

CRS Report for Congress

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Military Interventions by U.S. Forces from Vietnam to Bosnia: Background, Outcomes, and “Lessons Learned” for Kosovo

May 20, 1999

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ABSTRACT

This report provides basic information on nine cases where the U.S. military has intervened, either unilaterally or together with other nations, and a summary for each operation of assessments of the operation relevant to the use of force, particularly for cases such as Kosovo. The cases are Vietnam, Lebanon, Grenada, Panama, Iraq, Somalia, Rwanda, Haiti, and Bosnia. Information includes: the situation in which U.S. military forces were deployed, the size and length of deployment, the number of U.S. military personnel killed in or as a result of hostilities, the situation in which U.S. troops were deployed, the rationales, purposes, and/or interests involved in a deployment, and whether there was an international mandate and a congressional authorization for the action. The introductory overview includes a synopsis of the “lessons learned” for the use of force from all operations, and a brief discussion of the implications for future operations. This report will not be updated.

Other CRS sources include: *CRS Report 92-757 F, Use of Force by the United States*, (available on optical disk); *CRS Report 94-529 F, U.S. Military Operations, 1965-1994 (Not Including Vietnam): Data on Casualties, Decorations, and Personnel Involved*; and, *CRS Report 96-476 F, The War Powers Resolution: Twenty-Two Years of Experience*.

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Summary

The congressional debate on Kosovo has raised interest in previous cases where the United States military has intervened in other countries. Of these, nine are cited as providing some type of lesson or precedent for future action. In eight of these, the U.S. military used force: Vietnam, Lebanon, Grenada, Panama, Iraq, Somalia, Haiti, and Bosnia. In the ninth, Rwanda, the United States undertook a humanitarian mission.

The numbers, purposes, circumstances and results of these interventions varied greatly. They have involved numbers of U.S. military personnel ranging, at peak, from about two thousand (Lebanon in 1982-1984) to over 500,000 (against Iraq in 1991, Vietnam in 1961-1973), and lasted from a few months to over a decade. More than one reason was cited for most interventions; these reasons included the need to reverse aggression, the need to maintain regional stability, and the protection of U.S. citizens, of economic interests and of human rights. The restoration of constitutional order or the rule of law, and enforcing political or peace settlements, are among the other considerations. Rwanda was undertaken only to provide relief to millions of refugees in the midst of a civil war. Congress has authorized only two of the deployments — Iraq and Vietnam — and the latter authorization was subsequently disputed. (Congress authorized the last 18 months of the 1982-1984 deployment to Lebanon.) Only Panama was a unilateral U.S. action, for the others the United States sought allies. The U.N. Security Council authorized the four interventions occurring after 1990, but not those prior to that. Three are generally regarded as successes (Iraq, Panama, Grenada), three as failures (Vietnam, Lebanon and Somalia), and three have had mixed results subject to varying interpretations (Haiti, Rwanda, and Bosnia). The numbers of U.S. military personnel killed as a result of hostilities ranged from none thus far in Bosnia, to 59,000 Vietnam.

Among the “lessons learned” from these interventions relevant to the current situation in Kosovo, those involving the effective use of force seem most pertinent at this time. Most *ex post facto* assessments of individual interventions point to the use of overwhelming force as a major factor in successful operations, and the lack of adequate force as a major factor contributing to mixed results for failures. This conclusion leads some analysts to argue that the United States should avoid operations where limitations are put on the use of force, as in the current case of Kosovo. Nevertheless, some analysts who compare interventions, suggest that there are ways to make the threat and use of force more credible, and more effective, and thus enhance the possibilities of success in “limited force” interventions.

Other CRS reports are: *Use of Force by the United States*, CRS Report 92-757 (available on optical disk); *U.S. Military Operations, 1965-1994 (Not Including Vietnam): Data on Casualties, Decorations, and Personnel Involved*, CRS Report 94-529 F; and, *The War Powers Resolution: Twenty-Two Years of Experience*, CRS Report 96-476.

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Military Intervention by U.S. Forces from Vietnam to Bosnia: Background, Outcomes, and “Lessons Learned” for Kosovo

The congressional debate on Kosovo has raised interest in previous cases where the United States military has intervened in other countries, and in the lessons that such interventions teach for the use of force in such cases as Kosovo. This report provides pertinent information on eight important U.S. military interventions using force: Vietnam (1961-1973), Lebanon (1982-1984), Grenada (1983), Panama (1989-1990), Iraq (1990-1991), Haiti (1994-1996), Somalia (1992-1994) and Bosnia (1992-present). It also provides information on one strictly humanitarian intervention in Rwanda (1994). These are operations that have occurred within the past 30 years and are invoked as comparisons to the situation in Kosovo with regard to purposes, conduct, outcomes, and “lessons learned.”

The report provides a chart of the most pertinent data (Table 1), summarized in the overview. The overview section also summarizes the “lessons learned,” particularly the lessons for the use of force, from each case, and discusses the implications for future operations, including Kosovo. The overview section is followed by a synopsis of each operation, which summarizes the situation in which U.S. military forces were deployed, the size and length of deployment, the number of U.S. military personnel killed in or as a result of hostilities, and whether the U.S. undertook action alone or in coalition with other nations. Other information includes the rationales, purposes, and/or interests involved in a deployment, and whether there was a U.N. or other international mandate,¹ and a congressional authorization for the action.

The cases from Vietnam through the Persian Gulf War draw heavily for the description of events and the lessons learned from CRS Report 92-757, *Use of Force by the United States*, coordinated by Mark Lowenthal and (name redacted) ,

¹The U.N. provided peacekeeping forces for some of these operations. Some of these U.N. operations were authorized under Chapter VII of the U.N. Charter, which provides the U.N. Security Council with a range of responses to “threats to the peace, breaches of the peace, and acts of aggression.” They include measures not involving the use of force, such as economic sanctions, interruption of communications, and severance of diplomatic relations (article 41). They also include measures involving the use of force by air, sea, or land forces (article 42). Where this report cites Chapter VII authority for an operation, it refers to an authorization to use whatever means necessary, interpreted as the use of force, to achieve the goals set forth in Council resolutions.

October 14, 1992, CRS Report 92-757 (available on optical disk).² The synopses of these cases were kept relatively brief, as the reader can refer to this study for further information. Descriptions of the events of subsequent cases are presented in relatively more detail. The author drew on a variety of sources, including those listed in the Bibliography, for information on the U.S. military activities and lessons learned of cases from 1992 on.

Other CRS sources relied upon for most of these cases were: CRS Report 94-529 F, *U.S. Military Operations, 1965-1994 (Not Including Vietnam): Data on Casualties, Decorations, and Personnel Involved*, by (name redacted) and John C. Schaefer, June 27, 1994; and, CRS Report 96-476 F, *The War Powers Resolution: Twenty-Two Years of Experience*, by (name redacted), May 24, 1996. (The latter provides an extensive discussion of the provisions and requirements of the War Powers Resolution (P.L. 93-148), and the issues involved in its application.)³

Overview of Cases, “Lessons Learned,” and Implications for Congress

The United States has undertaken a variety of military interventions for a wide range of purposes since World War II, and with mixed degrees of success and failure. These interventions have involved numbers of U.S. military personnel ranging, at peak, from about 2,000 (Lebanon in 1982-1984) to over 500,000 (against Iraq in 1991, Vietnam in 1961-1973). The duration of U.S. deployments has ranged from months to years. The numbers of U.S. military personnel killed as a result of hostilities ranged from none thus far after over six years in Bosnia, to some 59,000 over 12 years of involvement in Vietnam. Congress has authorized only two of the deployments — Iraq and Vietnam — and the latter authorization was subsequently disputed. (Congress authorized the last 18 months of the 1982-1984 deployment to Lebanon.)

The stated purposes and the U.S. interests involved in these operations varied. All but one were undertaken for more than one reason. Iraq had the most clear-cut primary purpose — to reverse Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait — and involved the strongest U.S. interests — stability in a region vital to U.S. economic well-being. Protection of U.S. citizens was stated as a reason for intervention in two cases (Panama and Grenada). The need to maintain regional stability was cited or viewed as a reason for five of the operations (Bosnia, Lebanon, Grenada, and Vietnam, as well as Iraq). Economic interests, human rights, the restoration of constitutional order or the rule of law, and enforcing political or peace settlements, are among the other

²Includes sections on Vietnam by Mark Lowenthal and (name redacted), on Lebanon by Clyde Mark, on Grenada by (name redacted), on Panama by (name redacted), and on the Persian Gulf War by (name redacted).

³Data on the costs of these operations can be found in CRS Report 94-995 F, *Costs of Major U.S. Wars and Recent U.S. Overseas Military Operations*, by (name redacted) and (name redacted). Cost data on Bosnia is updated regularly in CRS Issue Brief 94040, *Peacekeeping: Issues of U.S. Military Involvement*, by (name redacted).

considerations for U.S. intervention. Rwanda was undertaken only to provide relief to millions of refugees in the midst of a civil war.

Most operations were undertaken in conjunction with other military forces. Only Panama was a unilateral U.S. action. All four interventions since 1990 (Bosnia, Somalia, Haiti, and Iraq) have been authorized by the U.N. Security Council. The four occurring before 1990 (Panama, Lebanon, Grenada, and Vietnam) were not.

Three of these interventions are generally regarded as successes (Iraq, Panama, Grenada), three as failures (Vietnam, Lebanon and Somalia), and three have had mixed results subject to varying interpretations (Haiti, Rwanda, and Bosnia).

“Lessons Learned”

All military interventions are accompanied by debate and analysis of the reasons for their success or lack thereof. The “lessons learned,” or predominant perceptions, of the results of each operation usually color the thinking and planning for the next operation. Most military thinkers caution that each intervention is unique, and the “lessons learned” from each operation, while useful in a general sense, may not be applicable or appropriate for every case of intervention. In addition, predominant perceptions may be based on misperceptions, leading to the wrong “lessons,” and perceptions that are not considered politically appropriate may not be raised to the level of a “lesson.” Still, the following generalizations can be made about the widely agreed upon “lessons learned” and other perceptions regarding the individual interventions cited in this paper.

- Successful interventions were ones in which the United States was willing to use the force required for the situation from the outset. For all interventions perceived as failures, the amount of force deployed and exercised fell considerably short of the force needed, in retrospect. (In addition, sometimes this force was applied gradually or “incrementally,” giving an appearance of hesitation or reluctance to its use.) This applies to both conventional operations where the goal was to win by inflicting a military defeat, as well as to instances where the intention was to use limited force. The “limited force” operations include interventions where the objective was to force parties to negotiate their differences, as well as peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations, where it was to ensure or enforce an agreed upon peace settlement.⁴ Other factors also influence the decision to constrain the use of force, including most notably geostrategic and geopolitical concerns, and perceptions about the depth of public support, and differences of opinion among the United States and its allies.
- Judgments concerning the amount of force necessary were considerably easier to reach in cases where the objective was to defeat an opposing armed force.

⁴This generalization is supported by the analysis of Peter Viggo Jakobsen, a Danish professor, in a systematic study of the Gulf Conflict, the Yugoslav wars from 1991 through 1995, and U.S. and international action on Haiti. See: *Western Use of Coercive Diplomacy after the Cold War: A Challenge for Theory and Practice*. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1998.

Judgments concerning the amount of force needed to present a credible threat to back diplomatic efforts to achieve a negotiated solution to a problem, and to create an environment conducive to a negotiated solution often erred on the conservative side. “Mission creep,” i.e., the perception that the intervening forces, once committed, get assigned ever greater military tasks, appear to result from a failure to anticipate the amount of military effort that would be required, or an unwillingness to commit sufficient forces and resources at the outset, even if the need had been anticipated, or unanticipated developments to which the military forces had to react.

- Successful interventions were largely either undertaken to restore the *status quo ante* which had been disrupted by an event, e.g., Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait, or were conducted on behalf of an existing and long-standing constitutional order with broad public support, e.g., to restore the constitutional order and the perceived winners of the elections in Panama. Even successful interventions can require substantial sustained assistance for reconstruction and for fortifying institutions whose integrity has been compromised by the usurper regime. Unsuccessful interventions attempted to establish a new order or support a relatively recently adopted new order which did not have a cultural or institutional basis or perceived legitimacy to sustain it and where the intervening forces left before such conditions were attained (e.g, Somalia and Lebanon), and where there was debate over whether such conditions were in our power to foster through intervention (e.g., Vietnam).
- Coalitions can offer great benefits — such as conferring international legitimacy on an operation — but they can also complicate its planning and implementation. Apart from the military problems of coordinating the activities of military personnel of several nations, coalition nations often have different interests at stake in an intervention, leading to different perceptions of the risks and benefits of various modes of intervention. These differences may undermine the operation, particularly if participating parties are viewed by the opponent as pursuing distinct objectives, or if disagreements arise about the appropriate use of force. Often, however, the United States has no option but to work with a coalition, as it needs access to bases and resources that only a coalition can provide. The “leadership” that many urge the United States to demonstrate is one means of managing a coalition to make its military operations more effective.
- Greater knowledge and prior evaluation of local conditions is essential to improving the chances of success, and may mitigate the force needed to attain desired results by enabling diplomats and intervention forces to better deal with a situation. Although rarely cited as a major problem in the literature on individual operations, the lack of knowledge and appreciation of the complexity of local social and political conditions is mentioned by some analysts as significantly contributing to the United States’ inability to manage some operations, particularly Lebanon and Somalia.⁵

⁵ Telephone conversation with William J. Durch, Senior Associate of The Henry L. Stimson
(continued...)

- Some situations may not be winnable with “limited” force because the opponent has a much greater interest in the outcome than the intervening parties, and thus is willing to sustain greater costs and to cede only in the face of a crushing defeat. Once committed to an intervention in such circumstances, the intervening party is faced with a Hobson’s choice: to bear much higher costs than originally anticipated, or to withdraw. While some analysts argue that withdrawal can be a desirable option if an intervening party fails to reach stated limited goals, others find that a withdrawal in one situation, with an accompanying perception of defeat, can make the threat of or the actual use of force less persuasive in future instances.⁶

Considerations for Applying the “Lessons”

Successful interventions, by definition, all had adequate force to accomplish the mission from the start. Unsuccessful, or failed interventions, suffered from an unwillingness, for a variety of reasons, either to commit or to use sufficient force, or from underestimations of the amount of force that would be required, according to many analyses. In conventional warfare, the standard has long been to use “overwhelming” or, in more recent terminology, “decisive” force. In Lebanon in the 1980s, and in the post-Cold war period, the U.S. military and other militaries have been deployed in limited numbers and for limited purposes, that fall short of that standard. This line of analysis suggests that policymakers must be prepared to commit a fairly substantial force and to incur risks when undertaking any operation where some degree of resistance is a possibility. Otherwise, interventions will inevitably become “quagmires” where forces will be forced to deal with “mission creep,” i.e., ratchet up the degree of force necessary, often too little too late, or to withdraw.

⁵(...continued)

Center. May 13, 1999. Also see: William J. Durch, ed., *U.N. Peacekeeping, American Politics, and the Uncivil Wars of the 1990s*. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1996. Here, Durch outlines seven “lessons learned from the Somalia operation, two of which concern the need for an improved ability to deal with local parties. Richard N. Haass points out that it may be difficult to eliminate uncertainty, but found that “unnecessarily large” gaps in knowledge led to mismanagement or tragedy in Lebanon, Somalia, Grenada and Haiti. See his book, *Intervention: The Use of American Military Force in the Post-Cold War World*. Washington, D.C.: The Carnegie Endowment, 1994.

⁶ One analysis found that, because of past actions, the United States already lacks credibility when it threatens force. Its authors state that there is “a generation of political leaders throughout the world whose basic perception of U.S. military power and political will is one of weakness, who enter any situation with a fundamental belief that the United States can be defeated or driven away. This point of view was expressed explicitly and concisely by Mohammed Farah Aideed, leader of a key Somali faction, to Ambassador Robert Oakley, U.S. special envoy to Somalia, during the disastrous U.S. involvement there in 1993-1995.” See: Barry M. Blechman and Tamara Cofman Wittes, *Defining Moment: The Threat and Use of Force in American Foreign Policy Since 1989*. The Foreign Policy Project, Occasional Paper No. 6, May 1998. [The Foreign Policy Project is a collaborative effort of the Henry L. Stimson Center and the Overseas Development Council.] www.stimson.org/usfp.

Nevertheless, as the United States began to contemplate a greater use of “limited force” in peace operations in the early 1990s, some analysts argued that the need for commitment of substantial force for even limited war or military operations presents policymakers with undesirable “all or nothing” options. U.S. experiences in Lebanon, Somalia, and Bosnia, when taken as “lessons” for future operations, seem to reinforce this policy dilemma. Some analysts judge, however, the more important factor may be the correct application of force. To such analysts, “quagmires” and “mission creep” can be attributed, in some circumstances, as much to the lack of knowledge about and the skill to deal diplomatically with a situation as to an initial reluctance or failure to commit appropriate force.

These analysts suggest two areas in particular where the United States and other nations can improve their ability to use force effectively. One is by enhancing the diplomatic efforts that guide the use of force, the other is by making the threat of force and the limited use of force more credible.

Diplomatic efforts may be enhanced in various ways. As mentioned in the previous section, some analysts believe that a greater knowledge of a situation is necessary not only to avoid committing too little force to an intervention, but also to improve diplomatic efforts. Greater knowledge could enable policymakers and diplomats to set more precise and realistic goals for negotiations. It also might help in one area where some analysts find that “limited force” operations have been diplomatically weak—the use of incentives. Some argue that the study of past operations with the intention of development of better “doctrine” on using the combination of force and diplomacy more effectively may provide the basis for more successful limited force operations in the future.⁷

Making the threat of force and the use of limited force more credible might also improve an intervention’s chances of success. The use of “limited” military force to add muscle to a diplomatic effort appears most likely to succeed if the opponent is convinced that he faces a force capable of inflicting costs that outweigh the benefits of resisting, defying, or breaking a negotiated settlement. The result of these operations has led many to conclude that the standard must apply to the potential **commitment** of forces to an operation, even if those forces are not actually **deployed**.

For United States policymakers, and those of most other democracies as well, making more credible the threat of force and the use of force in “limited force” situations presents several challenges.⁸ The first is how to rally and sustain public support when a decision has been made to commit force, as public support is one important factor in how credible a threat appears to opponents. In the United States, citizens are willing to bear the costs and casualties of military operations

⁷See Jakobsen, *op. cit.*, and Alexander L. George and William E. Simons, *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy*, 2nd edition. Boulder, Co.: Westview Press, 1994.

⁸ For greater discussion of this subject, see *Defining Moment, op. cit.*, and , *Interventions, op. cit.*

commensurate with the interests that they perceive to be involved.⁹ Over the course of an intervention, public support is often weak and difficult to sustain for interventions where vital interests are not perceived to be at stake, particularly if there are casualties. These include operations undertaken on behalf of such intangible and unmeasurable interests as regional stability, the defense of human rights (where the public will weigh the lives of American military personnel against the lives of foreign civilians), or even the protection or encouragement of democracy, which many policymakers and analysts across the political spectrum consider an important national security interest.¹⁰ Unless a greater national consensus develops on the desirability of defending such interests, policymakers must be willing to bear a fair degree of political risk and exercise considerable leadership to rally public support or to compensate for the lack of it in order to make a significant, sustainable, and credible commitment.

A second challenge is improving the ability of coalitions, either ad hoc or under international organizations, to work more effectively, as third-nation support is viewed as one element for the credible use of force. The conclusion of a few analysts is that in cases where significant force is to be exercised, a successful outcome will depend on one or a few major powers of a coalition taking a leading role and exhibiting a willingness to assume most of the risks.¹¹ This implies that once the United States commits to an operation, it must often commit to a leading, if not a leadership role. In such situations, however, it must be assured in advance that other members of the coalition would be willing to continue to provide needed assistance, such as access to territory from which to stage operations, as the level of force used is increased.

Finally, U.S. policymakers may have to continuously reexamine the goals they set for the use of force. All analysts cite a need to define clear military and political objectives at the outset of an operation. Still, as some analysts have observed, the introduction of military force can change the circumstances on the ground and create new situations. Thus, some analysts argue, policymakers must remain flexible in adjusting objectives as the situation changes, or as it is better understood.

Implications for Congress concerning Kosovo

As of mid-May 1999, the Yugoslav government's continuing (perhaps seeming) indifference to the effects of sustained air strikes has led to differences of opinion on the correct course for U.S. policy. On the one hand, some policymakers and analysts conclude that the United States could force the Yugoslav government to agree

⁹See: Eric V. Larson. *Casualties and Consensus: The Historical Role of Casualties in Domestic Support for U.S. Military Operations*. Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 1996.

¹⁰See: Holmes, Kim R. *The Foreign Policy Challenge: A Conservative Agenda*. The Heritage Foundation's Issues '98: The Candidate's Briefing Book series, and statements of George Shultz and Madeleine Albright in CRS Report 94-805 F, *The Use of Force: Key Statements by Weinberger, Shultz, Aspin, Bush, Powell, Albright, and Perry*, by (name redacted) and Nina Serafino, Updated December 5, 1995.

¹¹Jakobsen, *Western Use of Coercive Diplomacy, op.cit.*

through negotiations to an acceptable Kosovo settlement, including the return of refugees, if greater force were credibly threatened or applied, in particular the use of ground troops. This analysis is backed by observations from past interventions, particularly Iraq, where analysts observe that air power alone would not have achieved the objectives. (Although NATO used air power only in Bosnia, some analysts argue that the Bosnian and Croat action on the ground against Serb forces provided the necessary supplement to make air power effective.)

On the other hand, some analysts believe that the United States should not commit such substantial force to an area of limited U.S. interests, and argue that the United States should seek to exit as quickly as possible. One form of exit would be withdrawal. However, a precipitous withdrawal, which would be interpreted as a defeat, would reinforce the perception that the United States is unwilling to use its substantial power in pursuit of its goals. It could also contribute to a perception that the United States is unwilling or unable to exercise leadership.. Arguably, such an exit would perpetuate a vicious cycle where opponents feel increasingly confident in challenging the United States, requiring that the United States use greater force in the future to make its threats and uses of more credible. It may also have implications for the willingness of NATO countries and countries in other areas to participate in intervention coalitions with the United States in the future, and even for the survival of NATO as a meaningful institution.

A second exit strategy could be to develop a “containment” policy, which would isolate the Yugoslav government and take steps to guard against the creation of further instabilities in the Balkans from the presence of refugees. Although this might save the costs of continuing and perhaps escalated U.S. and NATO military action, a containment policy would also imply substantial costs to provide for refugees and perhaps for a long-term NATO military presence in the region.

A third approach would be to make diplomatic efforts to deal with the Kosovo situation more effectively, including the refinement of objectives. (Current efforts center on the formation of a unified international front, with an emphasis on Russia’s role as an intermediary with Belgrade.) Some analysts argue that the United States’ lack of knowledge about the political situation in Yugoslavia regarding Kosovo is reminiscent of the U.S. lack of knowledge in Lebanon and Somalia, and argue that greater awareness and appreciation of the political dynamics in Yugoslavia is needed to formulate realistic objectives for a settlement. Efforts to improve diplomacy would not necessarily alleviate the need to mount and maintain a credible threat or escalate the use of force in the long run, however. Even in the event of a negotiated settlement which allowed for the return of refugees, some analysts argue that it would be necessary to maintain a high level of force in and around Kosovo to protect returnees.

Table 1. Comparative Data

	Auspices/ Participants	# U.S. Forces (Peak, apprx.)	Period of Deployment	# U.S. Deaths from Hostilities	Congress Authorized?	U.N. Mandate?	U.S. Purposes/Interests	Outcome
Vietnam	Primarily U.S., with Australia, South Korea, New Zealand, Thailand, and Philippines	546,000	1961-1973	59,000	Yes	No	Ideological, Regional Stability, Containment of Soviet/Chinese Power	Withdrawal in unstable peace, eventual collapse of supported government
Lebanon	Coalition with Great Britain, France, Italy	1,900	Aug.-Sept. 1982; Sept. 1982-Feb. 1994	260*	No initially; Yes for last 18 months	No	Restoration of Constitutional Order, Regional Stability	Withdrawal in unstable situation, 6 years more of civil war, 1990 peace agreement
Grenada	Primarily U.S. with several Caribbean countries	8,800	Oct.-Dec. 1983	19	No	No	Restoration of Constitutional Order/Rule of Law, Regional Stability, Ideological, Protect U.S. Interests	Restored democracy, stability.
Panama	Unilateral	27,000	Dec. 1989 - Feb. 1990	23	No	No	Restoration of Constitutional Order, Rule of Law, Counter Drug Trafficking, Economic, Treaty Obligation	Restored democracy, stability
Iraq	U.S.-led coalition with European and Middle Eastern countries	541,000	August 1990 - mid-1991	147	Yes	Yes	Counter Aggression, Economic, Regional Stability	Reversed Iraqi aggression; continued efforts to contain hostile Iraq regime.
Somalia	U.S.-led coalition; U.N.; Unilateral	25,800	Dec. 1992 - March 1994	29	No	Yes	Humanitarian, Support a Peace Settlement	Withdrawal in midst of conflict, continued instability

* Most of these in a single bombing incident.

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	Auspices/ Participants	# U.S. Forces (Peak, apprx.)	Period of Deployment	# U.S. Deaths from Hostilitie s	Congress Authorized?	U.N. Mandate?	U.S. Purposes/Interests	Outcome
Rwanda	Unilateral	3,600	July - Oct. 1994	0	No	Yes	Humanitarian	Some humanitarian relief, withdrawal in midst of escalation of fighting, continued instability
Haiti	U.S.-led coalition; U.N.	21,000	Sept. 1994 - Feb. 1996	1	No	Yes	Restoration of Constitutional Order, Rule of Law, Human Rights, Support a Political Agreement, Stem Flow of Refugees, Protect U.S. Citizens	Restored constitutional order, short-lived democratic order, then considerable political instability
Bosnia	U.N.; NATO	16,500	July 1992, relief air drops; April 1993 - Present, air enforcement; Dec. 1995- Present, ground presence	0	No	Yes	Humanitarian Relief, Promote a Negotiated Peace Settlement, Regional Stability, Treaty Commitment	Humanitarian relief provided, peace agreement signed, implementation proceeding slowly with the continued presence of troops

Case Synopses

Vietnam

Description of the Conflict, U.S. Actions, and International Support. From 1961 through 1973, U.S. forces participated directly in attempts to quell the Viet Cong insurgency in South Vietnam. This insurgency was accompanied by a massive infiltration of communist North Vietnamese soldiers through neighboring Laos and Cambodia and supported by China and the Soviet Union. The United States had declined to become directly involved in French efforts to quell communist Viet Minh guerrillas in Indochina—the state which was partitioned into North Vietnam and South Vietnam by the 1954 Geneva agreement ending the French-Viet Minh war, although it played an advisory role. With the establishment of an independent South Vietnam, the U.S. assistance increased. U.S. ground troops engaged actively in combat from 1965 through 1972. From 1965-1968 U.S. planes attacked selected Viet Cong and North Vietnamese targets in Laos, Cambodia, and North Vietnam. From 1961-1965, and from 1972 through the U.S. withdrawal in early 1973 after a peace agreement was signed, U.S. combat activities were confined to combat airpower support for South Vietnamese actions. Geostrategic concerns, particularly the possible reaction of China, constrained the American effort from bringing the war more directly into North Vietnam until 1972, when the United States bombed Hanoi and mined North Vietnamese harbors after a major North Vietnamese invasion in order to put pressure on North Vietnam to resume peace negotiations.

At the peak of U.S. involvement, over 546,000 U.S. military personnel from all services were committed to Vietnam. Some 48,000 of them died in combat.

The United States had little support from other nations for its effort: Australian and New Zealand made troop and other contributions; South Korea, Thailand, and the Philippines contributed troops. There were no U.N. Security Council resolutions regarding the conflict in Vietnam, although the Security Council debated the issue in 1996.

U.S. Purposes and Interests. The stated U.S. purpose and interests for engaging in South Vietnam were usually ideological — saving South Vietnam from the spread of communism, and preserving its pro-West government. (The questionable democratic orientation and disagreements over that government's degree of popularity with the South Vietnamese people were a major source of domestic opposition to the war.) This position was backed by the geostrategic concerns that nearby countries were “dominoes” which would also fall to communism after South Vietnam, and that Soviet and Chinese expansion in the region would impede U.S. access to the Indian Ocean and threaten the United States' ability to defend its interests in the Pacific.

Presidential Notification and Congressional Action. In August 1964, after two U.S. ships reportedly were fired upon by North Vietnam, Congress approved the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution (P.L. 88-408), requested by the President. (Subsequently, it was established that one ship actually was fired upon by North Vietnam, but doubts remain about the other.) This resolution provided the President with full advance

approval “to take all necessary measures to repel any armed attack against the forces of the United States and to prevent further aggression,” and declared it a vital U.S. interest to maintain international peace and security in Southeast Asia. During the House debate, Members stated that the resolution was not an advance declaration of war and that the Administration assured them it did not constitute authority to launch an “all-out war.” The State Department subsequently interpreted it as an unequivocal grant of authority to the President to use the armed forces as he deemed appropriate for the defense of South Vietnam. This interpretation was the source of continuing controversy.

Assessments of the Outcome. Within two years after the U.S. troop withdrawal and the subsequent cut-off of military aid, the South Vietnamese government suffered two North Vietnamese invasions and collapsed in 1975. The two major critiques of U.S. policy and actions during the war — from those who attributed U.S. difficulties during the war to a failure to commit sufficient force to the operation and from those who believed the United States should withdraw because the South Vietnamese regime did not enjoy the popular support to prevail — both seemed borne out by the outcome.

Three “lessons” subsequently became part of the canon of U.S. use of military force, embodied in such statements as the “Weinberger Doctrine.”¹² The first was that U.S. forces should act with “decisive” or “overwhelming” force in conventional warfare against the appropriate targets — i.e., the source of the conflict, or in this case North Vietnam. Limits on the use of force, and its incremental escalation, should be avoided. The second was that the United States should not commit forces to conflicts where the objectives are not credible to the U.S. public. And, finally, it was widely held that Congress should debate and approve U.S. involvement in a major military conflict. From a military perspective, U.S. forces won the battles they fought in South Vietnam, and could have prevailed militarily against North Vietnam if the United States had demonstrated the political will to operate without time and force constraints in order to achieve a military victory.

Two other conclusions also became part of many analysts’ criteria in judging the advisability of U.S. intervention. One was that the United States should not engage in military action on behalf of political forces that do not enjoy widespread support among their own people. The Vietnam war also led to the questioning of the utility of U.S. technological superiority, particularly of air power, if the U.S. and its allies were not also willing to confront opposition forces on the ground.

Lebanon¹³

Description of the Conflict, U.S. Actions, and International Support. Some 1,200 U.S. Marines were deployed in late September 1982 as part of a U.S.-Italian,

¹²This was a set of six conditions for use of force set forth in 1984 by then-Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger. This and other statements on the use of force are discussed and reproduced in CRS Report 94-805 F, *The Use of Force, op. cit.*

¹³For current information on the situation in Lebanon and U.S. relations with that country, see CRS Issue Brief 89118, *Lebanon*, by (name redacted).

French and later British multinational force (MNF) — about 4,000 strong — in an attempt to stabilize Beirut. The Lebanese government requested the MNF to assist in reestablishing its sovereignty and authority, which had been seriously eroded by a civil war between Christian and Muslim groups beginning in 1975, the unwanted presence of Syrian and Palestine troops, and the Israeli occupation in June 1982. The MNF entered amidst the disorder and chaos exacerbated by the killing of President-elect Bashir Jumayyil, and the massacre of 700 Palestinians in refugee camps. This was the second MNF deployment sent to Lebanon, entering from September 24-27, just 10 days after the first had withdrawn. The first MNF of U.S., French, and Italian forces landed in Beirut in August 1982 to oversee the evacuation of soldiers of Syria and of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) trapped by the Israeli invasion, and left when that task was completed. The second MNF was brought to serve as an “interposition force” between Israeli forces and the Lebanese military and militias. The U.S. component soon began training the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) to disarm Lebanese private militias, and the United States provided assistance to the LAF.

As violence intensified throughout the second half of 1983, the MNF came under fire in September and responded with force, including firing from U.S. ships on Syrian gun positions, and military overflights of Beirut. On October 23, 1983, in a turning point for the United States, about 239 U.S. military personnel, mostly Marines, were killed at a Marine headquarters/barracks, and about 58 French soldiers were killed in their barracks, from terrorist bombs at each location. (About another 21 U.S. troops were killed in or as a result of combat action during the operation.) The United States increased naval gunfire and began air bombing missions with France and Britain in late 1983, and increased support to the LAF in early 1984. U.S. naval forces were given the authority “to provide naval gunfire and air support against any units in Syrian-controlled parts of Lebanon firing into the greater Beirut area,” as well as against those attacking U.S. forces or facilities. With the situation deteriorating further, the Marines were moved to warships offshore on February 7.

The mandate for the mission was spelled out in bilateral agreements negotiated between the government of Lebanon and the United States and the other countries participating in the MNF. The agreement with the United States stated that the agreement was “in conformity with the objectives” of U.N. Security Council Resolution 521 of Sept. 19, 1982. That resolution however, discusses only the possible expansion into the Beirut area of the United Nation’s Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) which had been first deployed in 1978 to stabilize the situation in Southern Lebanon by creating a buffer between Israeli and Lebanese forces. (UNIFIL continues to this day.) The Security Council provided no separate authority for the MNF in Lebanon.

U.S. Purposes and Interests. For the first deployment, President Reagan reported to Congress that the Marines would assist the Lebanese government with the withdrawal of Syrian-PLO forces, remaining for no more than 30 days. An unstated goal was to avoid further fighting between the Israelis and the PLO-Syrian forces. The stated U.S. purposes for the second deployment were less specific. The President reported to Congress that the MNF presence would “facilitate the restoration of Lebanese sovereignty and authority,” and allow the Lebanese Armed Forces to provide safety for persons in an unspecified “area” in pursuit of the U.S. objective of

restoring the “territorial integrity, sovereignty, and political independence of Lebanon.” This, according to analysts, would involve the disarmament or immobilization of private Lebanese militias, the withdrawal or neutralization of Israeli, Syrian and Iranian forces remaining in Lebanon, and an accommodation between Israel and Palestinians operating out of south Lebanon. The mandate for the MNF, as agreed to by the U.S. and Lebanese government, was to “provide an interposition force at agreed locations and thereby provide the multinational presence requested by the Lebanese government to assist it and the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) in the Beirut area.”

Presidential Notification and Congressional Action. Congress and President had continued disagreements over whether the War Powers Resolution should be invoked. President Reagan reported the first deployment without referring to it, despite a warning from the chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee that the deployment should be reported with specific reference to Section 4(a)(1) of the War Powers Resolution. The President also reported the second deployment without reference to the War Powers Resolution, stating that the Marines would not engage in combat unless attacked. In June 1983, Congress passed the Lebanon Emergency Assistance Act of 1983 (P.L. 98-43), requiring statutory authority for the President to significantly expand the number or role of U.S. military personnel in Lebanon. As a result of the continuing War Powers debate, on September 20, 1993, Congress passed a joint resolution (P.L. 98-119) authorizing the Marines to remain in Lebanon for 18 months. The resolution specifically invoked section 4(a)(1) of the War Powers Resolution.

Assessments of the Outcome.¹⁴ The first MNF was considered a success as it accomplished its defined mission and exited. The second MNF’s problems in Lebanon now appear to have foreshadowed the difficulties that would beset international peace operations after 1990. Assessments of the outcome at the time attributed the second MNF’s failure to the lack of a force of sufficient size to deal with the chaotic situation and adequately assist the Lebanese government, police, and army. Many critiques cited political problems, among them: (1) the vagueness of the objective and the lack of a clear concept as to when the mission would be accomplished, (2) a lack of political consensus and conflicting expectations among the contributing nations, (3) a lack of appreciation of the complexity of the situation and the lack of a sense of realism about events on the ground, (4) a failure to anticipate local reactions, and (5) ineffective diplomacy. A final widespread perception was that part of the failure was due to an insufficient, inflexible and unrealistic mandate that (1) tied the peacekeepers to one side of the conflict, making them appear biased toward the factions controlling the Lebanese government, and (2) was not adjusted when it became apparent that circumstances warranted it a change.

The problems with “force protection” measures were also studied. On the one hand, limitations on the area of operations of deployed forces, a measure taken at least in part to protect the troops, hobbled the MNF by preventing it from pursuing

¹⁴In addition to materials from CRS Report 92-757, this section draws upon John Mackinlay, *The Peacekeepers: An Assessment of Peacekeeping Operations at the Arab-Israeli Interface*. London: Unwin Hyman, 1989. Chapter Four.

attackers. On the other hand, force protection measures failed to forestall or mitigate the barracks bombing, the trigger event for the withdrawal of U.S. forces.

Grenada

Description of the Conflict, U.S. Actions, and International Support. On October 25, 1983, the United States undertook a defacto unilateral invasion of Grenada, albeit with the participation of small contingents from members of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and other Caribbean countries. This action followed the death of Marxist President Maurice Bishop, head of the New Jewel Movement, in a violent intra-party coup. While the numbers of U.S. military personnel is uncertain, a Marine Corps force of about 1,800 and Army combat forces of as many as 2,300, encountered armed opposition from elements of the 700 Cuban and 6,500 Grenada forces stationed on the island. (Some 8,800 U.S. troops were involved ashore at the peak period.) Although it had been feared that fighting from the Cuban soldiers would be fierce, they offered limited resistance. Hostilities formally ended on November 2, a week after they began; most armed action had occurred during the first two days. Nineteen U.S. soldiers were killed in action or died of wounds sustained in battle. With U.S. objectives met, and the operation hailed as a success, most of the troops withdrew within two months. A small training and advisory group remained for another year and a half.

Many close U.S. allies criticized the invasion, and the United States was forced to veto a Security Council draft resolution condemning interference in the internal affairs of Grenada.

U.S. Purposes and Interests. The reasons stated for the mission were (1) concern for the safety of American citizens on the island, among whom were 600 students and faculty of St. George's University Medical School, (2) the "urgent request" from the OECS for U.S. assistance with the "developments of grave concern to their safety and peace" on Grenada, and (3) need to assist in restoring law and order in the absence of a legitimate government in control of the island. A geopolitical Cold War concern was also present, as the United States viewed Cuban assistance to Grenada with the construction of an airfield, naval base, munitions storage area, barracks, and a Soviet-style training area as another projection of Soviet power into the Caribbean.

Presidential Notification and Congressional Action. In the hours before the invasion, President Reagan informed congressional leaders of his decision at a White House meeting, and submitted a report to Congress "consistent with the War Powers Resolution" the day of the invasion. Congress took no action.

Assessments of the Outcome. *Urgent Fury* was counted as a success in achieving its stated objectives of protecting U.S. citizens and restoring law and order in Grenada. The U.S. decision to invade was accepted by Grenadians, despite its violation of sovereignty, because it deposed de facto leaders who had seized power by force from a popular president. The United States also provided substantial assistance to compensate for damages and to help rebuild the country. Great Britain and several Caribbean countries assisted with the reorganization of security forces.

The next president elected was decidedly pro-U.S. The United States thus accomplished an unstated objective — the removal of a possible theater of East-West conflict with few repercussions. The U.S. military learned many lessons to improve its ability for the services to work together in “joint” operations that improved their ability to perform in future missions, including *Just Cause* in Panama and *Desert Storm* against Iraq.

Panama¹⁵

Description of the Conflict, U.S. Actions, and International Support. On December 20, 1989, the United States unilaterally launched a surprise invasion of Panama, in the midst of the massive discontent inside and outside Panama over the continued rule of General Manuel Noriega, Commander-in-Chief of the Panamanian Defense Forces (PDF). Since Panamanians had first rallied against Noriega’s defacto rule in June 1987, the United States had tried various pressures — including economic sanctions — to force him to resign. The U.S. military intervention took place after the Panamanian legislature, controlled by Noriega, had declared that a state of war existed between Panama and the United States, and Noriega’s security forces had harassed U.S. personnel and dependents in Panama and killed one U.S. soldier. The United States brought in some 14,000 military personnel to augment the 13,000 who were stationed in U.S. military bases in Panama. Resistance by the 15,000- 19,000 member PDF (of which 3,500 were army troops, and most of the remainder police forces) was stronger than expected in some areas and non-existent in others. U.S. forces established control within a few days. Guillermo Endara, the apparent legitimate victor of the 1989 elections which Noriega had quashed, was rapidly installed as President. Noriega was located and arrested on January 3, 1990, and taken to the United States, where he was tried and convicted of drug trafficking. Twenty-three U.S. military personnel were killed in or as a result of the fighting, before the operation ended on February 13, 1990.

The Organization of American States passed a resolution which “deeply regretted” the intervention. A U.N. Security Council draft resolution deploring the U.S. intervention in Panama and demanding immediate withdrawal was vetoed by three permanent members (the United States, France and the United Kingdom).

U.S. Interests and Purposes/Presidential Notification and Congressional Action. President George Bush justified the action in a letter to Congress as necessary to protect 35,000 American citizens in Panama and to fulfill U.S. treaty responsibilities regarding the operation and defense of the Panama Canal. (Some analysts viewed the latter as a pretext.) Other objectives were to defend democracy, which Noriega curtailed by ignoring the results of a May 1989 election, and to combat drug trafficking with Noriega’s arrest. (Two U.S. federal courts had indicted Noriega for drug trafficking.) In the months before the intervention, Congress had debated the possibility of removing Noriega by force — indeed many Members had encouraged it and the Senate had approved a measure supporting the use of the military option — but Congress did not specifically authorize the action. The President did not consult

¹⁵For current information on Panama, see CRS Issue Brief 92088, *Panama-U.S. Relations*, by (name redacted).

with Congress prior to the invasion, but did notify them of it a few hours before it commenced. Subsequently, in February 1990, the House passed H.Con.Res. 262 stating that the President had acted “decisively and appropriately” in ordering the intervention.

Assessments of the Outcome. The operation was largely regarded as successful, as it restored the rule of law. Aside from the issue of an undetermined number of civilian casualties, Panamanians appeared to largely support it, as it resulted in the dissolution of the feared PDF. The United States was able to withdraw most of its forces fairly quickly, although the looting and disturbances immediately following the invasion pointed to the need to rapidly provide security and law enforcement forces. A recognition of the need for sustained support following even this successful and relatively short operation led the United States to provide some \$480 million during the first three fiscal years after the intervention to provide emergency relief to those people displaced by combat, to create jobs, and to strengthen Panama’s private and public sectors.

For military analysts, the air operations demonstrated the possibility of “precision bombing” with the new F-117A fighter-bomber aircraft, later used in Iraq, but also taught the limitations that climatic conditions could place on such operations in impeding the visual identification of targets. Analysts also noted that problems can occur when weapons are used in areas of civilian population, as incendiary rockets, launched from U.S. attack helicopters providing close air support to U.S. troops, ignited fires that burned down El Chorillo, a residential neighborhood in Panama City.

Iraq¹⁶

Description of the Conflict, U.S. Actions, and International Support. On January 16, 1991, the United States took the lead in a multinational military operation, *Desert Storm*, to force the Iraqi military to relinquish Kuwait, which it had invaded five months earlier. Six weeks of air and naval warfare against Iraqi military and industrial targets damaged Iraq’s military capability to counter the subsequent four-day ground campaign to liberate Kuwait. The United States committed some 541,000 military personnel to this war, which it carried out as the lead nation among an allied coalition of European (principally Britain and France) and Middle East states, which contributed another 200,000 forces. The allies played varying roles in the August 1990 *Desert Shield* buildup of forces in Saudi Arabia and surrounding areas to deter further aggression and in the war itself. At the time of the war, the Iraqi military was estimated by some analysts to be the world’s fourth largest armed force, well-equipped and seasoned by eight years experience in combat against Iraq. The Department of Defense estimated 547,000 Iraqi troops in the Kuwait theater at the time of the U.S. intervention, although later calculations placed the number as low as 183,000, one indication that Iraqi capabilities may have been substantially

¹⁶For current developments regarding Iraq and U.S.-Iraqi relations, see CRS Issue Brief 92117, *Iraqi Compliance with Cease-Fire Agreements*, by (name redacted), and CRS Issue Brief 94049, *Iraq-U.S. Confrontation: 1998-1999*, by Alfred Prados and (name redacted).

overestimated. When the war ended successfully on February 28, 1991, 147 U.S. military personnel had been killed in or as a result of hostilities.

Prior to the allied intervention, the U.N. Security Council had passed several resolutions penalizing Iraq for the invasion and demanding its withdrawal. On November 20, 1990, the Security Council authorized [S/RES/678 (1990)] the use of “all necessary means” to restore peace and security in the area unless Iraq complied with previous U.N. resolutions by January 15.

U.S. Interests and Purposes. The Middle East is considered a region of undisputed U.S. “vital interests,” i.e., the continuing supply of petroleum to the United States. In addition, the forceful seizure and occupation of another country is a clear violation of the U.N. charter, and a charter provision which the United States will act to defend. As many other countries share these interests, and as the Middle Eastern countries clearly felt directly threatened by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the United States had little problem in dedicating overwhelming force and persuading other nations to join a coalition which would pursue the objective, as announced by President Bush in August 1990, of ousting Iraq from Kuwait. However, other members of the coalition would not then support further attacks on Iraqi forces once they had evacuated Kuwait or the removal of Hussein from power, actions that some U.S. policymakers believed were necessary to protect regional security over the long run.

Presidential Notification and Congressional Action. In early October 1990, the House and Senate separately voted to support the initial deployments of which on August 9, 1990, President Bush reported the deployment of *Desert Shield* forces to Congress “consistent with the War Powers Resolution.” However, Congress expressed concerns in November when, in order to give the United States the ability to launch a ground offensive to liberate Kuwait, 150,000 more military forces were dispatched soon after Congress adjourned. When Congress reconvened, it passed a joint resolution (P.L. 102-1) on January 12, authorizing the use of military force to implement U.N. resolutions (but not issuing a declaration of war) against Iraq.

Assessments of the Outcome. By driving Iraq from Kuwait, the United States achieved its major objectives of countering aggression, securing the independence of Kuwait, restoring a critical level of security to the Gulf States, and protecting U.S. citizens. The operation was viewed as highly instructive in several respects. Among the military “lessons,” the operation demonstrated that (1) the use of overwhelming force can minimize the number of casualties, (2) the use of air power can provide a critical comparative advantage (although air power alone, without ground operations, could not have brought about the withdrawal of Iraqi forces), (3) decisive success on the battlefield allows for a prompt withdrawal of forces, and (4) sufficient time to deploy forces and an international environment in which forces can easily deploy to staging areas near the target can significantly affect the outcome of the operation. Among the political lessons gleaned from the operation were: (1) the successful use of force can enhance prestige and provide leverage in dealing with other issues in a region, (2) U.N. resolutions provide legitimacy necessary for coalescing domestic and international support, and (3) the strength of the coalition was due to a set of highly favorable circumstances, including a supportive international climate, nations willing

to provide staging areas for operations, and the quiescence of nations who might have been expected to oppose the operations.

Whether the operation can be counted as a complete success is debated, however, by those who judge that the operation should have pursued the war into Bagdad to depose Hussein, in order to remove his destabilizing presence from the region. However, the Bush Administration did not list this as an objective for several reasons. For its part, the Administration did not want to risk leaving a power vacuum in Iraq that could be exploited by Iran, and it did not deem it wise to undertake an operation of the magnitude that it judged would be necessary to overturn Hussein. In addition, the United States was dependent on the resources of the coalition partners, particularly the staging areas provided by Saudi Arabia, who viewed further action as potentially harmful to their interests. These partners, particularly Middle Eastern countries, questioned the wisdom of setting a precedent in the region of deposing an existing government, and did not want to create a situation which could require a long-term “outside” occupation presence in the region. For many analysts, this points to a last lesson: that even strong coalitions can dissolve once national interests begin to diverge.

Somalia¹⁷

Description of the Conflict, U.S. Actions, and International Support. On December 8, 1992, U.S. forces led the UNITAF (Unified Task Force) coalition in Operation *Restore Hope* to establish a secure environment for humanitarian relief operations in Somalia, where bandits and contending factions in the Somali civil war prevented the delivery of food and other supplies to some of the estimated two million starving Somalis. Some 37,000 military forces — 25,800 U.S. military personnel at peak, accompanied by some 9,000-12,000 from other nations — were deployed in southern and central Somalia between December 1992 and May 1993. At the time, they were believed to face threats mainly from individual acts of violence, although the threat from rival factions — who had political interests in disrupting shipments to their rivals — became clear once the force was deployed.

The U.N. Security Council authorized UNITAF on December 3, 1992 [S/RES/794 (1992)] to operate with a Chapter VII mandate under U.S. command. The existing U.N. peacekeeping operation, United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM I), had failed in its efforts to monitor a cease-fire and assist in humanitarian aid efforts.¹⁸ The United States planned to turn over military command to the United Nations once a secure environment was established; there were estimates that could occur within two to three months.

On March 26, 1993, the U.N. Security Council created UNOSOM II [S/RES/814 (1993)] as a Chapter VII operation with enforcement powers and a broad

¹⁷For information on the current situation in Somalia, see CRS Report RL30065, *Somalia: Prospects for Peace and U.S. Involvement*, by Theodoros Dagne, February 17, 1999.

¹⁸UNOSOM I operated from April 1992 to March 1993. The U.N. had authorized a strength of a few thousand, but it operated with far less. By December 1, 1992, UNOSOM I numbered only 655.)

mandate to disarm the factions, in accordance with provisions of their Addis Ababa agreements of January 1993. Among its tasks, UNOSOM II was charged with promoting political reconciliation, and reestablishing national and regional administrative, police, and judicial institutions. Deployed in May 1993, UNOSOM II consisted of 20,000 troops and 2,700 logistics elements. U.S. forces comprised some 1,900-2,900 of UNOSOM II; apparently most were combat support personnel assigned to the U.N. Logistics Support Command.

Other U.S. military personnel were part of the related U.S. unilateral operation, organized to support UNOSOM II, which began in March 1993. It was comprised of 1,100 plus soldiers in a quick reaction force (QRF) and, as of August 3, 1993, an Army Ranger task force. It was organizationally linked to the UNOSOM II mission, as the commander of the QRF, an Army major general, was also Deputy Force Commander of UNOSOM II.

The U.N. and U.S. forces came under direct attack beginning in June 1993 as, in what many in the United States viewed as an example of "mission creep," they pressed to demobilize and disarm the factions, and to apprehend those who were attacking relief efforts. Most importantly to the United States, 18 U.S. soldiers were killed on October 3, 1993, in a firefight with forces loyal to General Mohammed Aideded, the leader of the major faction in Mogadishu. Over October 3-4, however, U.S. forces killed some 500-1,000 of Aideded's men. As a result of the U.S. deaths, on October 7, President Clinton announced that the United States would withdraw all combat forces and most logistics units by March 31, 1994, even though from a military perspective the United States had won the battle. In all 29 U.S. military personnel were killed in or as a result of hostile action in Somalia. UNOSOM II left in March 1995, in the midst of continued instability.

U.S. Interests and Purposes/Presidential Notification and Congressional Action. Neither deployment received an authorization from Congress, although there was bipartisan support in the early phase of the deployment. On December 10, 1992, President Bush reported to Congress the deployment of troops consistent with the War Powers Act. He reported troops would engage in hostile action only as needed to accomplish their humanitarian mission and to defend themselves. When U.S. troops engaged in military action in June 1993, President Clinton reported that fact to Congress "consistent with the War Powers Act" and referred to President Bush's report. Congress did, in the Department of Defense Authorization Act for FY1994, express the sense that the President should seek and receive, by November 15, its authorization for any continued deployment. Instead, on October 13, President Clinton reported to Congress that he had fixed the March 31 deadline for the departure of U.S. troops. The report claimed success for the humanitarian mission and specified that the United States was providing logistics support and security, only for a limited time, to give the U.N. and other organizations' humanitarian and political efforts "a reasonable chance of success."

Assessments of the Outcome. Since the UN withdrawal in 1995, Somalia's rival factions have been unable to form a central government, and fighting has continued throughout much of the country. Many analysts perceive that this continued instability ranks this first attempt at a forcible humanitarian intervention as a failure, although some point to limited successes in that many lives were saved.

Although many aspects of the intervention are criticized and many lessons are drawn from its shortcomings, many analysts point to the greatest problem as a mismatch of mandate and resources, in particular a serious lack of the appropriate level of force deployed and used, from the outset on, to deal with both the mandates of the operation and the conditions in the country. The reasons given for this are varied, and not all are universally agreed upon, but the problems mentioned most often can be summarized by the following six points: (1) a lack of U.S. or other major power attention and commitment to the matter, (2) a reluctance by the United States to devote adequate force, despite widespread support for the humanitarian mission, because of a fear of casualties and the perception that U.S. interests were tenuous; (3) a lack of appreciation of the underlying political causes of the famine which triggered the intervention and of the political forces at play; (4) a lack of understanding that a humanitarian intervention would affect the political dynamics in the country and exacerbate the conflict; (5) inconsistencies in the objectives, and a lack of coherence in the planning and actions among the many parties that participated in the various operations; and (6) a failure to provide incentives for the rival factions to take the steps leading to peace, particularly incentives to disarm and demobilize. This operation also contributed to the widespread perception that the United Nations, as currently constituted, was not equipped to lead operations that required the systematic application of force.

Rwanda

Description of the Conflict, U.S. Actions, and International Support.

Operation Restore Hope, the three-month U.S. humanitarian intervention in Rwanda which began July 22, 1994, was launched to assist non-governmental and international organizations providing relief to refugees from the Rwanda civil war and to assist with the deployment of U.N. peacekeeping troops. Troops with the U.N. Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR) had originally deployed in October 1993 as a lightly-armed and equipped peacekeeping force of about 2,500 to assist with the implementation of the August 1993 Arusha Peace Agreement. This agreement between the insurgent Tutsi-based Rwanda Patriotic Front (RFP) and the Hutu-dominated government had been brokered by international mediators to end civil war that had wracked Rwanda since 1990. It provided for the establishment of an interim government that would include Tutsis prior to 1996 elections.

In April 1994, with the death of Rwanda's Hutu president when his plane was shot down approaching the Kigali airport, extremist elements and their militia allies began to systematically murder Tutsis and moderate Hutus. By July 1994, an estimated 500,000 - 800,000 of them had been killed, while UNAMIR troops stood helplessly by. At the height of the genocide, all but a few hundred UNAMIR troops were withdrawn after 10 Belgium UNAMIR peacekeepers were shot while guarding the moderate Hutu Prime Minister.

Attempting to deal with the crisis, the U.N. Security Council had authorized an increase in UNAMIR strength to 5,500 in May 1994, but the volunteered contingents from African and four non-African nations were inadequate to deal with the crisis, according to some analysts. As a result, the U.N. authorized two unilateral missions—one from France and one from the United States—to assist under a Chapter VII mandate.

France began its two-month, 2,300-strong military relief mission, *Operation Turquoise*, in June 1994. The French operated largely in southwestern Rwanda, where they established a protected zone, barring the entry of the RPA, to which Hutus fled as the Tutsis took over the government in June and July. This zone sheltered some 1 million people by the time the French announced they would pull out.

The United States dispatched its military personnel the late July 1994. At peak in mid-August, U.S. military personnel involved in the mission totaled 3,600, most of whom were deployed outside of Rwanda. Initial plans called for U.S. personnel to operate in Kigali, but were changed when the Tutsi government took over and the United States declined to recognize it. As a result, U.S. forces centered their mission initially on the refugee camps in Goma, Zaire. These camps had taken in an estimated 850,000 Rwandans, mostly Hutus, of the estimated two million who had fled to neighboring countries. In Goma, U.S. forces aided non-governmental and international organizations in the delivery of food and other humanitarian relief, and in providing clean water.

A smaller detachment of U.S. forces subsequently deployed to protect the Kigali airport in order to protect humanitarian shipments and supplies. When French troops departed southwestern Rwanda, U.S. forces transported UNAMIR troops there to guard the protected zones when the French departed. U.S. troops were perceived by some analysts as operating under a certain level of risk from the random violence of a nearly lawless situation in Goma. In Kigali, as the Tutsi rebel army became the government army, it maintained order and provided protection. Except for the small number of U.S. troops assigned to the operating center which was to coordinate with non-governmental and international organizations, U.S. forces were restricted to the airport.

U.S. Interests and Purposes/Presidential Notification and Congressional Action. President Clinton reported, on April 12, 1994, the deployment of combat-equipped U.S. forces “consistent with the War Powers Resolution” to Burundi to assist with the evacuation of U.S. Embassy personnel and citizens from Rwanda. The president made no further report on deployments to or connected with the Rwanda situation, nor did Congress take any action on the matter.

Assessments of the Outcome. Official U.N. and some U.S. analyses found that the humanitarian missions undertaken by the French and Americans had performed successfully when measured by their intended purpose of lessening human suffering. The U.S. military judged that deaths in the Goma camp dropped from 6,500 to 500 a day within two weeks of its arrival, and that the incidence of disease fell sharply.

Debate over the Rwanda case centers, however, not on the effectiveness of the humanitarian mission of saving people from death by starvation or disease, but on whether the international community could have done more to have prevented the forced exodus and murders of millions of people. A United Nations assessment observed that UNAMIR had not been provided the resources to address the situation in Rwanda and to fulfill its mandate. Some analysts argue that the Arusha peace process could have been salvaged if the UNAMIR had been adequately staffed and deployed during the two weeks after the Rwandan president was killed. An adequate

force would have consisted of at least 5,000 troops from militarily-advanced nations that can provide well-trained troops with all the necessary weapons and equipment to engage effectively in combat. This analysis led to the revival of calls for a U.N. standing force to deploy quickly into such situations. In its absence, many argue that countries like the United States, France, and Great Britain must, with their indispensable capabilities, take the lead to forestall or ameliorate such situations.

Haiti¹⁹

Description of the Conflict, U.S. Actions, and International Support. On September 19, 1994, U.S. soldiers began landing in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, to create conditions that would allow for the restoration of Haiti's first democratically-elected President, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, to office. Aristide had been overthrown in September 1991 by a military junta. A forceful invasion was called off, as U.S. forces were en route, when diplomatic efforts secured the military leaders' agreement to step down by October 15 and cede to Aristide in return for an amnesty. Because the military junta had agreed to leave power before U.S. troops landed, even the slim resistance anticipated by the 7,000-member Haitian Armed Forces did not occur, and U.S. troops entered unopposed. Some 21,000 U.S. military personnel were on the island by October 4, when soldiers from about another 20 nations began arriving to complete the multinational force which would oversee the transition and stabilize the country through the creation of new institutions. Three months after the landing, one U.S. soldier was killed as the result of a hostile action.

The military intervention followed three years of international efforts — including negotiations sponsored by the United Nations and the Organization of American States — to restore Aristide to office. On July 3, 1993, the junta agreed, in the Governor's Island accord, to step down on October 15 of that year and allow Aristide to return 15 days later. The United States sent 200 troops to Haiti on the *Harlan County* to monitor Aristide's return to power, when it was becoming clear that the junta would not comply with the accord, but the ship was turned back on October 11 in the face of pro-junta demonstrators on the dock. The international community subsequently offered the junta incentives and reimposed sanctions, to no avail.

The U.S.-led multinational force that finally intervened, more than a year after the junta broke the Governor's Island accord, operated under a U.N. Security Council [(S/RES 940 (1994)] Chapter VII authorization "to use all necessary means to facilitate the departure from Haiti of the military leadership." This resolution had been approved on July 31, 1994, almost two months before the invasion. It turned control of the operation over to the 6,000-strong U.N. Mission in Haiti (UNMIH) at the end of March, 1995. Some 2,400 U.S. forces remained to participate in the U.N. peacekeeping operation; others remained to perform related functions, leaving by February 1996.

U.S. Interests and Purposes/Presidential Notification and Congressional Action. Although U.S. interests were not perceived as high enough to intervene for

¹⁹For information on the current situation in Haiti, see CRS Issue Brief 96019, *Haiti Under President Preval: Issues for Congress*, by (name redacted).

more than two years after Aristide's overthrow, this perception changed among some policymakers because of the problems created by the growing number of Haitian refugees. On September 18, 1994, President Clinton reported to Congress the objectives of the U.S. deployment, under Section 8147 (c) of the DOD Appropriations Act for FY1994 (P.L. 103-139). The goals were to restore the legitimate, democratically elected authorities, create a secure climate in which democratic processes could operate, dismantle the "old instruments of repression," and help create new institutions or replace corrupt ones, most importantly the police force and the judicial system. They also included confiscating and registering weapons, providing security during June 25, 1995 parliamentary elections, restoring and providing public services and constructing roads and sanitation facilities. On September 21, 1994, the President reported that the deployment would be increased, consistent with the War Powers Resolution. The President did not seek prior congressional authorization for the Haiti deployment, and Congress could not agree on adopting a binding prior authorization requirement.

Assessments of the Outcome. Lessons were learned from both the attempted 1993 and successful 1994 military actions. The *Harlan County* fiasco, where U.S. power was demonstrably thwarted by hostile crowds, demonstrated to many analysts the dangers of fielding inadequate forces to deal with potentially hostile situations. It also illustrated the dampening effects of potential negative public opinion on policymakers' resolve when U.S. interests are not high. (The incident occurred shortly after U.S. soldiers were killed in Somalia.) The successful restoration of Aristide the following year through the threat of credible military force, after incentives and sanctions had failed, demonstrated for some analysts that threats of force may often be necessary to back diplomacy. Some also argue that the involvement of the OAS and the U.N. conferred a legitimacy on the operation that made it possible to muster domestic and international support.

Haiti's continuing political problems have led to conflicting interpretations of the ultimate value of the intervention. Although UNMIH ended in June 1996, the United Nations has fielded follow-up civilian missions to deal with Haiti's continuing institutional problems. It is currently assisting the police force there. Hoping to foster stability, the United States has maintained a U.S. military presence of a few hundred troops, mostly through short-term training missions, but in March 1999, the commander of the U.S. Southern Command urged that presence end because of the risk to those troops from political instability.

Haiti's failure, despite ample international assistance, to cement democratic procedures and institutions and to improve its economy more than five years after the U.S. military intervention, leads to varying interpretations of its value. Some analysts feel that the intervention affirmed that the United States was willing to take risks to promote democracy in the hemisphere, giving more hope that democracy will one day take hold than if the intervention had never taken place. To others, Haiti merely demonstrates the futility of spending resources to promote democracy in countries with little democratic tradition or culture.

Bosnia²⁰

Description of the Conflict, U.S. Actions, and International Support. The United States has played a significant role in the international effort to stabilize the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina and other parts of the former Yugoslavia since conflict broke out in 1991. In June of that year, two of Yugoslavia's six republics — Croatia and Slovenia — declared themselves independent. While Slovenia seceded after a brief conflict with Yugoslav forces, Serbs living in Croatia, aided by the Yugoslav People's Army, mounted an armed opposition. Fierce fighting ensued between Croatian and Yugoslav forces, and Yugoslav forces captured significant territory from Croatia. (The Croats subsequently drove the Yugoslavs out of this area, the Krajina region, in fighting during 1995, see below.) The United Nations brokered a cease-fire in Croatia, and in February 1992 sent an international force — the United Nations Protection Force, or UNPROFOR — to monitor it. UNPROFOR was subsequently deployed in June 1992 to Bosnia-Herzegovina, where intense conflict had broken out between ethnic Serbs, Muslims and Croats, and, in December 1992, to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to protect it from the spread of fighting elsewhere. The United States contributed relatively few troops to UNPROFOR. (Over 38,000 military personnel participated, of which the United States contributed under 1,000 to serve in Macedonia and Croatia.)

The initial U.N. mandate to implement a peacekeeping plan was contained in Security Council Resolution 743 (1992). Subsequent resolutions expanded and extended that mandate, and provided various authorities governing UNPROFOR's use of force in Croatia and Bosnia. In some, the Security Council invoked Chapter VII.

The U.S. military took a leading role in the NATO air operations over Bosnia, which provided UNPROFOR with information collected by reconnaissance aircraft (AWACs), supervised the established no-fly zones, and supported UNPROFOR when its ground troops came under attack. The U.N. Security Council authorized the use of air power under Chapter VII in June 1993 (S/RES/836) to protect six safe areas in Bosnia & Herzegovina, and to support UNPROFOR in the performance of its mandate. NATO planes downed four Bosnian Serb planes violating the no-fly zone in February 1994, and undertook limited air strikes in August, September and November of that year. In 1995, NATO planes carried out massive air strikes to rout Bosnian Serb positions around Sarajevo in May and to defend the U.N. Protected Zone in the Srebrenica area in July.

²⁰For more information on the current situation in Bosnia, on presidential and congressional action concerning the former Yugoslavia, and on the deployments themselves, see the sources cited in the introduction and bibliography, and: *Bosnia: Key Presidential and Congressional Actions Relating to War Powers Since August 1992*, by (name redacted), CRS Report 95-1190 F, December 12, 1995; *War Powers Resolution: Presidential Compliance*, by (name redacted), CRS Issue Brief 81050, updated regularly, and *Bosnia-Former Yugoslavia and U.S. Policy*, by Steven J. Woehrel and (name redacted), archived CRS Issue Brief 91089.

With the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement for Bosnia on December 14, 1995, NATO took over the ground operation from UNPROFOR to enforce the settlement. The United States contributed a greater proportion of the NATO ground operation (the Implementation Force or IFOR) — some 16,500 ground troops compared to 37,500 from other countries— and a similar proportion to the next NATO operation (the Stabilization Force or SFOR, from December 1996 to the present) — 6,200-6,900 ground troops compared to 24,000 from other countries. IFOR and SFOR have also had air components; U.S. participants in this number about 900. The United Nations Security Council authorized IFOR in December 1995 [S/RES/1031 (1995)] and SFOR in December 1996 [S/RES/1088 (1996)] and June 1998 [S/RES/1174 (1998)], all under Chapter VII.

Thus far, no U.S. military personnel have been killed as a result of hostile action in any of the Bosnia-related operations in which they have been deployed, but at least one has died as a result of a land mine accident.

U.S. Interests and Purposes. The Clinton Administration has consistently stated that U.S. action in the countries that formerly comprised Yugoslavia is undertaken as part of its commitment to NATO in the interest of preserving stability in Europe. Many fear that continuing conflict in the Balkans, fueled by ethnic and religious rivalries, will spill over into neighboring countries with the arrival of refugees, and undermine the cohesion of the NATO alliance. The Administration also states that U.S. participation is necessary to fortify NATO, by helping to maintain its credibility and its continued relevance.

Presidential Notification and Congressional Action. President Clinton has reported U.S. troop deployments and incidents of the use of force in the area to Congress “consistent with the War Powers Resolution,” beginning in April 1993, with the dispatch of forces to participate in the NATO air enforcement effort. Congress has never specifically authorized U.S. military deployments in the area. Congress has also considered, but not passed, various measures to block funding, or deployments. The House and Senate, however, have separately passed various measures dealing with troop deployments to the Balkans.

Assessments of the Outcome. The lengthy international involvement in Bosnia has led to an evolving series of “lessons learned” from the various component operations. The early years of the Bosnia situation, from the deployment of UNPROFOR in 1992 through the early airstrikes in 1994, were widely viewed as failures. Virtually all analysts agree that UNPROFOR’s assigned missions — from the delivery of humanitarian relief “by all necessary means” to the protection of safe havens — greatly exceeded the resources committed, particularly the use of force at least for defensive purposes if not for outright enforcement. UNPROFOR’s credibility, and the credibility of the entire effort, was quickly undermined by contributors’ unwillingness to provide and use sufficient force to accomplish those missions, according to many analysts, although there is no agreement on the level of force that would have been desirable. The norm of U.N. peacekeeping operations that peacekeeping forces should be impartial (also one of the “lessons learned” in Lebanon during the 1980s), was viewed in retrospect as an inappropriate posture when various parties were still engaged in conflict in violation of Security Council resolutions.

The multilateral nature of the operation and the combination of a U.N. operation with the air power of a coalition of major powers were highly problematic, determined by the lack of coherence on objectives, the lack of coordination in its efforts, and the perception that although costs were to be shared some participants were at greater risks than others. Among U.S. analysts, this led to the widespread perception that the United Nations was unable to led operations which required a significant use of force and that such operations should be delegated to regional organizations or ad hoc coalitions.²¹ For many analysts, the mismatch of resources and application of insufficient force only prolonged the intervention, and made impossible the achievement of a desirable outcome.

Success in achieving the Dayton Peace Accord in December 1995 is usually credited to decisions to bring outside credible force to bear on the Bosnian Serbs and their Yugoslavian allies. From the international community came the creation of the British Rapid Reaction Force in June 1995 and French pressures for NATO airstrikes in July and August of that year. For some analysts, this British and French leadership and political will to use sufficient force provided the crucial pressure that made possible the diplomatic success at Dayton. In addition, local forces opposed Serb military gains, with the Croats ousting the Serbs from Krajina in mid-1995, and the Bosnian Croats taking an offensive against the Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1995 before the airstrikes. The Bosnian Croats and the government forces gained territory in September 1995 through the direct intervention of the Croatian army in Bosnia, which altered the military balance. All of these on-the-ground operations were viewed as putting pressure on Serbian forces.

The ultimate value of U.S. and international intervention in Bosnia and the Dayton accords is a matter of debate, however. Some analysts view the three-year NATO presence as accomplishing little, pointing out that Bosnians have not been able to implement many provisions of the Dayton agreement and that Bosnia “shows few signs of becoming a viable country...”²² Others believe that a more positive result may have been possible if credible force had been committed much earlier in the operation.

²¹This was not a universally shared perception. Two analysts from the London School of Economics and Politics, studying the problems in operations in the former Yugoslavia prior to 1994, argued that “the regional organization should normally act as the agent of the UN, always within a mandate approved in the Security Council, but subject to closer and more direct control as the scale of military intervention moves from that appropriate to traditional peacekeeping toward enforcement. Enforcement should always be managed by the global organization.” Spyros Economides and Paul Taylor. “Former Yugoslavia,” in *The New Interventionism: 1991-1994*, edited by James Mayall. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1996, p 92.

²²Alan Tonelson and Ted Galen Carpenter, *Peacekeeping: Anatomy of a Failure*. Los Angeles Times. March 14, 1999.

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²³As noted earlier, much of the material in the Vietnam, Lebanon, Grenada, Panama, and Iraq cases are drawn from CRS Report 92-757 F. See that report for bibliographies on those cases.

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