

Cold War Commander guide to United Nations Peace Keeping Forces in the Balkans Conflict – 1992 -2001

By Noshier (aka Paul Martin)

Inspired by a recent post with accompanying photos on the forum (thanks Matt!) and a long-time intent to get my own small collection of peacekeepers onto the tabletop, I finally got around to writing this article on incorporating UN Forces in games of CWC.

What I hope to do over the following articles (6 in total including the army lists) is give a feel for the UN and how to get the best out of such forces when putting together a Balkans Conflict scenario. I hope to introduce some unusual ideas for house rules and finally I hope to give a degree of guidance on putting together a UN force. Whilst the intent is to create a series of UN Lists these lists will be based primarily on the Kosovo Conflict (1996 - 1999). These lists (with a little tinkering and knowledge of the CWC main lists) should give you enough to go on when creating potential UN lists for other theatres during the period.

Background

As I am sure most readers will know, it wasn't that long after the end of WWII that military aggression was fuelling tensions all over the world. In true "to the victors go the spoils of war" fashion, it wasn't long before the international community stepped in to create a multi-national Peacekeeping force to police the growing number of hotspots.

The UN's role is wide-ranging, with military action being an absolute last resort. Although this article focuses primarily on military action, it is worthwhile touching briefly on the full mandate particularly in relation to writing plausible scenarios **for** military action being taken. Many of the house rules I incorporate here take into account these preferred UN courses of action.

The UN's own definition of Peacekeeping is simple. It is a way to help countries torn by conflict to create conditions for sustainable peace. As well as having a collective military might, the UN includes civilian police officers, aid workers and trained professionals skilled in a wide variety of specialist roles that can observe and assist in implementing peace agreements. Whilst not having a specific military role, these staff frequently find themselves in the front line and often on casualty lists that result from conflict.

The charter of the UN gives its Security Council the power and responsibility to take action which includes a mandate to authorise regional organisations (such as NATO) to undertake certain peace enforcement functions where direct UN involvement is not considered appropriate or feasible.

As its name suggests, UN deployments include troops and specialists from across the world which in recent years has also seen the involvement of countries from the former Soviet Union. This leads to some exciting game opportunities where multi-national forces take on enemies with similar equipment and training. The possibility of “blue on blue” false recognition issues arises, as do issues of allies ‘looking the other way’ whilst once neighbours take advantage of these oversights... There are a whole host of these situations which have been widely reported throughout the recent conflict in the Balkans involving French, Dutch and former Soviet Union countries. Think Srebrinica and you’ll get the gist of what I mean.

UN Intervention – UNPROFOR, 1992 -1995.

I have not even attempted to create army lists for CWC for this period, for one very simple reason – the nightmare of trying to pick apart the UNPROFOR (United Nations Protection Force) deployment to the Balkans consisting of nearly 39,000 personnel from Argentina, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Columbia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Jordan, Kenya, Lithuania, Malaysia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Poland, Portugal, the Russian Federation, Slovak Republic, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, the UK, the USA and Venezuela...



Essentially I would suggest that players wishing to re-enact battles within this period use their own imagination and the existing CWC lists of the periods to come up with multi-national UN forces! However, I have provided some background information in the section on the Bosnian War which I hope gives you a feel for the period which should help when putting together “what-ifs” or re-enactments of actual battles.

IFOR, SFOR and KFOR Army Lists

IFOR Brigade, Sarajevo January to December 1996

This list is based on the British led NATO Brigade deployed to Sarajevo following the signing of the Dayton Peace Accord in December 1995. The brigade consisted of a UK Mechanised Infantry Battalion, a UK Armoured Infantry Battalion, a Dutch Mechanised Battalion, a Malaysian Infantry Battalion, a UK Armoured Engineer Squadron and a UK Reconnaissance Squadron. The Brigade was also supported by a UK Artillery Regiment and assets from the Army Air Corps.

Although they are not listed within the army list, the following NATO contingents were also "in theatre" at this time and could therefore potentially be included in an army representative of the period:

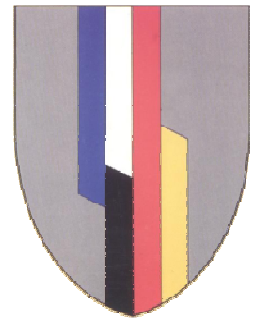
- Various French and US combat assets.
- A multi-national transport Battalion consisting of Austrian, Belgian, Greek and Luxembourgers.
- A German Engineer Battalion, Transport Battalion and Helicopter Regiment.
- A Hungarian Engineer Battalion.
- A Turkish Military Police Company
- A UK EW Company
- Special Forces detachments from the UK and US

SFOR, Bosnia

This list is based on one of three multi-national brigades deployed under SFOR – in particular the British-led NATO Brigade deployed to Sarajevo after IFOR's task was complete. The brigade consisted of a UK Armoured Infantry Battalion, a UK Armoured Regiment, a Dutch Mechanised Battalion, a Malaysian Infantry Battalion, a Canadian Mechanised Battalion, and a Czech Mechanised Battalion. The Brigade was also supported by a UK Armoured Engineer Squadron, a UK Artillery Regiment and assets from the Army Air Corps.

SFOR 1996/KFOR 1999, Franco-German Brigade

This list is based on the Franco-German Brigade that deployed under SFOR in 1996 and again as KFOR in 1999. The brigade consisted of the German 292nd Jager Battalion, 295th Artillery Battalion and 550th Panzer Pioneer Company and the French 110th Infantry Regiment and 3rd Hussar Regiment.



KFOR, 4th Armoured Brigade, Kosovo/Macedonia. 1999

This list is based on the British led multi-national brigade deployed under KFOR to Kosovo and Macedonia throughout 1999. The Brigade consisted of two UK battlegroups (Irish Guards and Kings Royal Hussars), a Canadian Reconnaissance battlegroup, an Italian battlegroup and two UK Engineer Squadrons, the 21st and the 28th. Brigade support took the form of:

- A UK Household Cavalry Squadron
- A UK Anti-aircraft Squadron
- A UK Helicopter Squadron
- A single SAS Squadron

KFOR, LeClerc Brigade, 1999

This list is based on the French led multi-national brigade deployed under KFOR to Kosovo throughout 1999. From April to August the brigade consisted of a French Para/Marine Regiment and a single Infantry Regiment. From September the brigade consisted of a French Infantry Regiment, a Belgian Mechanised Battalion, and a United Arab Emirates Mechanised Battalion. Brigade support took the form of:

- A French Helicopter Regiment
- A French Tank Squadron
- A Foreign Legion Cavalry Squadron
- A Foreign Legion 'Spahi' Squadron and Engineer Company
- A French Special Forces Platoon
- A Belgian Helicopter Company

KFOR, 12th Panzer Brigade – April to December 1999

This list is based on the German led NATO Brigade deployed to Kosovo in April to December 1999. The brigade consisted of German Panzer Grenadier Battalion, a German Gebirgsjager (Mountain Infantry) Battalion, a German Paratroop Battalion, a Russian Motorised Rifle Battalion and a Turkish Mechanised Battalion. The Brigade was also supported by a German Panzer Pioneer Company, a Dutch Artillery battalion and a Dutch Helicopter Flight.

KFOR, American Brigade - April to December 1999

This list is based on the U.S led NATO Brigade deployed to Kosovo in April to December 1999. The brigade consisted of a U.S Battalion 'Task Force', a US Marine Expeditionary Unit, a Greek Mechanised Battalion and a Polish Airborne Battalion. The Brigade was also supported by a US Engineer Company, a US Artillery Battalion, a US MLRS Battalion, a Greek Engineer Company and Special Forces detachments from the US and Norway.

House Rules

'Third battlegroup' integration to CWC style game-play

When thinking through how best to integrate UN battlegroups into the Balkans conflict I was acutely aware that quite often the UN were a "third force" in many of the battles that happened. CWC game-play does not incorporate a possibility of using a third force other than as an allied command. Despite what many casual observers of the war might think, the UN didn't side with one protagonist.

What I have come up with is a playable set of house rules that can lend its hand to integrating a "Third Battlegroup" into the game – but it is far from perfect and feedback/discussion on how to make the following more workable would be most appreciated.

The "Third Battlegroup" may only ever be formed from UN Troops. Battlegroups must have a minimum of two commands and must include a CO. The Third Battlegroup may only ever be included in either of the Ethnic Cleansing Scenarios or the Intervention scenario.

To integrate a third force's play in any other phase other than the scheduled phase, the third battlegroup player may only declare his intention to interrupt the active players game turn at the following points in the turn:

- a) Immediately following the end phase of either active players game turn
- b) Immediately after either active players scheduled phase
- c) Immediately after one of the active players commands fails a command roll or blunders

1. Scheduled Phase

Scheduled assets available to a third force should be planned for in the same way as highlighted in the CWC Rulebook. However, a note must be made detailing during which active player's scheduled phase the assets will be used.

The third battlegroup commander's scheduled assets arrive immediately after the currently active player's scheduled assets and are resolved as a separate issue.

To cancel or delay a scheduled asset, use the existing rule in CWC.

2. Initiative Phase

When interrupting the active player's game turn, the third battlegroup commander carries out all intended initiative phase actions of the command with which he intends to interrupt the action with. Play then proceeds to the Command Phase.

3. Command Phase

Command Phase play for the third force is exactly the same as outlined in the CWC Rulebook. The third force commander can continue to interrupt game play as long as he has commands that have not been activated.

4. End Phase

The third force never receives an End Phase. Outstanding hits, smoke and suppression are removed / recovered at the end of the turn of the current active player whose turn was interrupted and a victory condition check is also made.

Opportunity fire by third force battle-groups remains the same as in the CWC Rule book and may only ever be used once in any game turn.

Flexible Air Support Asset (FASA)

It should be noted that although most of the UN lists include aircraft and attack helicopters a significant proportion of the air support throughout the conflict came from the US Carrier fleet which was permanently “on-station” in theatre.

UN Battle-groups are free to choose air support assets from within their own list. Local commanders may also make use of a Flexible Air Support Asset which comes free of charge (including any special munitions) but with the following restrictions:

- The FASA option may only be used once in any scenario and the commanding unit may do nothing else in the turn in which the option is used
- The FASA option is chosen after all deployment is complete
- The aircraft and asset may be chosen from either the army list of the ‘host nation’ (same as CO) or from the US modern list
- FASA must still abide by the Danger Close House rule
- To receive FASA support the commanding unit receives a -1 modifier. This command roll is also subject to all normal modifying rolls applicable to receiving air support.
- Any blunders resulting from a request for FASA see the number of hits taken doubled.

Danger Close Artillery and Air Support Restrictions

UN Forces (and even to some extent NATO forces during the conflict in Kosovo) were generally reluctant to use artillery and air strikes indiscriminately for a fear of causing unnecessary civilian casualties. To represent this restriction in CWC, UN Forces may never call in artillery and/or air strikes against targets within 30cm of a BUA. Similarly air strikes and artillery may never be called in against targets within 30cm of refugees (represented by a stand or stands of figures).

The only exception to this rule is the use of Aircraft delivered PGM's. The target must be clearly identified as hostile – i.e. in LOS and having fired.

“Red Force” Recognition & Friendly Fire

Bearing in mind the multi-national nature of both the UN forces and the fact that many of the Balkans forces also used similar equipment, the possibility of friend and foe recognition begs to be tackled by this conflict.

In keeping with simplicity of the existing rules, I suggest the following simple house rule to bring these instances into play.

- Only use these rules if the UN Force consists of two or more nationalities or the Balkans troops are using any equipment identical to the UN Forces.
- When a UN Command Blunder results in a **Cross Fire** the UN Command nearest the Command that blundered takes the resulting fire damage. **Notice that this is different to the same blunder in CWC!** This result is not affected by LOS etc.
- Artillery and Air Support Blunders remain as written.
- When first attempting to fire on a Balkans enemy unit with a similar vehicle to a UN Commands vehicles roll 1d6. On a roll of 6 the units identity is mistaken as a ‘friendly force’ and the attack does not take place

Authors notes:

This is very much a ‘work under construction’ and I would very much welcome any feedback (positive or negative) on how the content may be improved.

Much of the work (particularly the Army Lists) comes directly from the free downloads on GHQ’s website whilst the historical aspect comes largely from the internet and my own personal experience of serving in the Balkans with Her Majesty’s finest!

If you would like to comment, please feel free to email me:

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