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THE MULTINATIONAL FORCE AND OBSERVERS

Since 1982, the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) has performed its peacekeeping mission under the 1979 Treaty of Peace between Egypt and Israel, and the 1981 Protocol to the Treaty. The MFO's uniqueness lies in its role as a confidence-building measure (CBM) under a definitive Treaty of Peace. As such, it is not an interim or transitional mission that fits under Chapter VI or Chapter VII of the UN Charter. The MFO was created by the Protocol to the Treaty, and reports directly to the two Treaty Parties. It lies outside the United Nations system, with its own independent international legal personality pursuant to the Protocol. It has a Headquarters Agreement with Italy and a network of participation agreements with 11 troop contributing countries. This bilateral origin has profound implications as to how Treaty-related confidence-building measures are structured, funded, and managed. The MFO was originally modeled in the field along the lines of familiar Chapter VI United Nations peacekeeping entities. However, over time the MFO has been free to evolve its own practice and innovate in the areas of management, operations, logistics, and finance.

For over 13 years, the MFO has discharged its mission as set forth in the Treaty of Peace, specifically its Annex I concerning security arrangements, and the Protocol. The accomplishment of the MFO mission has been an anchor for the broader regional peace process, and a potential model. The lessons learned from the MFO experience are of interest to any future architects of new peace treaties who contemplate their own, non-UN, confidence building measures. MFO's successful liaison structure

by
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grown up between the two formerly warring parties is a model worth copying.

Shared Funding

The success of the MFO mission rests on the underlying commitment of the Parties to the peace and support of their own creature the MFO. The MFO is funded primarily by the two Treaty Parties themselves; the MFO budget of $51 million is provided in equal measure by the three Funds-Contributing States, Egypt, Israel, and the United States, with smaller financial donations by Germany, Japan, and Switzerland. MFO finances are on a pay-as-you go basis funded by draws against letters of credit or similar arrangements. The Parties have daily oversight, in the field, of what we do and how we do it. This cost-conscious environment is both healthy and interactive. As the United States, the patron and witness of the peace, intended, the MFO structure has helped to reduce the U.S. financial burden, and shift the third-party role in day-to-day support of peacekeeping to MFO management. Visitors to the MFO have found a private sector flavor to the MFO management style, with our annual Trilateral Meeting compared more to a shareholders' meeting than a typical diplomatic conference.

The liaison system created by the Protocol has fostered cooperation, and adjustments to the Treaty regime consider political, economic, and other developments. The Treaty and Protocol mandate is clear, but the drafters could not foresee all the changes and situations the MFO has faced on the ground over time. Through the liaison system, the drafters provided the mechanism for necessary adaptation. In itself, it is a model for regional cooperation.

The credibility of the MFO as an independent agency has attracted durable participation from countries that recognize the need for continuity in support of a confidence building measure under a permanent Treaty. Troop contributors currently include Australia (which provides the present Force Commander), Canada, Colombia, Fiji, France, Italy, New Zealand, Norway, the United States, and Uruguay. The latter eight countries have served in MFO uninterruptedly since 1982; the Parties and MFO owe them a great debt of gratitude. Hungary is completing formalities to participate, replacing a contingent from the Netherlands that served from 1982 until April of this year. The U.K. was also a participant for the MFO's first ten years. Support from participants has included contributions of critical specialties and, with the U.S., France, and Italy, key capitol equipment [in the past, Australia and Canada also contributed capitol equipment]. Previous Force Commanders have come from Norway, New Zealand, and the Netherlands.

Organization

In Treaty Zone C, the MFO operates two main camps, and 31 remote sites manned by personnel of three light infantry battalions provided by Colombia, Fiji, and the United States. These are supplemented by mobile and foot patrols, and temporary observation posts. Deployed in the Strait of Tiran is a Coastal Patrol Unit of three vessels provided by Italy. A small, 15-person Civilian Observer Unit (COU) is the specialized arm of the MFO that alone verifies Treaty compliance in all four of the Treaty Zones. The large distances of the Sinai are covered by one DHC-6 aircraft provided by France, ten UH-1H helicopters provided by the United States, and the MFO vehicle fleet. Except for vessels and aircraft, all equipment is MFO-owned and procured, standardized where possible on one or two manufacturers, and interoperable by our contingents. We perform many support activities through a U.S.-based support services contractor, which in turn subcontracts for labor with an Egyptian services company. Logistics are done by a mix of soldiers, contractor personnel, and direct hire civilians. Most MFO procurement is by competitive bidding from commercial sources in Egypt, Israel, United States, and to a much lesser extent, other sources. We also procure from the U.S. Defense Department about 20 percent of our total requirements, in particular aviation parts

and supplies, medical supplies, and food and general supplies when cost-effective.

Cost-Conscious Management

The attention of MFO management increasingly has been directed toward reducing costs. With the consent of both Treaty Parties and the United States, coordinated through the annual Trilateral Meeting, the MFO has steadily cut away at its overhead, absorbing annual inflationary impacts and reducing its cost to the contributors. The MFO budget has declined 31 percent since MFO FY 89.

Budget reductions have resulted from a number of initiatives. We have reduced personnel at the Rome Headquarters (currently 25, down 41 percent since FY 89) and military strength at the Force (currently 1,952, down 17 percent since FY 90, and down 28 percent since its peak in FY 87). We have not adopted UN financial practices for peacekeeping and we have arranged troop contributions at less cost. The MFO has closed nine of its original remote sites, reduced its aircraft fleet by 50 percent in FY 90, and reduced the vehicle fleet by 24 percent since FY 88. Logistical savings have been achieved by reliance on commercial, competitive procurement (inverting the 80 percent dependence on the U.S. DoD supply system that the MFO had at its inception); by applying commercial warehouse management concepts to stocking and inventory management; and by reduction in the cost of our support services contract. The quality of performance of our mission and our support for the troops has remained high. Since 1986, the MFO has sought to reduce further the burden on the three Funds Contributors by seeking, with their diplomatic support, other financial donors, resulting in annual contributions by Germany, Japan, and, last year, Switzerland. These collectively amount to just under $2 million per year. At the same time, MFO disbursements in the two Treaty Parties provide about a 60 percent "return" on their MFO financial contribution, and, in the U.S., exceed current U.S. "incremental costs" of participation as defined in a recent study by the General Accounting Office, an arm of the U.S. Congress.

The flexibility and independence of the unique MFO management structure and its conscious political insulation, unfettered by quotas, are two reasons for its successes. They allow cost-effective innovation with a minimum of intrusion by national political agendas and the bureaucracy that hamper change in other environments. Constructive trilateral review of the MFO has proven to be a continuing feature, with a declining budget and personnel count as the result.

The United States plays the combined roles of troop-contributor, Funds-Contributing State, and patron and formal witness of the Peace Treaty. The MFO Director-General, nominated by the State Department and appointed by the Parties, embodies, day-to-day, the third-party assistance implicit in the role of patron and witness in ensuring the success of the peacekeeping mission. We draw the observers in the MFO's all-civilian unit from the United States, as a further reflection of the U.S. role as witness to the peace. This does not in any way diminish the important roles of other countries that contribute critical specialties or equipment. But the MFO could not have been created from scratch and taken up its mission without the generous financial, diplomatic and military support provided by the United States. Creating future MFO-like entities would also entail the support of one or more key external diplomatic, financial, and military patrons to ensure that requirements are met. Future creations would also require an existing management structure like the MFO's or the creation de novo of its analogue.

The MFO will continue to serve the two Treaty Parties as long as we are called upon by them to do so. The Governments of Egypt and Israel, in light of the evolution of the peace process, will define the MFO's future. They have agreed that now is the time for stability in the MFO, and continuity of its structure and participation, as the peace process expands in the face of the ever-present setbacks and the hostility of its enemies. Only time will tell if new peace trea-

ties in the region might produce similar, MFO-like entities to serve the interested parties.

TECHNOLOGY IN THE STRUCTURE OF TREATY CBMS

Any consideration of technology as an adjunct to peacekeeping depends on many factors, including the context, mission, specific monitoring or other objectives, terrain and environment, and cost. The architecture of the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty presumes the development of a strong, stable, peaceful, and "normal" relationship between the two former combatants. In a material degree, this has been achieved, although full normalization is still linked to regional issues external to the bilateral process. The barometer of bilateral political relations therefore goes up and down, but within a band that for the Middle East is rather normal looking indeed. The discussion of the use of technology for the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty, as it relates to CBMs and to aids to observation and verification, falls within the framework of "traditional," fully consensual peacekeeping.

The Treaty presumption of development of positive bilateral relations was bolstered by a series of CBMs, the MFO being the key third-party mechanism. In the sphere of verification of security arrangements contained in Annex I to the Treaty, there are three levels of confidence-building and security measures, each with its own technological assumptions.

First, the Parties themselves retain national capabilities for early warning. These are explicitly recognized in Annex I to the Treaty; the presence of Early Warning Systems is expressly sanctioned in two of the Treaty Zones in which the implementation of the Treaty is supervised by the MFO. The MFO Civilian Observer Unit routinely calls at these sites in Zones A (in Egypt) and D (in Israel). The Treaty places no limitation on their size or capabilities within the specified Zones, but associated military manning and protective features fall within the general military limitations articulated in the security Annex I of the Treaty. Aerial platforms for reconnaissance activity are also permitted in these two Zones. Thus, national means are not merely assumed, but are woven expressly into the fabric of security arrangements.

Second, by agreement among Egypt, Israel, and the United States, U.S. high-altitude surveillance flights periodically take images of the Treaty Zones, and a narrative report of the interpretation resulting from the raw data is shared with Egypt, Israel, and the MFO. This activity is reflected in the Appendix to Annex I to the Treaty, and in side letters to the Treaty dated March 26, 1979.

Third, the MFO itself, is, by design, a low-technology force and observer unit, relying primarily on visual, on-the-spot verification throughout the Treaty Zones.

The decision not to endow the MFO with sophisticated radar, sensor, or other monitoring assets was conscious. This decision was taken fully in light of previous experience in the Sinai with such assets. The U.S.-sponsored Sinai Field Mission (SFM) from 1976–1980 assisted the two Parties with monitoring of the strategic Giddi and Mitla Passes. The SFM used four unattended ground sensor fields, TV and infrared scanner technology to supplement human effort in monitoring the passes, which separated Israeli and Egyptian Forces at that time during the staged withdrawal process.

There are several relevant factors behind this decision:

- Most importantly, the symbolic, political role of the MFO required a Force size that had credible political "weight," a consideration not directly linked to strict operational or technical criteria. The operational concept becomes meshed with the political requirement. From a technical point of view, there are many possible theoretical variations for accomplishing a mission like the MFO's; the drafters of the Protocol intentionally picked a model that was manpower- and not technology-intensive.
- The existence of the technical means discussed above diluted the need to endow the MFO itself with advanced technology. In par-

ticular, the third-party assistance of the United States in conducting aerial photographic reconnaissance provides a synergy with the MFO. Weaknesses of photographic interpretation, particularly when it comes to counting personnel, identifying unit affiliations, distinguishing civil from military construction, or differentiating between certain types of equipment, are well complemented by the strengths of ground-based observation by the MFO.

- There were also structural factors. The MFO covers a large mission area (56,000 km^2), which includes multiple historical access and invasion routes; the SFM used technology in the Sinai to monitor only two of these during its existence. The MFO mandate does not include security, per se, of the border between Egypt and Israel. Anti-smuggling and antiterrorist protection of the frontier is the responsibility of Egyptian and Israeli authorities, not the MFO. There are areas along the border where sensor equipment is useful to the Parties in dealing with such intrusions, but the MFO role regarding unauthorized crossings is an incidental one as we carry out our other functions. Moreover, the MFO has no focus on particular plants, facilities, sites, or processes, like those the subject of UN surveillance equipment in Iraq, although it does have checkpoints focused on specific road monitoring.

Technology is present, in a supporting role, in the MFO. Communications are essential to any force, and the more so in our large and environmentally hostile mission area; we have redundant HF (high frequency), VHF (very high frequency), and telephone communications, with all sites having at least two communications means. Computers are now as standard in our staff functions as the typewriter used to be. As a safety feature, global positioning satellite (GPS) systems are installed in our COU vehicles, and on the French and American aircraft in MFO service. Our remote sites have night vision goggles, as do our American helicopter aviators. GPS and marine radar are on our three Italian coastal patrol unit vessels, and we have had ground-based commercial radar at one site near the Strait of Tiran. This ground-based radar has proven costly to maintain for the relatively limited benefit it provides us. It will be turned off and sold, and we are considering whether we will replace it with some other equipment. We have basic mine detection capabilities, since the Sinai is awash with mines that we must clear from the areas of our sites and foot patrol/temporary observation post missions, and that we must dispose of when Bedouin bring unexploded ordnance to our locations, which happens frequently.

Visual Observation Is Key

But the focus of the MFO mission is on people and their visual observation, usually assisted by no more than binoculars. If, for example, our personnel think they observe an aerial intrusion over the international boundary, successful identification and violation confirmation depends on such factors as aircraft altitude, speed, heading, and markings, as our personnel attempt to make visual recognition and find out if the aircraft has, in fact, strayed over the boundary. Obviously, not every sighting will lead to a certain conclusion, but we can still raise with the Parties cases that do not result in formal Treaty violations. These kinds of technical limitations reflect the will of the two Parties, and in context, do not materially limit the MFO in accomplishing its mission.

It is our ability, based on our freedom of access throughout the Treaty Zones, to be physically present and verify any site that is key. This is the bottom line for any system of verification, no matter what technology may be usefully deployed to assist the mission, as it was also for the SFM.

Our experiences with the equipment we have has led us to several conclusions. Equipment must work in the relevant environment. In our case, heat extremes and sand infiltration constitute the norm; all our equipment must work under such conditions. There are many, more significant environmental factors in terms of a wider use of technology. The SFM, to which I

have referred, had two hundred "alerts" a day on its sensors, a good cure for operator boredom. However, the registrations primarily consisted of wildlife, illegal economic activity (the Sinai has been a smuggling and military corridor), aircraft overflights, Bedouin movements, UN and SFM members, and authorized personnel of the Parties, including joggers. By contrast, in four years of monitoring of the two passes, SFM reported only 90 violations.

Equipment must be user-friendly. Our military personnel are from several different countries, they rotate frequently (maximum tour lengths are one year, but many serve less than that), and prior familiarity with our largely commercial equipment may be minimal. Training requirements, operation, and operator-level maintenance must be straightforward—the famous "KISS" (keep it simple, stupid) principle. Other levels of maintenance must be locally supportable (by the Force itself or local vendors, not always feasible in a remote location). Hardy, rather than hypersensitive, equipment is the goal. The benefit the MFO has derived from using MFO-owned equipment, standardized in terms of procurement of parts and maintenance effort, and interoperable by all our contingents, cannot be overemphasized.

Given MFO's inspector-based verification and our practice, any proposal to add new technology faces strict scrutiny on operational, financial, technical and policy grounds. Equipment needs must be fully justified. The maintenance cost tail of a procurement decision, as well as the purchase price resulting from competitive bidding, must be recognized up-front. Vendor warranties and capabilities to deliver on local servicing commitments are no less important.

These considerations may seem clinically obvious, but in practice they are not; sadly, some of this knowledge comes only with experience, some of it expensively acquired.

TRAINING PROGRAMS

Relentless turnover of military personnel is a reality in any peacekeeping environment, but it is a critical operational consideration. The discontinuity it provokes impinges on operational efficiency, and on evaluation of new technological assets. We combat the effects of this phenomenon on two tracks. One is the emphasis on civilian personnel in key positions at the Headquarters, at the Force, and in our Cairo and Tel Aviv offices to provide institutional memory and seasoned experience to support the military officers and personnel to whom much of the mission is entrusted. The other is an emphasis on training to maximize the contribution of military personnel to the MFO and to ensure a proper transition of thinking from the arts and science of war to those of peacekeeping.

The MFO is a well-established mission with a relatively clear mandate. We have had the time in place and experience to develop training programs tailored to our particular needs. The principal components have been shared with participating governments and the UN.

In the face of tours that vary in our three infantry battalions from 6 to 12 months, and given the diverse levels of prior training and experience, MFO training must begin prior to deployment to be effective.

Predeployment

We have developed a predeployment training package designed for the three light infantry battalions, with practical skills and suggested drills to ensure retention and understanding. The training at this stage remains a national responsibility. The package we provide, aimed at the trainers, provides basic guides and information, and a series of lessons. The lessons cover running a field site, patrolling, observation and recognition skills, reporting procedures, communications, survival skills and first aid, explosive ordnance disposal, cooking, and operation and operator-level maintenance of small generators of the type we have at our remote sites. We encourage units in predeployment training to put together mock check points and observation posts, and simulate situations that cover on-site incident observation and reporting, and also communication and coordination of response actions staffed through higher echelons. The transition in thinking and

approach from a defense to a peacekeeping force begins here, including our rules of engagement, limitations on our response to situations arising outside our facilities, and emphasis of the MFO mission focus: "Observe and Report." This entails emphasis as well of the unique elements of the MFO, as opposed to other peacekeeping missions, going from the fact that we work directly for the two interested Parties with their full support under a definitive Treaty of Peace. We have to remind soldiers that we have our own practices, regulations and management philosophy. What works "back home" or in the UN is not necessarily the way we do it at the MFO.

As part of the package, we provide color posters to assist in recognition of military grades and ranks, military, police and other license plates, and aircraft of both Treaty Parties. The posters are also intended for day-to-day use at remote sites. More comprehensive picture-book recognition guides are produced for company level use and above.

The predeployment training package is critiqued by those who have used it, and we intend to update the package biennially. In time we will likely make better use of videotaped training courses.

Deployment

Arrival at the MFO triggers our programs of basic orientation and hand over. A Newcomer's Brief is presented as early as possible to all new arrivals. It is conducted by the Force Commander and key staff with briefings on the mission, the human and natural mission environment, key functional sections of the staff, unexploded ordnance hazards, and energy and water conservation, followed by a remote site orientation for staff personnel.

We have a formal hand-over program for each key staff position, based on a hand-over book, updated by each incumbent. The hand-over book provides both general orientation information, and specific information relevant to the staff job and function to be assumed, including daily routines, established MFO procedures, required coordination, and key MFO regulations and Force orders. The book is intended to lend structure and discipline to personal hand-over and provide a substitute for that personal contact when there is no overlap between the departing member and replacement. Quality over time frankly varies with the degree of attention given to updating the materials by the incumbent, and with command emphasis and review placed on maintaining and improving these tools. The orientation and hand-over programs apply to military and civilian personnel alike.

All new arrivals receive driver training and testing. This and other training discussed below are conducted or coordinated by a small but critical staff element called the Training and Advisory Team provided by New Zealand (NZTAT); they reflect the MFO commitment to systemic training, and they do their job superbly.

Driver training and testing for an MFO driver's license are required to ensure a common standard of driving skills among all the contingents, and to sensitize personnel to the rules and many hazards of the road in the desert. In our non-hostile situation, our losses of personnel stem from accidents and carelessness in coping with a demanding physical environment in particular from not driving safely and at appropriate speed. The desert is not empty, hazards abound, and we periodically have fatalities and serious injuries from avoidable accidents. These are a tragic waste of young life. We therefore take our safety training very seriously. We want all our soldiers to return home safe and sound, enriched by a rewarding professional experience and having seen at least some of the major tourist destinations in our host countries.

NZTAT trains the trainers; contingent trainers are prepared by NZTAT to conduct the actual training in a four-day course. To qualify, trainees must pass a written test, a practical driving assessment, and an in-cab test of instructional skills. Once qualified, trainers conduct both initial training leading to the MFO license test, and continuation training. When they determine that drivers are ready for MFO license testing, for reasons of standardization, NZTAT conducts the

test and decides if a license will be issued. For persons who will be designated contingent drivers, there is a special 2-day defensive driver's course emphasizing driver attitudes, car control, and road hazard prediction and identification. There is also a special course for, and assessment of, drivers who will be assigned to drive MFO buses. Follow-up by NZTAT includes driver components of the semiannual Force Skills Competition, quarterly snap driver tests, snap vehicle inspections, technical advice when accidents occur, and collaboration with the Force Safety Officer.

NZTAT also conducts a critical remote Site Commander's Course, a four-day preparation of site commanders for duty at our observation posts and checkpoints. The course reviews operations, observation and recognition responsibilities, and site maintenance. Other specialized courses address training for the range officers, duty investigators who assist the Force Commander in on-site investigation of possible Treaty incidents, and quick reaction units at each camp.

Ongoing Training

Continuing training is provided throughout tours of duty with the MFO. Battalion training in MFO skills, primarily a contingent responsibility, is ongoing. Validation of the success of this training is a NZTAT responsibility, conducted by means of quarterly operational readiness checks of each infantry battalion to review standards of remote site personnel in key skills areas. The Force Commander also has a site inspection program that semiannually evaluates performance and conditions at each of the remote sites. After-action analysis with relevant personnel of what went right and what went wrong in actual Treaty incident cases, in terms of observation, reporting, and follow-up, is a standard feature. There are periodic training exercises such as mass casualty and medevac (medical evacuation) drills, assisted by NZTAT, and, as noted, reinforcement of driver safety. We seek feedback from contingents on the successful and weak points of all of our training efforts.

National training is not interrupted during the period of MFO deployment. Except for mission-imposed operational limitations (for example, no parachute jump training or large unit exercises), basic skills are maintained. The MFO experience provides many positive adjuncts. Infantry battalion operations, with the emphasis on remote site missions, allow the consolidation of small unit skills, and development of junior officer and non-commissioned officer leadership proficiency. Valuable peacekeeping skills, learned in a model, "textbook" environment, are taken home. While many militaries face doctrinal, manpower and financial challenges in integrating peacekeeping business, it is a reality that the business is growing. The inventory of peacekeeping skills to which the MFO contributes is one of the pay-backs of MFO service.

Civilian Observer Unit Training

Specialized training for the 15-person Civilian Observer Unit (COU) is provided by the Unit itself. Approximately one-half of the complement of this Unit consists of officers seconded from U.S. foreign affairs agencies, most of them serving on one year tours. The other half of the Unit, recruited directly by the MFO, consists of seasoned ex-military veterans who typically stay in the COU far longer. Just as these observers are the continuing institutional memory of the COU, they also train the new class of seconded foreign affairs agency personnel as quickly as possible to conduct MFO missions. The COU program emphasizes recognition and observation skills, knowledge of the Treaty and the operations area, map reading and navigation skills, radio procedures, COU practice and conventions, and awareness of environmental hazards. Each new observer is assigned a more senior observer as mentor reinforcing classroom training in the field, to instruct new personnel on detailed characteristics of each of the COU mission areas, and to participate in evaluation and eventual "team leader" qualification of new personnel.

In the face of a revolving work force, the MFO emphasizes its hand-over and training program to promote standardized required skills across our diverse contingents, and to communicate effectively who we are, what we do, and how we do it. At the heart of the program is the use of our own resources to train the trainers, provide key materials and technical assistance, and perform systemic evaluations to validate the results of MFO and contingent training. We believe we have been successful in developing and standardizing the core skills required for the mission, but the challenge recurs with touch-down of each new rotation.