Chapter 7

Drawing Down the Forces

Naval Operations

While their comrades on the ground were working throughout the theater, the coalition sailors were busy in various activities off the Somali coast. The work at sea was characterized during the third phase by patrolling, training with coalition partners, and shipboard routine.

Situation reports for this period are filled with the names of ships of coalition partners that entered the waters off the Somali coast and, for a time, became part of Navy Forces Somalia. Some, like the Indian offshore patrol vessel *Sukanya* (OPV P51), were that nation's entire contribution to the coalition and remained as part of the force. Others spent time in the area working with the United States and other nations' vessels and then departed when their limited missions were done. Examples of such ships were the Pakistani Navy's replenishment oiler *Mowain* (AOR A20), destroyer *Tughril* (DD 167), and fleet oiler and stores ship *Dacca* (AOR A41); and the Indian Navy's guided missile corvettes *Kuthar* (FSG P46) and *Khukri* (FSG P49). Some of the transiting ships were supply ships supporting their countries' troops ashore, such as the Belgian command and support ship *Zinnia* (AGF A961), and the Australian helicopter and logistic support ship *Jervis Bay* (GT 203). Other ships represented the naval contingent of coalition allies that also provided ground troops to the operation. In this category were the Australian landing ship logistic *Tobruk* (LSL L50); the Italian amphibious transport dock *San Giorgio* (LPD L9892), mine countermeasures support ship *Vesuvio* (MCS A5384), and guided missile frigate *Grecale* (FFG F571); the Turkish landing ship tank *Ertugrul* (LST L401), depot ship *Derya* (AD A576), and guided missile frigate *Fatih* (FFG F242); and the

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An Alouette III SA-316B Chetak helicopter prepares to land on board the Indian Navy's Sukanya-class offshore patrol craft Sharda *(P 55), anchored off the Somali coast.*

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A U.S. Marine KC-130 Refueler aircraft on the ground at Belet Weyne airfield, as a Marine AH-1 "Cobra" attack helicopter flies overhead. The mission of the KC-130s was to refuel the Cobras, keeping them in the air to escort food convoys.

Canadian replenishment oiler *Preserver* (AOR 510).

The daily work of all the vessels in the coalition was varied. There were the normal training and drills, and underway replenishments were common, but the more important tasks were in direct support of the operation. Naval air was a key factor, and Navy Forces Somalia assumed the air traffic control mission for the operation during its early days. Aircraft performed road reconnaissance for convoys and stood ready for close air support if needed. Logistics and tanker flights helped troops on the ground stay supplied, while forward infrared radar surveillance flights kept the commanders informed of movements within the theater. The ships also conducted coastal surveillance and intercepted and searched merchant vessels entering the waters of the area of operations.

This latter mission was very important in ensuring more weapons were not smuggled into the theater. In one notable example, an intelligence report indicated a cargo vessel named the *Maria*, a ship of Greek origin laden with arms and ammunition, was sailing from Serbia and supposedly heading for Somalia. The coalition naval forces kept a tight watch for this ship, which was nondescript and bore a name common to merchant vessels in the Mediterranean. The *Maria* was eventually reported as seized by the Seychelles Coast Guard in their national waters on 5 March. The ship was carrying 90 tons of munitions and falsified registry papers at the time.[305]

Air Operations

Air support was vital to every aspect of the operation. It provided a capability that offset the tremendous distances of the area of operations and served as an important and flexible supporting arm to troops on the ground.

Although a service component, the U.S. Air Force was in some aspects similar to a functional organization. Its primary duty as the overseer of Air Force Forces Somalia was to provide mobility, both into the area of operations and within the theater. It was one of the smallest components of the Unified Task Force Somalia (UNITAF), but there was no shortage of airframes in the country. Most of these came from the American forces, and all four Services (Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps) contributed to the air armada that was sent to Somalia. Some of the coalition part-

ners also used their own aircraft for resupply or as a contribution to the overall operation.

The aircraft were used for almost every traditional mission of air power.* In the initial phases of the operation, fixed-wing attack aircraft from the carriers flew air patrols for detachments working at distant sites and were prepared for close air support if necessary. Medical evacuation flights and search and rescue flights were also significant parts of the planning.** Later, Army and Marine Corps attack helicopters provided close-in fire support to operations against factions in Mogadishu and Kismayo. Transport aircraft flying on the air bridge brought personnel and supplies into the country, and C-130 and C-141 intratheater flights carried fuel and supplies to the sectors.

The absence of traditional ground supporting arms (e.g., tanks and heavy artillery) during Operation Restore Hope was offset by the use of attack helicopters. These aircraft filled an important void in the organizational structure. With the decision to leave howitzers on board the maritime prepositioning force shipping, gunships assumed a vital supporting arms role. Marine Forces Somalia (MarFor) used them successfully in the attack on weapons storage sites in Mogadishu, and the Army employed them frequently during troubles in Kismayo in February and March. The Army's after action report claimed: "Attack aviation provided the discriminatory firepower required for this type of environment."[306] Also, the Somalis displayed an evident respect for the capabilities of these weapons. "[Their] presence also provided a psychological effect that helped in intimidating potential threats. ... On several occasions, the mere presence of the attack helicopters served as a deterrent and caused crowds and vehicles to disperse."[307] These versatile aircraft protected convoys throughout the theater, performed day and night reconnaissance missions, and accompanied coalition forces on the ground. They added appreciably to the coalition mission to create a secure environment.

The calibration of weapons was important to the effectiveness of the aircraft. Marine Aircraft Group 16 (MAG-16) built a firing range five miles northwest of Bale Dogle airfield where all aviation weapons could be properly checked. From 6 January to 12 January, the group conducted a battle-sight zero range to sight all of its M16A2 rifles.[308]

Aircraft were also critical to the supply of forces in the field, especially in the operation's early days. Working with the Air Force or air mobility element, MAG-16 set up "spoke channel" flights to the sectors of Bardera, Bale Dogle, and Baidoa. Service began a few days before Christmas. An average of four transport flights a day soon delivered vital cargo of rations, miscellaneous supplies, and engineering equipment to these areas. Lockheed KC-130 Hercules transports from Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 352 delivered fuel, as did CH-53D/E heavy lift helicopters from MAG-16. These helicopters also transported personnel and carried oversize cargo by external lift. The spoke channel flights served Kismayo and other sectors with fuel deliveries. Even the French forces at Oddur benefited from these flights by driving the shorter distance to Baidoa to pick up fuel and water delivered by air.[309] As the New Zealand forces came into theater they set up scheduled "Kiwi flights" into the various relief sectors. Their light fixed-wing Andover aircraft were used to deliver passengers and light cargo on a regular basis.

The peculiarities of the desert environment affected aircraft as well as soldiers. The omnipresent dust was extremely damaging to equipment, especially to the machines' sensitive air intakes. Even the finest filters could not keep out all the powder-like dust. The aircraft at dirt airfields in the interior were particularly vulnerable to this problem, since every time an airplane or helicopter took off or landed at one of these fields it raised a storm of red or ochre dust, the color depending on the location. One solution was to use dust palliatives that could be put down on the runways and adjacent surfaces to hold the particles in place. Another solution was to place AM2 interconnecting panels, a medium-duty, aluminum, landing mat capable of supporting both fighter and cargo aircraft operations, on ramps and taxiways.

Despite all the work to repair the runways and keep them serviceable, problems developed rapidly. The traffic of the heavy Lockheed C-141 air-

* The Marine Corps lists six functions of support provided by its air arm. These are offensive air support, antiair warfare, assault support, aerial reconnaissance, electronic warfare, and control of aircraft and missiles.

** See Chapter 8 for a more detailed description of medical evacuations.

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Using a John Deere road grader, U.S. Air Force SSgt Robert Chandler, along with other members of the Air Force's Red Horse civil engineering team, smoothes out the ground at Oddur airstrip.

craft rutted or broke up the surfaces. In some cases, such as at Bale Dogle, a main air base for the operation, this meant the suspension of C-141 flights or the transfer of cargo to the smaller C-130 aircraft for delivery.

The need for continuous maintenance of the runways was distressing. So was another common problem, foreign object damage. This was caused by small items, such as pebbles, screws, or trash that could get onto an aircraft operating area and cause damage to airframes or engines when blown around or kicked up. Damage from foreign objects was plentiful at Somali airfields. It often came in the form of stones or small rocks that were blown onto runways by propeller aircraft. Airmen, soldiers, or locally hired Somalis engaged in a never-ending struggle to keep the operating areas clear and safe.

Rocks, dust and debris weren't the only problems at the airfields. Within a short time, the airport at Mogadishu became the busiest on the Horn of Africa, resulting in serious overcrowding. Colonel Dayre C. Lias, USAF, Air Force Forces Somalia deputy director of mobility forces, noted on 18 December that there were a "World Airways DC-10, Kuwait DC-8 and C-5 on civilian ramp. Military ramp saturated with civil and other nations military aircraft." The next day, he noted that "[Mogadishu Airport] operating close to the limit." By early January, "the north ramp (old military ramp where several non-flyable MiGs are located) was saturated with a variety of traffic. ... Civilian, relief agency, coalition force and Marine KC-130s are all using the ramp on a free flow basis. We even saw two African Airlines 707s." Colonel Lias was also very specific about the cause of the crowding: a lack of what he called visibility. By this he meant the air mobility element had no knowledge of, or control over, the arrival of many of these aircraft.[310]

Control and management of aircraft were long-running problems during the operation. There were several causes. First, there were actually two operations (and thus two headquarters) responsible for sending aircraft into Somalia. One of these was UNITAF. The other was the joint task force for Operation Provide Relief, which was still based at Mombasa. Establishing a chain-of-command and tracking authority between these two entities were some of the first priorities Air Force

Forces Somalia had to establish. Provide Relief headquarters was willing to work with UNITAF man-to-man between the respective operations sections (through U.S. Central Command, their common superior) using information passed in situation reports. This was a solution, but one that was still fraught with difficulties.[311]

Other internal problems existed. The operation took place early in the joint era, when common command and communications systems were still being formed. As the components came into the area of operations, each brought their own systems with them, and these were not always compatible. There were "lots of software problems," Colonel Lias noted. The Navy used the contingency theater automated planning system, while the Marines relied on fragmentary orders, and the Air Force employed the theater air mobility system, all of which sought to manage complex air-ground operations.[312]

The UNITAF method to manage and control the airspace was through an airspace control authority, established within the Air Forces directorate of mobility forces.* Under normal circumstances, a control authority is the responsibility of a sovereign nation, which, working with the International Civil Aviation Organization, can publish and distribute Notices to Airmen to help control the air traffic within its airspace. But, as with so much in Somalia, there were no normal circumstances. No sovereign government existed to work with the international aviation organization. Thus, the job fell by default to UNITAF.

Coalition commander Lieutenant General Robert B. Johnston, working through his airspace control authority staff, published a memorandum to all "potential users of Somali airspace." It cited a United Nations Resolution 794 provision to "take all necessary means" to establish the secure environment for relief operations. This was the basis to assume the airspace control authority for Somalia by UNITAF, "effective the 9th day of December 1992," and continuing until further notice. Having assumed this authority, General Johnston enjoined "all countries ... to direct their registered aircraft to strictly comply with all airspace control orders and applicable regulations and conventions in place in Somalia. All aircraft must strictly comply with established airspace control procedures to ensure effective procedural control. Violations of air traffic control directions will be reported to the International Civil Aviation Organization, the U.S. Federal Aviation Agency, and other appropriate national agencies."[313]

Unfortunately, problems of airspace management and control continued. Not everyone saw the clear logic in the commanding general's memorandum. At a meeting held in Nairobi on 7 January 1993 between representatives of UNITAF and civilian agencies, the timely dissemination of Notices to Airman was identified as the main problem. But there were greater, related issues brought up at the meeting. The International Civil Aviation Organization did not accept the joint task force's authority to issue Notices to Airman, nor did it acknowledge the task force's interpretation of U.N. Resolution 794 that it controls Somali airspace except for military traffic, nor did it recognize task force air control orders where they conflicted with existing Notices. The civil aviation organization and other participants at the meeting further asked to discuss precise technical issues such as air traffic control procedures over Somalia, communications frequencies, changes in Notices to Airman language, and the status of navigational aids.[314] *

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* In most joint operations, a joint force air component commander (JFACC) would be established. The commander is normally charged with developing the air campaign plan for the theater, basing it upon the assets available to him. In a war or combat situation, this plan would address four important air functions: airspace management, airspace control, air defense, and targeting. It was soon obvious the last two functions were not of significance to Operation Restore Hope. UNITAF did require the first two, however, and so the airspace control authority was established. In the first few weeks to the operation, Major General Harold W. Blot, commanding general of the 3d Marine Aircraft Wing, held this position. In her study of UNITAF, Dr. Katherine A. W. McGrady of the Center For Naval Analyses explained the development of the authority and its functions. She also notes the term "JFACC" was sometimes erroneously used. Part of this confusion may have unintentionally come from UNITAF itself, which listed Major General Blot as joint air component commander on its early personnel rosters.

* Other participants included the International Air Transport Association, a trade organization that serves the commercial airline industry, and the National Geodetic Survey, a part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Among other missions, the National Geodetic Survey conducts aerial photographic surveys of airports in the United States to locate the positions of obstructions and aids to air travel. Since the survey agency does not function outside the United States, it is likely that some of its personnel may have attended this meeting to provide information and expertise in these matters.

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A variable omni-range, meteorological navigational aids system using an AN/FRN-44 site survey van with an omni-range radio was set up at Mogadishu airport by the 485th Engineering Installation Group to assist civilian aircraft into what became the busiest airport in the Horn of Africa.

The tension created by the inflexibility of the civilian authorities was made clear by the joint task force's airspace control authority when it threatened to impound civilian aircraft if they "did not start complying with the air control orders." On the other side, international organizations claimed they could not issue Notices to Airman based on the air control order language because civilian operators could not understand them.[315]

In spite of the seeming impasse, both sides agreed "that safety is now the paramount issue in the critically congested airspace over Somalia."[316] This one point of agreement and the willingness of people to work to a common end were the beginning of the solution.

Just one week later, on 14 January, representatives of UNITAF, the International Civil Aviation Organization, and other agencies met in Mogadishu for a technical meeting. The commanding general of UNITAF was again designated as the airspace control authority "for all of the territorial airspace of Somalia." Colonel Frederick M. Lorenz, UNITAF's staff judge advocate, explained the legal basis for this position under United Nations Resolution 794 and passed out copies of the memorandum by which General Johnston assumed this authority. Difficulties with the dissemination and publication of Notices to Airman were identified, and the air control order process was explained. The meeting reconvened the next day and again on the 16th.[317]

One of the most important agreements reached on the 15th was that the International Civil Aviation Organization recognized that the UNITAF commanding general served as the airspace control authority "'on behalf' of the sovereign state of Somalia." The distinction was noted as being academic, but it was sufficient to verify the UNITAF commanding general as the "sole authority for airspace procedures in the Mogadishu [flight instruction region]." Progress that day and the next created a single airspace control plan. UNITAF air control orders were reviewed, along with existing Notices and the

international organization's plans. From this work, two Notices, controlling upper and lower airspace, were circulated through the Kenyan Civil Aviation Authority. All future Notices to Airman would be distributed "on behalf of Somalia at the request of the Commander, Unified Task Force." A meeting was set between UNITAF's airspace control authority representative, Major John D. Reardon, and those of commercial carriers flying out of Nairobi. The International Civil Aviation Organization promised to provide plans for reconstructing airspace control within the Mogadishu region and to hire a permanent organizational representative in Mogadishu. Finally, requirements for the transition of airspace control authority to the commanding general of United Nations Operation Somalia II (UNOSOM II) would be forwarded by the international aviation organization to UNITAF.[318]

These matters essentially cleared up the question of control of the civil aircraft coming into Somali airspace. The UNITAF staff continued to work out other coordination problems. The most significant of these were addressed by a series of agreements made at the beginning of March with the adjacent flight instruction regions (Nairobi, Addis Ababa, Aden, the Seychelles, and Bombay.) The agreements covered such coordination issues as radio frequencies, transfer of responsibility from one region to another, and established routes, flight levels and separation between aircraft, and the acceptance of messages and revisions. These agreements went into effect on 31 March.[319]

Management of military aircraft coming into the area of operations did not pose such drawn-out problems, but it still had to be addressed. General Johnston established his airspace control authority through the air mobility element's director of mobility forces, Colonel Walter S. Evans, USAF. By the end of December, as the tempo of air operations reached the maximum capacity for Mogadishu airport, Colonel Evans worked through the United States Transportation Command and Central Command to establish time slot allocations for all aircraft coming into Mogadishu, including those of coalition partners. At the same time, he worked with the various ground forces quartered in or near the airfield to

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A group of Maleel townspeople gather to await the deliver of wheat donated by Australia. The wheat was flown in slung underneath a Marine CH-53 helicopter.

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MajGen Steven L. Arnold, USA, commanding general of the 10th Mountain Division, meets with town elders, Red Cross representatives, and other humanitarian relief works in Merka.

stop the growing number of near accidents caused by unauthorized personnel and equipment on the runways and taxiways.[320]

With the establishment of these procedures and organizational structures, UNITAF was able to look forward and plan for the ultimate transfer of air traffic services back to civil authorities. As early as 18 January, an initial plan for the transition of airspace control authority functions was published. Under it, the authority could stand down on 22 January except for airspace management functions and "aviation services ... still required by JTF Somalia Components." On that date, Air Force Forces Somalia would be responsible for publication of a "combined flight schedule for U.S. and coalition forces" and the air mobility element was to incorporate into it all fixed-wing airlift schedules of the components and coalition partners. Provision also was made for UNITAF's operations air section to eventually coordinate all air issues within the area of operations.[321] Brigadier General Anthony C. Zinni, in his position as the director of operations, assumed the remaining airspace control authority for Somali airspace on 1 February, delegating it to Lieutenant Colonel William J. O'Meara, USAF.[322]

Establishing air control and airspace management had been long, and at times it was very complex work within a thicket of military and international organizations and operational procedures. But, as with many issues confronted by UNITAF, the problems were eventually resolved in a spirit of cooperation and mutual interest in the safety of all aircrews and the success of the overall mission. The best indicator of the success of these efforts was that, in spite of the small and poorly equipped state of the Mogadishu airport, it was accident-free even while operating as the busiest airport on the Horn of Africa.

End Game

The work performed during the third phase, from the beginning of January to the end of March, provided the basis for the transition that would occur in early May. Throughout this phase,

Lieutenant General Johnston allowed his subordinate commanders great discretion. As he said in a component commanders' meeting on 6 January: "Every HRS [humanitarian relief sector] is different; commanders must be given broad missions. [They] will have to weave [their] way through a broad fabric of village elders and others. I'm pleased with what I see; commanders on the ground taking initiative and doing a splendid job."[323]

All the coalition partners set up similar structures in the humanitarian relief sectors, ensuring a standard method of working throughout the area of operations: weapons control policies were in place in every sector; civil-military operations teams coordinated the needs of each sector's relief organizations and reported through the main civil-military operations center in Mogadishu; former police were vetted into auxiliary security forces; councils of local elders and clan leaders were established to place responsibility for Somali governance and security back into their own hands; and patrols established the reach of UNITAF far into the countryside. Where possible, coalition soldiers provided medical care and worked with the local populace to improve their lives by such projects as digging wells or improving roads. More importantly, a secure environment, which was UNITAF's primary mission, was in place. This security allowed the delivery of food, medicines, and other relief supplies. The United Nations acknowledged the important effects of UNITAF's work during this period in its report on Somalia:

> The improved security conditions made it possible for United Nations agencies and NGOs [nongovernmental organizations] to strengthen their staff in Somalia, and numerous new [nongovernmental organizations] arrived. In addition to the WFPs [World Food Program's] stepped-up food deliveries, UNICEF expanded its operations, providing medicines and staff to 16 hospitals, 62 mother-and-child health [centers] and 156 health posts throughout Somalia by January 1993, and together with its [nongovernmental organization] partners, helped feed over 200,000 children a day. The World Health Organization opened a central pharmacy in

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Marines of 2d Platoon, Company C, 3d Light Armored Infantry Battalion provide security for a convoy of United Nations trucks carrying food from Mogadishu to Baidoa.

DVIC DD-SD-00-00845

Marines of 3d Battalion, 9th Marines, 15th Expeditionary Unit, board an American Trans Air L-1011 for the flight back to the United States.

> Mogadishu. Indeed, by January 1993, food and medical supplies were getting through to almost all the towns of southern and central Somalia, with immediate and dramatic results. Although many hungry, weak people were still staggering into feeding [centers], most could now be saved. Deaths from starvation and disease fell sharply and, reflecting the greatly increased food supply, by March 1993, cereal prices had fallen to a third of their September 1992 level.[324]

While coalition forces were acting so successfully in the field, UNITAF command in Mogadishu was heavily engaged in two important activities: shaping the force to meet the changing realities of the mission and preparing for the transition to United Nations control. By the end of December, with the end of Phases I and II and the start of Phase III, there was an opportunity to oversee the development of the theater. The forces spreading out through the area of operations needed attention and logistics support. There were many things, small and great, which could be done to make the deployment run more smoothly or alleviate the harshness of daily life for the soldiers in the field.

Restructuring and Redeployment

Before the end of December, General Johnston was ready to take an objective look at the force to see how well it matched the mission in light of the progress of the past few weeks. General Johnston faced an interesting dilemma. With the success of the first two phases, the continuing arrival of capable coalition partners, and a less intense threat than had been originally anticipated, General Johnston had to decide if it still made sense to bring in the major portions of two American divisions. If not, he had to determine what sort of force structure there should be in the theater to ensure the accomplishment of the mission. As General Johnston later stated, it was a good thing to have "the ability to refine your decisions that were made ... before you started; you've got to have the flexibility of not feeling like you can't change."[325]

Even before the end of 1992, the composition of the American forces within the coalition changed greatly from what had originally been anticipated. It was already clear there was no need for a force incorporating armor and artillery. Also, it was clear a smaller force could perform the mission. Accordingly, MarFor cancelled its scheduled deployment of two of its subordinates; the 1st Battalion, 1st Marines, and the 1st Tank Battalion. Thus, the last Marine unit to arrive was the 3d Battalion, 11th Marines, on 31 December 1992. But this artillery battalion did not even draw its howitzers from the maritime prepositioning force ships. It operated instead as a provisional rifle battalion with assigned security duties in Mogadishu.[326] *

On 6 January 1993, General Johnston held a meeting with his commanders and staff to discuss restructuring and redeployment of forces. He stated the intent had always been to build up quickly to provide overwhelming force, and then to draw back. The question of how forces could be reduced while maintaining a balanced structure was freely discussed among the officers present. General Zinni, the operations officer, remarked that the force did not need any more combat units. In the ensuing discussion, it was recognized that with the scheduled redeployment of the 3d Battalion, 9th Marines, in about two weeks, MarFor would be at about brigade size. Looking at the Army Forces Somalia units that were coming in behind the Marines at that time, it was also recognized there could be a force composed of one Army brigade and one brigade of Marines. From an initial heavy brigade structure, MarFor could reduce its size to a light brigade, which was about the size of the present Army Forces Somalia. Major General Steven L. Arnold, USA, commanding general of Army Forces Somalia, voiced his concern that UNITAF should remain joint, both within its headquarters and in its organization. He saw the mix of a Marine Corps brigade-sized force with light armored vehicles would work well with an Army brigade containing aviation assets. General Johnston foresaw that UNITAF headquarters would have to be drawn back as well, but would have to remain fairly robust to take advantage of national intelligence assets. His guidance was that the force would draw back to the Army and Marine brigades, which would mean reducing the current size of MarFor and the UNITAF headquarters as well. He also directed that MarFor should plan to attain its light brigade size by 30 March.[327]

There were immediate changes at UNITAF headquarters. General Johnston later said he knew the headquarters was heavy to start, but that was needed during in the early phases when planning was critical. "But very quickly you don't need [a large headquarters staff.] Once you get into the HRS [humanitarian relief sectors], I don't need all that command and control. ... The guys on the ground doing the sweeps, the convoys, didn't need the headquarters anymore to plan all of these operations, so I was anxious to download headquarters."[328] A joint personnel processing center had already been established within the operations section by the end of December to take care of non-unit line number movements out of theater.[329] By the end of the year, personnel who could be spared from the headquarters staff sections were returning home or to their former units. Out of an initial headquarters of 1,008 personnel, 225 were identified by the staff sections as excess and were redeployed.[330]

General Johnston had to convince some officers in his chain-of-command that it was appropriate to scale back the size of UNITAF at this time. As he said: "there has been some uneasiness on the part of Joint Chiefs of Staff and even CentCom [Central Command] with this drawing down." But, as he also made clear: "It obviously takes more forces to impose the security environment that we have created than it does to maintain it." He saw the improving intelligence situation, and the ability to maintain mobility and firepower in the reconfigured force, allowed him to continue the security mission and prepare for the eventual turnover to the United Nations. He also knew, however, that "I had to keep selling and convincing people [to] trust me. I'm the guy on the ground and I know, talking to my commanders, what we can draw down to and still be able to handle any kind of eventuality."[331]

UNITAF Redeployment

By 8 January, the UNITAF staff had developed a three-phase plan for the reduction of the American forces. The first phase was to go from 15 January to 5 February 1993, with MarFor and

* This was not unprecedented. In October 1983, during the invasion of Grenada, H Battery, 10th Marines, as part of the 22d Marine Amphibious Unit, did not land their howitzers and served as an infantry company.

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A Marine 5-ton cargo truck is driven up the stern ramp of the MV Pvt Franklin J. Phillips *(T-AK 3004) at the port of Mogadishu. By late January 1993, the operation had accomplished its mission well enough to allow the command to reduce the size of UNITAF.*

Army Forces Somalia each drawing back to their heavy brigade configurations. This would leave the Marine brigade with the 7th Marines, Marine Aircraft Group 16, and a force service support group. The Army brigade would be composed of the 2d Battalion, 87th Infantry, Task Force Kismayo, an aviation battalion, a military police battalion, and a forward support battalion. Forces from the Navy and Air Force would be reduced as appropriate. Personnel from Operation Provide Relief, in Mombasa, would also begin to redeploy at this time. Special Operations Forces would remain at current strength. Also during this period, the Joint Task Force Support Command would assume responsibility for the support of residual forces. The second phase was to begin on 6 February and last two weeks, until 20 February. In this phase, the UNITAF headquarters, Air Force, and Navy Forces would continue reductions. Special Operations Forces would begin reductions as appropriate. The Support Command would also begin to draw back its strength, except for engineer units since there was still a recognized need for their continuing services. These important assets would be consolidated in an engineer group or the naval construction regiment, both reporting directly to UNITAF headquarters. In the final phase, lasting from 21 February to 5 March, the ground forces would be reduced to MarFor or Army Forces Somalia light brigades. The proposed Marine brigade would consist of the 1st Battalion, 7th Marines (three rifle companies, a weapons company, a tank platoon, a light armored vehicle platoon, an armored assault vehicle platoon, an engineer platoon, and a truck detachment), Marine Aircraft Group 16 (consisting of eight CH-53D helicopters, four UH-1Ns, and four AH-1Ws) and a combat service support group. The Army brigade would comprise an infantry battalion, an aviation battalion (consisting of 15 UH-60s, 6 OH-58s, and 4 AH-1s), a military police battalion of two companies, and the forward support battalion. UNITAF headquarters, Air Force Forces Somalia, Navy Forces Somalia, Support Command, and the remaining personnel of Operation Provide Relief would continue to

reduce where possible. Some engineer units would redeploy, but others would remain to continue necessary support.[332]

This plan was forwarded to Central Command for approval on 11 January. Five days later, General Joseph P. Hoar gave his approval to the concept, but denied approval for the timeline. General Hoar stipulated that units would redeploy only at his direction and that redeployment would be driven by events, not a time schedule. Specifically, such events would be in one of two categories; an American unit would be replaced by an arriving member of the coalition, or the unit would be no longer necessary to the operation, as decided by the commanding general of UNITAF.[333]

The MarFor staff immediately began work on the redeployment plan. The concerns were twofold. They had to reduce the size of the force while continuing to conduct operations, and they had to maintain a balanced force throughout each stage of the reduction. Major General Charles E. Wilhelm had told General Johnston he could continue to conduct his mission with about a third of the current number of troops.[334] The MarFor plan called for a reduction to a heavy brigade of about 4,000 Marines and sailors by 31 January and to a light brigade of 2,000 troops by 1 March. In actuality, the dates were slipped in accord with circumstances, but the plan provided the basis for the reductions as they occurred throughout the next three months.[335]

The first unit to depart from Somalia was the 3d Battalion, 9th Marines, which began boarding flights from Mogadishu airport on 19 January. MarFor then had to reconfigure its forces, particularly the 7th Marines, to take the place of their departing comrades.[336]

An important part of the retrograde was the return of equipment to the maritime prepositioning force shipping. Two of the ships, the *PFC James Anderson, Jr.* (T-AK 3002) and the *Pvt Franklin J. Phillips* (T-AK 3004), were scheduled to return to the Blount Island rework facility. Since these ships were to depart soon, equipment that needed repair was loaded onto them. (Work progressed so quickly that the reloaded *Anderson* was able to sail on 7 February, easily making its scheduled arrival date.) Also complicating the operation was the possibility the maritime prepositioning force ships might be needed to support another contingency. Equipment in good shape was, therefore, loaded onto the *1stLt Jack Lummus* (T-AK 3011) and the *1stLt Alex Bonnyman* (T-AK 3003). Throughout these evolutions, any mission essential equipment was kept ashore in support of the Marines still in the area of operations.[337]

By the end of January, 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit also was putting its equipment through a rigorous maintenance effort, preparing to embark on board the amphibious shipping. This unit had earned well-deserved laurels in its work throughout the area of operations. At the beginning of February, these Marines, with pristine equipment, back loaded onto their ships. They departed the Somali coast on 3 February to continue their deployment in the Persian Gulf.[338]

On 19 February, UNITAF ordered MarFor to commence a reduction to the heavy brigade level. With the planning the Marines had already done, and with the redeployments that had already occurred, this was easily accomplished. With most nonessential personnel already gone from the theater, MarFor needed only to redeploy a detachment of CH-53 helicopters from Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 466 to reach the goal by the beginning of March.[339]

The first days of that month saw a continuation of departures as residual detachments and personnel not part of the heavy brigade left Somalia. At the same time, preparations went forward for reduction to light brigade strength. On 9 March, MarFor began validating these movements, and on the 13th the realignment of its forces between Bardera and Mogadishu began. By 17 March, the 7th Marines, with its attached coalition forces, had returned to the capital city while Task Force Bardera remained in the city for which it was named. The same day, Colonel John P. Kline, Jr., and his staff from Marine Aircraft Group 16, departed the theater, making Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 369 the MarFor aviation combat element.[340]

On 21 March, the staff of the light brigade took over the watch schedules at the MarFor command post. From that point on, in addition to their routine of normal duties within Mogadishu and Bardera, the Marines began to plan for the gradual assumption of their security mission by coalition forces and for the transition of the operation to the United Nations. The remaining staff of 7th Marines performed operational planning, while the residual MarFor staff worked on transition

Photo courtesy of the Turkish Armed Forces

Turkish soldiers with an armored infantry fighting vehicle, outfitted with a 25mm gun and machine gun, patrol their sector of Mogadishu.

planning.[341] Major General Wilhelm departed from Somalia on the 23d and Colonel Jack W. Klimp assumed command of Marine Forces Somalia.

The size and structure of Army Forces Somalia were also changed. A field artillery battalion, an aviation company of CH-47 helicopters, and some subunits of the 710th Main Support Battalion left their major equipment on board ship, or had it back loaded.[342] Not all of these decisions went unquestioned. The return of the CH-47s was a source of complaint by the United States Army Europe, which had sent them. As General Johnston explained: "it seemed like a requirement, initially. But very quickly after we got here, we began to say 'Do we need 47s?' Because ... we've got C-130 capable airstrips where we need them to be, why do we need CH-47s? We're not going to go and make massive vertical assaults."[343]

The Army Forces Somalia staff also had to plan for the redeployment of their units, but their work was complicated because some Army units would remain in Somalia to support UNOSOM II. Army plans therefore had to account for residual organizations and establish a rotation schedule to allow Army units to return home after four months in theater.* Army planners were thus responsible for both the arrival and departure of units during this phase. Reducing numbers while keeping up capabilities was accomplished through "constant mission analysis" to "continuously reassess each unit and piece of equipment deployed."[344]

The first Army units to rotate home were a mix of organizations from both Army Forces Somalia and the Support Command, units that had either completed their assigned missions or had been replaced by coalition forces. These included two

* The Army's four-month rotation was a self-imposed requirement to facilitate transition planning and to provide an orderly flow of units in and out of theater. Under UNOSOM II, Army units and personnel served tours of six months to one year.

Photo courtesy of Col Frederick M. Lorenz

Three armed Moroccan soldiers prepare to set up a defensive position on the grounds of the abandoned Somali National University in Mogadishu.

signal battalion mobile subscriber equipment companies; the 5th Battalion, 158th Aviation; the 710th Main Support Battalion; and selected Army Forces Somalia staff. Later redeployments included Task Force Kismayo; the 3d Battalion, 14th Infantry; the 41st Engineer Battalion; and the 511th Military Police Company.

Under the four-month time limit in theater, the first rotation of units would begin in April. On 20 February, Army Forces Somalia requested that U.S. Army Central Command identify the organization that would pick up responsibility for the Army's mission in Somalia. On 28 February, a reconnaissance party for the 1st (Warrior) Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, arrived in Mogadishu. The brigade advance party arrived on 30 March.[345] Major General Arnold, the commanding general of Army Forces Somalia, had returned to the United States on 13 March. A transition cell, under the assistant division commander for support, Brigadier General Greg L. Gile, USA, was formed to ease the rotation. This cell continued to work in Somalia until the middle of April. During that time several other Army units arrived, including the 1st Battalion, 22d Infantry; the 3d Assault Helicopter Battalion; the 10th Forward Support Battalion; and the 4th Platoon, 300th Military Police Company. As these units came into the area of operations, they transferred property from their departing counterparts. On 9 April, the "Warrior Brigade" took full responsibility for all Army Forces operations in Somalia, for the theater's quick reaction force, and for the Merka relief sector.[346]

Coalition Shifts

The largest coalition forces assumed responsibility for all humanitarian relief sectors, but smaller forces sent by many nations also were put to effective use. These units were often only compa-

ny sized, but in the aggregate they formed a considerable addition to UNITAF capabilities.

Many of these coalition units were placed under the operational control of MarFor. These units were from Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Turkey, Nigeria, Pakistan, and the United Arab Emirates.[347] After working with their Marine counterparts at first, they were later given their own areas of responsibility. These areas were generally within the city of Mogadishu, and often were at some key point or in the vicinity of the airport, which was where most of them had their bivouacs. The Tunisian forces worked directly with the Support Command at the university compound that adjoined the grounds of the American Embassy.

Toward the end of the operation, with the departure of MarFor and portions of Army Forces Somalia, these small units were given greater security duties. Situation reports for the last weeks of April and the first days of May show these units at work throughout the city. To illustrate the scope of their activities, the report for 1 May notes that Turkish forces, which had previously been conducting security patrols in the vicinity of the parliament building and presidential palace, were then providing security for the embassy compound. Tunisian forces were providing security at the American University complex. Saudi forces conducted night patrols and manned security positions at the airfield. Zimbabwe forces manned two strongpoints, conducted patrols in the northwest part of the city, and established ran- dom checkpoints. Pakistani forces (by that time composed of four battalions) conducted motorized security patrols in the northwest part of the city and manned numerous checkpoints. They were responsible for security at the pump site located nine kilometers north of Mogadishu, and also conducted patrols in Afgooye and Merka. Egyptian forces conducted patrols and provided security at the airport. Kuwaiti forces conducted mounted and dismounted patrols and provided security for the ammunition supply point. The Botswana forces conducted security operations in the Bardera relief sector. Nigerian forces manned the strongpoint at the K-4 traffic circle in central Mogadishu and conducted patrols. They also manned strongpoints in the northern part of the city and worked with the Somali auxiliary security force in the vicinity of the presidential palace. By this time, United Arab Emirate forces were under the operational control of the Italian forces and conducted security patrols at the New Port and in the Villagio Bur Carole and Hamar Jab Jab areas of the city. The Greek force, a company of 110 soldiers, arrived in early March and were placed under the operational control of the French forces at the Oddur relief sector to provide medical support from their base in Wajid.[348]

In this manner, all of the elements of the coalition helped maintain the secure environment, which was the mission of UNITAF. Those members of the coalition who were staying in Somalia also were aligned within the humanitarian relief sectors for their roles in UNOSOM II.*

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* It should be noted that many of these coalition members were from African or Muslim countries. Many of these contributions were made from a feeling of support for their religious or ethnic brethren in Somalia. For some it was viewed as a distinct obligation and the United Arab Emirates contingent used that very name for their unit. As Colonel Major Omar Ess-Akalli, the commander of the Royal Moroccan forces told the author, Somalia was an African problem and it was only right that Africans should be taking part in assisting in the solution.

Chapter 8

Normality Begins to Return

Logistics

For the first few weeks of the operation, the 1st Force Service Support Group from I Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF) provided outstanding support to the Unified Task Force Somalia (UNITAF) as a part of Marine Forces Somalia (MarFor).[349] However, by early January, the group's ability to continue its prodigious effort was under a severe strain due to two developments.

The first was the growing size of UNITAF itself. By the middle of January, American forces and coalition partners were approaching a total of 30,000 soldiers. Since most of the supplies they needed were coming from maritime prepositioning force ships, of which four had been unloaded, that figure was about 10,000 men more than what would normally be supported from these sources.[350] A related complicating factor was the distance that separated some parts of the coalition. Transportation assets, such as trucks, fuel tankers, and water trailers (commonly referred to as "water buffaloes") were critical for the continued success of the operation. Those available were being run hard on lengthy and rugged roundtrips to outlying sectors.

The other factor in the group's ability to continue to support UNITAF was inherent in its very nature as an integral component of a Marine expeditionary force. When MarFor returned to the United States, the support group would have to go back as well. As Lieutenant General Robert B. Johnston explained: "When you retrograde the [Marine Expeditionary] Force, you retrograde the FSSG [Force Service Support Group], because we were part of I MEF, a package."[351]

These difficulties had been foreseen. The planned answer was in the creation of UNITAF's one functional subordinate command, the Support Command.* Relying on the significant combat service support assets available to the Army, this command was organized around four specialized groups: the 36th Engineer Group; the 62d Medical Group; the 593d Support Group (Area); and the 7th Transportation Group.* In addition to the organic units belonging to these groups, the Support Command also had the 2d Chemical Battalion, the 720th Military Police Battalion, the 240th Quartermaster Battalion, and a special signal task force. This command also included personnel and postal companies, ordnance detachments, public affairs teams, and an air traffic control team.

When fully assembled in the theater, the Support Command could provide exceptional support and strength to UNITAF. The difficulty was in the amount of time it would take to bring all of these soldiers and their equipment to Somalia; plans called for the Support Command to become fully operational on 28 January 1993.

Until that time, UNITAF was dependent on the capabilities of MarFor's service support group and the maritime prepositioning force. Although stretched by great demands, these units were "performing their support well and exceeding expectations."[352] However, before the command was fully operational, it was necessary to task some service support assets from Army Forces Somalia to assist UNITAF. Selected 10th Mountain Division units were consolidated to perform such critical logistics functions as water production and petroleum distribution.[353] This support lasted

* The full name of this organization was the Joint Task Force Support Command, but it was sometimes referred to as the Joint Logistics Command.

* These units and the support systems they used were reflective of the Army's structure and its need to provide support to corps and army levels ("echelons above division"). Normally, a deploying Army division would be provided with a slice of the corps' support elements and the division would have its own structures to coordinate and work with these higher levels. In Operation Restore Hope, however, the entire 10th Mountain Division did not deploy, and the 1st Marine Division did not have the same structures in place to work with the Support Command, as did their Army comrades. The Support Command also was responsible for providing some support to the coalition partners. The command had to adjust their traditional methods of doing business to meet the demands of the theater and of the UNITAF structure.

DVIC DD-SD-00-00879

A Russian Antonov AN-124 Condor long-range heavy transport from the Aviation Industrial Complex, Ulyanovsk, waits to unload at Mogadishu airport. The aircraft was chartered to carry a load of supplies for Brown and Root Services Corporation, a U.S. Government contractor.

from about the middle of January until the end of the month.

The Support Command's units began to arrive in theater in late December, along with the commanding general, Brigadier General Billy K. Solomon, USA. Although his command was not expected to assume the entire theater logistics support mission until late that month, individual units assumed responsibility for their portion prior to that date. For instance, on 15 January, the 7th Transportation Group took responsibility for port operations from Navy Forces Somalia and MarFor.[354] By 28 January, when the Support Command assumed its total support mission, responsibility for medical support, some food supply (class I), water, and petroleum, oil, and lubricant (class III) supply operations were already performed by command units. Support Command and MarFor ran in-theater movement control jointly.[355]

Even as the elements of the Support Command were deploying into theater and just starting to take up their duties, its staff looked to the future. The command was to have another, longer lasting mission than its support of UNITAF. It would become the main United States contribution for United Nations Organization Somalia II (UNOSOM II). As General Johnston explained in March: "When you talk about the Joint Logistics Command, we always saw ... our U.S. role in this thing as long term. Yes, we had a mission, but I don't think anybody ever believed that we would draw every American out of here: that we would have something for UNOSOM II and really thought it would be in the form of logistics, strategic lift, which is why we formed the Joint Logistics Command that would come in to replace the [Force Service Support Group]."[356]

On 28 January, the Support Command completed its transition of responsibilities and fully assumed the burden of combat service support in the entire area of operations.[357] By that time, the command had established its headquarters in the American University compound, which adjoined the American Embassy grounds. Tunisian soldiers

provided the security for the compound and the command's headquarters.*

The most important function the command would provide was transportation, the nerve center for which was in Mogadishu. "Because most of the force equipment and nearly all of the supplies had to flow through the Port of Mogadishu, the port operations became the logistics center of gravity. The design of the [echelons above division] port support structure was critical to sustainment operations."[358] Although the port's size and limited berthing space caused competition between arriving humanitarian cargo ships and military prepositioned afloat stocks, the 7th Transportation Group was able to establish an effective command and control system for the terminal operations. The group not only operated the port, it also controlled the inland distribution of the supplies.[359]

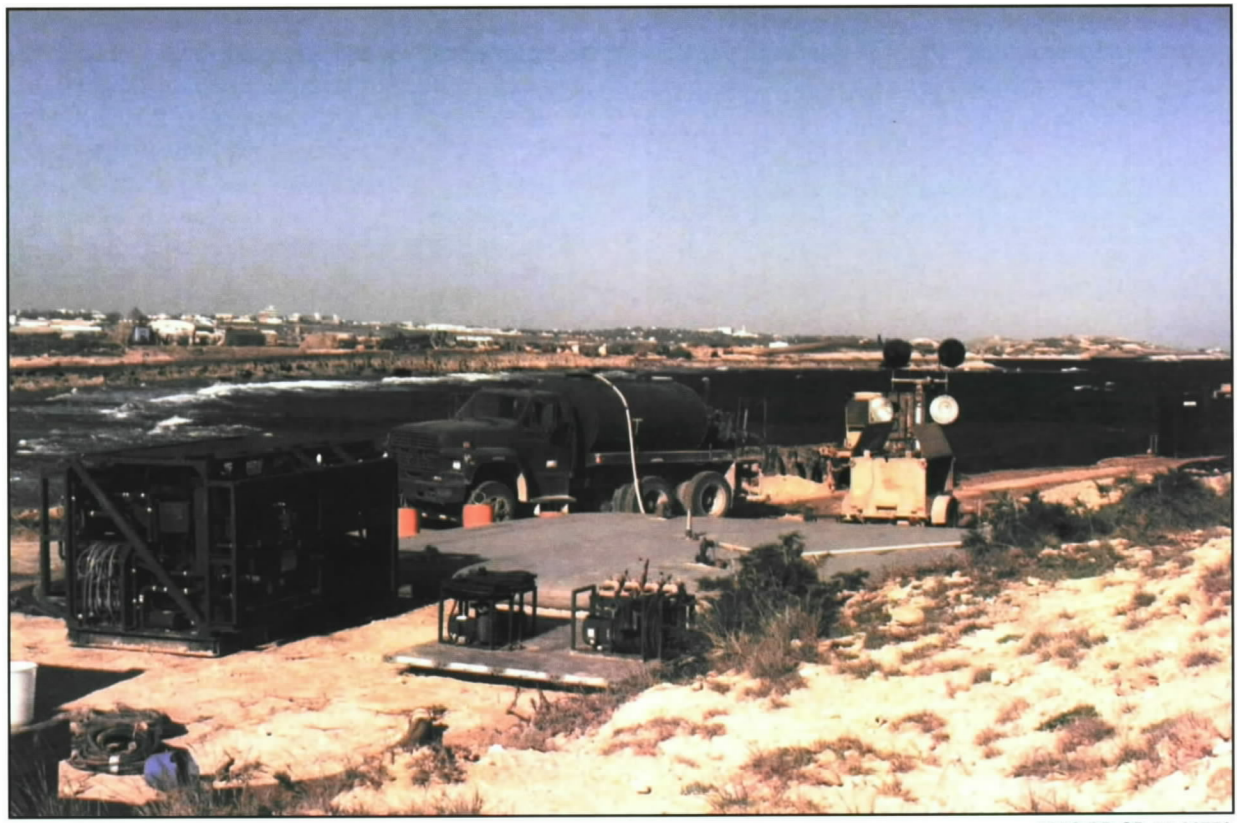
The 593d Area Support Group was prominent in establishing the logistics distribution structure. Once again, the long distances covered by UNITAF were a determining factor. The area support group was specifically strengthened with additional trucks, and those of the 7th Transportation Group were also available for missions. To ensure supplies reached their intended users quickly and efficiently, the support group established a series of intermediate theater support bases. These bases complemented each of the American Army and Marine divisions' own support facilities. This made the distribution of supplies easier since security operations in the sectors were also conducted out of these fixed locations. In addition, the system kept down the requirement for additional combat troops because the logisticians could rely upon security from the combat units in these outlying sectors. In this manner, the Support Command was able to provide direct supply maintenance support to the Army's nondivisional units and backup support to both the Army and Marine divisional units, as well as provide common item supply support and services to the units of the coalition partners.[360]

In the austere Somali environment, the ability to contract for goods and services was important for provisioning complete logistics support. The center of such activity for UNITAF was the task force director of acquisitions. Under the original joint task force plan, MarFor contracting elements were located in Kenya, from where they provided goods services to their brethren in Somalia. Army Forces Somalia contractors were established in Somalia itself. As necessary, requirements could also be forwarded to contracting elements in the Middle East or in Europe.[361]

Army contracting officers operated under a double handicap. The Somali economy could only be described as sparse since there was little to be gotten from local sources. There were also structural difficulties for them to work around. Army Forces Somalia had deployed its own field-ordering officers early in the operation, and these soldiers were able to make small purchases of services and supplies for their units. The U.S. Army component of Central Command imposed stringent restrictions on its subordinates in Somalia, most notably for the contract of labor services. A waiver to these restrictions had been requested, but was denied until the Army Central Command contracting officer could confirm the needs. Unfortunately, this officer had not yet arrived in the theater. Army Forces Somalia's judge advocate reviewed the situation and determined the ordering officers could make the necessary procurements. Eventually, in coordination with Army Central Command, an acquisition officer was warranted as a contracting officer and deployed to the theater. This officer had the authority to make purchases up to $100,000.[362]

Another contracting system, tried for the first time during an active campaign in Somalia, was the logistics civil augmentation program. The program contract with the civilian firm of Brown and Root was started in 1992 through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. These civilians, working under contract, arrived in Somalia to perform logistics tasks that otherwise would have fallen to the soldiers and Marines themselves. For instance, they provided laundry services by hiring local Somali women to do the job. They dug wells and operated cranes and worked at the port. They generated power for the camps and they provided and cleaned portable toilets. Overall, the program was regarded as a major help to the operation, although that help was expensive.[363] Of a total of $33 million originally appropriated for the contract, $7.5 million remained by 5 March, with $5 million of that fenced against the contractor's demobilization and draw down costs. More

* The Support Command Site Security Force was originally a Moroccan company (-), assigned to this duty on 4 January 1993. The Tunisians assumed the mission a few days later.



DVIC DD-SD-00-00778

A tank truck is filled with fresh water from a desalinization plant for distribution inland. The U.S. Air Force's 823d Civil Engineering Squadron, also known as Red Horse, set up the plant at Mogadishu airport.

money had to be requisitioned to keep these important services functioning.[364] *

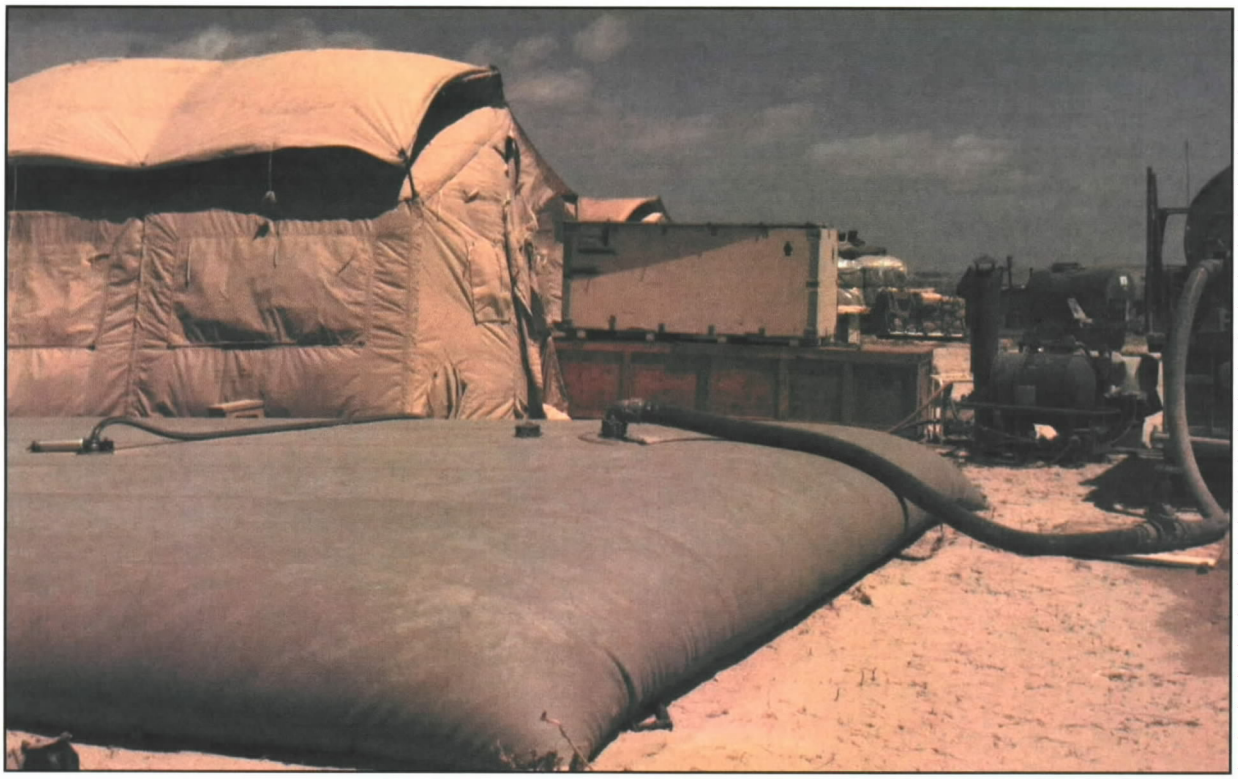
If transportation was a key logistics function, the most critical commodity supplied to the troops was water. Drinking water alone was rated at four to five liters per man per day. Water also was necessary for basic hygiene and cleaning clothing. There were no sources of safe, potable water in Somalia when UNITAF arrived, so the coalition had to take extraordinary measures to provide the precious liquid.

At first, ships in the port manufactured potable water. This was pumped ashore for transportation to the soldiers and Marines in the field. The importance of this source can be gauged from the statistics in the situation reports of the maritime prepositioning force. On 15 January, for instance, the prepositioning ship MV *1stLt Jack Lummus* (T-AK 3011) pumped 13.5 thousand gallons of water ashore. By that date, the prepositioning force had delivered a total of 845.5 thousand gallons of water to the collection points.[365]

In those early days, when 1st Force Service Support Group was providing the logistics support, every means available was used to carry the water. For the 7th Marines' movement to Baidoa, water trailers were used and supplemented by five-gallon "jerry" cans filled with water and placed "in every nook and cranny of every vehicle." This allowed the Marines to carry 8,100 gallons on that initial trip. By the end of December, regular convoys were set for every other day, bringing 14,000 gallons of water to Baidoa and Bardera on each run.[366] But this effort, coupled with the need to resupply Bale Dogle, "stretched to the limit MarFor's ability to make and distribute water." Fortunately, Army Forces Somalia was arriving with its bulk liquid assets by that time. As these units became operational, they provided relief to the burdens of the Marines.[367]

Another important source of water was in the ground of Somalia. The native population had long centered some of their towns on deep wells. Army engineers and Navy construction battalions

* Brown and Root operated these logistics civil augmentation support programs successfully in Haiti, Rwanda, and Bosnia.



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A water truck fills a large bladder, part of a tactical water distribution system. The 823d Red Horse Squadron set up the system and accompanying shower facility at Mogadishu airport.

had the equipment to dig new wells or improve those that already existed. The well water still had to be treated before it was deemed potable, or even usable for washing. To achieve this, reverse osmosis water purification units were put into operation. These specialized units used a series of membranes, filters, and chemicals to purify the water. They could produce potable water from fresh sources, brackish groundwater, or seawater. The purified water was then stored in large inflatable bladders from which it could be pumped as needed. By setting these units up in outlying areas with wells, additional water was provided to the local troops.*

Commercial bottled water provided another source of drinking water. Veterans of Desert Storm were familiar with the clear plastic liter bottles containing pure water that could be easily distributed to the troops with their rations. Palletized loads were unloaded from ships directly onto trucks for transport throughout the theater.* Troops still carried canteens, but they were commonly seen with bottles of water sticking out of cargo pockets or next to them in vehicles.

The increase in water production and distribution had one other benefit for the soldiers and Marines on the ground. By early January 1993, bath units arrived in the theater and set up mobile shower units. Even in the midst of the hottest day coalition troops could look forward to a few minutes of refreshing cool showering in the evening. To match the clean bodies, the contracts for laundry services provided clean clothing and saved the

* There was similar work to improve the lot of the Somali people as well. For instance, members of the 593d Area Support Group repaired 18 of 20 wells serving Afgooye, and then improved the reservoir system of the city of Mogadishu. The level of the reservoir was raised from eight inches to more than two meters, increasing the total volume of available water from 100,000 gallons to more than 3 million gallons. For the first time in two years, the people of Mogadishu had running water. (593d Area Support Group, FY 93 Annual Historical Review, Fort Lewis: Washington, Dec93, p. 2.)

* There was one notable incident in which a cargo ship could not be unloaded properly and a human chain of Marines was used to pass bottles of water one at a time.

DVIC DD-SD-00-00779

A KC-130 Hercules aircraft from Marine Aerial Transport Refueler Squadron 352 homebased at El Toro, California, delivers needed fuel through expeditionary distribution system at Kismayo airfield.

troops the burden of washing their uniforms by hand.*

As water was necessary to the health of the coalition soldiers, so fuel was necessary to run their machines and vehicles. Like water, petroleum had been identified very early in the planning process as a critical class of supply. An offshore petroleum distribution system allowed this commodity to be brought to the theater by ships, which did not have to use precious berthing space at the port. The ships could stand offshore and pump the fuel to a storage and distribution point.[368] By the middle of January, maritime prepositioning force ships had pumped ashore a total of 470,300 gallons of JP-5 (jet fuel) and 517,000 gallons of MoGas (a motor gasoline fuel that can be used in some aircraft).[369]

Fuel was often delivered to outlying sectors by air. Early in the operation, Marine Corps and Air Force C-130 aircraft were used to make daily flights to deliver fuel and other cargo. But as the Support Command became fully operational, the need for air delivery declined dramatically.[370]

The Support Command's 593d Area Support Group brought ample fuel transport vehicles for the task of bulk petroleum distribution. The real problem encountered was a shortage of trained drivers in some of the units. Army Forces Somalia remedied this by providing assistant drivers for these line-haul operations.[371]

Medical Care and Health Issues

Living in Somalia presented several serious threats to the health of the coalition soldiers, and UNITAF had to be prepared to deal with them all. As with nearly every other logistics function, there were two levels of support organizations at work: the first provided the initial medical infrastructure and the second, within the Support Command, was meant to be the long-term solution. At first, each of the American components

* This chore, when performed by the troops, was not only drudgery, it was often futile. In the early days of the operation there was not enough water to get clothing really clean or to rinse it out properly. Leaving the damp utilities hanging from the lines of a tent or the branches of a tree then exposed them to the fine blowing sand, which made them stiff, gritty, and uncomfortable.

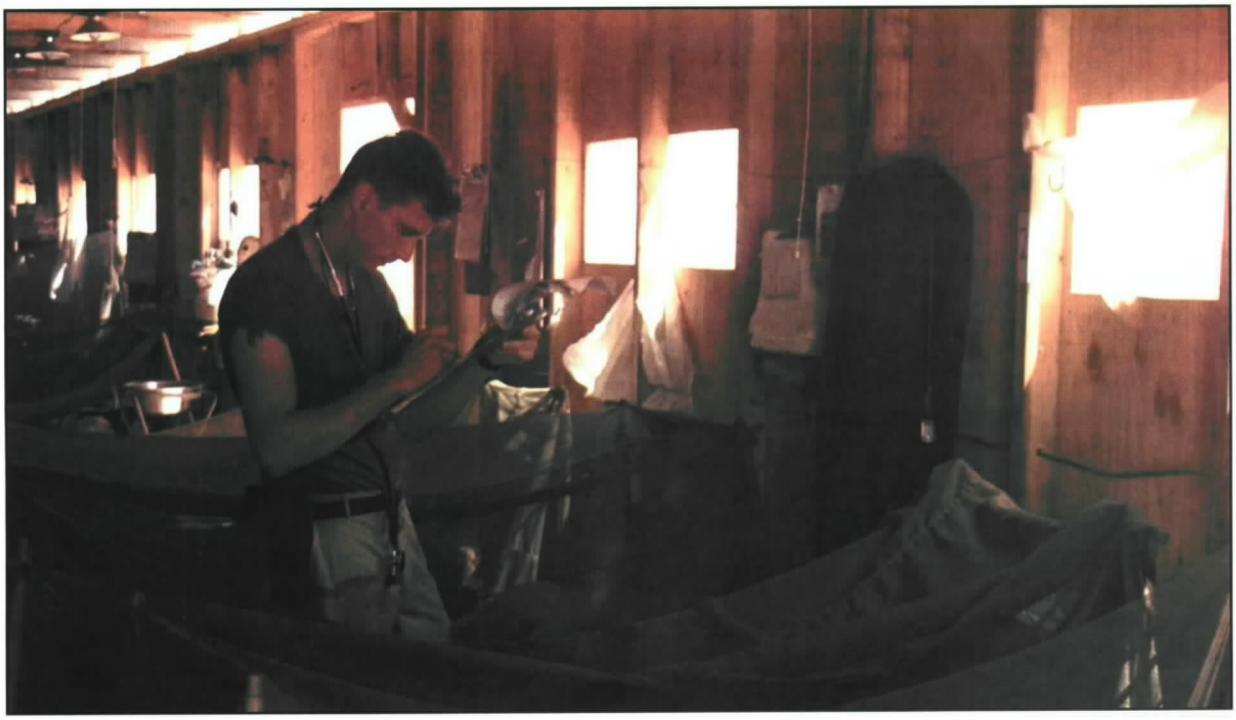
had its own medical units providing first-line support. These worked under the overall guidance of the UNITAF surgeon, Captain Michael L. Cowan, USN. In addition, many of the larger coalition forces had their own internal medical organizations.

After the possibility of wounds, the greatest threat to the well being of coalition soldiers came from the very country itself. The hot and arid climate of Somalia posed a serious threat to UNITAF personnel. The intensity of the sun during the daytime and any physical exertion drained troops of fluids and electrolytes. The greatest safeguard against dehydration and heat casualties was a program of awareness. Leadership at all levels was necessary to ensure preventive measures were carried out. The first of these was the replenishment of water. But having water available could do no good if it was not consumed in the proper amounts. Leaders, especially on the small unit level, had to be aware of the condition of their troops, constantly watching for signs of heat stress. An advisory issued to UNITAF soldiers stressed that they should work on the "weak link" principle; that when one soldier succumbed to heat injuries or showed symptoms, the others would not be far behind. Regulating work periods, resting, staying in the shade when possible, and forcing liquids were all recommended measures to prevent heat casualties.

Another environmental threat came from the creatures and organisms that lived there. Some of these were obvious; venomous snakes, spiders, and scorpions could inflict painful and dangerous bites. Other threats were not so easily noticed. Mosquitoes carried malaria, dengue fever, yellow fever, and other diseases. The bites of sand fleas could cause fevers and sores. Ticks carried hemorrhagic fever, typhus, and relapsing fever. Fleas were vectors for typhus, plague, and relapsing

DVIC DD-SD-00-00821

Lt Patrick Cosmajkl of the U.S. Navy's Environmental and Preventative Medicine Unit, Naples, Italy, examines a slide under the microscope for confirmation of a suspected Malaria case in the 1st Medical Battalion Field Hospital in Mogadishu.



DVIC DD-SD-00-00823

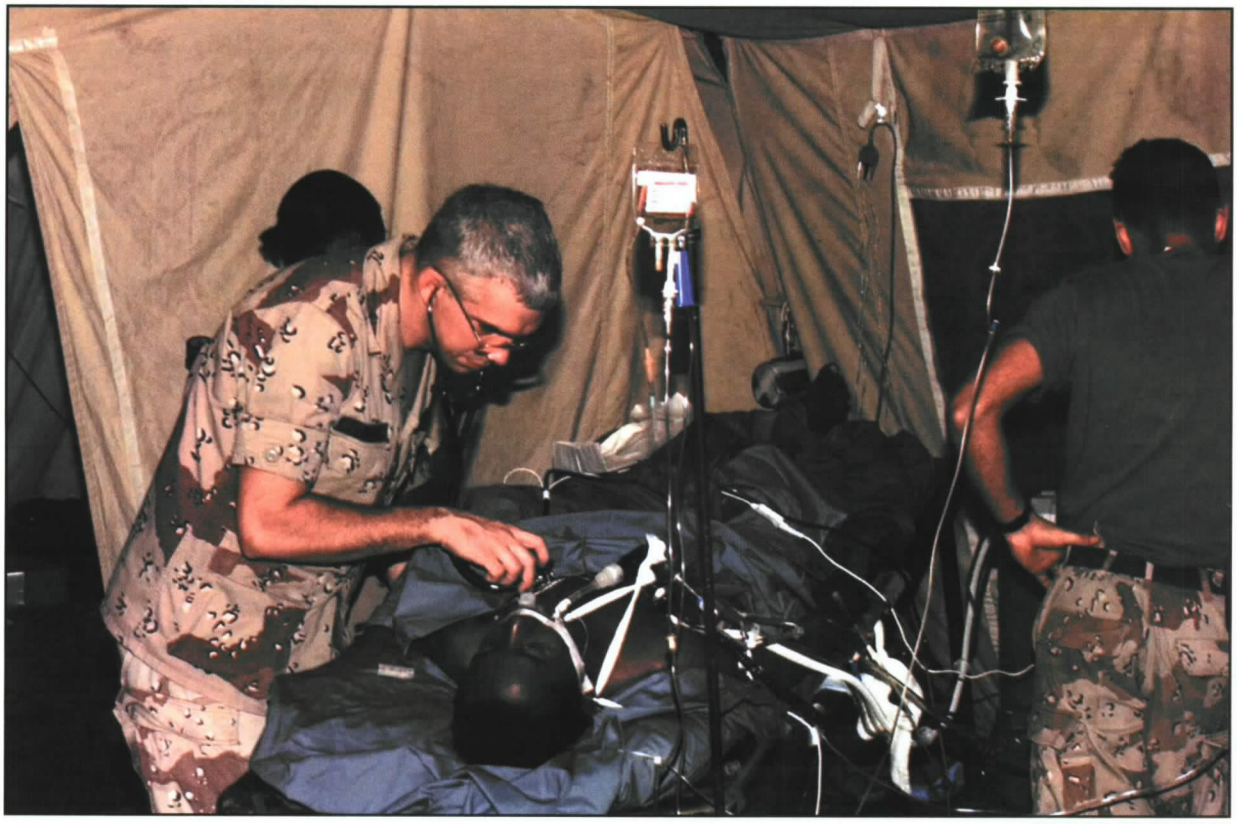
HM3 Anthony Pacino, USN, records a patient's vital signs in a ward of the 1st Medical Battalion Field Hospital. The use of mosquito nets was required because of the prevalence of malaria.

fever. Mere contact with the ground or water could make a soldier prey to parasites and diseases. Hookworms lived in the soil, as did mudworms and whipworms that could be ingested if a soldier did not wash his hands before eating. Tetanus from puncture wounds was the real menace. The worms carrying snail fever could enter a body from exposure to the water of streams, rivers, or ponds. Mud fever came from contact with water or mud contaminated with infected animal urine. Prevention for all of these included such simple practices as avoiding areas where snakes, spiders, or scorpions might be lying. Clothing and boots were shaken out before putting them on and all personnel were warned to avoid sleeping on the ground (all American personnel were issued cots) or walking barefoot. Keeping trousers bloused and sleeves rolled down helped avoid contact with insects, and repellants containing DEET (N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide) were issued. All personnel had mosquito nets for their cots. If soldiers or Marines had to enter bodies of water, they were warned to keep their trousers bloused and to cover as much of their bodies as possible.[372]

Vaccines were available for the prevention of many diseases, and troops were inoculated before deploying. Required immunizations were immune serum globulin, tetanus-diphtheria, oral polio, influenza, typhoid, yellow fever, meningococcal, and measles. For malaria, the prophylactic mefloquine was given to the troops on a weekly basis.[373]

Captain Cowan recognized the challenge he faced in guarding the task force's health as its senior surgeon. The time-phased force deployment caused shortages of mosquito nets and insect spray, which had to be made up quickly. Apprising General Johnston of the situation, Captain Cowan received the support he needed to get these items to the troops.[374] He also began a campaign to educate the soldiers and Marines about the benefits of so simple an act as washing one's hands frequently. Lister bags and bars of soap were placed where they were most needed, outside of latrines and near the entrances to mess facilities.

To combat the spread of disease, Captain Cowan had three epidemiological units assigned to him. These units had a sophisticated serology, parasitology, and bacteriology laboratory. They were responsible for monitoring the health of the personnel of units in the field and going out to any battalion aid station on the first sign of an epidemic to stop it before it could take hold. These



DVIC DD-SD-00-00835

Maj Eric Edwards, USA, head nurse of Intensive Care Unit 1, 86th Combat Support Hospital, tends a wounded Somali who had been caught in a crossfire during a gunfight on a Mogadishu street. His left leg was severely wounded and eventually required amputation.

medical specialists identified areas from which diseases were spreading, enlisted local command emphasis for the preventive medicine programs, and stopped the incidents. An outbreak of dysentery was stopped in Mogadishu. In Bardera, occurrences of malaria and dengue were swiftly brought under control.* Infected soldiers were brought from the outlying areas back to Mogadishu for proper treatment, and in most cases returned to duty in four days.[375]

Medical evacuation was another health concern. Again, the distances in the theater were a factor. Specific helicopters were assigned to aerial medical evacuation and were required to be able to transport any casualty to Mogadishu within two hours. To answer this need, MarFor helicopters from the amphibious assault ship USS *Tripoli* (LPH 10) were placed forward in such areas as Bardera, and they never missed the time limit for a critical medical evacuation. A casualty clearing company in Mogadishu was ready to stabilize patients and then forward them on. In the early days of the operation, this meant going to the *Tripoli*, which was the only medical backup available in the theater. The combination of the pervasive dust and the old style tents caused problems for the sterility of the clearing company's modern and sophisticated equipment. As Captain Cowan said: "This great new state-of-the-art [equipment] is in 19th century tents, full of dust. [The corpsmen] did a good job, but ... this [kind of structure] is definitely wrong, not for this climate, not for the desert."[376]

The answer to many of the captain's concerns was within the Support Command. The initial planning for medical support was based on the expectation of large numbers of casualties. This in

* A Center for Disease Control study indicated the effectiveness of the preventive medicine programs. Of the thousands of American personnel in Somalia during the time of UNITAF, there were only 131 incidents of malaria, of which 83 appeared after the troops had returned home. (Center for Disease Control, "Malaria Among U.S. Military Personnel Returning From Somalia, 1993," *CDC MMWR Weekly*, 16Jul93, pp. 524-526.)

turn dictated the structure of the medical unit, the 62d Medical Group. In addition to an evacuation hospital, there were the three medical companies (one each for ambulance, air ambulance, and clearing), two sanitation detachments, an epidemiology detachment, an entomology detachment, two veterinary detachments, a dental detachment, and one for combat stress control. The group even contained its own medical logistics battalion. The mission of this large unit was to provide "comprehensive care to all U.S. forces involved in the security and humanitarian mission and to provide limited support to other coalition forces in the theater (i.e., on an emergency-only basis)."[377]

One of the 62d Group's first challenges was receiving its planned hospital equipment. The Army barge-carrier vessel *Green Valley* (TAK 2049), which carried the 86th Evacuation Hospital's gear, had too deep a draft for the port of Mogadishu. Not could the ship offload at Mombasa because its length was too great for the docks there. So the 86th Hospital had to wait for its equipment to be brought in by air. This required adjustments to the time-phased deployment that interrupted the scheduled airflow, but the operations section's movements unit worked wonders in getting the equipment into the theater. The hospital was up and running by 6 January 1993. The hospital consisted of four operating rooms and more than 100 beds for patients, including an intensive care unit with 12 beds. With the establishment of the Army hospital, the Navy casualty clearing company was able to depart. The 62d Medical Group picked up all UNITAF medical responsibilities by 28 January.[378]

The number of American troops supported by the 62d Medical Group reached a peak by mid-January, then declined through the transition to the United Nations at the beginning of May. The number of combat casualties was not nearly as great as initially planned for. So the group, like

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Hospital Corpsman James Brown, USN, applies topical ointment to the arms of a Somali infant as part of the medical civic action program conducted in the streets of Mogadishu by medical personnel from MEU Service Support Group 15.

DVIC DD-SD-00-00697

U.S. Air Force 1st Mobile Aeromedical Staging Flight personnel carry a patient from a Marine CH-46 Sea Knight helicopter at Mogadishu airport.

other units, was able to scale back its personnel and organization for the follow-on medical units that arrived in early May. The surplus capability meant the medical staff was able to provide some services for Somalis, although this was not part of their mission. It was always expected, however, that the American medics would treat any Somalis injured by American forces. Doing so had the additional benefit of maintaining skills. There also was a humanitarian aspect, the desire to treat an injured fellow human being. But there was a two-fold problem in providing treatment to these Somali civilians. First, they were taking up beds, facilities, and medical stocks that might be needed should there be a sudden surge of American casualties.[379] Second, there was the ethical dilemma of how to provide care that exceeded that which would normally be found within the country at large. As Captain Cowan noted, "we can't be the medical facility of Somalia." An answer lay in assisting local doctors and care providers, and in the use of the facilities of the hospitals provided by some of the coalition partners, such as the Swedes and the Moroccans.

Even with American casualties lighter than expected, the 62d Medical Group had to maintain certain capabilities as it reduced the size of its force. An air ambulance was retained to continue accommodating the long distances, and since adequate fixed medical facilities would not be available in the country, the evacuation hospital also remained. The continuing threat of disease dictated keeping a large preventive medicine capability.[380] By early May, the 86th Evacuation Hospital was replaced by the 42d Field Hospital, a smaller facility with only 32 beds. In its time of support to UNITAF, the 86th provided service to a large number of the force's soldiers and Marines: there were 4,914 outpatient cases with 971 Americans admitted for treatment.[381]

Air evacuation was one of the most important parts of medical planning. Original estimates were for 200 patients per week showing up at the battalion aid stations per 1,000 soldiers. The vast majority of this estimate was expected to be for disease and non-battle injuries, with a smaller portion for combat injuries; but preparations still had to be made for the movement of these persons within and out of the area of operations. The U.S. Air Force's 1st Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron was tasked to develop the evacuation system for patients to third and fourth echelon medical facilities. Two aerial evacuation crews supplemented the squadron, one each from the 183d and 156th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadrons. The 1st Aeromedical Squadron was located with the Air

Force's air mobility element and was composed of an aeromedical evacuation coordination center, a mobile aeromedical staging facility, and the aeromedical evacuation liaison team. By 19 December, all aeromedical evacuation personnel had arrived in Mogadishu. A separate aeromedical evacuation operations team and six evacuation crews deployed to Cairo West Airport, Egypt, to support transiting evacuation missions.[382]

Since the battalion aid stations in the humanitarian relief sectors had only limited medical capabilities, the evacuation plan was set for patients to be moved to the larger and better-equipped facilities in Mogadishu and Mombasa, Kenya. At first casualties were taken to the *Tripoli*. Later, as the Army's 86th Evacuation Hospital became operational, patients stayed at that facility in Mogadishu or the one in Mombasa. Evacuation aerial ports of embarkation were established in the theater at Kismayo, Bardera, Gialalassi, Oddur, Belet Weyne, and Baidoa. The aerial ports of debarkation for these flights were in Mogadishu and Mombasa. Serious cases needing even higher levels of treatment were sent out of theater. Embarkation ports for these evacuation missions were established at Mogadishu, Mombasa, Djibouti, and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The debarkation ports for these movements were at Cairo West, Egypt, and Ramstein and Rhine Main air bases in Germany. In some rare instances, casualties were flown directly from Somalia to Germany on board strategic airlift using aerial refueling support.[383]

For the first 90 days of the operation, the squadron moved a total of 304 casualties. Of these, 38 were sent out of theater. By 10 March, the size of the aeromedical evacuation system was reevaluated in consideration of the actual needs of the operation. On 19 March, all remaining 1st Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron personnel redeployed and the evacuation mission was turned over to U.S. Air Force Reserve component personnel. The reserve airmen were stationed in Cairo West, and rotated into Somalia as required.[384]

Engineering

UNITAF was provided numerous engineering assets and capabilities. Some coalition members brought their own engineer units, often specifically sent to clear mines and undertake local work projects. In addition, each of the U.S. Armed Services had internal engineer units.

Photo courtesy of the author

A merchant ship carrying vital relief cargo arrives at the port of Kismayo shortly after coalition forces reopened that port.