

WHITE PAPER

A Private Alternative to a Standing United Nations Peacekeeping Force

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PEACE OPERATIONS INSTITUTE



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Preface

The current genocide in the Darfur region of Sudan has tragically highlighted just how slow and unwieldy the current UN peacekeeping system can be. What makes the current situation even more tragic is the realization that this has become a repeating theme, with the helpless situation of Darfur of today closely representing the helpless situation of Rwanda just over a decade ago, when the people of that country were the victims of genocide, compounded by a slow and ineffective UN response.

Though the UN demonstrated last year in Lebanon that it is able to respond rapidly and effectively when the will among member states exists, this has been proven to be the exception rather than the rule. It is clear that there must be a better alternative to the current *status quo* for the sake of the Darfurs and Rwandas of this world.

Some have proposed a ready reaction force or standing army component of the UN. Although this proposal is laudable, it would likely be mired in many of the same bureaucratic and cost issues that besets the current UN peacekeeping system. As the member states with the capacity and capabilities are already loathe to commit resources to UN peacekeeping missions on an *ad hoc* basis, so too are they likely to be reticent to do so on a more semi-permanent basis.

But what if we were to move the onus from the militaries of the world to the private sector instead?

The private peace and stability operations industry has demonstrated itself to often be a faster, better and cheaper alternative to the world's militaries. The private sector offers enormous benefits to the UN, and could provide the necessary flexibility, expertise and capabilities needed for such a ready-reaction component to the future UN peacekeeping operations structure. Such a move would no doubt be revolutionary in the eyes of many. However, properly regulated and adequately overseen, such a move would no doubt bring enormous benefits to the current system and could alleviate the suffering of many around the world affected by conflict.

The private sector may not be a panacea for peace; but given the current shortcomings in the UN peacekeeping system, any possibility for improving the current situation is definitely worth pursuing.

J. J. Messner
Director-General
Peace Operations Institute

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

The past decade has seen an explosion in humanitarian interventions around the world. Since the United Nations (UN) first deployed a peacekeeping mission in 1948, no decade has seen more UN peacekeeping involvement than the 1990s. As of December 2006, there were a record 80,368 uniformed personnel involved in 18 UN peacekeeping missions around the world.¹ And the United Nations has not been alone. Organizations such as NATO have also operated in a peacekeeping capacity, albeit on a more regionally focused level.² This massive increase in humanitarian obligations has both positive and negative aspects. Africa is the most trying continent, where deployments account for nearly 70 percent of UN peacekeeping personnel and resources.³ It is heartening that the international community has become more involved and present in areas of the world that were historically outside of the traditional Cold War spheres of influence.

¹ "Uniformed Personnel in UN Peacekeeping: 1991 - 2006." 22 January 2007. Prepared by the Peace and Security Section of the United Nations Department of Public Information in consultation with the Military Planning Service of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

² Hartley, Keith and Todd Sandler. "NATO Burden-Sharing: Past and Future." *Journal of Peace Research*. Vol. 36, No. 6. November 1999.

³ "UN Peacekeeping Operations: Surge 2006." 1 November 2006. Prepared by Department of Peacekeeping Operations / External Relations.

Unfortunately, there is a growing gap in the UN between peacekeeping commitments and actual capacity to deploy missions in support of these commitments.⁴ Despite the recent growth in peacekeeping commitments, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) is still funded as a temporary department and must justify all expenditures on a yearly basis.⁵ This level of uncertainty could undermine peacekeeping effectiveness by reducing DPKO ability to make long-term plans. The current bureaucratic process often results in a delay of several months between a Security Council authorization of intervention and a deployed mission. A large part of this delay is finding countries willing to support the mission, both in monetary and troop commitments. Peacekeeping deployments are expensive, and many countries are reluctant to commit nationals to conflicts that might put their troops in harms way.⁶ These factors and others ensure the deployment process is painfully slow, sometimes with devastating results. The genocide in Rwanda tragically illustrated the consequences of not intervening.

On April 7, 1994 Rwanda exploded in ethnic violence.⁷ Lieutenant-General Romeo Dallaire commanded the small contingent of UN peacekeepers stationed there as part of the UNAMIR mission. It was these blue helmets who witnessed the systematic slaughter of over 800,000 ethnic Tutsis, restrained from intervening by an international community still recovering from the peacekeeping debacle in Somalia the previous year that left 18 American servicemen dead.⁸ It took three months before the international community was able to organize a coherent response to the Rwandan genocide. Reflecting back on the tragedy, Dallaire estimated that this "...three-month delay cost the lives of

⁴ Langille, H. Peter. "Bridging the Commitment-Capacity Gap: Existing Arrangements and Options for Enhancing UN Rapid Deployment." November 2002. The Center for United Nations' Reform Education.

⁵ "Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations." 21 August 2000. pp. 29-34.

⁶ Møller, Bjørn. "Privatization of Conflict, Security and War." Danish Institute for International Studies. 2005. p. 18.

⁷ Kuperman, Alan J. *The Limits of Humanitarian Intervention: Genocide in Rwanda*. 2001. The Brookings Institution. p. 15.

⁸ Thakur, Ramesh. "From Peacekeeping to Peace Enforcement: The UN Operation in Somalia." *The Journal of Modern African Studies*. Vol. 32, No. 2. September 1994.

hundreds of thousands of innocent Rwandans,” a toll that “...could have been prevented if there had been the international will to accept the costs of doing so.”⁹

Recently, there have been several proposals from both the private and public sector to formulate a rapid response, standing peacekeeping capacity under the Secretary-General’s purview. This United Nations Emergency Peace Service (UNEPS), as some are calling it, would be comprised of a force 12,000-18,000 strong, drawn from professionally trained, multi-national soldiers.¹⁰ In addition to having a rapid response capability to execute Security Council sanctioned peacekeeping operations (some estimates say within 48 hours), this force would be able to help in environmental catastrophes and other humanitarian disasters. They would follow the mantra of first in, first out, with deployments not exceeding 6 months.

While the current state of UN peacekeeping readiness is unacceptable given the modern mission and expanded commitments, a rapid-reaction force wholly incorporated within the UN is not the solution. Factors such as the UN personnel system, ambiguous troop numbers and unclear force compositions all suggest that this idea is another idealistic concoction of unrealistic solutions to tangible and pressing problems.

Instead of creating a standing, supranational army under UN jurisdiction, the United States and the other influential members of the Security Council should advocate using the capabilities of the private sector to assist in peace and stability operations worldwide. These companies combine the traditional skill and professionalism of military personnel with the efficiency and mobility of the private sector. Iraq and Afghanistan have provided excellent opportunities for these firms to hone skills and strategies as well as identify areas needing further improvement, such as contract management and oversight.

⁹ Feil, Scott R. “Preventing Genocide: How the Early Use of Force Might Have Succeeded in Rwanda.” Carnegie Corporation. April 1998. Foreword by Lieutenant-General Romeo A. Dallaire.

¹⁰ Kraus, Don. “Acquiring a Fire Engine Before the Fire Breaks Out.” *Journal of International Peace Operations*. Vol. 2, No. 3. November/December 2006.

This concept is not without controversy. Some argue that “outsourcing war” is an encroachment on the inherent powers of the state, while others draw no distinction between legitimate companies engaged in the peace and stability operations industry and the illegal and reprehensible mercenaries of the 1960s and 1970s.¹¹ These biased opinions and blanket condemnations of the industry draw heavily from personal and moral convictions rather than hard facts and historical evidence. Private peace and stability operations companies are vilified as “mercenaries” or “war profiteers,” with no distinction between those with positive records of conduct and disreputable or dishonest companies.¹²

Meanwhile, developing countries like Pakistan, Bangladesh and India contribute disproportionate numbers of troops to UN missions, pocketing much of the nearly \$1,400 *per diem* the UN pays for each peacekeeper.¹³ These troop contributions are desperately needed and greatly appreciated, and the sacrifices these contributing countries make are commendable. But the contributions and sacrifices of private security companies are also commendable, and their potential in peacekeeping operations must be realized.

Methodology

Chapter Two frames the peacekeeping discussion by providing a brief review of the United Nations and the inception of modern-day, multilateral peacekeeping operations. The recent surge within the past decade of Chapter VII, peace enforcement operations demands an active response. Though restructuring the Department of Peacekeeping Operations may be necessary, this alone will not accomplish the degree of reform and change needed to meet future peacekeeping demands. The concept of the “responsibility to protect” is examined. A bold and aggressive

¹¹ Scahill, Jeremy. 2007. *Blackwater: The Rise of the World's Most Powerful Mercenary Army*. Nation Books, New York.

¹² Messner, J.J. “What’s in a Name?” *Journal of International Peace Operations*. Vol. 2, No. 6. May/June 2007.

¹³ “How Peacekeeping Works.” BBC News Online. 14 April 2007. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/in_depth/6524867.stm

idea, the responsibility to protect is firm UN doctrine, and maintains that state sovereignty is not an ultimate, inalienable right. By accepting that this fundamental concept of sovereignty can be adjusted as necessary, the UN must also allow other aspects of the state to be redefined, namely the state's monopoly on the use of force.

Chapter Three introduces private peace and stability operations companies, beginning with the important example of Executive Outcomes in the 1990s. Through operations in Angola and Sierra Leone, Executive Outcomes played a pivotal role in defining the reemerging concept of the private peace and stability operations company, a sector that had been essentially dormant since the 17th century. Chapter Three continues to outline the key characteristics and advantages to the private security industry, and discusses the ways in which the industry has played a central role in U.S. military operations, long before the Iraq War and the massive publicity accompanying this conflict.

Chapter Four addresses the contingent of peacekeeping critics who believe the entire concept is a waste of money, manpower, and influence. Ted Galen Carpenter, currently the Vice President for Foreign Policy and Defense Studies at the Cato Institute, stated that "...Washington needs to reexamine its enthusiasm for the entire concept of collective security. It is dubious wisdom to attempt to 'globalize' civil wars and minor cross-border conflicts."¹⁴ While criticisms of the current state of the UN are deserved, the solution is not to withdraw from the business of peacekeeping entirely. Rather, using current American programs for peacekeeper training and indigenous force development as an example, the U.S. and others can more carefully and strategically assist in peacekeeping operations, drawing on the skills of the private sector.

The outline of a UN standing force will be presented in Chapter Five, incorporating different elements from different ideas. This is the most prevalent theory for peacekeeping reform, so it must be presented in detail. Fundamental discrepancies between stated

¹⁴ "The United Nations and Global Intervention." *Cato Policy Report*. January/February 1997.

aims of the UNEPS idea and achievable results will be addressed. An alternative to direct UN contracting of private companies is for Member States to fulfill their contributions to peacekeeping operations by contracting on an individual basis. In this fashion, the UN could maintain plausible deniability and not be directly involved in contracts. This option is not preferred, but would be one way to familiarize the UN bureaucracy and psyche to private contributions to the effort.

Chapter Six will outline the benefits of the private alternative to the current system, complete withdrawal and establishing a standing capacity. The private solution is the best option and also contains a certain degree of inevitability. The private solution would not maintain a standing capability, but rather contract with various companies to guarantee a certain level of readiness. The private sector trims fat and strives for efficient returns. An organization like the International Peace Operations Association could be bolstered to ensure transparency requirements and human rights compliance. Lastly, the current tragedy in Darfur is examined and areas ideally suited for a hypothetical contract are identified. In the future contractors will ideally play a larger role than simply facility construction and food service, such as intelligence gathering, training, and strategic consulting. But the current animus in the UN towards private sector involvement demands a slow and measured approach to the peacekeeping market.

Research Techniques

This paper was researched and written over a five month period. Resources included books, journals, newspaper articles, government reports, congressional testimony and first-hand interviews. The intended length of this paper was 40-60 pages. This page constraint resulted in certain issues and options being focused on in greater depth while others are partially addressed or omitted entirely. The body of the paper is dedicated to examining the costs and benefits of the two dominant approaches to peacekeeping reform: establishing a permanent standing UN peacekeeping force or harnessing the potential of the private

sector and applying it towards the world's growing peacekeeping needs.

This paper is not neutral and was not intended to purely provide information about both options. The aim of the paper is to persuade and encourage the reader to consider the private sector as a potential resource for modernizing the UN's peacekeeping capability. Of particular help in distilling and conveying this important and controversial debate were the members of the International Peace Operations Association (IPOA), especially President and founder Doug Brooks. Also, the IPOA member companies were helpful resources, in particular Hank Zimon and Bill Clontz of MPRI.

CHAPTER TWO

UN Peacekeeping and the Recent Surge

Peacekeeping is a vital component in the implementation of a sustainable peace between factions that were previously engaged in conflict. Peacekeeping generally refers to the mission that is deployed after all parties have consented to a peace arrangement. This contrasts with peacemaking or peace enforcement, which seeks to impose a peace on parties that may not necessarily agree with the provisions. It is important to not confuse these terms, as they refer to markedly different approaches to the common goal of a lasting and sustainable peace.

Modern peacekeeping began with the creation of the United Nations in 1945. The horrors of two world wars convinced world leaders that a mechanism had to be created to avert further bloodshed of this magnitude. Woodrow Wilson's beloved League of Nations attempted to accomplish this goal by creating a forum for the world's grievances, but the League was doomed from the beginning by a lack of a powerful charter and the absence of the United States, a key world player in the post-World War I environment. When the League condemned Japan's invasion of Manchuria in 1931 and demanded Japan's withdrawal, the dictatorship simply withdrew from the League and sealed the

organization's fate.¹⁵ Fortunately, lessons were learned from the League of Nations, and the framers of the new United Nations Charter were determined to avoid the fallacies of those before them.

The League failed to work for much the same reason the early American experiment with the Articles of Confederation produced nothing: there was not enough power focused on a central body.¹⁶ This problem was solved in America by writing a new constitution that created a powerful central government that had the right to levy taxes, raise an army and regulate commerce between the states in the union. Much the same was done with the League of Nations successor organization, the United Nations. In addition to the General Assembly, which represented the opinions of every member nation, there was the Security Council. The Security Council is a 15-member group with five permanent members and ten rotating members. The five permanent members represent the victors after World War II and each had the power to veto any resolution.

The Security Council is the strongest body in the United Nations, specifically because the five permanent members – the United States, United Kingdom, France, Russia and China – have a disproportionate amount of influence in the Council and can therefore advance resolutions without developing consensus among the nearly 200 other UN members. The Security Council is an integral component in the peacekeeping and peace enforcing process in the UN. All deployments of UN troops are authorized by a Security Council Resolution, and depend on the Security Council to amend or extend the mission's mandate. If a standing peacekeeping force were established within the UN and under the direction of the Secretary General, a Security Council Resolution would still be necessary before any contingent could deploy.

The Security Council first authorized a peacekeeping mission in May 1948. In response to the conflict that followed the

¹⁵ "League of Nations." [Britannica Concise Encyclopedia](#). Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2006.

¹⁶ "Confederation, Articles of." [The Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia, Sixth Edition](#). Columbia University Press. 2003.

proclamation of an independent Jewish state in 1948, the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) deployed to the Middle East to supervise the tenuous cessation of hostilities that had been negotiated between the Israelis and Palestinians. UNTSO remains in place today, holding the distinction as the longest UN peacekeeping operation on record.

UN peacekeepers are commonly referred to as “blue helmets.” The blue painted helmets did not become commonplace until the UN intervention in Egypt during the 1956 Suez Crisis.¹⁷ In the scramble to assemble and equip the troops, the United States donated surplus helmets to the mission. In order to distinguish the multinational peacekeeping force from a traditional military, the troops painted over the olive gray with blue paint, inaugurating a practice that continues to this day.

The Recent Surge

Since the first mission in 1948, there have been 59 separate UN peacekeeping forces deployed around the world. These various missions ranged in size and length, some like UNTSO and the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) continue today, others like the United Nations India-Pakistan Observation Mission (UNIPOM) and the United Nations Operation in Somalia I (UNOSOM I) lasted less than a year. While individual missions have varied in size, length of deployment and cost, the 1990s and early 2000s have seen a sharp spike in the demands placed on the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO). This increased reliance on peacekeeping missions provided by the UN has challenged the current system and strain and tension are evident.

There are currently 18 active missions directed by the DPKO. This includes 16 peacekeeping operations as well as two political missions controlled by the DPKO. Of these 16 missions, 8 were launched since 2000. As UN peacekeeping commitments escalate, so too do the costs of sustaining these interventions. The number of military, police and civilian personnel deployed on UN

¹⁷ "United Nations." *The Oxford Companion to American Military History*. Oxford University Press, Inc., 2000.

peacekeeping missions has nearly doubled since 2004, and there are currently an estimated 140,000 personnel operating in various peacekeeping capacities within the DPKO. Of these personnel, nearly 70 percent are attached to African missions. The two largest missions in Africa are the UN Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) with over 18,000 uniformed personnel and the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) with over 15,000 uniformed personnel. These are incredibly large numbers by historical UN peacekeeping standards, and this surge does not appear to be a temporary aberration in the peacekeeping trend. If the past 15 years are to be used as an example for future needs, then the DPKO and other UN offices will continue to feel the strain. There is also the looming specter of a sizeable peacekeeping contingent being deployed to Darfur, which will further challenge the UN peacekeeping apparatus to balance yet another massive and complex mission.

Proposed Restructuring of the DPKO

The United Nations is hardly oblivious to the surge in peacekeeping needs or the strain this places on the current organization and management of the DPKO. Newly elected Secretary General Ban Ki-moon emphasized peacekeeping reform as one of his top priorities for the United Nations in the 21st century. On 15 March 2007 Secretary Ban gained the approval of the General Assembly to proceed with an initial restructuring of the DPKO.¹⁸ His plan includes breaking the current DPKO into two new departments, the Department of Peace Operations and the Department of Field Support. Each new department would be headed by an Under-Secretary General, sharing the burden of peacekeeping between two experts instead of one.

Secretary Ban has correctly identified the necessity for change, including structural adjustments to the current organization and management of peacekeeping operations such as the proposed division of the DPKO. This is an important step in addressing the looming challenges that are confronting the UN. However, a

¹⁸ "General Assembly Gives Support to Secretary-General's Proposals to Restructure United Nations Peacekeeping, Disarmament." 15 March 2007. GA/10579. Department of Public Information.

reshuffling of responsibilities and personnel alone will not single-handedly alleviate the strain on the system. Proponents and detractors alike of the expanding peacekeeping commitments all agree that something must be changed. The challenge is striking a balance between the competing theories and synthesizing the best actionable reform that brings increased efficiency, readiness, transparency and effectiveness to the United Nation's peacekeeping ability.

A focus of any UN reform should be strengthening the Organization's permanent planning capability. Currently, the DPKO equates to the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) within the U.S. military establishment.¹⁹ This serves as a good venue for policy planning, but the DPKO lacks a strong war planning capability such as the Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (O/JCS). Originally, the framers of the UN Charter envisioned a strong and centralized military planning capacity and formed the Military Staff Committee within the Security Council.²⁰ Comprised of the military representatives of the Permanent Five, the Committee was intended to direct any military operation undertaken by the UN. Unfortunately, Cold War realities paralyzed the Committee, and it continues to exist today in name only, with no practical capability.

Cultivating a more established planning capacity would help ameliorate fears among Member States that come from the current *ad hoc* nature of peacekeeping planning. Currently, this reluctance is one of the major impediments to raising the requisite troops and funds necessary for a peacekeeping mission. Rather than diverting energy and resources on establishing a standing peacekeeping force, the UN should focus on developing a more cogent planning capacity and operationalizing the policies developed.

In 2000, a highly anticipated report on UN peacekeeping capacity and areas for reform was published. Known as the Brahimi

¹⁹ Interview with Henry A. Zimon, Vice President, Strategic Plans and Programs at MPRI. 23 March 2007

²⁰ "United Nations." The Oxford Companion to American Military History. Oxford University Press, Inc., 2000.

Report, this document encompassed the most thorough in-house exploration of the UN peacekeeping system.

The Responsibility to Protect

In 2001 the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) released a report on humanitarian interventions and the validity of state sovereignty in the face of massive human rights violations. The report aimed to clarify the concept of the responsibility of the international community to protect populations at risk and justify the theory, referred to as the responsibility to protect. As a basic principle, ICISS determined that:

Where a population is suffering serious harm, as a result of internal war, insurgency, repression or state failure, and the state in question is unwilling or unable to halt or avert it, the principle of non-intervention yields to the international responsibility to protect.²¹

The idea that state sovereignty is not the same sacred right as was accepted after the 1648 Peace of Westphalia has been gaining momentum in recent years.²² The theory of the right to protect is firmly based in the belief that sovereignty does not provide unalienable protection from atrocities such as genocide. The theory is targeted at both those countries that are unable to intervene to protect the welfare of its citizens as well as those who are unwilling to. In a 2005 report, former Secretary-General Kofi Annan declared “...I believe that we must embrace the responsibility to protect, and, when necessary, we must act on it.”²³ UN support for the right to protect is a clear indication that the institution of the state is malleable, and the relationship between the state, non-state actors and the private sector is continuously being redefined.

²¹ “The Responsibility to Protect.” December 2001. Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty. p. xi.

²² Winkler, Theodor H. “Adaptation of Security Structures to Contemporary Threats.” Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces. April 2004. p. 2.

²³ “In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All.” Report of the Secretary-General. March 2005.

The concept of the right to protect is bold. It is based on a sense of moral obligation, superseding state sovereignty. It is commendable that the United Nations is prepared to redefine the concept of sovereignty and acknowledge that circumstances have changed drastically in the past 300 years. It is specifically this type of flexible and prescient attitude that is needed to meet the challenges of complex peacekeeping in the 21st century. Unfortunately, the UN is not as eager to acknowledge the changing nature of the rapport between state militaries and private actors, and the redefinition and reassignment of duties and expectations that are happening now.

Simply because the UN promotes the right to protect does not imply that other states and non-state actors do not find fault with the theory. But as the preeminent global forum for consensus building, UN support is a strong endorsement for the controversial idea. UN commitment to this idea is still being tested, and the case of Darfur provides a potentially explosive trial. The Sudanese government has forbidden a UN mission from deploying to the western Darfur region, citing a violation of sovereignty as grounds for refusing the peacekeepers. Simultaneously, numerous reports corroborate the accusation that the Khartoum government of President Bashir is continuing to materially support the persecution of civilians in Darfur, contrary to successive UN resolutions.

A full-fledged UN mission to Darfur has the potential to be a large and extremely complex undertaking. Despite right to protect rhetoric, the UN seems unwilling and unable to intervene on behalf of the millions of displaced persons in Darfur and violate Sudan's sovereignty. More precisely, certain members of the Security Council will not support this approach, and record petroleum prices have only strengthened the bargaining position of oil-rich Sudan. Even with the consent of Khartoum, the mission would provide daunting, but not insurmountable, logistical, intelligence and support challenges. The private sector is ideally placed to provide these critical services, allowing the Blue Helmets to concentrate on enforcing the peace agreement.

CHAPTER THREE

Private Peace & Stability Operations Companies

Private soldiers have a long and storied past. While the concept of individuals with military training offering their skills to the highest bidder is not a new phenomenon, the present structure of private security companies (PSCs) and private peace and stability operations companies (PPSOCs) is a marked departure from the mercenaries of the 1960s or private armies of feudal Europe. To be sure, the primary focus of PPSOCs, as with any other company, is to create profit. This differentiates the PPSOCs of today with the hired soldiers of centuries past. Rather than operating as a disparate band of professional soldiers, today's PPSOCs combine highly trained individuals with a permanent structure built along corporate lines.²⁴

Executive Outcomes

Executive Outcomes is recognized as the pioneer of the private military contracting.²⁵ The Executive Outcomes model became known as the 'EO model' and has been replicated by many

²⁴ Spicer, Tim. "Should the Activities of Private peace and stability operations companies Be Transparent?" Sandline International. September 1998. p. 2.

²⁵ Cleaver, Gerry. "Subcontracting Military Power: The Privatization of Security in Contemporary Sub-Saharan Africa." *Crime, Law and Social Change*. 2000. p. 139.

subsequent PMCs.²⁶ Executive Outcomes was conceived and led by former South African Defense Forces (SADF) colonel Eben Barlow. Post-apartheid South Africa's commitment to demilitarization caused disillusionment among battle-hardened soldiers. Many of Executive Outcomes' original employees came from the elite 32nd Battalion, an incredibly effective unit that had extensive guerrilla experience from the wars in Angola, Mozambique, and Namibia.²⁷

Ironically, Executive Outcomes won its first large contract with the Angolan government; much of the SADF 32nd Battalion that formed the nucleus of Executive Outcomes' forces had spent the previous decade fighting their new client. This experience proved invaluable in turning the tides of conflict. The Angolan civil war was a product of swift and unilateral Portuguese withdrawal in 1975.²⁸ Left with no effective administrative apparatus or any competent statesmen, Angola descended into civil war.

The second largest oil producer in Africa and a significant diamond exporter, Angola is blessed with vast potential wealth. The rebel faction, União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA) gained control of the vital Soyo oil fields in March 1993 and threatened to suffocate the government's final source of revenue. The Angolan military, lacking the capability to retake the fields without incurring significant damage to the equipment stranded there, contracted with Executive Outcomes. In a swift and fierce battle, Executive Outcomes commandos retook the Soyo fields and expelled the UNITA rebels. This success prompted the Angolan government to sign a one-year contract with Executive Outcomes valued at US\$40 million. For this price, Executive Outcomes provided training, intelligence, supply transport and most important, air support.²⁹ In less than a year, Executive Outcomes managed to stun UNITA into signing the Lusaka Accord in November 1994.

²⁶ Leander, Anna. "The Commodification of Violence, Private peace and stability operations companies, and African States." Copenhagen Peace Research Institute. 2003. p. 3.

²⁷ Singer, PW. 2004. *Corporate Warriors: The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*. Cornell University Press. p. 102.

²⁸ Meredith, Martin. 2005. *The State of Africa*. Simon & Schuster UK Ltd. p. 311.

²⁹ Shearer, David. 1998. "Outsourcing War." *Foreign Policy*. No. 112. p. 73.

Whereas the UNITA rebels had shown competence on the battlefield and provided Executive Outcomes with some challenge, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in Sierra Leone seemed all too eager to drop their guns and desert their units in the face of advancing Executive Outcomes forces.³⁰ The civil war in Sierra Leone began in 1991 with the invasion of the RUF from neighboring Liberia. By 1995, the RUF was closing in on Freetown, leaving a wake of indiscriminate killing and horrific atrocities. After reading about Executive Outcomes' success in Angola, 26-year-old president Valentine Strasser negotiated a contract worth \$15 million for the company to clear the capital city, Freetown, and the diamond mines in neighboring Kono. Desperately short of foreign capital, Strasser granted diamond concessions in areas where Executive Outcomes regained control.³¹

This was a risky proposition for Executive Outcomes to undertake, because they would have to rout the rebels to ensure compensation. Taking a gamble, Executive Outcomes agreed to the contract. Within nine days of landing in Freetown, Executive Outcomes had driven the RUF back 126 kilometers. This stunning success continued until the RUF was on the verge of collapse near the Liberian border. RUF leader Foday Sankoh readily admitted that "...had Executive Outcomes not intervened, we would have taken Freetown and won the war."³² As had been the case in Angola, the RUF agreed to a peace accord and multi-party elections were able to occur.

Key Characteristics and Competitive Advantages

Though the example of Executive Outcomes in Angola and Sierra Leone is a celebrity case within the industry, it is not indicative of who the industry is or what the industry does. Executive Outcomes was a company willing to conduct and support offensive operations against foreign targets. The vast majority of

³⁰ "Private Security Firms Can End Africa's Wars Cheaply." *Saturday Star* (Johannesburg). 23 September 2000.

³¹ Meredith, 565.

³² Shearer, 51.

the companies labeled as PSCs or “private military companies” do not offer this service, and many are not inclined to.³³

The Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights, which the United States government helped draft in cooperation with other governments and companies, defines governing principles to promote human rights and corporate social responsibility. In regards to Companies and Private Security, the Voluntary Principles explicitly states that “...private security should provide only preventative and defensive services.”³⁴

Companies can be involved in private security provision, VIP and installation protection, information analysis and consultancy, logistics and operational support, explosive ordnance disposal, and humanitarian development and institution building. Though estimates for the number of contractors in Iraq range as high as 100,000, it is probably much closer to 40,000.³⁵ Of these, only a small percentage is engaged in armed protection, and none are actively contracted for offensive actions.

Private peace and stability operations companies combine the benefits of the private sector with the experience and skills gained from active military or government employment. Conscientious about profit and revenue, these companies aim to deliver services at a decreased marginal cost, passing savings onto the consumer. Savings also come from the existence of competition within the industry. Through competition, companies are forced to justify costs and demonstrate value to the client. The clients include governments, militaries, NGOs, humanitarian organizations, and private businesses. The possibility of UN contracting is a lucrative and intriguing proposal for developing new business for these companies, and competition would be strong for UN contracts, ensuring the UN would benefit the most from a contracting

³³ Brooks, Doug. “Messiahs or Mercenaries? The Future of International Private Military Services.” *Managing Armed Conflicts in the 21st Century*. Eds. Adekeye Adebajo and Chandra Lekha Sriram. 2001. Routledge Publishers.

³⁴ “Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights.” <http://www.voluntaryprinciples.org/principles/private.php>

³⁵ Interview with Doug Brooks, President of the International Peace Operations Association. 3 April 2007.

arrangement.

Scalability and Rapid Response

Private peace and stability operations contractors are highly scalable, and can rapidly adapt to the constantly changing environment that conflict and post-conflict situations present. Private contractors maintain databases with thousands of individuals representing a wide array of skills and specialties that can be quickly hired to fulfill the changing needs of a mission. Because these specialists are not full time employees and are only employed as needed, the company can maintain a slim payroll and avoid the problems that plague the bloated UN personnel system. This swing capacity helps to enhance military readiness, by allowing the active units to focus on core mission objectives without becoming distracted by secondary or tertiary support and logistics concerns.

Suitability of Employees

Many of the individuals employed by private security companies are former members of the military. This creates an important capacity to understand and interoperate with the active military components participating in a mission. Military traditions, jargon and discipline are familiar and the learning curve between different contractors is significantly reduced thanks to this common denominator. Previous careers in the military, and more specifically the Special Forces, also provide important cost saving benefits to private security companies. The expense of training and cultivating the human capital is borne by the military establishment, and private companies benefit from the years of experience at no additional cost.

The "Mercenary" Aspect

Private military and security companies have been unfairly compared to "mercenaries." In fact, the legitimization and increased regulation of the private security industry would help prevent against a return to this brand of undesired, renegade

behavior.³⁶ Continuing to denigrate and mislabel the industry would force those employees engaged in legal work to resort to other, less desired forms of work. Rather than thriving on the conflict and chaos that the “mercenaries” of 1960s and 1970s fame did, today’s private peace and stability operations companies are more concerned with stabilizing conflict to open the avenue for increased legitimate investment and diversification of services.

Contractors in Support of the U.S. Military

The publicity and reporting surrounding the Iraq War has brought the critical role contractors play in supporting military operations into the public view. Though many in the general public realized for the first time in Iraq how important contractors were, this was hardly the first time that the private sector has supported the military in wartime. From the Revolutionary War through Vietnam and up until the NATO operations in the Balkans, the military has recognized the capabilities and advantages that the private sector can provide. In today’s modern military, “[c]ontingency contracting provides the commander a flexible and responsive means to support deployed forces and their mission.”³⁷

Contrary to popular belief, private contractors are not a recent post-draft entrant to conflict situations.³⁸ During the Vietnam War, Pacific Architects and Engineers (PAE) had 40,000 contractors in-country supporting military operations. In fact, PAE suffered a higher proportion of casualties during the 1968 Tet Offensive than did the Army.³⁹ Even with a draft pulling thousands of soldiers into the military ranks, it was still necessary to contract with PAE to provide for the Army’s engineering and maintenance needs. The abolition of the draft in 1973, therefore,

³⁶ Brooks, Doug. 2001.

³⁷ “Contracting Support on the Battlefield.” FM 100-10-2. Department of the Army. August 1999.

³⁸ Rosen, Nir. “Riding Shotgun with Our Shadow Army in Iraq.” *Mother Jones*, May/June 2007. Rosen incorrectly asserts that “[i]n World War II and Vietnam, the cooks, the truck drivers, the ditch diggers, and, yes, the bodyguards, were all military personnel.” p. 90.

³⁹ Interview with Doug Brooks, President of the International Peace Operations Association. 2 April 2007.

did not precipitate an explosion in military contracting with the private sector.

The long history of contractors working in concert with the military establishment to accomplish integral tasks has been an obvious success. The U.S. has the best-supported and best-supplied military in history, and the only military capable of projecting force and sustaining large-scale overseas deployments. The utility the private sector has demonstrated through its successful relationship with the military must be recognized and applied to the current and future humanitarian crises around the globe. The private sector has an immense amount of institutional knowledge related to conflict and post-conflict operations, and continuing to ignore the private sector's skills and services would be a tragic waste.

CHAPTER FOUR

Overextension is to Blame

There are certain camps that argue the current strain being witnessed in the peacekeeping system is a result of overextension and a penchant for intervention as a panacea for every foreign conflict. This criticism originates domestically, and American advocates of a more limited approach to peacekeeping and international involvement include such people as Christopher Preble and Ted Galen Carpenter of the Cato Institute. Opponents of the present level of international peacekeeping involvement question the costs, mandates and legitimacy of such missions.

The ticket price of current UN peacekeeping operations can be high, but it is difficult to place these costs in perspective. Estimating the opportunity cost, that is the cost of doing the next best thing, is difficult to compute because a multitude of independent and constantly changing variables influence the outcome of any situation in international relations.

There is wide consensus that encouraging regional and indigenous response capabilities to conflicts is desirable.⁴⁰ In a situation like Darfur, this would mean the African Union (AU) taking primary responsibility for maintaining peace and ensuring all relevant cease-fires are implemented. Unfortunately, nascent

⁴⁰ Tardy, Thierry. "The Brahimi Report: Four Years On." Geneva Centre for Security Policy. 2004. p. 3.

regional organizations such as the AU, despite real motivation and interest to take on a larger leadership role in Africa, are lacking the essential resources to deploy in a meaningful capacity. Currently, the AU has 7,000 peacekeepers in Darfur, a commendable contribution to a desperate situation.⁴¹ Sustaining this deployment has been difficult for the AU. When Ethiopia invaded Somalia to oust the Islamic Courts Movement from Mogadishu, the AU was asked to provide a replacement force to maintain order in the Somali capital as Ethiopian troops withdrew. The demands of supporting two separate missions have proven extremely difficult for the AU. Though Uganda pledged to supply a portion of the troops needed for the stabilization force, funding such a mission has been difficult and currently only 1,500 of the promised 8,000 troops have deployed to Mogadishu.⁴²

The AU is not a toothless organization like its predecessor, the Organization for African Unity (OAU). The OAU was replaced by the AU in 2000 specifically out of recognition that a stronger intercontinental body was necessary if Africans were to take responsibility for crises on the continent. What the AU lacks is resources, not will. Even if America is militarily overextended, regional alternatives to a UN mission combined with U.S. support are limited. A robust mission to Darfur, whether under the auspices of the AU or the UN, will need significant financing by the international community. Currently, the United States contributes 27 percent to the UN's peacekeeping budget. Japan is second at 19 percent and no other country comes in above 10 percent. Even limited cuts in U.S. peacekeeping expenditures would have drastic repercussions in the ability of the DPKO to operate at capacity.

Though an intervention in Rwanda to prevent the genocide would have cost millions of dollars and cost countries such as the U.S. hard political capital, these costs pale in comparison to the aggregate loss of life and property resulting from the ensuing crisis. As the conflict spilled across the Great Lakes region of

⁴¹ "Sudan, Chad Agree to Stop Fighting." *The Associated Press*. 3 May 2007.

⁴² Abdulle, Sahal. "AU Calls for Peacekeepers to Avert Somalia Disaster." *Reuters*. 27 April 2007.

Africa the humanitarian and economic costs became immeasurable. Death and disease plagued the refugee camps of Kivu and Goma, creating a costly humanitarian catastrophe that the international community struggled to cope with. The illegal harvest and export of Congo's valuable natural resources enriched a lucky few, but depleted the country's ability to fund future development projects.⁴³

Reducing American involvement abroad and investment in peacekeeping is not a viable solution to the current gap between peacekeeping requirements and the international community's capacity. Considering the interconnected nature of global trade and relations and the massive economic footprint of America, it is impossible for the country to withdraw from an international endeavor such as peacekeeping without precipitating significant economic and political repercussions. Rather, previous and current programs to promote military professionalism and readiness on the African continent make efficient use of the private sector's skills and abilities. These programs are a valuable tool and should continue to augment UN peacekeeping operations.

American Initiatives in Africa

Since Africa hosts roughly 70 percent of UN peacekeeping forces and currently has six active peacekeeping missions, special attention must be devoted to developing security solutions for a continent plagued by endemic conflict.⁴⁴ There have been several American programs implemented to raise the quality and readiness of African military personnel, in attempt to encourage more indigenous participation in peacekeeping and conflict management. Though an important endeavor, these programs should not aim to shift the entire burden of peacekeeping away from the UN and onto the shoulders of regional organizations.

⁴³ "Final Report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo." S/2002/1146. 16 October 2002.

⁴⁴ "UN Peacekeeping Operations: Surge 2006." 1 November 2006. Prepared by Department of Peacekeeping Operations / External Relations.

In the wake of the Rwandan genocide, the Clinton Administration searched for solutions to prevent a similar crisis from happening in the future.⁴⁵ It was determined that developing indigenous African peacekeeping capabilities were advantageous and possibly preferable to relying on foreign interventions. The African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI) sought to train and equip peacekeepers in select African countries invited to participate in the program. ACRI provided classroom and field training as well as non-lethal peacekeeping equipment.⁴⁶ ACRI was quickly conceived and implemented, partly in response to the outbreak of hostilities in Sierra Leone and the kidnapping of over 500 UN peacekeepers by the Revolutionary United Front. ACRI training had established phases and participant countries completed training by 2002.

The 2002 National Security Strategy highlighted expanded assistance to African states as "...both a core value of the United States...and [a] strategic priority."⁴⁷ The Bush Administration redefined ACRI and changed the name to the African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance Program (ACOTA). The program retained the same basic mission of training African peacekeepers and improving readiness to respond to crises on the continent. The ACOTA training program provides important training and equipment to African peacekeepers, and is similar in methodology to models used by the private sector.

In 2004, President Bush announced the Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI). Building on the successes of the ACOTA program, GPOI greatly expands funding for training to US\$660 million over five years and aims to make the initiative a more permanent feature of U.S. foreign military assistance.⁴⁸ In April

⁴⁵ "US Support to African Capacity for Peace Operations: The ACOTA Program." February 2005. The Henry L. Stimson Center.

⁴⁶ Berman, Eric G. "French, UK, and U.S. Policies to Support Peacekeeping in Africa: Current Status and Future Prospects." Norwegian Institute of International Affairs. 2002. p. 23.

⁴⁷ "The National Security Strategy of the United States of America." September 2002. p. 10.

⁴⁸ Graham, Bradley. "Bush Plans Aid to Build Foreign Peace Forces." *The Washington Post*. 19 April 2004. A1.

2007, Blackwater USA, Northrop Grumman and MPRI were awarded a US\$200 million contract by the Department of State to provide education and training services as part of the GPOI mission.⁴⁹ Considering military commitments in Afghanistan and Iraq, it is logical that large segments of the Initiative be contracted to proven and capable private sector companies, reserving active U.S. military units for core war-fighting tasks and not diverting attention or manpower.

Summary

The answer to the current problems of UN peacekeeping is not to terminate the program entirely, as withdrawing U.S. funding and logistical support would certainly do. It is possible to reform certain parts of the structure to better respond to modern realities. Rather than continuing to advocate an approach that would have negative long-term effects of global security and the stability of international markets, critics of international intervention and humanitarian peacekeeping should redirect their resources towards constructive reforms. Advocating the use of private components in UN peacekeeping missions would be a logical and realistic approach to peacekeeping reform and financial savings.

The Global Peace Operations Initiative recognizes the necessity of developing indigenous crisis and peacekeeping capabilities on the African continent to supplement international efforts. The Initiative draws on the financial strengths of the U.S. government, private sector expertise in providing peacekeeping education and training, and the willing candidate pool of potential African peacekeepers. The Initiative enjoys bipartisan support in Congress and provides an example of the possibility for an efficient allocation of resources and division of labor between the public and private sectors.

⁴⁹ Contract award number SAQMPD07D0050-SAQMPD07D0051-SAQMPD07D0052.

<http://www.fbo.gov/spg/State/A-LM-AQM/A-LM-AQM/Awards/SAQMPD07D0050-SAQMPD07D0051-SAQMPD07D0052LnIDIQ.html>

CHAPTER FIVE

A Standing UN Force

Calls to improve the United Nations' response time to crises are nothing new. Since the UN intervention on the Korean Peninsula in the 1950s, critics and experts have been beating the drum for UN reform that shortens the response time and raises the capability and quality of UN intervention forces. One recurring idea that surfaces perennially is the establishment of a permanent, standing peacekeeping force under the control of the United Nations. This idea for a United Nations Emergency Peace Service (UNEPS) has gained traction among Congress, NGOs and within the UN bureaucracy. While improved response time is necessary to meet the extraordinary demands made on the UN peacekeeping establishment, a permanent capability is not the answer.

United Nations Emergency Peace Service

In many respects, the idea sounds very appealing. Don Kraus, Executive Vice President for Government Relations at Citizens for Global Solutions, is a proponent of such a force. A recent article authored by Kraus appeared in the *Journal of International Peace Operations* and advocated his vision for this quick-reaction force.⁵⁰ The force as envisioned by Kraus would be 12,000 -18,000 strong, comprised of military and civilian professionals, permanently

⁵⁰ Kraus, Don. "Acquiring a Fire Engine Before the Fire Breaks Out: A Proposal for a UN Emergency Peacekeeping Service." *Journal of International Peace Operations*. Vol. 2, No. 3. November/December 2006.

based, and deployable within 48 hours. There are a number of problems with this concept.

One of the strongest criticisms of UN peacekeeping is the delay that often occurs between a Security Council authorization and the deployment of a force. Delays cost lives and money. Complex peacekeeping missions, where peace is tenuous or still not realized and the threat of resurgent violence is large, can often take up to 90 days to deploy. Much of this delay comes from intransigent Member States unwilling to contribute the necessary troops and equipment. The UNEPS concept aims to ameliorate the problem of collecting troops by establishing a standing force that would be dedicated to the task of peacekeeping and humanitarian intervention. But where would these troops come from?

In June 2006 the group Global Action to Prevent War and Armed Conflict held a conference on the establishment of a UNEPS force. In the report of the group's findings released after the conference, it was determined that a UNEPS force would be comprised of "carefully selected and expertly trained [individuals]...recruited from among volunteers drawn from many countries."⁵¹ If the Secretary-General has difficulty persuading Member States to loan troops to peacekeeping missions under the current *ad hoc* arrangements, why would they be any more likely to acquiesce to a request for permanently assigning national units to a supranational force?

The report does call for "volunteers" from Member States, but it is important to examine where these volunteers are being drawn from. It is impossible for active duty military or law enforcement personnel to volunteer without government consent. So if the UNEPS force is truly to be comprised of volunteers, all active duty professionals are ineligible without the government agreeing to contribute troops to this standing force, thereby raising the perennial question of Member State willingness to contribute to UN forces, *ad hoc* or otherwise. Therefore, the possibilities for

⁵¹ Johansen, Robert C., ed. "A United Nations Emergency Peace Service to Prevent Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity." 2006. Global Action to Prevent War, Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, and World Federalist Movement. p. 46.

staffing UNEPS are limited to retired professionals or those working in the private sector, as neither of these groups are bound by contractual obligations to their government and have the freedom to change professions. The UN would therefore be signing numerous individual contracts for all the required positions on the UNEPS force. This is not dissimilar to the process of contracting certain functions of an operation out to a firm, except the UN personnel system will be further encumbered by this surge of around 15,000 permanent employees.

Bill Clontz has an intimate understanding of the interaction between the military establishment, the UN and the private sector, the result of a long career encompassing all three areas. “The personnel system is the root of many problems for the UN,” Clontz says. “Personnel policies like the quota system make UN personnel difficult to fire, meaning the UN often gets stuck with mediocrity.”⁵²

Deficiencies in the personnel system are another example of the internal problems that are inherent to the UN structure as an international organization. For most UN employees, whether based in New York, Geneva, or any other city, the UN is not only their employer and source of income, but also the sponsor for the relevant visas and work permits that foreigners must possess. This further complicates releasing personnel because employees not only lose their income, but often must return to their home country.

While the difficulty associated with culling the UN personnel system of non-performing individuals impacts the performance of the Organization, the reverse is true of the current *ad hoc* peacekeeping arrangements. The temporary basis on which external peacekeeping recruits are hired ultimately penalizes the UN.⁵³ The uncertain and temporary nature of these employment contracts makes retention of talented personnel difficult. The current arrangements are not adequate to compete with the

⁵² Interview with William R. Clontz, Vice President, International Group at MPRI. 23 March 2007

⁵³ “Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (The Brahimi Report).” August 2000. p. 23.

private sector, and deprive the UN of many talented individuals with vital skills and firsthand knowledge of peacekeeping. The resulting dearth in experienced peacekeeping professionals impacts all aspects of the mission, from planning to deployment. The Brahimi Report suggests creating a more stable system of employment for temporary recruits, but this would place the current peacekeeping system in danger of becoming bloated with non-essential personnel.

Taking into account the problems in the UN personnel system, the idea of adding an additional 15,000 permanent employees to the payrolls does not seem appealing. These employees would be subject to the same intransigent policies on termination of employment and would further the burden of accountability and quality control within the UNEPS force.

The calls for a UNEPS force 15,000 – 18,000 strong are ambiguous when considering the exact composition of this force. Generally, military operations require a four-to-six ratio of combat to support personnel.⁵⁴ This means for every four soldiers carrying weapons and placed in a combat environment, six support personnel are needed to maintain the safety and effectiveness of the soldiers. This ratio can increase sharply as operations become more complex or dangerous, as the trend in peacekeeping seems to suggest. If support personnel are excluded from the quoted estimates, a force of 15,000 would need a minimum of 22,500 additional support workers. If the 15,000 strong force is all-inclusive, the number of peacekeepers available for patrols, enforcement, and actual combat falls to only 6,000, while the other 9,000 will be occupied with support activities. A force of 9,000 is inadequate for the complex peacekeeping situations that such a force would likely deploy to.

Maintaining Plausible Deniability for the UN

It is unlikely that the ideology supporting the fundamental aversion to private sector involvement in peacekeeping missions will subside anytime soon within the UN. Reconciling the needs

⁵⁴ Interview with Henry A. Zimon, Vice President, Strategic Plans and Programs at MPRI. 23 March 2007

of the UN with the capabilities of the private sector will be a long and complicated task. Unfortunately, in the critical and time-sensitive area of peacekeeping, such plodding progress towards greater efficiency and effectiveness can mean lives wasted and capital lost. An alternative to the UN directly contracting for various portions of a peacekeeping mission would be for individual countries to be allowed to fulfill their obligations to a peacekeeping mission in whatever fashion they deem appropriate.

Under the current system, following a Security Council resolution authorizing an intervention force, the Secretary General must depend on contributions from Member States to assemble the troops, funding, equipment and other necessary components of a peacekeeping mission. States vary in what they are able and willing to contribute. The United States assumes a large portion of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations' budget, while Bangladesh, Pakistan and India contribute far greater numbers of warm bodies.⁵⁵ Recognizing that every country has different limitations is essential to assembling adequately equipped peacekeeping missions.

One way to accommodate these limitations without compromising the effectiveness of the mission would be to allow contributing countries to contract with the private sector to fulfill UN commitments.⁵⁶ If the United States were to pledge 100 police officers as part of a peacekeeping mission, the United States should be allowed to contract with a company like MPRI or DynCorp to provide professionally trained and capable police officers. Awarding contracts in this way, through the third country as opposed to directly from the UN, would in a way shield the UN from direct involvement in managing such contracts without depriving the mission of the necessary skills of competent police officers.

Alternatively, the United States could agree to provide five active duty military police officers to a mission, employed and

⁵⁵ "Fact Sheet." Prepared by the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations in cooperation with the United Nations Department of Public Information. September 2006.

⁵⁶ Møller (2005). p. 19.

compensated directly by the government. These five MPs could in turn lead contingents of 20 contracted civilian police officers supplied by a company such as MPRI. The chain of command would be clearly defined within the agreement negotiated between MPRI and the government. Under this scheme, the UN would still receive the required number of police officers, trained and ready to deploy. The responsibility of enforcing the contract and negotiating details would be handled by the third country, in this case the United States, leaving the UN not directly involved in contracting with the private sector.

Such added flexibility would serve two purposes. First and foremost, the UN would receive a highly trained and professional contingent of police officers. In peacekeeping and peacemaking interventions, a professional civilian police corps is essential to maintaining order and establishing the precedent that the military and civil law enforcement are two important but separate entities of society. Second, the UN should not constrain its options for assembling the necessary parts of a mission. Judging by the difficulty the Secretary General already encounters when raising resources for a peacekeeping mission, barring member countries from fulfilling their contribution obligations as they best see fit might only work to further deprive a mission of adequate resources.

Summary

The concept of a United Nations Peace Service is ostensibly appealing, but lacks the pragmatism and international support needed to be realistically implemented. The proposals are either too vague or wildly over optimistic. The imperative for peacekeeping reform demands practical proposals for reform and change, not more grandiose and unsustainable options. Personnel inflexibilities, ambiguous troop numbers and unclear force compositions are only a few of the serious questions that surround the UNEPS proposal.

Peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations should continue under the aegis of the UN to ensure legitimacy and broad acceptance. But the UN should not further punish the victims of

war and humanitarian disaster by barring the private sector from contributing to peacekeeping operations. Short of directly contracting with these companies, or to segue into direct contracting, the UN should allow contributing Member States to fulfill their peacekeeping obligations with private contractors.

CHAPTER SIX

The Private Option

There is no simple solution to solve the shortfalls of UN peacekeeping. As outlined above, many of the problems peacekeeping faces stem from the unparalleled size and scope of the UN's bureaucracy and mandate, as well as political intransigence and hesitation on the part of Member States.⁵⁷ The UN's responsibilities have only grown over time, most sharply in the realm of peacekeeping and peace enforcement. There is no panacea that can be easily implemented to remedy the diverse and numerous problems associated with UN peacekeeping operations. But that does not imply that certain reforms, readily available and plausible to implement, should not be adopted.

The private sector provides a massive and intriguing potential as a tool in implementing UN peacekeeping reform. The privatization of peacekeeping should not occur overnight, and certain elements of a UN peacekeeping mission should continue to be performed by UN personnel.

The roots of the private military industry stem from the end of the Cold War.⁵⁸ The policy of containment required America to confront communism wherever it emerged, and for a client regime to be anti-communist was usually sufficient to guarantee financial

⁵⁷ Bellamy, Alex J. and Paul Williams, eds. Peace Operations and Global Order. p. 187.

⁵⁸ Singer, 49.

and military support. Once the Soviet Union collapsed, this unconditional support vanished. Also accompanying the end of the Cold War was a worldwide decline in military personnel, from 28 million in 1985 to 21 million by 1999.⁵⁹ The massive release of manpower, weapons, and expertise, particularly from Eastern Bloc countries and post-apartheid South Africa, provided the PMC with two of the three essential components for success: manpower and weapons.⁶⁰ The third component is crisis. The state institution in Africa is generally weak, and does not control a monopoly over the use of force, leading to crises in which the state supremacy is challenged.⁶¹ In the post-Cold War environment, developed countries are less likely to intervene in low intensity conflicts because there is no longer a delicate balance of power to preserve.⁶²

Clear and practical legislation and regulation of the industry is in the interest of the companies competing for contracts, the clients looking for professional and cost-effective security solutions, and the victims of ongoing conflicts around the world. The ambiguity that many claim the private security industry thrives on in fact directly counters the further acceptance and understanding the industry seeks. By formalizing the relationship between the private sector and organizations like the UN, the ideological barrier could be ameliorated, allowing companies to put more resources into delivery of services and less into repetitive and redundant justification of their existence.

Regulation and Transparency

The largest objections to expanded private sector involvement in peacekeeping operations are not based on contractor inadequacy or lack of capability, but on the allegedly uncontrollable nature of the private sector. Objections to a lack of proper oversight and

⁵⁹ Leander, Anna. 2001. "Global Ungovernance: Mercenaries, States and the Control over Violence." Copenhagen Peace Research Institute. p. 5.

⁶⁰ Mandel, Robert. 2002. *Armies Without States: The Privatization of Security*. Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc. United Kingdom. p. 56.

⁶¹ Møller, Bjørn. "Raising Armies in a Rough Neighborhood: Soldiers, Guerrillas and Mercenaries in Southern Africa." Southern African Regional Institute for Policy Studies. 2001.

⁶² Brooks, Doug. 2001.

enforceable norms are common in the criticism of the private security sector. In reality, private elements of a UN peacekeeping mission would be subject to an equal or higher degree of accountability than current national contingents. Indeed, the industry itself is seeking stronger and more effective accountability, realizing that the legitimacy necessary to secure and complete contracts demands a high degree of transparency and international acceptance.⁶³ The institutions for promoting transparency and enforcing high industry standards are already in place, they must simply be strengthened.

The promotion of a large and reputable standards bearing association would allow clients to easily identify companies with good reputations and strong records of success. Member companies would be subject to rigorous screening processes before admittance to control for past offenses and guard against the dilution of the association's international standing. Once an association of this type reached a critical mass of industry-leading PMCs, membership would become a necessity for those companies wishing to compete for lucrative contracts. This type of self-regulation helps control the costs of expensive external monitoring by making good behavior and professional conduct the industry norm. A company's failure to respect the association code of conduct would result in a tarnished image and the loss of a competitive edge within the industry.

The International Peace Operations Association (IPOA) is just such a trade association. IPOA promotes further transparency and self-regulation within the private security industry. Member companies must adhere to the IPOA Code of Conduct to remain within the Association. The private security industry is large and complicated, and the realities of overseas operations and deployments are best understood by the industry itself. The Code of Conduct was developed in close consultation with leading companies within the industry and reflects a pragmatic and enforceable set of binding guidelines. The Code addresses such topics as human rights, accountability, transparency, safety, and ethics. In addition, international agreements and conventions

⁶³ Mancini, Francesco. 2005. "In Good Company? The Role of Business in Security Sector Reform." The International Peace Academy. p. 18.

must be adhered to, including the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 1949 Geneva Conventions and the 1975 Convention against Torture.⁶⁴ This member-driven approach provides an important layer of regulation to a complex and growing industry. There are clear benefits to promoting a strong trade association for PMCs, and IPOA provides an excellent reference for expanding this branch of regulation.

Critics of this approach to regulating the industry cite an association's inability to enforce voluntary codes or reprimand high profile member companies.⁶⁵ While a trade association cannot prosecute member companies that violate the association's code of conduct, the privilege of membership is a powerful tool for ensuring company compliance. Though specifics are confidential, IPOA has denied membership to applicant companies for not meeting the standards the Association promotes. Denial of membership sets a strong precedent and demonstrates that even a voluntary trade association like IPOA is capable of acting independently of powerful industry figures. It is also significant to note that no IPOA company has had membership revoked for violating the Code of Conduct. All complaints that have been raised before the Standards Committee have been handled in a timely and appropriate fashion, negating the possibility of expulsion from the Association. This implies that the system of self-regulation and peer review is capable of enforcing high standards and professionalism within the industry.

As membership continues to grow, it is clear that companies within the industry embrace and encourage further transparency and accountability. PMCs are often characterized as secretive and elusive, but with 37 current members, including industry heavyweights like Blackwater USA, MPRI and ArmorGroup, the move towards regulation is clearly endorsed by the companies themselves. The Association serves as an important component in the regulation process, but should not be considered a holistic

⁶⁴ "International Peace Operations Association Code of Conduct." Version 11. 1 December 2006.

⁶⁵ Schreier, Fred and Marina Caparini. "Privatising Security: Law, Practice and Governance of Private Military and Security Companies. March 2005. Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces. p. 126.

solution to the issues of oversight and transparency. An Association like IPOA must work in conjunction with state and UN-level efforts to promote efficient and timely oversight of the growing industry.

Because PPSOCs are by nature international organizations, it would be reasonable to form this regulatory body under the auspices of the UN. One recommendation for a division of labor would be for the General Assembly to legislate, the Security Council to enforce, and the International Criminal Court to interpret.⁶⁶ Though some degree of international oversight is necessary and encouraged, it is important to remember and respect the private sector's competitive advantages regarding efficiency and cost effectiveness. Promoting a strong peer-driven trade association would help guard against the dilution of these key advantages, as an added layer of UN bureaucracy may incur.

Government Oversight and Competition

Competition is one of the key consumer advantages within the private sector by maintaining quality between different services while ensuring the lowest cost is achieved.

The US-led 2003 invasion of Iraq and ensuing occupation and reconstruction effort has dramatically illustrated the necessity of private contractors in various capacities. However, the size of contracting needs and the speed with which contracted services were needed put a strain on the government's oversight capability. While the invasion of Iraq and ouster of Saddam Hussein was a decisive military victory, the post-invasion occupation and reconstruction effort was not adequately planned. This resulted in several contracts being improperly awarded and inadequate oversight capacity once the contracts were awarded, leading to confusion, fraud and waste. With the Democratic victory in the November 2006 congressional elections, an effort has been made to strengthen the government's oversight role and reduce the perception of ambiguity that surrounds contractors in

⁶⁶ Møller (2005), 26.

Iraq.⁶⁷ It is important that national governments work in concert with other more limber forms of regulation and oversight, such as a trade association, to ensure that contractors retain the legitimacy and acceptance necessary.

The Integrated Deepwater Systems (IDS) program to refurbish and modernize the U.S. Coast Guard fleet demonstrates the necessity of proper oversight, as well as the problems created by inadequate competition. The IDS contract was awarded on 25 June 2002 to Integrated Coast Guard Systems (ICGS), a joint partnership between Bethesda-based Lockheed Martin and Los Angeles-based Northrop Grumman.⁶⁸ The original contract value was US\$17 billion, but costs have steadily increased during the course of the program, reaching nearly US\$24 billion by early 2007. In addition to cost increases beyond initial projections, the program has suffered from functionality reductions and structural design flaws, causing production delays. On 17 April 2007 the Coast Guard announced it was taking control of the IDS program in an effort to improve oversight.⁶⁹

The Coast Guard's decision to restructure the management of the IDS program was the result of strong congressional criticism of the program's cost overruns and production delays. Much as waste and malfeasance in Iraq was the result of an accelerated timescale and inadequate planning, the IDS program also faced an aggressive acceleration in development and acquisition, reflecting the post-9/11 situation and the Department of Homeland Security's expanding charge.⁷⁰ The scope and complexity of the modernization project combined with a rigorous delivery schedule limited the amount of competition.

⁶⁷ Chaddock, Gail Russell. "Congress Girds Up for Return to Oversight." *The Christian Science Monitor*. 9 April 2007.

⁶⁸ O'Rourke, Ronald. "Coast Guard Deepwater Program: Background and Issues for Congress." 6 September 2006. Congressional Research Service. p. 2.

⁶⁹ Merle, Renae and Spencer Hsu. "Coast Guard to Take Over 'Deepwater.'" *The Washington Post*. 17 April 2007. D1.

⁷⁰ "Coast Guard: Progress Being Made on Addressing Deepwater Legacy Asset Condition Issues and Program Management, but Acquisition Challenges Remain." GAO-05-757, July 2005. Government Accountability Office.

The private sector is essential to modernizing the fleet and ensuring the Coast Guard has the necessary tools for fulfilling its mandate. The Coast Guard does not maintain a research, production and testing capacity allowing it to fulfill such a massive and comprehensive overhaul as IDS demands.

Picking the Battles

Many critics of the private security industry cite encroachments on inherently governmental functions as a cause for alarm. The argument goes that the state should control a monopoly on the ability to maintain armies and use force. Alarmists allege that the national military is in danger of being replaced by legions of private warriors, whose allegiance is not to a government but a board of directors concerned with their bottom line. While the private sector is certainly capable of fulfilling any military need, up to and including offensive military operations, many companies and individual supporters of the private sector playing a larger role in peacekeeping do not advocate a complete displacement of Member State troops.

The number of peacekeeping personnel armed and actively enforcing peace is a relatively small proportion of the entire mission force. There are a plethora of tasks that the private sector can accomplish without privatizing the actual enforcement of the peace. Hesitation to privatize this frontline component does not grow from apprehension over capability or effectiveness, but rather in response to the persistent cynicism of the industry. Support and logistical roles offer excellent opportunities for initial involvement and should be used as a prerequisite for larger, more active participation by the private sector in peacekeeping missions.

There is still a large amount of hostility towards the use of contractors in peacekeeping operations, mostly fostered by a misinterpretation of the private security industry's capabilities and intentions.⁷¹ Within the UN this hostility is much stronger,

⁷¹ Brooks, Doug. "Messiahs or Mercenaries? The Future of International Private Military Services." *Managing Armed Conflicts in the 21st Century*. Eds. Adekeye Adebajo and Chandra Lekha Sriram. 2001. Routledge Publishers.

and at the current time a wholly private alternative to a standing UN force is completely unrealistic. Instead, private security companies should work with the UN to identify areas where the industry's unique capabilities and competencies can be best implemented. The planning, execution, deployment, and support of a UN peacekeeping mission all could be partially or wholly contracted without jeopardizing the effectiveness of the mission.⁷²

Debate in Darfur

The current crisis in the western Darfur region of Sudan is relatively recent, and in relation to the North-South civil war that concluded in 2005, a footnote in Sudan's long and violent history since independence from Britain in 1956. Yet in only a few years, massive atrocities have been committed by the central government in Khartoum and the rebel factions. It is a situation where all parties are guilty of criminal acts, and while the government is better equipped and funded to perpetrate random acts of violence, the Darfur rebel factions must share a proportional amount of the blame for the continued violence. Tragically, but not surprisingly, the brunt of the violence is borne by the civilian population of Darfur. This is a common characteristic of low level conflicts involving rebel or irregular forces.

And Previously in the Great Lakes Region

Casualty estimates from the two wars in the Great Lakes region of central Africa during the 1990s and early 2000s vary wildly, from 3.2 to 4 million dead. The fact that casualty numbers are so imprecise speaks to the international indifference towards the conflict. The extreme physical conditions of the region made reporting especially difficult and the prevailing international attitude of nonchalance left what reporting did emerge from the Congo with little to no audience. Meanwhile, the civilian death toll was increasing by a thousand a day.⁷³

⁷² Interview with William R. Clontz, Vice President, International Group at MPRI. 23 March 2007

⁷³ Brooks, Doug. "Help for Beleaguered Peacekeepers." *The Washington Post*. 2 June 2003. A17.

As the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) swept across Rwanda, the perpetrators of the genocide became terrified of retribution. As the *Interahamwe* and Rwandan Armed Forces (FAR) fled, the remaining Hutu population, whether directly guilty or marginally complicit in the mass killings, followed in their wake. What resulted was the single largest refugee movement in modern history, sending over a million Hutus across the border in a matter of days.⁷⁴ Some argue that there were in fact two genocides: the Hutu massacre of Tutsis, and a counter-genocide comprised of mass Hutu killings at the hands of the advancing RPF.⁷⁵ Over the course of the Congo Wars, the RPF would be further implicated in massive violations of human rights, including the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Hutu refugees.⁷⁶

It is specifically examples like the humanitarian catastrophes in Darfur and the Great Lakes that further invalidate the old definitions of conflict and demand a revision of preconceptions and tactics. The United Nations has already partially acknowledged this changing reality in promoting the right to protect, but has hesitated from recognizing the similar evolution in the private security industry.

Around the time the North-South civil war was drawing to a close, Darfur began to erupt.⁷⁷ The UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) mandate expanded to include Darfur under Resolution 1556,⁷⁸ and was expanded yet again under Resolution 1706.⁷⁹

⁷⁴ Mamdani, Mahmood. 1999. "Preliminary Thoughts on the Congo Crisis." *Social Text*, No. 60. pp. 53-62. p. 58.

⁷⁵ Lemarchand, Rene. April 1998. "Genocide in the Great Lakes: Which Genocide? Whose Genocide?" *African Studies Review*, Vol. 41, No. 1. p. 8.

⁷⁶ Emizet, Kisangani N.F. July 2000. "The Massacres of Refugees in Congo: A Case of UN Peacekeeping Failure and International Law." *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 38, No. 2. pp. 163-4.

⁷⁷ The North-South conflict ended with a Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed 9 January 2005. Resolution 1556 (July 2004) broadened the UNAMIS mandate to include the intensifying hostilities in Darfur.

⁷⁸ 30 July 2004.

⁷⁹ 31 August 2006.

What Can the Private Sector Offer?

The private sector should first and foremost be considered for providing several key support activities a mission to Darfur would need. On 31 August 2006 the Security Council passed Resolution 1706, deciding "...that the mandate of UNMIS in Darfur shall be to support implementation of the Darfur Peace Agreement of 5 May 2006 and the N'djamena Agreement on Humanitarian Cease-fire on the Conflict in Darfur." The size of the region, the lack of transportation infrastructure, the use of anti-personnel mines, and the location and nature of refugee camps all present unique challenges for the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Fortunately, the private sector has the capability to respond to all of these obstacles.

The first and most evident issue when considering a mission to Darfur is the sheer size of the region, roughly the size of France. Section 8(b) of 1706 mandates UNMIS to "...observe and monitor movement of armed groups and redeployment of forces in areas of UNMIS deployment by ground and aerial means." Effectively controlling this area with only several thousand personnel is impossible. The African Union has realized this firsthand, and despite an augmentation of the force, bringing the total up to 7,000 troops, the force can only concentrate on certain areas of higher population density, leaving the vast majority of Darfur unmonitored and vulnerable. The size of Darfur necessitates specialized intelligence and surveillance capabilities. The deployment of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) would greatly enhance the intelligence ability of a peacekeeping mission and enable the military commanders to formulate a more precise and actionable picture of the realities on the ground. Evergreen Unmanned Systems, a division of Oregon-based private aviation company Evergreen International Aviation, provides just such a service.

Collecting intelligence on militia and rebel movements within Darfur is useless if the peacekeeping mission does not have the resources to act. Of primary concern again are the size of Darfur and the lack of reliable transportation infrastructure. UN peacekeepers must be able to respond quickly to reports from

UAV flights that indicate a violation of the peace agreement. The private sector could be contracted to provide transport helicopters, pilots, and necessary support crew at designated bases around Darfur to transport peacekeepers quickly to trouble areas.

Also of concern in Darfur, and Sudan in general, is the pervasive existence of land mines. During the North-South civil war and also in the Darfur conflict, land mines were laid indiscriminately. As a result, swathes of territory in Darfur are rendered uninhabitable. Unfortunately, the mine fields were not always documented, and even if the area was noted on a map, there is no guarantee the responsible persons are inclined to help. Mines are another of the factors that inflict heavy tolls on civilian populations during low intensity conflicts such as Darfur that lead to massive population transfers and internal displacement among the population.

Resolution 1706 also mandates UNMIS to "...assist the parties to the Agreements, in cooperation with other international partners in the mine action sector, by providing humanitarian demining assistance, technical advice, and coordination, as well as mine awareness programmes." New techniques being developed by private companies are making the clearing of minefields a faster and more efficient procedure. The Belgian company APOPO is currently using giant African pouch rats in Mozambique, training them to detect mines. The program is enjoying great success, and the company is hoping to move the operation into other countries, like Sudan and Sierra Leone, that are plagued by unexploded ordinance.

These three capacities, intelligence and surveillance, transportation and mine clearing, are all distinctly supporting roles. Though vital to the success of any peacekeeping mission to Darfur, these roles do not place private companies directly in harms way. Another important, arguably paramount, mandate Resolution 1706 confers on UNMIS is to "...maintain...a presence ...inside internally displaced persons camps and demilitarized zones around and inside internally displaced persons camps, in order to promote the re-establishment of confidence, to discourage violence, in particular by deterring use of force." The refugee

situation in Darfur threatens to destabilize neighboring Chad, where many of the camps are located for safety reasons. Yet despite their location outside of Sudan's sovereign borders, attacks have continued.

The need for professional and effective guards for these humanitarian camps is of the utmost necessity. In the Great Lakes crisis of 1994, the refugee camps located in the Kivu provinces of Eastern Congo became the lynchpin in igniting the First Congo War. With such large numbers of Hutu refugees moving at once, it was impossible for foreign aid agencies to differentiate between militia and civilians. The political hierarchy of Rwanda's genocidal regime survived the exodus intact and reestablished itself in the camps, using the chaos to re-supply, train, and recruit volunteers.⁸⁰ Since protection of civilians is one of the primary arguments for a UN intervention in Darfur, securing these IDP camps is imperative.

⁸⁰ Curtis, Marcus. July 2005. "Raison d'Etat Unleashed: Understanding Rwanda's Foreign Policy in the Democratic Republic of the Congo." *Strategic Insights*, Vol. 4, No. 7.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Conclusion

Debate about the United Nations has been raging since the Organization's inception. The very size and scope of the UN ensured that regardless of what consensus building measures were taken, spoilers would always exist. For all the difficulties and shortfalls, the UN fulfills an important and vital role in world affairs. The task of peacekeeping in particular is crucial to diffusing global crises that threaten to destabilize individual countries, whole regions, or the entire globe. Peacekeeping is an integral part of the UN and should not be removed entirely nor shifted to regional organizations like NATO or the African Union. The controversial nature of humanitarian interventions demands the highest possible degree of cooperation and solidarity among the international community. The UN is currently the best forum to achieve this level of agreement.

Any attempt to reform the United Nations must be approached from a pragmatic angle. Certain deficiencies within the UN are inherent to the Organization itself, and indicative of the consensus-based, inclusive approach that was agreed upon by the Organization's founders after World War II. Intended to be a global forum for mediating disputes and avoiding future conflict, certain difficult decisions had to be made to ensure the UN enjoyed credibility and broad participation. The decision to create the General Assembly, where each member country enjoyed an equal voice in debate, appealed to smaller countries wishing to counter the traditional influence of the major powers. Reform,

regardless of motivation, can only accomplish so much within the UN structure. At a certain point, the deficiencies of the UN are internalized and inherent to the very structure of the Organization, and cannot be solved through internal reform.

While the UN has been remarkably prescient in accepting controversial yet necessary concepts such as the right to protect, it has been frustratingly narrow in choosing which directions to look forward. The need for peacekeeping reform is one of the most popular topics for literature, opinion pieces, criticism, and laudations. The 15 May 2007 reauthorization of the MONUC mandate in the Democratic Republic of the Congo for a force of over 18,000 affirms that complex peacekeeping is becoming the norm rather than the exception.⁸¹ The realization that peacekeeping is but one of many equally important tools needed to successfully bring a country out of crisis has contributed to the growing complexities of these operations.

Where early UN peacekeeping missions had narrow and clear mandates solely concerned with providing security, more recent missions have promoted institution building, civic instruction, electoral education, and financial reform as part of a more complete and lasting solution to conflict. It is commendable that the UN and the numerous other NGOs involved in these activities are searching for the right formula for sustainable peace and development, but these added burdens have also served to further complicate peacekeeping missions.

The private sector has clear advantages as well as perceived liabilities. Years of expertise and firsthand knowledge operating in the harsh environments so common of conflict zones, these companies bring a collective wealth of institutional memory and capability to an operation. The explosion of contractor use following 9/11 and the invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan have had an important impact on the industry. It is no longer possible to deny the industry's existence as a temporary aberration that will subside. Private military and security companies are here to stay. Iraq and Afghanistan have proved valuable training areas,

⁸¹ "UN to Keep Peacekeepers in DR Congo." *Aljazeera.net*. 16 May 2007.

for the private sector to operate on a large scale and identify weaknesses in structure or operations and where improvements need to be made. Sustained operations in these theaters of war and other conflict zones have also been instrumental in more clearly defining what operations companies want to be involved in, and what areas are not of interest.

A complete privatization of peacekeeping is both unrealistic and unwanted. But a gradual approach can and should be taken, integrating certain private elements and duties into the UN peacekeeping structure, keeping what works, discarding what may not. It is not enough to reject private involvement simply on the basis of ideological aversion or on hypothetical situations concerning what *could* happen. The facts of over 15 years of privatized security and support in its current corporate form does not merit rejection. On the contrary, this past decade and a half has repeatedly demonstrated where the private sector's efficiency, reliability, and competence are best implemented.

As a UN mission to Darfur draws closer to reality, the private sector's services must be carefully and seriously considered. The chances of success for such a vital and necessary mission could be greatly increased by contracting companies with strong records of client satisfaction and a commitment to the increased transparency and regulation of the industry. Further empowering a trade association like the International Peace Operations Association would save the difficulty of recreating an oversight organization from scratch, and preserve the valuable time and intellect that has already been devoted to creating a functioning system of regulation and peer review. While state and UN levels of oversight may be necessary and/or desired, the fundamental impetus for this should come from within the industry itself.

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