



Extract from RUSI paper

The UN-Shield concept made a considerably more extensive proposal reflecting the intellectual upper end of the debate over UN military capability

In 1997, a concept conceived earlier by a private British individual, Paul Stonor, which has become known as 'UN-Shield' was further developed by him and three colleagues. Published in the *Army Quarterly and Defence Journal*⁹ the article carried a foreword by the former Prime Minister, Lord Callaghan and was subsequently raised in a House of Lords debate.¹⁰ The UN-Shield concept made a considerably more extensive proposal reflecting the intellectual upper end of the debate over UN military capability. The proposal envisaged a supranational Shield Council of Monitors elected under the supervision of the UN but empowered to take decisions in relation to military enforcement with accountability to the UN, but without the requirement for a specific UN mandate. The Shield Council would control a powerful force of some 500,000 capable of the full range of military activity and, indeed, possessing nuclear capability. The military force would be recruited directly from member nations on a voluntary basis.

⁹ *Army Quarterly and Defence Journal* (Vol. 127, No. 1, 1998).

¹⁰ *Hansard, House of Lords* (Vol. 589, No. 146, 30 April 1998).

Whatever the strength of objective argument for a UN owned force, the impediment is implementation in the present political environment. The Shield vision mentioned earlier, involving the wholesale transfer of national military power to a UN entity, is a long-term aspiration dependent on a number of presumptions about the evolution of international relations. In the medium term, a robust combat capability, of the scale of the 1995 UN Legion of 30,000 troops capable of a large range of operations currently undertaken by national forces, may be feasible. However, member nations of the UN and, under present arrangements, the Permanent Members of the Security Council in particular, would need to be confident that the model would work. There would of course be big financial implications.

National subscriptions to the UN would need to increase considerably and nations would presumably contribute at the expense of their own national defence spending.

An incremental approach, whereby the UN sets up a relatively small force capable in particular of proactive deployment in support of preventive diplomacy, would address the urgent need for forces that might avert crises such as the Rwanda massacre. It would be wrong to overburden that tragedy

with counterfactual narratives involving early deployment of a small UN force. Nevertheless, the argument for the generic preventive mission is very persuasive. It is important that the two strands of this argument are recognised in the context of this paper.

The force would address an urgent and widely accepted need on the one hand. On the other hand, it would be a practical experiment with a view to expanding capability in the medium term as the usefulness of the force is demonstrated. It bears mention that the concept is similar to that mentioned earlier and proposed by Sir Brian Urquhart in 1995. The roles he identified would form the basis for further study of the range of missions for what we might call the Phase 1 UN Intervention Force (UNIF1). The 1995 Langhill paper proposes an incremental approach.

To what extent should this concept address the proposals of the 2006 UNEPS study? UNIF1 would of course be much smaller and would be a specifically military force. That is not to say that it might not be part of a larger capability

that included civilian, police and judicial capability even at the outset. It is a premise of this paper, however, that the military capability would require a specific command and force structure and the concept raises specific issues of military mission analysis, equipment, recruiting, training, education, basing, logistics and related cultural, ethical and legal considerations. The remainder of the paper will examine these elements and consider in broad terms how larger. Phase 2 and 3 Forces (UNIF2, UNIF3) might evolve.