

PART V Combat: Enforcing the Peace*

The United Nations is often criticized for not using enough force to enforce international law and maintain the peace. There are certainly examples of the UN's lack of robust and forceful responses to aggression and genocide, especially in the difficult period 1993–94 in Bosnia and Rwanda. But there are also cases where the United Nations and allied forces may have used excessive force, for example in Somalia in 1993. That important case is examined in intriguing detail by in Chapter 12 William T. Dean III, who introduces the reader to many US Air Force terms and concepts while providing insights into the missions and the famous “Black Hawk Down” incident, named after the US helicopters that were shot down by Somali militiamen. The US operation resulted in the deaths of 18 American soldiers and US withdrawal from the joint US/UN mission, which in turn led to the end of the UN mission and the continued suffering of the Somali people. By contrast, the response to the conflict in Bosnia, though weak at first, eventually proved successful. In Operation Deliberate Force, described in detail by Robert C. Owen in Chapter 13, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) flew over 3,500 sorties (flights) against over 300 individual targets. This helped bring the Serbian side to the negotiating table and the Serbs' quick agreement to the 1995 Dayton Peace Accords, which finally brought longed-for stability to Bosnia. Although NATO worked closely with the United Nations in 1995, Operation Deliberate Force was a NATO-run enforcement operation using substantial air power.

It was the United Nations itself that applied armed force and combat in the eastern Congo in 2006 and 2008. After repeated warnings, the world organization was able to “engage” rebel forces with its Mi-35 helicopters, armed with Gatling guns and rocket launchers, without losing any UN personnel. Though fired upon, the armour of the aircraft was able to withstand penetration and so prevent crashes. Overall, as described by A. Walter Dorn in Chapter 14, the UN mission's use of robust aerial force against rebel groups seems to meet the just war criteria, including just cause, last resort, proportional means and right conduct. Airborne force was needed not only for self-protection but also to protect the mission mandate, the civilian population, and the tenuous peace. After the rebels accepted negotiations, the tentative peace deal allowed the fighters to reintegrate into the Congolese government forces, providing a welcome respite from fighting. Libya 2011 was another success, if not triumph, for UN-authorized force, in this case conducted mostly by highly capable and well-equipped NATO air forces, of greater capacity than any UN peacekeeping operation had ever incorporated. While it is often stated that air power cannot achieve sustainable territorial results without ground troops, the rag-tag Free Libyan Army made effective use of NATO strikes to seize (“liberate”) territory and eventually bring an end to the Gadhafi regime. Air

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power over Libya is examined by the Swiss expert on air power doctrine, Christian F. Anrig, who in Chapter 15 covers the NFZ as well as combat operations.

Part V of this volume shows how sometimes *force is needed to control force*. Air combat power, judiciously used, can help the United Nations maintain international peace and security; but the proper application of force needs thorough intellectual exploration.

