarian mission obstructs the military option (from the inside and the outside). This prolongs the conflict since soldiers, and not civilians, mostly profit from humanitarian aid.

Despite this, the UN Secretariat, primarily interested in implementing *Agenda for Peace* of the Secretary-General, opposed the redefinition of

the concept of peacekeeping operations in Yugoslavia, shunning the new and increasingly difficult tasks for which it was underfinanced and understaffed. Thus they returned to the already tested models of maintaining a stalemate. Despite the fact that Boutros Boutros Ghali wrote in the same document that "though the system of states remains grounded in the international community, the time of absolute and exclusive sovereignty is over".

In that letter Secretary-General came out with a valuable innovation in peace-building which in ethnic and civil conflicts includes disarming the warring parties, the return of the refugees, police training, the protection of human rights, reforming or fortifying government institutions, the promotion of formal and informal political participation, renewing and strengthening mutual trust.⁹

The confrontation between the NATO military structures and the UN about the "dual-key" command and the need for unannounced and determined reprisals by NATO's air force in Bosnia on several occasions ended in a halfhearted compromise. In his letter to the Security Council Chairwoman Madaleine K. Albright of 1 November 1994, the UN Undersecretary Chinmay R. Gharekhan tries to minimize these differences and emphasize the compromises achieved in the negotiations, proposes several potential targets for NATO air strikes and requires a prior warning to the party that is going to be attacked. But the shorter procedure and the relative unpredictability of NATO's restricted air reprisals made it less probable that the UN field commanders would ask for them.

Boutros Boutros Ghali made a personal contribution to this debate,¹⁰ by pointing out to the ever increasing responsibilities and the budget of the peacekeeping forces and the need for a broader coordination. Though he hailed the more active participation of regional organizations, Ghali nevertheless thought they should be put under the UN command (the demand which has been behind the conflict with the USA about the reform of peacekeeping forces) and warned of the danger of "regional hegemony and interventionism". In Bosnian context, the Secretary-General obviously referred to NATO and not to the Russian interventionist escapades in "contiguous foreign countries" which the world silently condoned as peacekeeping operations.

Although in that article Ghali mentions that the circumstances in which peacekeeping operations (each of them specific) are taking place have changed (which include determent, supervision of the distribution of humanitarian aid and the restoration of the government and the infrastruc-

⁹ Josef V. Montville, "Facing Ethnic Conflict: A Problem-Solving Diplomacy for the Clinton Administration", *The Harvard Journal of World Affairs*, Spring 1993.

¹⁰ In his article in *The New York Times* of 30 August 1994.

ture in the states without an operating government and even a certain involvement in internal conflicts), Secretary-General defines this as a transitional anomaly and advocates a partial reform of the traditional concept of peacemaking mediation but also the centralization of decision-making.

According to *The Washington Post* of 2 November 1994, "NATO's intervention in Bosnia did not depend solely on the general mandate of the UN Security Council but also on a special authority of Secretary-General, who delegated this authority to his on-site representative. In short, NATO authorized an organization unwilling to use force to control its ability to use force." As a result, both organizations lost credibility and NATO, which is still in search of its role within the new system of European security, was turned into a "paper tiger". Such a situation does not only reflect profound differences in the character and the attitudes of these two organizations but a lack of political consensus among the countries which sit both in NATO and the Security Council and which use every opportunity to hide behind the UN authority.

The dual-key command had given a lot of headache to military planners and had made a dent in NATO's cohesion. At the meeting of NATO's defense ministers in München in February of 1995 it was clearly stated that this harmful practice had to be given up, regardless of its temporary necessity due to the character of the mandate or NATO's unpreparedness to send ground troops from national UNPROFOR contingents made up of the soldiers from NATO member-countries and soldiers from other countries.

A few days (on 29 April 1994) before Clinton's platform about the American stand on peacekeeping operations and particularly the criteria of American involvement, funding and logistic support were announced, the Security Council published a presidential report on peacekeeping operations which relied heavily on Secretary-General's report on "increasing the UN capacities for peacekeeping operations" of 14 March 1994 (S/26450), addressed to the General Assembly. The report emphasizes the "need for clear and precise definition of the political objectives, of the mandates, of the costs wherever possible, of the time allocated for peacekeeping operations and the need for the mandates of the peacekeeping operations to be periodically subjected to a review".

Here are some of the criteria for the approbation of new peacekeeping operations: a threat to the international peace, the readiness of regional organizations to offer help in the resolution of the crisis; a stable cease-fire and the readiness of the warring parties to arrive at a political solution; a clearly defined political objective; a possibility of formulating a well-thought out mandate of peacekeeping operation; safety of UN personnel. Without a desire to delve further into the elaboration of the mechanisms of enforcing peace where necessary, the concept is still based on a "full cooperation of the warring parties".

Some of the mentioned “practicalities” are: the quality and the speed of the information flow necessary for passing Security Council’s decisions, a better communication among the Council’s members and nonmembers and monthly consultations between the Council’s president and a competent group of countries, as well as between the Council and the countries whose troops take part in the peacekeeping operations. For these countries the report envisions the necessity of the need for consultations each time an expansion or a change of the mandate is considered, but does not stress the need for the consultations with the governments on whose territory peacekeeping forces are operating.

This platform of the Security Council also emphasizes the importance of a rapid deployment and an increase in the number of peacekeeping forces for the success of the operation. Obviously giving up on the concept of permanent UN forces (opposed by the USA), the Council instead advocates the formation of stand-by forces in member-countries which can be rapidly put at the disposal of the Security Council and deployed in hotspots, their timely preparation as well as the grooming of civil and police forces. Although it is pointed out that the UN peacekeeping operations have to be under the UN command, the General Assembly’s demand for the solution of the problem of more efficient command and control was favourably received.

On 22 February 1995 the Security Council reacted with a presidential report to the supplement to the earlier UN Secretary-General document (Supplement to the Agenda for peace S/1995/1) in which he has partly revised or amended his earlier proposals. The Council agrees that the priority should be given to the prevention of conflicts; it upholds the importance of economic and social development in ensuring peace; it advocates the building of peace after the cessation of hostilities; it reiterates the problem of the lack of resources and troops; it proposes a more extensive training, equipping and planning of national contingents for peacekeeping operations; it emphasizes the importance of rapid deployment; demands more efficient information; requires a better coordination among the UN and other agencies; supports “microdisarmament” and the existing regimes of arms embargo; supports sanctions; emphasizes a greater role of regional organizations in the prevention of conflicts, creation and maintaining peace.

The choice between morality and *Realpolitik* has never been an issue for the UN. Neither the Secretary-General nor the Secretariat have the mandate, let alone the ambition, to operate in accordance with the lofty and abstract moral principles. Nor is the UN a supranational organization which acts in the name of the people and not the governments. Nor do member-countries, and particularly the great powers, view the UN as something more than a thrashing ground of *Realpolitik*, a stock exchange of national interests, a stage on which “deals are struck” and “strength taken measure of”.

Nation-state, its interests, sovereignty and integrity have remained the central category of UN operation even after the cold war. Boutros Boutros Ghali likes to point out that he is just a "humble clerk" who carries out the will of member countries, which set him tasks and give or deny the resources for its implementation. To undermine that principle would mean to undermine the UN themselves. Or more precisely, the UN is often only the place and the mechanism through which the great powers impose their will.

The incapability of the UN to renounce the cold war concept of peace mediation is not only a consequence of the cold war inertia of the UN Department for Peacekeeping Operations but also of the reluctance and the inability of the international system to deal with the causes of crises since they directly encroach upon the foundations on which the international system and thus the UN themselves rest: inviolable sovereignty, great powers' domination, non-interference into internal affairs of member countries, respecting national interests of member countries, etc.

Thus the UN have become the "junkyard" for those problems which the great powers do not want to solve or because of whose solution they do not want to clash directly. Owing to the recent policy of consensual multilateralism of the great powers the UN peacekeeping operations have been used for relatively rapid resolutions of crises which used to be resolved within the framework of the cold war bipolarity.

The Russian Federation has used the advocacy of peace mediation primarily as the justification for its own "policing" in "contiguous foreign countries".

For the USA, the "aggressive multilateralism" was supposed to put the brakes on American neoisolationism and alleviate the risks of being the sole superpower and the world policeman. For Washington, this new multilateralism should have been a cover for interventionism in those countries where an open defense of American national interests might be condemned as a blatant demonstration of force (the Gulf, Haiti).

Although the great powers in principle support the new, more constructive approach to the creation of peace, the reform has been slowed down by the question of the command over peacekeeping troops, particularly because of the powerful American reserves. Americans have wavered in their approach to the new concept of peacekeeping operations which was affirmatively defined by President Bush and redefined by President Clinton, which reflects the vacillations in American foreign policy. Also, most UN operations are based on the intelligence data which are passed on to them by the great powers, which increases the need for an independent UN source of intelligence data.

The readiness which Clinton demonstrated at the G7 meeting in Tokyo about American participation in the formation of permanent UN Rapid

Reaction Force is a proof that America is ready for a multilateral action but only if it retains great autonomy of political action and command.

And vice versa: the main reason for the American hesitation to join the peacekeeping operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina was the manner in which Europeans have attempted to resolve the Bosnian crisis: breaking up Bosnia and kowtowing to the aggressor instead of saving this multi-ethnic state and defending its borders. Already in Somalia and the former Yugoslavia Americans were ready for some give-and-take. In fact, the American (allied) campaign in Kuwait raised (false) hopes that that operation, by which the sovereignty of a UN member had been defended, would serve as a model for solving future conflicts. It was forgotten that the coalition's action had been motivated by oil and not by the desire to safeguard international law, that the campaign had been approved and even supported by the desintegrating Soviet Union and that the campaign had secured and enjoyed the support of the great majority of Muslim and nonaligned countries. Likewise, American intervention in Haiti, in "the American backyard", was primarily motivated by the refugee crisis.

In Croatia and Bosnia, America unambiguously opted for deterring the Serbian aggression on these two states, but because of the Vietnam syndrome they were more inclined to leave to the divided European powers to solve the crisis. On the one hand, the policy of Great Britain and France was to prevent the complete defeat of Serbia and the creation of a strong Croatia. They believed that this would ward off the awakened German self-confidence in Europe. This, naturally, thwarted any resolute joint action which would clearly send a message to Belgrade and bring about at least the balance of power. The danger threatening the deployed French and the British troops served only as an excuse for pussy-footing. The reason that the troops from these countries were most numerous was to cause such a paralysis and to manipulate with the information.

The question is whether Washington opposed the miscellany of European plans for the solution of the war in Bosnia because it was against the violation of principles and the creation of potentially explosive precedents (the territorial integrity of the victim of the aggression, obstructing the concessions to the aggressor, punishing war crimes, preventing banishment, etc.) or because it did not want to intervene militarily (particularly with its ground troops) in the implementation of any peace plan, in a regional crisis which is not American national priority and which could create a precedent for similar uncalled-for American engagement in other regions. Probably it was a combination of the two, plus the complex and multifarious relations of the USA with individual European partners and Russia.

It has also been proved that the decision about sending American troops as part of the peacekeeping operations in the post-Yugoslav conflict to a large extent depended on the frustrating experience of the action of

elite American troops against several hundred guerrilla fighters of General Aidid, but also on the overstretched America who at the same time had to play the central role in the peace process in the Middle East, in the stabilization of Russia, in the disarmament of the newly created nuclear powers and in the prevention of the emergence of the new ones, and in the redefinition of the NATO defense strategy.

Following the negative American experience in Somalia, the first phase of their campaign in Haiti and the frustrations to which the peacekeeping forces have been subjected in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia, the American government, pressured by the Congress and the public, gave up on Clinton's pre-electoral support for the creation of UN Rapid Reaction Force and proposed tougher criteria for sending American troops as part of the UN peacekeeping operations. In late January of 1992, after several months, the government completed its work on establishing a minimum of criteria for American participation in such operations (known as the Presidential directive) which should serve as the "navigational map" in deciding about American participation in peacekeeping operations on a case-to-case basis.

These criteria require convincing proofs that international security has been jeopardized, that a bigger catastrophe is looming which requires an urgent action or that there have been major abuses of human rights. America also requires other countries to show readiness to participate in an operation. In most cases American troops will remain under American command. The bigger and the more complex a peacekeeping operation, the less chances for American troops to take part in it under the UN command. The formulation of these criteria was preceded by vicious bickering between the Pentagon and the State Department about which department is to foot the bill for the American participation in the UN peacekeeping missions. It has been agreed that the State Department is responsible for funding the traditional peace mediation while Pentagon is to finance offensive military actions such as the one in Somalia.

The overall US policy regarding peacekeeping operations is to take into consideration the role of regional organizations as well as a more efficient management of the resources allocated for peacekeeping operations.

When republicans obtained majority in Congress, this meant a new nightmare for peacekeeping operations because republicans used Bosnia and some other weaknesses in Clinton's administration's policy as well as American contribution to the UN budget as a pretext for discrediting Clinton.

First, on 16 February, 1995, the House of Representatives pushed the bill which forbids extensive use of American intelligence and other infrastructure facilities for peacekeeping operations (naval blockades, patrolling the no-fly zones, etc.) worth 1.2 billion dollars unless they are included in

the cost of American contribution and unless they are authorized by both houses of Congress.

After that, the same Congressional house passed the bill (H.R.7) which would slash direct American funding for the UN peacekeeping operations (1.7 billion dollars in 1995), from a 31.7% to 20% share. Ms Albright said this represented the onset of “chaos” and “budgetary anarchy” in the UN since this example might be followed by other countries, for example France in Ruanda and Japan in Somalia. US Secretaries of Defense and State advised President Clinton to use veto if the bill is passed in the Senate since it would tie President’s hands in case he wanted to send American troops abroad and would bring to a halt many existing peacekeeping operations.

Great powers have been increasingly using the pretext of the “will of the international community”, both to “legalize” their unilateral or allegedly multilateral campaign or to cut the costs and risks of intervening in a crisis.

The preventive or punitive interventionism has become particularly unacceptable in disintegrating states, in cases of internal turmoils or regional imperialism, which is the most frequent form of post-coldwar regional instability. Convinced that it has no mandate to deal with the causes of civil wars, disintegration of states, foreign interventions and humanitarian catastrophes, the international community has been predominantly oriented towards their consequences.

Particularly complex crises of our time, in which internal conflicts go hand in hand with foreign aggression, humanitarian disasters and with genocides, and which are resolved by means of the traditional mandate of peace mediation, have made a dent in the credibility of the United Nations and regional organizations.

Mediators are very often disinterested observers of the genocide who do not think their task is to protect human rights or to cooperate with those who collect data about that. Humanitarian aid that saves some people, prolongs the agony of others because it stands in the way of a more energetic stance towards dealing with the causes of a tragedy. The moral bankruptcy of peacekeeping operations cannot be avoided without a serious reconstruction of peacemaking which, in turn, cannot be done outside the context of this still unreformed world organization. The United Nations are exactly as their member countries want them to be or as they deserve to be.

Today the UN cannot afford new failures if they want to maintain credibility. Great powers cannot any longer hide behind the Security Council and point their finger at the UN Secretariat, nor can the Secretariat keep handing over hot potatoes to the Security Council’s permanent members.

The United Nations, and particularly their peacekeeping operations, though reinvigorated, have not undergone a thorough reform which would qualify them for efficacious solutions of more complex regional and internal crises. Nor is it likely that this will happen soon or proceed smoothly. The UN peacekeeping forces are, with their composition, logistics, equipment and mandate, most suitable for enforcing peace. They should not be used in combination with humanitarian activities which should be exclusively left over to humanitarian organizations. If there is a need for interventionism, enforcing peace or punishing aggressors, these tasks can only be undertaken by great powers or strong regional military organizations responsible for regional collective security. The role of the UN peacekeeping forces is to stabilize the postconflict situation, to aid postwar reconstruction, to build up mutual confidence and regional stability, or to establish order after the military situation has been stabilized in a country in which the UN protectorate has been accepted as a temporary measure due to a collapse of the government.

Only in the post cold war age the conditions are ripe for a thorough reconstruction of peacekeeping operations more oriented towards the prevention of conflicts, creation and enforcing peace. In the beginning those activities were halfway between the VI and the VII chapter of the UN Charter ("Chapter 6.5"). International legal and political conditions have been created for the interventionism of the international community in internal affairs of other countries not solely when a complete paralysis of state institutions occurs, but also in the case of humanitarian tragedies, ecological disasters, war crimes, and human rights abuse.

All this will leave a permanent trace on the reform of the UN peacekeeping operations which envisages a more marked peace-enforcing operational role for regional organizations as well as the formation and training of national contingents for future peacekeeping operations. The system of states and their inviolable sovereignty will remain the axis of the international system, but the untouchable state sovereignty has been significantly undermined by the right of the international community to intervene in internal affairs especially when it regards them as a threat to regional or international security, human rights and democracy, ecology and development.

Lacking a willingness for a full-scale military intervention of the Gulf type, the need for a more efficient use and coordination of other means of pressure arose, such as diplomatic isolation, sanctions and dictating the conditions for negotiations in order to get to the root of the conflict, i.e. the governments and the leaders who had instigated the conflict in the first place.

The Security Council cannot rely solely or exclusively on the use of force, but must combine it with sanctions, disarmament, and arms control, diplomatic isolation, and other pressures.

The new system of collective security also requires that certain threats to international peace and security are taken into consideration: peaceful transformation of postcommunist societies, internal and international stabilization of the newly created states, curbing regional hegemonisms, reducing poverty, reducing population growth, preventing environmental degradation and abuse of human and minority rights.

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