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## LESSON 15

### CASE STUDY: SOMALIA

#### Introduction

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<b>Purpose</b>	This lesson provides a historical case study that allows you to evaluate a U.S. peacekeeping operation in a joint/multinational Third World environment under U.N. auspices.
<b>Why Study Somalia?</b>	United States involvement in the U.N. peacekeeping mission to Somalia raises fundamental issues regarding future participation in similar operations.
<b>Relationship to Other Instruction</b>	This text is relevant to the recurring themes of counterintelligence, mission creep, combined U.N. operations, Third World warfighting, and chain-of-command.
<b>Study Time</b>	This lesson, including the issues for consideration, will require about 2.5 hours of study.

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## Educational Objectives

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**Evaluate Operation** Evaluate a U.S. peacekeeping operation in a joint/multinational, Third World environment under U.N. auspices. [JPME Area 3(a)]

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**Lessons Learned** Determine some practical "lessons learned" for future OOTW deployments.

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**Somalia Scenario** Interpret OOTW doctrine, strategy, chain-of-command, and special forces issues in the context of the Somalia scenario. [JPME Areas 1(a), 1(d), 3(a), and 3(d)]

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**Intelligence Collection** Explain the importance of intelligence collection and cultural awareness in OOTW. [JPME Areas 5(b) and 5(d)]

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**JPME Areas/  
Objectives/Hours  
(accounting data)** 1/a/0.2  
1/d/0.2  
3/a/0.5  
3/d/0.2  
5/b/0.2  
5/d/0.2

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## Discussion

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### **Somalia Highlights**

The following is an outline and critique of United States involvement in the U.N. peacekeeping mission to Somalia:

wThe mission, which began for humanitarian purposes, gradually shifted into a special operations mission to capture a local warlord. Questions were raised concerning U.N. command of U.S. forces and a lack of combined operational capability. U.S. peacekeeping forces found it just as difficult to stay neutral between warring factions in Somalia as they did in the Banana Wars in the 1920s.

wU.S. intelligence organizations, geared to counter a sophisticated Soviet threat, were lacking in HUMINT which was crucial in the primitive environment of Mogadishu. Critics also charged that there was no planned avenue of escape and that the special forces chain-of-command ignored the theater commander and reported directly back to Fort Bragg. On the political side, Secretary of Defense Aspin was condemned for refusing a request from the theater commander for mechanized back-up forces.

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## Discussion, Continued

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### Objective Analysis

Although this criticism may appear to be Monday morning quarterbacking, an objective analysis would suggest the following:

wThere was little understanding of Somali clan culture or respect for Aidid's military ability. Aidid attended Italian and Soviet military schools and fought a victorious war to oust a previous Somali dictator. His tactical commander, Colonel Sharif Hassan Giumale, attended the Soviet military academy at Odessa and also received military training in Italy.

wGiumale had experience in clan warfare and had conducted extensive research on guerrilla insurgencies, particularly in Latin America. He adopted a lessons learned strategy to deal with elite Ranger forces for whom he had great respect. He noticed that U.S. special forces always used the same template:

wDelta commandos would storm the target  
wRangers would ring it for security  
wHelicopters would loiter to provide covering fire

wBecause the Rangers emphasized speed and surprise, Giumale realized that his militia would have to react quickly. U.S. helicopters could be neutralized with RPG barrages, and the superior firepower of U.S. ground forces offset by swarm tactics while ambushes and barricades delayed reinforcements.

wGiumale knew that U.S. commanders underestimated his militia, and that his troops possessed tactical and emotional advantages since they were fighting on home turf. But most importantly, the Americans displayed predictability, having used the same tactic six times before.

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## Discussion, Continued

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### **Military Challenges**

When a U.S. helicopter was downed two weeks before the Ranger raid (Giumale's troops might have been practicing), an official U.N. spokesman stated scornfully that "the bandits" got lucky.

A question of sound strategy was also raised when U.S. helicopters fired rockets on Aidid's headquarters killing an estimated seventy people, some of whom were women and children. This use of conventional firepower inflicted heavy collateral damage and was condemned by Italian forces, who argued that it only escalated the conflict by alienating the civilian population.

U.N. intelligence had placed Aidid's support at about one thousand, when in fact at the time of the Ranger raid it was about twelve thousand. The U.S. media also played into Aidid's hands by conveying the barbarity of the conflict to the public and Congress who quickly applied pressure on the President to withdraw U.S. forces.

Finally, what was missed in all this, was that the humanitarian side of the mission was a success. Thousands (perhaps millions) of Somalis were saved from starvation as the Army's 10th Mountain Division quietly carried out its civic action mission.

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## Required Readings

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*Operations Other  
Than War  
(OOTW)  
Readings*

- Stanton, Martin N., (Major). "Task Force 2-87: Lessons from Restore Hope." *Military Review*, Sept. 1994. Find this reading immediately following this lesson, pp. M-3 to M-9. Major Stanton discusses lessons from Operation Restore Hope, covering the following areas: Command and Control, Maneuver, NBC, Fire Support, Mobility, Countermobility, Survivability, Combat Service Support, and Intelligence.
- Bacevich, A. J. "Learning from Aidid." *Commentary*, Dec. 1993. Find this reading immediately following this lesson, pp. M-11 to M-14. Bacevich compares the methods and leadership used by Mohammed Aidid and Saddam Hussein.
- Post, Tom and Henderson, Daniel. "Firefighting from Hell" and "Making the Same Dumb Mistakes." *Newsweek*, Oct. 18, 1993. Find this reading immediately following this lesson, pp. M-15 to M-18. Post and Henderson talk about a contingent that tried to twice rescue an assault team of about 80 Rangers and Delta Force counterterrorist commandos. The operations turned into costly firefights and proved a setback for the U.S.
- Elliott, Michael, "The Making of A Fiasco." *Newsweek*, Oct. 18 1993. Find this reading immediately following this lesson, pp. M-19 to M-22. Elliott discusses Washington's blundered policy in Somalia. Attempting to capture Mohammed Aidid while at the same time pursuing a diplomatic policy of bringing factions together, proved to be a failure.
- Cushman, John H., LGEN USA (Ret). "Somalia, Phase II...Phase III?" *Proceedings of the Naval Institute*, Nov. 1993. Find this reading immediately following this lesson, pp. M-25. General Cushman discusses requirements for multinational or non multinational military forces when directed in war or operations short of war.
- Walsh, Kenneth. "The Unmaking of Foreign Policy." *U.S. News and World Report*, Oct. 18, 1993. Find this reading immediately following this lesson, pp. M-25 to M-28. Walsh discusses flaws in President Clinton's policies on Somalia.

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## Required Readings, Continued

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***Operations Other Than War (OOTW) Readings, continued*** Auster, Bruce. "From Beirut to Somalia." *U.S. News and World Report*, Oct. 25, 1993. Find this reading immediately following this lesson, pp. M-29 to M-31. The ambiguities of the Somalia mission show parallels to the Lebanon peacekeeping mission.

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## For Further Study

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### Supplemental Readings

The readings listed are **not** required. They are provided as recommended sources of additional information about topics in this lesson that may interest you. They will increase your knowledge and augment your understanding of this lesson.

*wJane's Intelligence Review.*

*wThe Economist.*

*wThe Washington Times.*

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## Issues for Consideration

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**Mission Creep**      What role did "mission creep" play in the Somalia scenario? Do you think a vague mission will be a problem again in future U.N. peace operations?

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**Aidid**                How does the Bacevich article compare Saddam Hussein with Aidid? Do you think the U.S. military has anything to learn from Aidid?

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**Assessment**        You are drawing up an IPB for Mogadishu; assess Aidid's order of battle and military capabilities. What type of threat does Aidid's clan present to U.S. peacekeeping forces?

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**Impact**              How did each of the following impact on warfighting in Mogadishu: Clan warfare, HUMINT, helicopters, mines, RPGs, women and children, urban guerrilla warfare, the media, and civil affairs?

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