

UN Attack Helicopters in the Heart of Africa: MONUC, 2004 onwards



Dr. Walter Dorn
Canadian Forces College
& Royal Military College of Canada

16 June 2011



The African “Great Lakes” ...



Congo 1960-64

- Independence from Belgium (1960)
 - Lumumba (PM)/ Kasavubu (Pres)
- Katangan secession
 - Moise Tshombe & *Union Minière*
 - suppressed by UN (1962-63)



Creation of “UN Air Force” (1961)

- Hammarskjöld’s leadership
 - Armed aircraft: Ethiopia, India, Sweden
- Pres. Kennedy offers eight US jets
 - Joint Chiefs: “seek out and destroy on ground or in the air the Fouga Magister jets”
 - Thant declined

US Airlift

50 C-130s transported
9,000 UN troops in two
weeks



Swedish Saab J29 Jets



27 October 1961

6

UN photo 72365

“Flying Barrels “

Ethiopian Sabre Jets



Indian Canberra Bombers





<http://www.bharat-rakshak.com/IAF/History/1960s/Congo01.html>

Flying in Formation:

2 IAF B(1) Canberras; 2 Swedish J29s Saabs; 2 Ethiopian F-86 Sabres



Securing road blocks &
positions around Elisabethville, 3 January 1963

De facto No-fly Zone (NFZ)

- “A protocol for carrying out the provisions of the **cease-fire**, including such matters as prisoner exchange and the fixing of troop positions, was signed on 13 October 1961 at Ellsabethville. While the protocol allowed firing back in case of attack, it **prohibited** Katangese and ONUC troop **movements**.
- Meanwhile, the remaining Katanga mercenaries were leading the gendarmerie in a long series of violations of the cease-fire agreement, going so far as to launch offensive air action along the Kasai-Katanga frontier. This was sternly protested by the United Nations, which **warned** that *Katangese aircraft involved - all of them piloted by mercenaries - would be brought down.*”
(emphasis added)

UN Forcefully Ended a Secession



ONUC Conclusions I

- Showed utility of air intelligence and air combat
- Air Intelligence
 - Utility of aerial recce
 - Limits of aerial recce: Italian airmen case (13 November 1961)
 - Need for gathering intell on air capabilities, incl. in foreign countries
- Air Combat
 - Establish ROEs and Force Directives (*see paper*)
 - Recognize the dangers of collateral damage
 - Accused of bombing a hospital and hotel
 - Mortar fire on a hospital

But

- Mission challenged and exhausted UN
 - At HQ long before DPKO created
 - Controversial among states and in media
 - Katanga lobby
 - UK, France fears
 - Soviet objections
 - Non-aligned movement
 - Dynamics (Tshombe Prime Minister)
 - Expensive: almost sent UN into bankruptcy
 - Difficulties in field: C2, armaments (bombs), casualties, bad press
 - Messy situation
- No mission in Africa until 1989 (Namibia)

Congolese Leadership

- Mobutu (1964-1997) - Zaire
 - Civil War (1996-1997)
 - MNF (LGen Baril)
 - Continental War (1998-2000)
- Laurent Kabila (1997-2001)
 - Dem. Rep. Congo
- Joseph Kabila (2001-)
 - Elections 2006, 2011



UN Back in the Congo ...



UN Photo 200146

Indian MI-24 attack helicopter

MONUC

- “Chapter VI” (1999-2003)
- “Chapter VII” (2003-)
- Protection of civilians
 - Warlords (CNDP), foreign rebels (FRDC), foreign armies, government troops
- Air power
 - Airlift
 - Air recce
 - Kinetic
 - Training



MONUC AVIATION SECTION
1999 - 2006 AND BEYOND

*Celebrating 150,000
hours of safe operations*



MONUC Aviation Family

MONUC Aviation

- Over 100 aircraft
- 1,600 personnel
- Helicopters:
 - Lama (Allouette III)
 - to Mi-76
 - MI-35 (Mi-24/25)
- Runway rehab.
- \$200 million of 1.1 billion MONUC budget
- 20,000 personnel flown annually
- 175,000 hours with no fatalities

Congrès national pour la défense du peuple (CNDP)



DES SOLDATS FDLR DANS LES MONTAGNES CONGOLAISES

Enemy of
FDLR
(ex-FAR)
Rwandan



Banyamulenge =
ethnic Tutsi Rwandans in
Kivus

- Laurent Nkunda,
“chairman”
 - Former general in FARDC
(Forces Armées DRC)
 - 81st and 83rd Brigades
- Bukavu 2004
- Goma 2006, 2008

Mi-35 Attack Helicopter



Front View;
MI-35 in MONUC, No.104 Helicopter Unit of
the Indian Air Force, 21 January 2006;

URL: http://www.bharat-rakshak.com/IAF/Images/Special/Features/Congo/Photo_2006123102447578.jpg.html



UN Photo, C. Herwig

Mi-24; the Mi-35 is a variant of
the Mi-24 and Mi-25





Distributing Leaflets



Information leaflets on the disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation, reintegration and repatriation (DDRRR) programme distributed in stronghold areas of the Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda (FDLR).

17 July 2008, South Kivu, Democratic Republic of the Congo

UN Photo/Marie Frechon, Photo # 202011

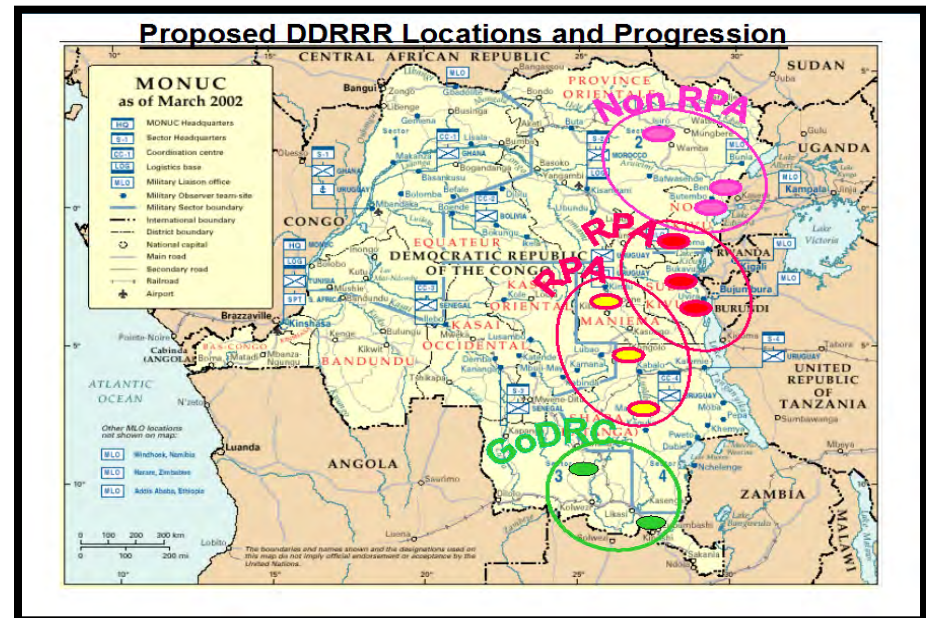
Concept of Operations 2002

Phase III: Progressive DDRRR

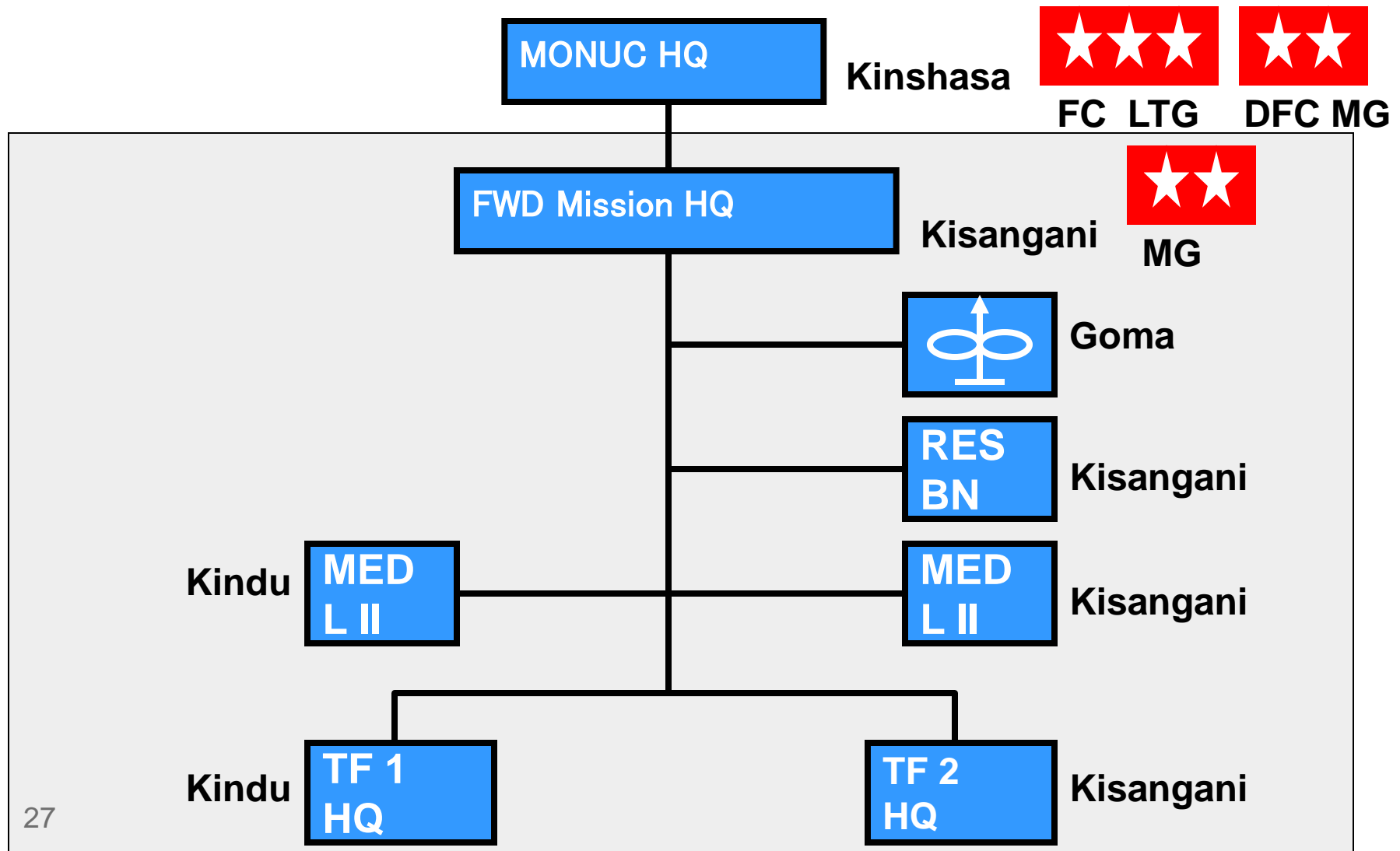
- Demobilize
Disarm Repatriate
Resettle
Reintegrate

- MONUC Shifts to DDR in the East

- Katanga
- Kivus



Forward Mission Structure



Concept of Operations: AH Ops

Mission:

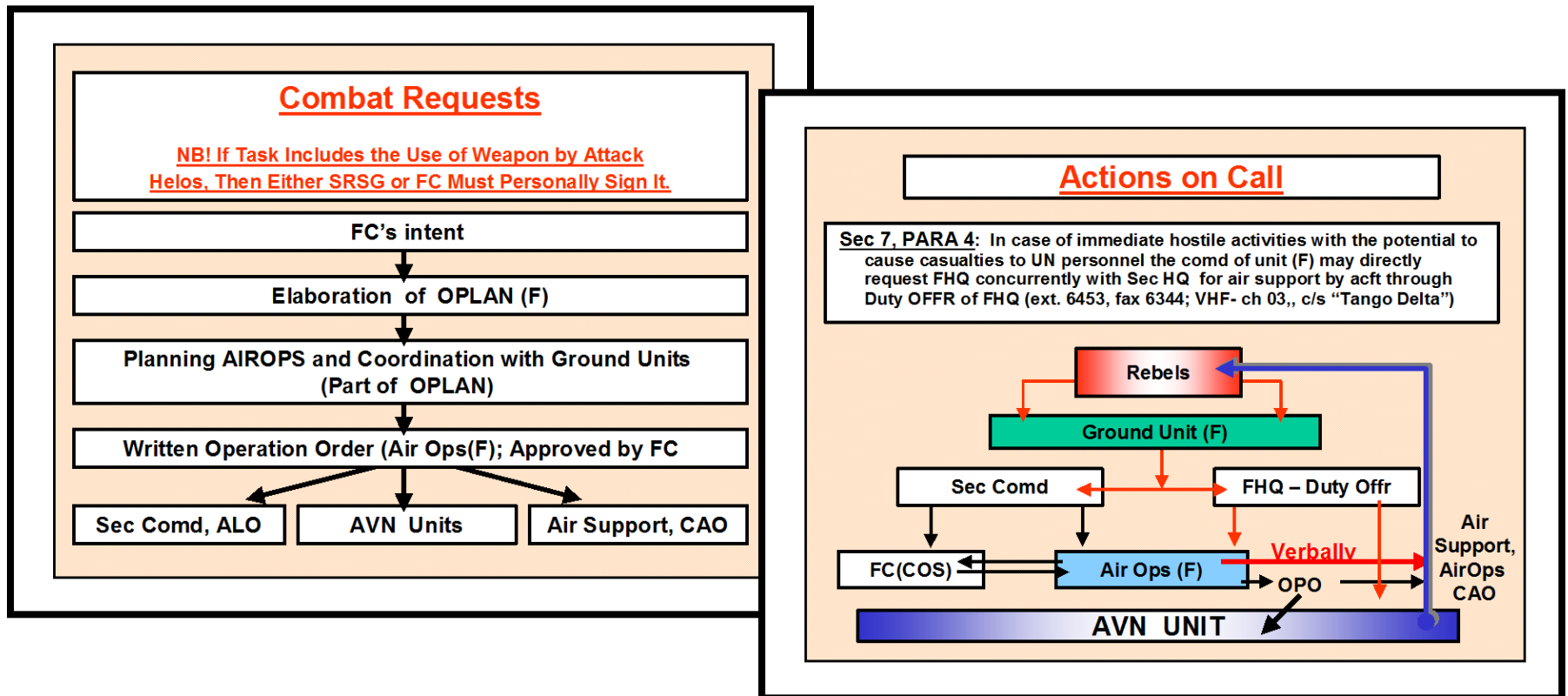
- **Deterrence through presence**
- **Suppression of ground threats from Surface-to-Air Missile, Small Arms Fire and Heavy Machine Gun Fire.**

Projected Mission Profiles:

- **Armed Deterrent Presence for DDR (On Station or On Call)**
- **Armed Reconnaissance – Area & Route**
- **Armed Airmobile Escort – TF Deployment & QRF**
- **Armed Convoy Escort – Mission Sustainment**
- **UN Facility & Personnel Protection**

Attack Helicopter Operations

UNAMSIL as a Model



UNAMSIL Air Ops (F) Lt Col Oleg Grekov



“UN helicopter patrols area of the Congo where LRA rebels believed to be hiding in 2005.”



“The Mi-25 Squadron of IAF, a part of Indian Aviation Contingent based at Goma in DRC, created a record of sorts on 19 Jul 06 when it completed 1000 hrs of flying in just 10 months of their induction. The sqn operates Mi-25 attack helicopters, and is commanded by Wg Cdr M C Mishra. The squadron nicknamed “VIPERS” is engaged in peacekeeping operations in this country troubled by internal strife and turmoil. “



“Congo (Kinshasa), June 30, 2005. IAF Mi-25 Z-3129 / UN-859 at Kinhasa: This rare type is identified by the absence of chin mounted machine gun. Gun pods are mounted on the wings.”



“Indian Mil-35 on escort duties on MONUC”



“Mi-35s ready to go on a mission: The attack component of the Indian Air Contingent is provided by Mi-35s seconded from No.104 Helicopter Squadron of the IAF.”



“Indian Camp: An aerial photograph shows the layout of the camp of the Indian air contingent.”



“First briefing of Indian Air Contingent officers at Bukavu.”



“photo shows six of the Mi-17s taking off from the Indian base. **The choppers are carrying Pakistani troops on the mission.**”



“Local terrain necessitates usage of helicopters. “

Imagery from MONUC's MI-35 sensor system

MI-35 Attack helicopter (AH)
during the attack on Goma
September 2008

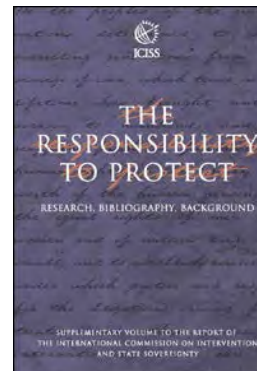
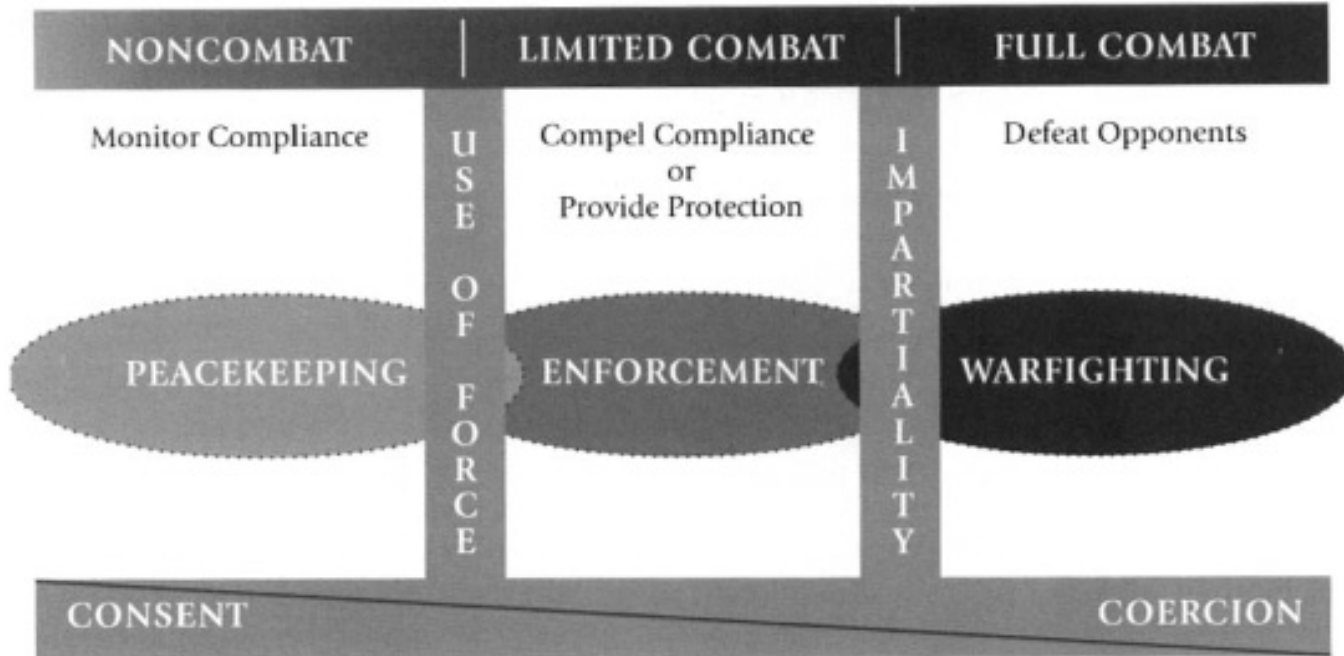
Photo credits: MONUC

Forward-looking Infrared (FLIR) camera freeze frame showing two suspected rebels approaching a vehicle on road

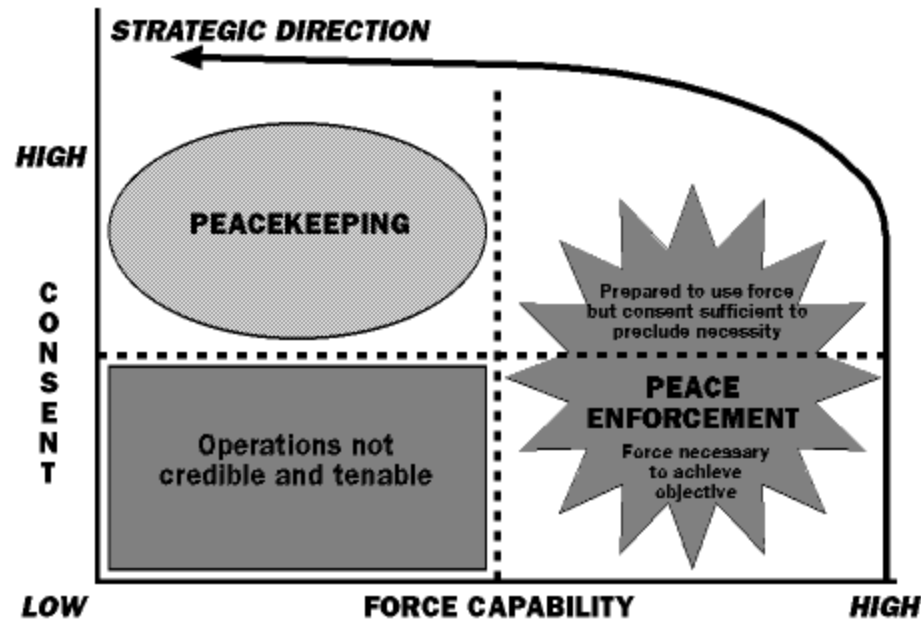


MONUC Case Conclusions

- Air power helped save Goma
 - 2006 and 2008
- “Peace Enforcement” requires robust peacekeeping
 - Deterrence
- Application of the “Peacekeeping Trinity”?
Matter of Degree
 - Consent
 - Impartiality
 - Min use of force (defensive)



Lessons – “Wider Peacekeeping”



UN UAVs?



Israeli



Australian



Japanese



American

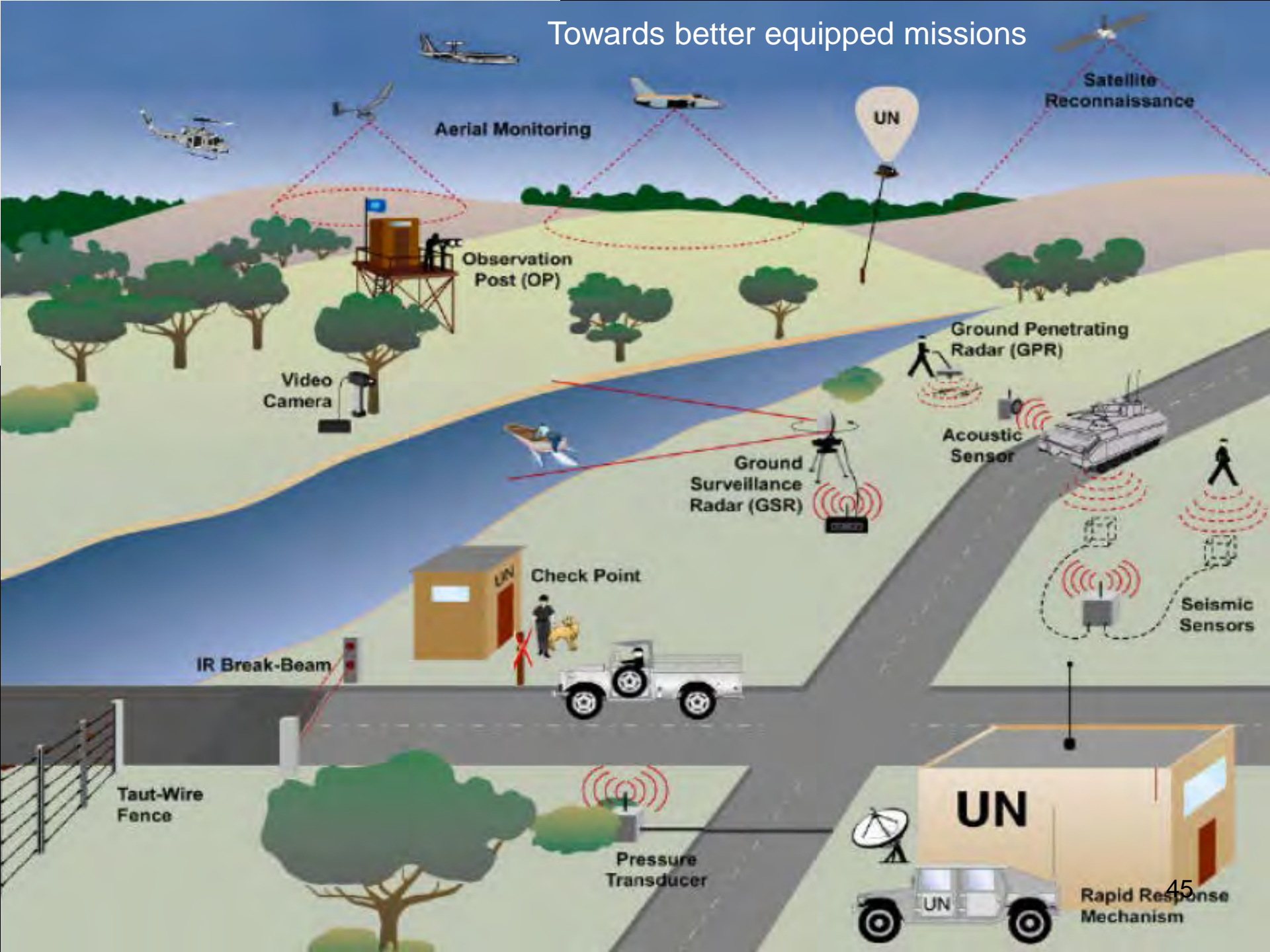
Canadian



Hand launched



Towards better equipped missions



KEEPING WATCH

Monitoring, Technology & Innovation
in UN Peace Operations



A. Walter Dorn

Foreword by LGen The Hon Roméo A. Dallaire (Ret'd)

To be continued ...

