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Leading Peace Operations: Turkey's Experience

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Assoc. Prof. Dr. Uğur Güngör
Department of International Relations
Başkent University

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About the Author

Dr. Uğur Güngör graduated from Military Academy in 1991. Dr. Güngör holds a master's degree in Political Science and International Relations from Boğaziçi University. He received his Ph.D. degree in International Relations from Bilkent University. He made post doctorate study in Princeton University in 2011-2012.

Dr. Güngör served in ISAF mission in Afghanistan in 2010-2011. He served as International Relations Advisor of the Chief of Turkish General Staff between 2008-2011.



He worked at the Center of Excellence Defence Against Terrorism (COEDAT) during the years of 2012-2014. In 2014-2015, he served as the political advisor of Turkish Army Commander. He retired from Turkish Army in 2015 as full Colonel.

He is currently Associate Professor of International Relations, Director of the School of Foreign Languages and Board Member of Strategic Research Center of Başkent University.

He also teaches International Relations and Security at Military Academy, Center of Excellence Defence Against Terrorism, Partnership for Peace Training Center and the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Diplomacy Academy.

He has published several articles and book chapters on peace operations and Turkish foreign and security policies.

He is married and has two children.

Abstract

This policy brief focuses on Turkey's leadership in peace operations in Somalia (UNOSOM II) and Afghanistan (ISAF II and VII). It explains the events leading to the establishment of these operations, provides a brief history, and explores their mission in order to provide a better understanding of Turkey's leadership and the operations themselves. Then, the brief examines the organization and activities of these operations under Turkey's leadership. This brief also aims at analyzing the significance of Turkey's leadership.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AOCC	Afghanistan Operation Coordination Center
AOR	Area of Responsibility
CIMIC	Civil-military Cooperation
COCOM	Combatant Command
COMISAF	Command of Commander of International Security Assistance Force
CTF 151	Combined Task Force 151
EU	European Union
EUPOL	European Union Police Mission
GOA	Government of Afghanistan
IA	Interim Administration
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IFOR	Implementation Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
KFOR	NATO Kosovo Force
KMNB	Kabul Multinational Brigade
MNMCC	Multinational Movement Coordination Center
MONUC	UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
MTA	Military Technical Agreement
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
OUP	Operation Unified Protector
RCC	Regional Command Capital
RSM	Resolute Support Mission

SFOR	Stabilization Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina
STANAVFORMED	Standing Naval Force Mediterranean
TA	Transitional Administration
TAAC(C)	Train, Assist, and Advise Command Capital
TAF	Turkish Armed Forces
TBTF	Turkish Battalion Task Force
TCN	Troop Contributing Nations
TGNA	Turkish Grand National Assembly
TIPH	Temporary International Presence in Hebron
UN	United Nations
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNAMID	UN-African Union Mission in Darfur
UNIFIL	UN Interim Force in Lebanon
UNITAF	Unified Task Force
UNMIBH	UN Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina
UNMIK	UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo
UNMIS	UN Mission in Sudan
UNMISET	UN Mission of Support in East Timor
UNOSOM	UN Operation in Somalia
UNSC	UN Security Council
UNSOM	UN Assistance Mission in Somalia
UNTAET	United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor

Leading Peace Operations: Turkey's Experience

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Uğur Güngör

Introduction

Since its foundation as a republic, Turkey has consistently pursued a foreign policy aimed at international peace and security. Turkey has supported peace initiatives by the UN and other regional organizations such as NATO, the EU, and the OSCE in order to maintain international and regional peace and security. Within this framework, Turkey's participation in UN military operations started in 1950, when it participated in the Korean War with a brigade. Between the years 1950-1953 a total of 15,000 Turks served in Korea on a rotational basis.

Since that time, UN peace operations have been a distinctive feature of Turkey's security and foreign policies. Following the Cold War, Turkey's involvement in peace operations increased. Since 1988, Turkey has joined actively in various peace operations with different observation functions as well as with military contingents. Turkey currently participates in EU Operation ALTHEA (Bosnia-Herzegovina) (2004-), the NATO Kosovo Force (KFOR) (1999-), the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) (1999-), the Resolute Support Mission (RSM) in Afghanistan (2015-), the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) (2006-), the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) (2013-), and the Combined Task Force 151 (CTF 151).¹

In the Balkans, with a view to finding a solution for the Bosnia and Herzegovina conflict, Turkey assigned a regiment-level task force to the UN Protection Force in Bosnia-Herzegovina (UNPROFOR), which was organized between 4 August 1993 and 20 December 1995 in order to first create safe zones and then protect them. Turkey's more active peacekeeping policy has not been limited to UN-led peace operations. It also participated in such UN-authorized NATO operations as the Implementation/Stabilization Force (IFOR/SFOR) in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Once NATO charged the implementation of the

Dayton Peace Agreement (14 December 1995), first IFOR, and then SFOR was formed, and an operation was conducted in the region. Turkey raised its regiment assigned to UNPROFOR to brigade level through reinforcements and assigned it to IFOR as of 20 December 1995. Following the completion of the IFOR operation on 20 December 1996 and assignment of the SFOR operation, this brigade was assigned to the Stabilization Force. The SFOR mission was handed over to the ongoing EU Force-led ALTHEA Operation on 2 December 2004.

In parallel with the UNPROFOR and IFOR Operations, the Shape Guard Operation was executed by the Standing Naval Force Mediterranean (STANAVFORMED) in the Adriatic Sea to support the arms embargo and economic sanctions on the former Yugoslavia. The Turkish Navy contributed to the Sharp Guard Operation between 13 July 1992 and 2 October 1996, and the Turkish Air Force joined NATO's Operation *Deny Flight* in Bosnia and Operation *Allied Force* in Kosovo with one F-16 squadron deployed in Italy. Following the conflict in Albania, the UN formed a multinational force in 1997 under Italy's leadership, handing authority over to the OSCE. Turkey contributed to this force with amphibious ships and frigates from 16 April to 01 August 1997. Turkey also contributed to the OSCE Kosovo Verification Mission (1999), the UN Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) (2001-2002) and various operations in Macedonia– Essential Harvest, Amber Fox, Allied Harmony, Concordia and Proxima (2001-2005).



In the Middle East, Turkey was concerned about local sources of regional instability, such as the dangers of religious and nationalist radicalization, terrorism, and the Arab-Israeli conflict. Therefore, Turkey had a great interest in peace and stability in the region. Within this framework, Turkey contributed to the UN Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group (1988-1991), which was formed to supervise the compliance of both sides with the cease-fire agreement and to monitor the withdrawal of troops; the UN Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (1991-2003) to deter border

violations and report hostile acts observed in the demilitarized area on the Iraq-Kuwait border; and Operation *Provide Comfort/Northern Watch* after the Gulf War of 1990-1991 (1991-2003). Turkey was also included in the international observer mission, Temporary International Presence in Hebron (TIPH) (1997-2008), established for the purpose of monitoring and reporting the evacuation of the city of El-Halil (Hebron) on the West Bank by Israeli forces and its transfer to the Palestine National Administration.

In the Caucasus, Turkey assigned personnel to the UN Observer Mission in Georgia from 1994 to 2009. Turkey also contributed with personnel support to the Border Monitoring Operation in Georgia, which was established due to the flow of refugees resulting from the Russian Federation's operation in Chechnya on the Georgia-Chechnya border from February 2000 to December 2004. The mission was expanded by changing its tasks and responsibilities in 2004. In this framework, Turkey assigned personnel to the mission that was organized by the OSCE to monitor the developments in Georgia during the period between June 2006 and 2009.

Turkey also contributed to the operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) (1993-1994), the former United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) and later on the UNMISSET (United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor) (2000-2004), the EUPOL Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Kinshasa) (2006-2007), the UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) (July-November 2006), the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) (2005-2011), the UN-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) (2006-2011), Operation Unified Protector (OUP) (March-October 2011), the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan (2002-2015), the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) (2012), and Operation Ocean Shield in the Gulf of Aden (2014-2016).

In addition to these efforts for the promotion of peace, security and stability in its environment, Turkey assumed the command of the peace operations in Somalia (UNOSOM II, 1993-1994) and in Afghanistan (ISAF II, 2002-2003 and ISAF VII in 2005).

This policy brief will focus on peace operations commanded by Turkey. It will first explain the events leading to the establishment

of these operations, provide a brief history, and describe their mission in order to provide a better understanding of Turkey's leadership and the operations themselves. Then, the organization and activities of these operations under Turkey's leadership will be examined and the significance of Turkey's leadership will be analyzed.

United Nations Operations in Somalia (UNOSOM I and UNOSOM II)

There was a violent fragmentation in Somalia following the downfall of President Siad Barre in 1991. A civil war broke out between two factions - those supporting Interim President Ali Mahdi Mohamed and those supporting General Mohamed Farah Aidid.² A single ethnic group sharing the same religion, history and language split into heavily armed clans. The fighting resulted in widespread death and destruction, forced hundreds of thousands of civilians to flee the country. Throughout the country, almost 4.5 million of the 6 million Somalis were estimated to be threatened by hunger and disease. Some 700,000 Somalis had sought refuge in neighbouring countries and another 300,000 were exiled elsewhere.³

The deterioration of the incidents of violence in Somalia compelled the UN to intervene in the country for humanitarian purposes. The UN, in cooperation with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and other organizations, sought to resolve the conflict. The UN, in cooperation with relief organizations, became engaged in providing humanitarian aid.⁴ The Security Council (UNSC) concluded in January 1992 that Somalia's internal situation itself "...constitutes a threat to international peace and security"⁵ and imposed an arms embargo against Somalia. However, all of these efforts were unable to stop the conflict, and on 24 April 1992, the SC decided to establish the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM I) with Resolution 751.⁶ It took more than three months to establish UNOSOM I. On 28 August 1992, the UN started the UNOSOM I operation with Resolution 775 to deliver humanitarian aid and to control the distribution of food.

UNOSOM I was an inadequate effort and ill-suited to tackle clan warfare and general violence.⁷ The relief effort was hampered by continued fighting and insecurity. In August 1992 the SC

decided to deploy some 3,000 additional troops to protect the humanitarian aid. But the situation continued to worsen, with aid workers under attack.⁸ UNOSOM I was kept from fulfilling its mission because of the inability or unwillingness of parties to honor agreements made with UNOSOM representatives. The UN succeeded in delivering only 9 percent of the food that arrived in the country.⁹ On 3 December 1992, after the situation in Somalia had further deteriorated, the SC, with resolution 794, determined that "...the magnitude of the human tragedy caused by the conflict in Somalia constitutes a threat to international peace and security".¹⁰

It authorized Member States to form a multinational operation, *Restore Hope*, called Unified Task Force (UNITAF), to establish a safe environment for the delivery of humanitarian assistance. It was a US-led, UN-sanctioned operation that included protection of humanitarian assistance and other peace enforcement operations. Eventually, Operation Restore Hope which was supported by 25,000 US troops and 10,500 troops from 23 other countries¹¹ began its intervention in Somalia on 9 December 1992.¹² UNITAF quickly secured all major relief centers, and by the year's end humanitarian aid was flowing again. UNITAF worked in coordination with UNOSOM I to secure major population centers and to ensure that humanitarian assistance was delivered and distributed. UNOSOM remained responsible for protecting the delivery of assistance and for political efforts to end the war.¹³

The Secretary-General recommended that the new UN operation in Somalia, which was under Chapter VII of the Charter, should be under UN command and control, though using elements from the headquarters that had already been established by the US-led force in Somalia.¹⁴ But incidents of violence against humanitarian operations and plundering of relief supplies continued and famine conditions kept on deteriorating. It subsequently became clear that the UNITAF would not succeed in establishing a secure environment. The UN Secretary-General therefore recommended an expansion in UNOSOM's mandate "...to secure or maintain security at all ports, airports and lines of communication required for the delivery of humanitarian assistance".¹⁵ At the end of March, the SC had increased the authorization to 28,000 UN soldiers and replaced UNITAF with a UN peacekeeping force that was established under Chapter VII

of the UN Charter with the mandate and armament necessary to enforce secure conditions for humanitarian operations. UNOSOM II was established in accordance with SC Resolution 814 of 26 March 1993, to take over the protection activities from the UNITAF.¹⁶

The SC authorized UNOSOM II to use whatever force was necessary to disarm Somali warlords who might refuse to surrender their arms, and to ensure access to suffering civilians. In subsequent months the security situation in the capital, Mogadishu, deteriorated. In June 1993 UN peace forces were involved in incidents in which they both suffered and inflicted severe casualties. On 3 October 1993, some US rangers deployed in Mogadishu in support of the UNOSOM II mandate, came under concentrated fire and 18 were killed and 78 were injured.¹⁷ Shortly thereafter US President Bill Clinton announced that US forces would withdraw by 31 March 1994. The remaining contingents in UNOSOM II were nervous about both their security and their ability to bring an end to the conflict in Somalia. They finally withdrew from Somalia under US protection in early March 1995.¹⁸ The removal of national units from UNITAF and subsequent withdrawals from UNOSOM further reduced the capability of UNOSOM II to undertake a military enforcement operation¹⁹ and the delivery protection of humanitarian relief supplies failed.

The mandate of UNOSOM I was to monitor the ceasefire in Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia; to provide protection and security for UN personnel, equipment and supplies at the seaports and airports in Mogadishu, and to escort deliveries of humanitarian supplies from there to distribution centers in the city and its immediate environs.²⁰ On 28 August 1992, UNOSOM I's mandate was expanded by SC Resolution 775 (1992), to enable it to protect humanitarian convoys and distribution centers throughout Somalia. The mandate of UNOSOM II was to take appropriate action, including enforcement measures, and to establish a secure environment for humanitarian assistance throughout Somalia.²¹

The mandate of UNOSOM II, covering the whole territory of Somalia, would include the following military tasks: (a) monitoring that all factions continued to respect the cessation of hostilities and other agreements to which they had consented; (b) preventing any resumption of violence and, if necessary, taking

appropriate action against any faction that violated or threatened to violate the cessation of hostilities; (c) maintaining control of the heavy weapons of the organized factions which would have been brought under international control pending their eventual destruction or transfer to a newly constituted national army; (d) seizing the small arms of all unauthorized armed elements and assisting in the registration and security of such arms; (e) securing or maintaining security at all ports, airports and lines of communications required for the delivery of humanitarian assistance; (f) protecting the personnel, installations and equipment of the United Nations and its agencies, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) as well as NGOs, and taking such forceful action as might be required to neutralize armed elements that attacked, or threatened to attack, such facilities and personnel, pending the establishment of a new Somali police force which could assume this responsibility; (g) continuing the programme for mine-clearing in the most afflicted areas; (h) assisting in the repatriation of refugees and displaced persons within Somalia; (i) carrying out such other functions as might be authorized by the SC.

UNOSOM II was also mandated to assist in the reconstruction of economic, social and political life. On 4 February 1994, the SC, with Resolution 897 (1994) revised UNOSOM II's mandate to exclude the use of coercive methods.

Turkey's Participation and Leadership in UNOSOM II

A new phase of Turkey's involvement in international peace operations was initiated with its contribution to United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM). Following the UNSC decision to establish UNITAF in December 1992, Turkey received an invitation letter from the UN, in which it was requested to participate in the new US-led peace operation in Somalia. The invitation was examined by various governmental organizations and a decision allowing the dispatch of a mechanized company-sized contingent to Somalia was made after obtaining approval from the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA) on 8 December 1992.²²

Firstly, it was decided by the Council of Ministers to send to Somalia a preliminary committee comprised of nine people from the Chief of Turkish General Staff and Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The mission of the preliminary committee was to assess the situation in Somalia and to meet the requirements of the Turkish contingent related to its site and area of responsibility (AOR), and to understand the situation on the ground in order to better prepare its troops. This committee moved to Mogadishu on 15 December 1992 and carried out a pre-deployment reconnaissance visit to Somalia.²³ This initiative led to very good results in terms of the preparation of contingents prior to deployment.

The Turkish contingent set off from Mersin harbour with the TCG (Ship of the Turkish Republic. Turkish: Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Gemisi) Ertugrul landing ship and the TCG Derya logistics support ship, accompanied by the TCG Fatih frigate, on 19 December 1992. They arrived, after the 15-day trip, in the Mogadishu harbor on 2 January 1993.²⁴ After the arrival of the Turkish contingent in Somalia, the preliminary committee returned to Turkey in mid January 1993. The Turkish contingent contributed to the operation in Somalia from 2 January 1993 to 22 February 1994 (as part of UNITAF and then UNOSOM II) with a 300-person mechanized company.



Somalia had almost no transportation facilities, no railroads, and few paved roads. Major airports were in Mogadishu, in the south, and Hargeysa, in the north. The Turkish contingent was tasked with the vital responsibility of protecting the Mogadishu airport, which possessed the vital importance of connecting Somalia with the outside world.²⁵ The other tasks of the Turkish military contingent were to protect UNOSOM II Headquarters, to provide escorts for convoys, to facilitate security, and to ensure delivery of food to the starving Somalis.

Following the developments in Somalia, the Belgian contingent (950 all ranks) and the French contingent (1,100 all ranks) were withdrawn from Somalia in December 1993. The United States announced, in October 1993, that it would withdraw its troops

from Somalia by the end of March 1994. As the end of the one-year period which was given to the Turkish contingent in Somalia by the decision of TGNA approached and many contributing states mentioned above declared their intentions to leave Somalia, Turkey also decided to withdraw its troops from Somalia in February 1994. While these countries were withdrawing, there was not a necessity for Turkey to stay in Somalia. The Turkish contingent returned to Turkey on 22 February 1994 as instructed through the decision of the Turkish government. It returned in two groups; the first group, comprised of 225 soldiers and PTT (Turkish Post Office) personnel, returned by air, the second group comprised of 86 personnel and vehicles returned by sea.

This operation was important in two respects for Turkey. First, Turkey was requested for the first time to provide an operational company to a UN peace operation. Second, it is worth noting that the command of UNOSOM II was assumed by Turkish Lieutenant General Çevik Bir for a period. Following the transition from UNITAF to UNOSOM II, General Bir became the first commander of UNOSOM II and performed his duty successfully from April 1993 to January 1994. The assignment of General Bir as commander to UNOSOM II was important for Turkey as its security-producer image would be further reinforced in the international arena.

Figure 1 shows the organizational structure of United Nations Forces in Somalia (UNOSOM) in the summer of 1993, to which 18 nations contributed. 14 of them reported directly to the Force Commander. These ranged in size from companies to brigades and represented myriad levels of military competencies and languages. All of the national forces except those of the U.S. were nominally under combatant command (COCOM) of UNOSOM— they were UNOSOM's forces to command and UNOSOM was responsible for their logistical support.

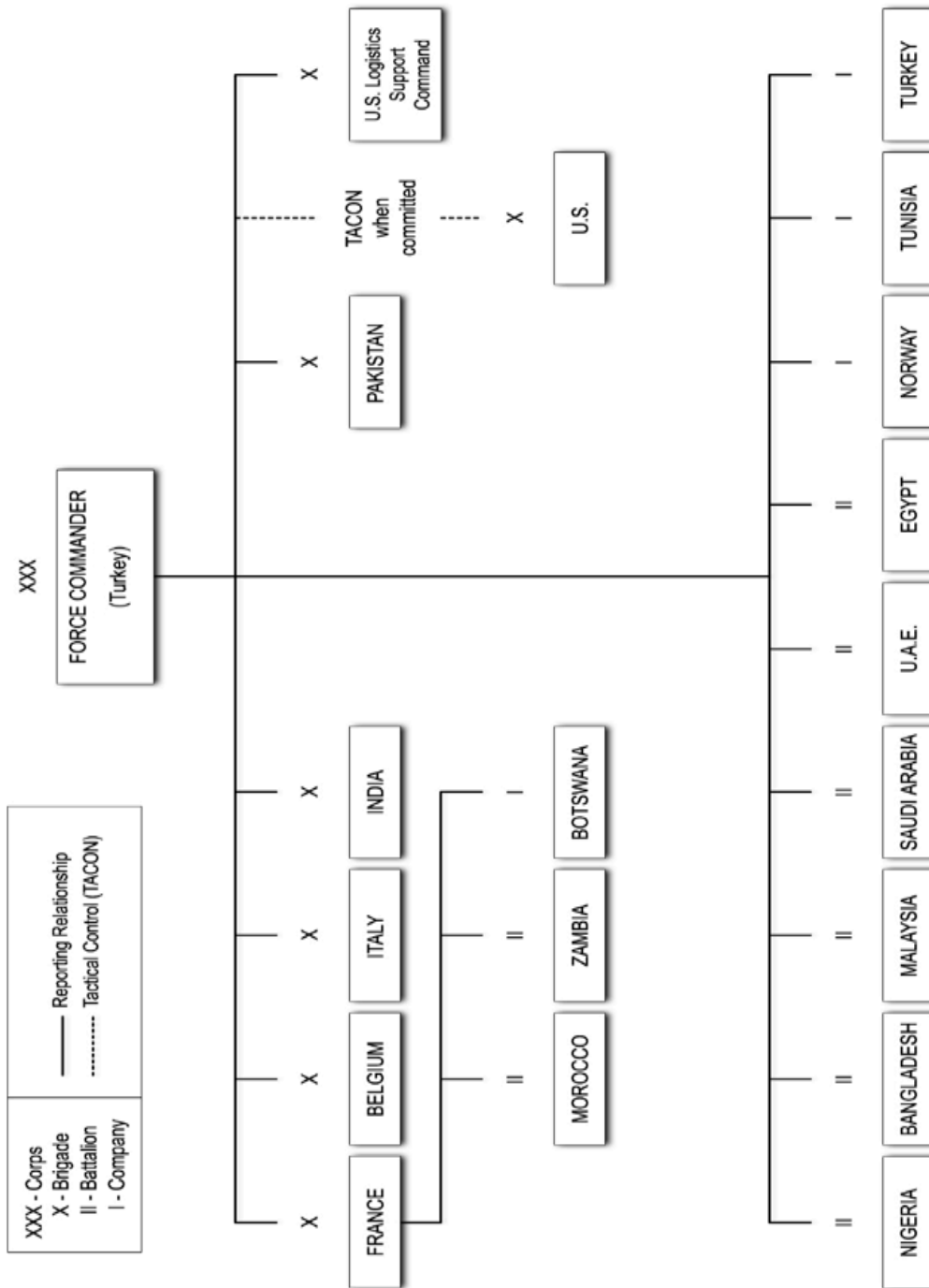


Figure 1: UNOSOM Command Relationships²⁶

In fact, these forces operated under a variety of employment restrictions and maintained direct contact with their national

governments. Missions were negotiated with them, not assigned to them. Three countries (Morocco, Zimbabwe, and Botswana) sent their forces under COCOM to the French brigade commander. However, these forces also retained direct ties to their home governments and participated actively in defining their own military missions and roles. Thus, the traditional military command prerogatives implicit in COCOM could not be fully exercised. Logistical support was often dependent on U.S. forces, though the civilian U.N. procurement system was also active on some logistical matters.

There were some problems with the administrative and operational control of the UNOSOM II operation. Owing to the complex, multinational nature of UNOSOM operations, General Bir, as the force commander of UNOSOM II, had been constrained by the need for extensive consultation before ordering troops from different countries to execute tasks which are crucial to the success of their missions. Consultations tended to waste vital hours and days, eventually resulting in the loss of lives.²⁷

General Bir explained that he had faced some problems since he had almost no authority to charge the contingents under his command and control. He noted that ensuring respect for the related authority by all of the other units and organizations



in the area of responsibility of the Peace Force, would enhance success. He further added that reacting to incidents and sending timely reports are essential for command and control, but without all of this, unity of command in UNOSOM II was virtually impossible. No country was likely to allow their forces to join a multinational peace operation and cut their ties to the national

command structure and political agenda. Contributing countries had been assigning their forces to the UN with the condition that they could determine their area of responsibility by themselves, and the Turkish Commander had been trying to command these forces according to the preference of their countries. This understanding was one of the difficulties he faced throughout his service.²⁸

Somalia constituted a good arena for Turkey to show its ability to play an international role. Turkey's successful performance in Somalia would increase its national prestige and consequently enhance the acceptability of the Turkish model. General Bir revealed this perspective in his book *A Hope for Somalia*:

My assignment to the UN commander would add prestige to our country in the international arena. At that time, the Turkic Republics, which shared common ties in terms of history, culture, religion, and language were newly emerging as independent states. The positive situation that had been made through the strong ties with them would continue to develop in our favor with Turkey's UNOSOM II commander position.²⁹

International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan (ISAF)

After the terrorist attacks occurred in the United States on 11 September 2001, the relationship between these attacks and al Qaeda, which was operating in Afghanistan, came to light. Because the Taliban Regime was in a relation with al Qaeda and because it was allowing Afghanistan to be used as a base for terrorism, a US-led multinational operation entitled Enduring Freedom (OEF) was carried out against Afghanistan.³⁰ The concept of the operation was to “destroy the Al Qaeda network inside Afghanistan along with the illegitimate Taliban regime, which was harboring and protecting the terrorists.” The OEF had roughly 10,000 troops inside Afghanistan, as well as air support and logistics elements outside of it. During the course of this operation, the Taliban regime collapsed and al Qaeda was heavily damaged. The US-led operation succeeded to largely eliminate the terrorist command, control and training centers and the next phase of the operation began.



On 14 November 2001, five weeks into US-led operations in Afghanistan, the SC endorsed an urgent meeting of Afghan political leaders. From 27 November through 5 December 2001, Bonn hosted the UN talks on Afghanistan, which sought to form an interim, post-Taliban administration for the country; strengthen domestic peace and stability in the transitional period; and reconstruct the physical, economic and human infrastructure of Afghanistan. The Bonn meeting brought together UN officials, Afghan leaders, and members of the international community to discuss the country's future.³¹ They decided to establish and train national security forces with international help and called for a UN-mandated force to assist in the maintenance of security for Kabul and its surrounding areas.

After some discussions, the delegates came to an agreement on December 5, 2001. The agreement called for three major political steps. The first was the formation of an Interim Administration (IA) consisting of 30 members. Hamid Karzai was selected as the chairman of the IA in which a slight majority of the positions, including key posts of Defense, Foreign Affairs and Interior, were held by the National Assembly. Second, a special 21-person commission was to be established to prepare an emergency "Loya Jirga" to be convened in six months. This body was to select a Transitional Administration (TA) to rule for a period not to exceed 24 months, at which time elections for a permanent government would be held. Third, no later than 18 months after the IA assumed power, another Loya Jirga was to be held in order to adopt a new constitution for Afghanistan.³²

As for the security force issue, the Bonn Agreement included an annex, entitled "International Security Force", which sought international help to establish and train Afghan National Security Forces. Because some time would be required for the new Afghan Security Forces to be fully constituted and functioning, it was requested that the United Nations SC "consider authorizing the early deployment to Afghanistan of a United Nations mandated force. Such a force will assist in the maintenance of security for Kabul and its surrounding areas." Moreover, the participants in the Bonn conference pledged, "to withdraw all military units from Kabul and other urban areas in which the UN-mandated force is deployed."

As a response to this request, the SC, determining the situation in Afghanistan constituted a threat to international peace and security, passed Security Council Resolution 1386 on December

20, 2001 and authorized the establishment of the ISAF, to assist the IA in maintaining security in Kabul and surrounding areas. On 22 December 2001, two days after the Security Council Resolution of 1386, an Interim Afghan Administration comprising 30 members under the head of Hamid Karzai was established in Kabul in accordance with the Bonn Agreement. On 12 January 2002, ISAF began to function and became fully operational on 18 February 2002.

The primary role of ISAF was to support the Government of Afghanistan (GOA) in the provision and maintenance of security in Kabul and its environs (within the ISAF Area of Responsibility). The goal was that the GOA, as well as the personnel of the UN, could operate in a secure environment, thereby enabling the GOA to build up national institutions and security structures in Afghanistan in accordance with the Bonn Agreement and as agreed on in the Military Technical Agreement (MTA) signed on 31 December 2001.

The responsibility for providing security and law and order throughout the country had been left to the Afghans themselves. ISAF's mandate had been outlined in the UNSC Resolution 1386. In practice the missions of ISAF were: to assist the Afghan Interim Administration in providing a security framework around political institutions and other key sites in Kabul; to advise the Afghan Interim Administration on future security structures and assist in their development; to assist the Afghan Interim Administration in reconstruction; to identify and arrange training and assistance tasks for future Afghan security forces; to conduct protective patrols jointly with the Afghan police in Kabul; to assist in the operation of Kabul International Airport; to support to the humanitarian assistance and infrastructure development; to make the police accountable and effective; and to maintain a safe and secure environment conducive to free and fair elections, the spread of the rule of law, and the reconstruction of Afghanistan.

In addition to security issues, ISAF helped the Afghan authorities and international assistance organizations in the reconstruction of the country under the terms of civil-military cooperation (CIMIC). CIMIC teams had been constructed for this purpose under the command of ISAF. They also prepared several projects related with education, health, agriculture, and infrastructure, and they carried out these projects as far as possible since the deployment of ISAF.

Initially, individual nations volunteered to lead the ISAF mission every six months. The United Kingdom formally informed the SC that it was willing to become the initial lead nation for ISAF, with a letter dated 19 December 2001 from the Permanent Representative of the UK to the President of the Council. The UNSC welcomed the UK's offer to take the lead in organizing



and commanding ISAF, and the UK served as the first lead nation, while Germany assumed command of the Kabul Multinational Brigade (KMNB) on 19 March. At the same time, the details of the handover of ISAF lead nation responsibility from Great Britain to Turkey were being worked out. On 23 May, the SC extended ISAF's mandate for an additional six months until 20

December 2002, with the adoption of Resolution 1413 and welcomed Turkey taking the role of lead nation from UK. When the British mandate was over, Turkey took over the command of the ISAF on 20 June 2002 for a period of six months.

Normally, Turkey would have handed over command on 20 December 2002, but no country was ready to take over. The UNSC therefore extended Turkey's leadership until 10 February 2003.³³ Upon the request of Germany and the Netherlands, the SC adopted Resolution 1444 on 27 November 2002 and decided to give the leadership to the joint command of Germany and the Netherlands. Since Germany and the Netherlands could not complete some of the necessary preparations to assume command of ISAF on 20 December 2002 as planned, Turkey turned over leadership to the joint command of Germany and the Netherlands two months later, on 10 February 2003.

ISAF III was led by Germany and the Netherlands with support from NATO from 10 February to 11 August 2003. Until this time, ISAF command rotated between the above stated nations on a 6-month basis. However there was tremendous difficulty to secure new lead nations. To solve the problem, command was turned over to NATO on August 11, 2003. NATO assumed

the leadership of the operation and became responsible for the command, coordination, and planning of ISAF, with a headquarter in Afghanistan until the end of 2014.

ISAF was one of the largest coalitions in history. It was NATO's longest and most challenging mission until 2014. At its height, the force was more than 130,000 strong, with troops from 51 NATO and partner nations. As part of the international community's overall effort, ISAF worked to create the conditions whereby the Afghan government was able to exercise its authority throughout the country, including the development of professional and capable Afghan security forces. A gradual process of transition to full Afghan security responsibility –known as “Inteqal” in Dari and Pashtu– was launched in 2011. This process was completed on schedule in December 2014, when ISAF's mission ended and the Afghan forces assumed full security responsibility.

Following the completion of the ISAF at the end of 2014, a new, follow-on, NATO-led mission called Resolute Support was launched on 1 January 2015 to provide further training, advice and assistance for the Afghan security forces and institutions. Some 13,000 personnel from NATO member states and partner countries are deployed in support of the Resolute Support Mission (RSM). The Mission operates with one central hub (in Kabul/Bagram) and four spokes in Mazar-e Sharif, Herat, Kandahar and Laghman.³⁴

Turkey's Participation and Leadership in Afghanistan (ISAF II and ISAF VII)

Turkey has long advocated a broad-based Afghan government including all ethnic groups for lasting peace and stability in Afghanistan. After the September 11 attacks and the following events in Afghanistan, when the UNSC adopted Resolution 1386, establishing ISAF, it was only natural for Turkey to take part in that Force. Turkey showed its willingness to participate, even to lead, in the multinational peacekeeping force for the reconstruction of Afghanistan. Turkey was among the first countries to announce its willingness to participate.

The Turkish government was quick to obtain parliamentary authorization in October 2001 to contribute troops to the U.S. campaign. The bill, which was met with public opposition, also authorized the government to allow the stationing of foreign troops on Turkish territory and permit the use of Turkish airspace and airbases.³⁵ Within this framework, the contribution of Turkey to ISAF began on 19 February 2002 with a company-sized unit comprised of approximately 300 soldiers and staff officers commissioned to the ISAF and KMNH Headquarters. It also consisted of Azerbaijani and Albanian teams serving under the command of Turkish companies and two Macedonian officers serving in the Turkish Battalion Command. It carried out security patrols and participated in humanitarian aid efforts.

The UK had assumed the command of ISAF for three months and wanted to hand it over. The main reason why the UK was so ready to do so was that the ISAF's three-month commanding mission would be over by the end of April. The Blair government wanted to transfer its duties to another country by that time, particularly given the pressure it was receiving from the opposition. Turkey had long been pointed out as the most likely successor to lead ISAF after the UK. Initially, Turkey was eager to lead ISAF and expressed her interest in this direction. Moreover, the UK and the U.S. officials regarded Turkey, a NATO member and Muslim-populated country, as the "perfect choice."

In April 2002, Turkey announced that it would take over the leadership of ISAF on certain conditions. Turkey insisted that the UN renew the ISAF mandate, and that the AOR remain limited to Kabul and its environs with no expansion. The UNSC approved Resolution 1413 on 23 May 2002. This Resolution resolved to extend the authorization of the ISAF for Afghanistan as defined in Resolution 1386, for a period of six months beyond 20 June 2002. The AOR remained unchanged. UNSC Resolution 1413 also transferred lead nation status for the execution of the ISAF mission from the UK to Turkey. Turkey's lead nation responsibility of ISAF II started on 20 June 2002 under the command of Major General Hilmi Akın Zorlu, for a period of six months.

Personnel joined the 28th Mechanized Brigade in Mamak/Ankara on 13 May 2002. The Turkish Battalion Task Force (TBTF) completed its preparations at the 28th Mechanized Brigade. Personnel were trained and informed about the organization, mission and mandates of ISAF and UN resolutions on ISAF

over a three-week period. The TBTF set off to Afghanistan from Ankara on 4 June 2002 and took over responsibility of its AOR in Afghanistan on 30 June 2002.

After taking command of ISAF II, Turkey increased the number of its soldiers to 1,400, making it the largest contingent in the peacekeeping force. This number consisted of the TBTF, reinforced with combat support and service, and officers commissioned in the ISAF, KMNB Headquarters and Kabul Airport.

TBTF's units were deployed in 10 camps: ISAF Headquarter camp, KMNB camp, Kabul Airport Command camp, Turkish Battalion Task Force camp, 1st Turkish Company camp, 2nd Turkish Company camp, 3rd Turkish Company camp, Multinational Engineering Group camp and TV Height camp. A Turkish mechanized infantry brigade was deployed in Kabul. Turkish troops also relieved forces from Iceland that had been responsible for security at ISAF's main logistical hub at Kabul Airport. In addition, both Albanian and Azerbaijani platoons contributed to ISAF as a subunit of the TBTF in its AOR.

The ISAF II organizational structure consisted of the ISAF Headquarters (with its own Communication and Information unit, Service unit, Protection unit, a CIMIC Coordination Center, Force Liaison elements, Human Intelligence teams, and Information Operations/Psychological Operations units), the KMNB, and the Kabul Airport Task Force. Germany was the lead nation for the KMNB. Under the KMNB were three battle groups, headed by German, French, and Turkish troops.

ISAF II Headquarters served under the command of the Turkish General Staff. Command of ISAF and the post of Commander of ISAF (COMISAF) were held by the Republic of Turkey. Members of Troop Contributing Nations (TCNs) remained under the full command of National Contingent Commanders. Turkish national force elements were under the command of the Turkish Military Representative (Deputy COMISAF). Operational control of all National Contingents contributed to ISAF was assigned to COMISAF.

ISAF activities were executed in coordination with U.S. CENTCOM based in Tampa/Florida. Additionally, the Afghanistan Operation Coordination Center (AOCC) and Multinational Movement Coordination Center (MNMCC),

including a section for the liaison officers of TCNs, were established at the Headquarters of Turkish General Staff in Ankara to ensure coordination between TCNs. The chain of command of ISAF under Turkish command is shown in Figure 2.

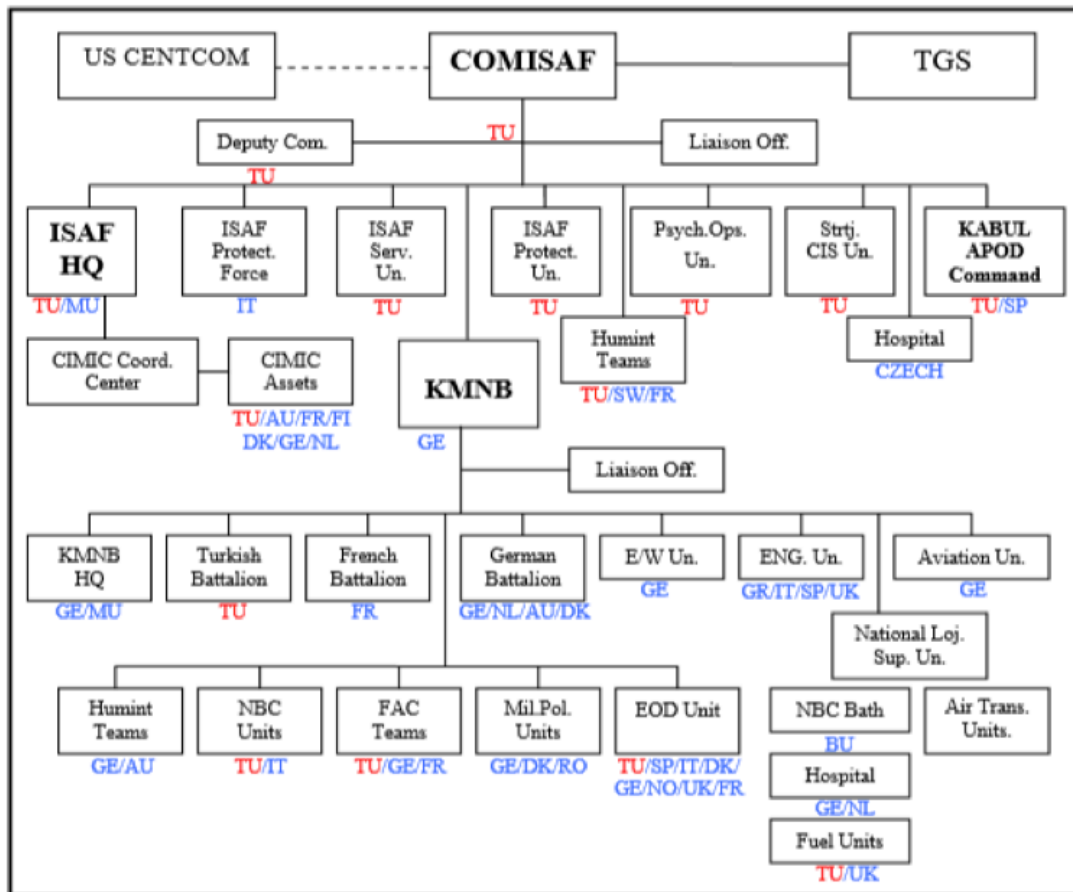


Figure 2: ISAF II Organization³⁶

At that time, ISAF's area responsibility spanned 50 kilometers in the north-south direction and 45 in the east-west direction around Kabul, for a total area of 2,250 square kilometers. Three battalion-level task forces operated in the city: the Turkish task force in the west and southwest; the German task force in the north, center, and northwest; and the French task force in the north. In addition, an Italian force-protection company operated in the center. Turkey also supervised the military portion of the Kabul airport (which was a crucial link in ISAF's logistics operations) and provided air traffic control for the entire airport.

ISAF authorized personnel strength of roughly 4,800, from 22 countries. The ISAF headquarters included 51 Turks and 42 Afghan nationals.

Under Turkish leadership, ISAF II was envisaged as 1) assisting in the development of future security structures, 2) assisting in Afghanistan's reconstruction, and 3) assisting in the training of future Afghan security forces. The task of the contingent in Afghanistan was to contribute to peace and security of the Afghan people and the stability and welfare of Afghanistan. Turkish command gave first priority, during the course of its term of duty, to help the Afghan Transitional Government to ensure security and stability in Kabul and its environs.³⁷ Turkish Armed Forces (TAF) executed important missions such as providing security for its own units, establishing check points, monitoring and patrolling within its area of responsibility and on the zone of separation, conducting point and area operations, carrying out info operation, contributing to CIMIC activities, advising military and police training, and running the military part of the Kabul airport.³⁸ Among the Turkish activities, the abolition of the night curfew in Kabul was noteworthy, as it enabled Afghans to be in the streets at night for the first time since 1979. During this period, TAF executed 175 civil service projects and trained different units from the Afghanistan security forces.

ISAF conducted a strong public information campaign using all available means to describe the role and tasks mentioned above. For instance, ISAF published newsheets every two weeks, giving ISAF news in English, Pashtu and Dari languages, and distributed 50,000 copies throughout the city free of charge. In addition, more than 150,000 leaflets were printed and distributed during Turkey's command. Under Turkish leadership, ISAF also ran two radio stations: Radio Turkiyem and Sadahje Azadi (Voice of Freedom), broadcasting all over the area of Kabul.

Normally, Turkey should have handed over command of ISAF on 20 December 2002, but no country was ready to make this commitment. So, the UNSC extended Turkish leadership until 10 February 2003. On that day, Turkey turned over leadership to the joint command of Germany and the Netherlands. After turning over command, Turkey continued to contribute to ISAF III and later ISAF IV with a reinforced company team supported by logistics and administration units as it had done in ISAF I. An Azerbaijani and Albanian platoon of 23 personnel each were also

included into the structure of the Turkish company, and Turkey assigned staff officers to ISAF headquarters.

Turkey again assumed the leadership of ISAF on 13 February 2005. The command changed from Eurocorps, which was a NATO Rapid Deployable Force that had been in charge of ISAF headquarters since 2004, to the “Rapid Deployable Corps in Istanbul.” ISAF VII was commanded by Turkish Lieutenant General Ethem Erdağı from 13 February to 12 June 2005, when Italy assumed command under Lieutenant General Mauro Del Vecchio. Turkey commanded 8,714 personnel from 36 countries and during Turkey’s tenure, ISAF VII troops were also deployed for the first time into parts of western Afghanistan. At the same time Turkey assumed responsibility for Kabul International Airport. After taking command of ISAF VII, Turkey increased the number of its soldiers in Kabul from 240 to 1,600.

As for the lessons learned in Afghanistan during ISAF VII, the operation proved to be problematic. There had been many national restrictions and caveats due to the multinational nature of the operation. Different pillars of the security sector had been put under different countries’ leadership. The United States was in charge of setting up an army, while Germany was to build up the police forces; Japan was to take care of disarmament; Britain was to fight narcotics; and Italy was to build the judicial system.³⁹

In addition, for two years starting in August 2006, Turkey took command of Kabul Regional Command Capital (RCC), one of the six regional commands of ISAF, on a rotational basis together with France and Italy. Turkey again assumed the leadership of the RCC for a one year term starting on 31 November 2009. This responsibility was extended until 31 December 2014 upon the request of the Allies.

After the end of the ISAF mission on 31 January 2014, Turkey started to participate in the RSM, which was a non-combatant mission launched on 1 January 2015. Within the framework of this new mission, Turkey took over leadership of the Train, Assist, and Advise Command Capital TAAC(C) in Kabul; began to operate Afghanistan International Airport; provided advisors for Afghan schools/institutions; and contributed to the Train, Assist, and Advise Command Capital. Currently, Turkey participates in the RSM in Afghanistan with 532 personnel.

In addition to the commanding of ISAF II and ISAF VII, in January 2004 NATO appointed Hikmet Çetin, Former Speaker of the Turkish Parliament and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, to the post of Senior Civilian Representative of NATO in Kabul. Mr. Çetin was responsible for advancing the political-military aspects of NATO's engagement in Afghanistan and received his guidance from the North Atlantic Council. He worked in close coordination with the COMISAF and UNAMA as well as with the Afghan authorities and other bodies of the international community between 2004-2006.

Since the beginning of the peacekeeping mission in Afghanistan, Turkey has been an active military power and Turkish soldiers serving in Afghanistan have received enthusiastic support among the Afghan public. Why has Turkey been successful in leading ISAF? First, as a Muslim country, Turkey has had an advantage: Turkish ISAF personnel know the Afghans' beliefs and customs to such an extent that they do not feel like aliens in Afghanistan. Second, Turkey has traditionally had good relations with the Afghan people. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the Turkish Republic, sent doctors and diplomats to help Afghans and established good relations with Amanullah Khan, the former king of Afghanistan. Today, Afghans remember the past fondly, expressing appreciation for Turkey's help at a time when Turks were fighting their own war of independence and were themselves in need of help. Third, under Turkish leadership, ISAF never became involved in Afghan domestic political issues. Therefore, the Afghan people and the interim government fully trusted ISAF.

Turkey's contributions have also been noteworthy in areas such as military training, education, health, and security. Turkey provided the opportunities for Afghan commissioned and non-commissioned officers to follow military education in Turkish military high schools, the military academy, and the Turkish Staff College. The TAF also sent military instructors to train the Afghan Army in the Ghazi Camp situated in Kabul. In addition, the TAF supported the military hospital with medical staff and provided health support to Afghan society. Although it had been considered a hard power asset and seen as one of the strongest armies of NATO, the TAF's contribution to peacekeeping as a soft power asset was important for the overall success of the mission.

Conclusion

Contributing to establish and maintain peace and stability in its region and beyond is one of the main objectives of Turkish foreign policy. Peace Operations are the legitimate means to realize this objective. As an active participant in all areas of the international community, Turkey also vigorously engages in peace operations not only conducted by the UN but also by NATO, the EU and the OSCE, to maintain international peace and stability. In addition to participating in peace operations as a Troop or Police Contributing country, assuming the leadership of the operation will also help to continue enhancing Turkey's role in the international arena as a security producer country.

End Notes

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