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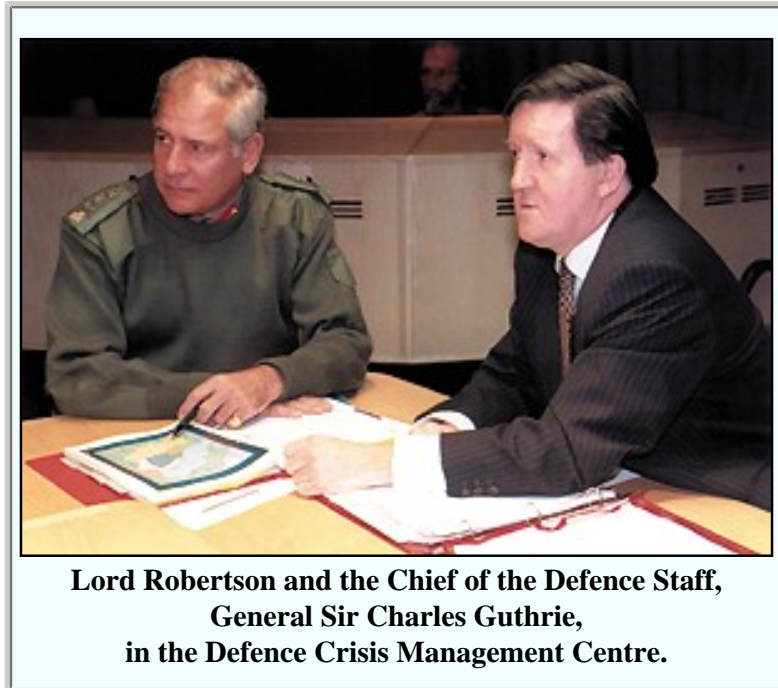
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Introduction

By Geoffrey Hoon MP, Secretary of State for Defence



In March 1999, NATO launched Operation ALLIED FORCE, and air operations against Yugoslavia began. The Alliance successfully achieved its objectives, thanks to the performance of the Armed Forces and the civilian personnel of the UK, our Allies and our other partners. Milosevic's forces, who had at his behest been carrying out acts of great brutality against Kosovo Albanian civilians, left the province, international peacekeeping forces entered and refugees were able to return to their homes.

NATO air strikes lasted 78 days. The NATO-led ground force which entered Kosovo immediately thereafter set about stabilising the province. The rebuilding of Kosovo society will be a long process, as its people recover from decades of neglect, ten years of discrimination and a bitter and brutal period of armed repression. But the prospects for the future are good as the people of the province have the opportunity to work together in partnership with the international community. The UK will continue to play a key role in this effort.

The aim of this paper is to set out the background to the crisis, explain why the UK and NATO had to intervene, give our assessment of how we performed and give details of the lessons we have learned and are implementing for the future.

It is right that we should look closely at how we might have done better. But this must not obscure the fact that we were successful. We forced Milosevic to halt his ethnic cleansing and to allow the people of Kosovo to return to their homes, so preventing a potential humanitarian disaster. Our experience in Kosovo has demonstrated the effectiveness of the international community working together in a just cause, with clear objectives.

This report was commissioned by George Robertson before he left to become NATO Secretary General last year. A great deal of the credit for the success of the campaign is due to him. I am determined to ensure that we build on his work as we move forward to implement the lessons set out here.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeffrey Hoon". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the beginning.



Chapter 1

Executive Summary

The following is a summary of the key lessons contained in this report. Supporting detail is given in the chapters identified in brackets.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES

NATO proved itself to be a capable and effective crisis management organisation. Solidarity and firmness of purpose were key NATO strengths. ([Chapter 5](#))

NATO Allies and EU partners must work together to improve their capabilities through the Defence Capabilities Initiative and the European Headline Goal. This will increase their ability to act and strengthen Europe's partnership with the US. ([Chapter 5](#))

UK crisis management structures proved to be effective. ([Chapter 6](#))

PLANNING FOR OPERATIONS

Military planning and operations are one part of the overall international effort, and must be co-ordinated with the other means of persuasion at our disposal, primarily political, diplomatic and economic measures. ([Chapter 5](#))

The international community needs to be better able in future to establish quickly a civil implementation presence. ([Chapter 5](#))

The planning and conduct of military operations must continue to reflect political realities and requirements. ([Chapter 6](#))

To maintain our flexibility of action and the highest possible level of uncertainty in the minds of our adversaries, we should plan for as many military options as necessary. ([Chapter 6](#))

When a clear commitment is made to use force, it will be important to sustain this for as long as necessary to achieve the agreed objectives. ([Chapter 6](#))

KEY DEFENCE CAPABILITY LESSONS

The performance by UK personnel was superb, but work must continue to alleviate overstretch and its consequences. ([Chapter 6](#))

Although levels of operational commitment have been much reduced from the peaks of mid-

1999, there is a need in the personnel field to focus on the key 'Policy for People' issues, making progress towards manning balance in all three Services and investing in and valuing Service personnel and their families. ([Chapter 6](#))

The conclusions of the Strategic Defence Review were vindicated. ([Chapter 6](#))

The importance of media operations was reinforced. ([Chapter 6](#))

There was in general a good flow of intelligence, but there is a need for better supporting secure communications systems in order to improve the flow of intelligence to those who require it. ([Chapter 6](#))

The importance of the maximum possible accuracy of attack and minimisation of collateral damage in military operations was underlined. (Chapters [6](#) and [7](#))

We must continue to prepare our fighting forces in all three Services for the most exacting military tasks. A soldier trained and equipped for war may play an effective role in a peacekeeping operation (and may acquire additional skills for this purpose), but one trained just for peacekeeping is not prepared for high intensity operations. ([Chapter 6](#))

The requirement for, and value of, Reserve forces was reinforced. Areas requiring further work to refine the arrangements for compulsory mobilisation were identified. (Chapters [6](#) and [8](#))

We must be prepared for our adversaries to make extensive use of asymmetric tactics in future operations. (Chapters [6](#) and [7](#))

Our capabilities for conducting information operations need to be further developed. ([Chapter 6](#))

The conduct of military, including air, operations must reflect political realities. Current doctrine should remain essentially unchanged, but its practical implication should always take account of these wider considerations. ([Chapter 7](#))

Interoperability with French maritime units was successfully achieved, with Royal Navy ships operating under French command for the first time. ([Chapter 9](#))

KEY EQUIPMENT CAPABILITY LESSONS

There is a need for the UK and its Allies and partners to improve capabilities in the following areas:

- Precision joint all-weather attack capability against both static and mobile ground targets ([Chapter 7](#))
- Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) (Chapters [6](#), [7](#) and [8](#))
- Improved communications/data links, including secure air-to-air and ground

communications, better "sensor to shooter" links and satellite communications (Chapters [7](#) and [8](#))

- Electronic Warfare/Suppression of Enemy Air Defences ([Chapter 7](#))
- Air to Air Refuelling ([Chapter 7](#))
- Battle Damage Assessment ([Chapter 7](#))
- Strategic lift (Chapters [6](#), [8](#) and [9](#))
- Readiness, deployability and sustainment ([Chapter 8](#))
- Close combat/force protection capability ([Chapter 8](#))

We must prepare fully to enable UK armed forces to meet the challenge, and reap the benefits, of digitisation. ([Chapter 6](#))

The effective performance of the Tomahawk Land Attack Missile in UK service was proved. ([Chapter 7](#))

Aircraft carriers played a useful and versatile role in the operation. ([Chapter 9](#))

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Chapter 2

Background to the Conflict

2.1. Kosovo holds a special place in both Albanian and Serbian history, culture and thinking. It is seen by many Serbians as the cradle of their nation and contains the site of the battle of Kosovo Polje (the "Field of the Blackbirds") where in 1389 a largely Serbian army was defeated by the Ottoman Turks. From the adoption of the 1974 Yugoslav constitution, put in place by Tito, until 1989, Kosovo had enjoyed a high degree of autonomy within Serbia, part of Yugoslavia, including direct representation in institutions at the Yugoslav (federal) level. Kosovo had long had a mixed population, but Serbians were in the minority and felt increasingly vulnerable in a province where local government and services were dominated by the Kosovo Albanian majority. This frustration was exploited by Slobodan Milosevic who swept to power in Serbia in 1989 on a nationalist agenda, which included re-asserting Serbian control of Kosovo.

2.2. From 1989 onwards, Milosevic removed Kosovo's autonomy and imposed direct rule from Belgrade. The Kosovo Provincial Assembly and Government were dissolved and Kosovo Albanians removed from important state posts, which included most jobs of note. Under a state of emergency, direct rule was enforced ever more repressively by Serbian security forces. This repression included chronic underfunding of education and welfare provision for the ethnic Albanian population. In response, the Kosovo Albanians set up a shadow administration, and drew on funds from those Kosovo Albanians who lived outside the province to fund welfare and education programmes.

2.3. For much of the 1990s, in particular during the first half of the decade, international action focused more on finding a solution to the intense fighting and ethnic cleansing in Croatia and Bosnia, as the former Yugoslavia began to disintegrate, than potential difficulties in Kosovo. But Kosovo remained on the international agenda, and efforts were made to try to convince Milosevic of the need to engage in dialogue with the Kosovo Albanians. In addition to calling on Milosevic to open a reasonable dialogue to find a negotiated solution, the international community put consistent pressure on the Kosovo Albanians to organise themselves into a delegation capable of negotiating an agreement with Belgrade.

2.4. Milosevic continued to refuse to offer reasonable terms for dialogue with the Kosovo Albanians and also tried to reduce international involvement in Kosovo, perhaps in the hope that the international community would lose interest. In 1993, Belgrade refused an extension to the mandate of the monitoring mission in Kosovo run by the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE, later to become the OSCE - the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe). An offer in September 1996 to provide a European Community Monitoring Mission in Kosovo was also refused. From late 1997, the United Nations (UN), the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), the European Union (EU), the OSCE and the Contact Group (comprising France, Germany, Italy, Russia, the UK and the US) focused regularly on the developing situation in Kosovo.

2.5. In December 1997, NATO Foreign Ministers confirmed that NATO's interest in Balkan

stability extended beyond Bosnia to the surrounding region, and expressed concern at the escalating ethnic tension in Kosovo.

2.6. Led by the moderate Ibrahim Rugova, who had been elected "President of Kosovo" in unofficial elections in 1992, the Kosovo Albanians pursued a policy of pragmatic non-violent resistance in response to Belgrade's repression. But this made little progress, and the continued repression by Milosevic's regime led to the radicalisation of elements of the Kosovo Albanian population, and the emergence of a new organisation, the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), which resorted to violent means to try to achieve its objectives.

2.7. The KLA's escalating attacks on the Yugoslav/Serbian security forces brought ever more heavy-handed responses. These had severe repercussions for the local population, sometimes involving direct violence against civilians. Open conflict broke out in 1998 following violent Yugoslav/Serbian security force operations in the Drenica region in late February and early March which left 30 Kosovo Albanians dead. Following this incident, NATO's concerns were re-emphasised in a statement by the North Atlantic Council in March 1998.

2.8. The international community, including NATO, condemned all acts of violence in Kosovo, and sought throughout to take an even-handed approach. The arms embargo imposed by UN Security Council Resolution 1160 in March 1998 applied equally to both the Yugoslav/Serbian governments and the KLA. UN, Contact Group, NATO and EU statements clearly condemned terrorism. Belgrade's right to respond to KLA acts of terrorism was accepted, but only if this involved appropriate and proportionate action. This did not include the indiscriminate and disproportionate use of tanks and heavy artillery which became the norm, and which rapidly eroded sympathy amongst the international community for Yugoslav/Serbian anti-terrorist operations.

2.9. The international community attempted to put pressure on the KLA, but for much of the crisis the KLA was a disparate organisation, with no clear structure or hierarchy. There was a large amount of weaponry freely available to the KLA in Albania, following widespread looting of armouries in the wake of the collapse of the Albanian Government in March 1997, and widespread local sympathy for their aims in the mountainous border regions. The KLA also appeared able to draw on funds from Kosovo Albanians living abroad, and possibly also from criminal activities. Once the KLA's political leadership was established, with Hashim Thaqi's emergence as the key figure at the Rambouillet peace talks, it was possible to make the position of the international community known to the organisation more effectively.

2.10. Throughout 1998, diplomatic efforts to find a peaceful, negotiated solution were led by the Contact Group. Intensive shuttle diplomacy between the two sides was conducted by US Envoy Chris Hill. But continued diplomatic efforts were rebuffed by Milosevic. We had no illusions about the difficulty of persuading Milosevic to engage with reasonable international attempts to resolve the Kosovo crisis. Because of the potential humanitarian and regional implications of continued or accelerated repression in Kosovo, it became clear that military options should be considered by NATO as one part of the wider effort by the international community to find a solution. NATO Defence Ministers therefore decided in June 1998 to task NATO military planners to produce a range of options, both ground and air, for military support to the diplomatic process, and by early August the results had been reviewed by the North Atlantic Council. The options considered included a phased air operation, a ground force to implement a ceasefire or peace agreement and - at the top end of the spectrum - a ground force which could enter Kosovo against

opposition in order to impose a solution. During the summer, NATO forces conducted a series of air and ground exercises to demonstrate the Alliance's ability to project power rapidly into the region.

2.11. The violence continued to escalate throughout 1998 as Yugoslav/Serbian security forces conducted large-scale operations against the KLA, who had moved from hit and run attacks to the occupation of "liberated" territory. The operations of the Serbian security forces remained heavy handed. They preferred to fight from a distance, and use heavy weapons, tanks and artillery against positions they believed the KLA occupied. As many of these were in Kosovo Albanian villages, it was the civilians who lived in them who suffered the most. Between 23 August and 5 September, Yugoslav/Serbian security forces launched major offensives in Suva Reka, Lipijan, Stimlje, Malisevo, Glogovac and Prizren. These resulted in Kosovo Albanian civilian casualties, and significant population displacement.

2.12. By mid September 1998, an estimated 250,000 Kosovo Albanians had left their homes because of the tactics of the Yugoslav/Serbian security forces, and some 50,000 were still in the open as the winter approached. It was clear that many could die if the fighting continued and they were prevented from reaching shelter. Widespread destruction of crops and property added to the concerns of the international community about the humanitarian consequences of the crisis.

2.13. On 23 September, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1199, which noted the numbers displaced and without shelter and expressed alarm at the impending human catastrophe in Kosovo. It demanded a ceasefire, the withdrawal from Kosovo of the Yugoslav/Serbian forces involved in civilian repression and the start of real political dialogue. Meeting in Vilamoura in Portugal the following day, NATO Defence Ministers affirmed their resolve and determination to take action if required. NATO also agreed to begin the formal build up and readying of forces to conduct air operations. On 8 October, a Contact Group meeting in London gave US Envoy Richard Holbrooke a mandate for his mission to Belgrade to secure agreement to the requirements of UNSCR 1199. On 13 October, NATO agreed that air strikes could begin by issuing Activation Orders (ACTORDs). On the same day, Holbrooke reported to NATO that Milosevic had agreed to the deployment of an unarmed OSCE verification mission to Kosovo and to the establishment of a NATO aerial verification mission, both aimed to verify his compliance with the requirements of UNSCR 1199.

2.14. Following negotiations with senior NATO military representatives, the Yugoslav/Serbian authorities agreed to reduce the numbers of security forces personnel in Kosovo to pre-crisis levels – to some 12,000 Yugoslav Army (VJ) and 10,000 Interior Ministry Police (MUP) personnel. Despite initial withdrawals, these reduced levels were never achieved, and forces gradually made their way back into Kosovo. On 27 October, NATO agreed to keep compliance of the agreements, which had by then been underpinned by UN Security Council Resolution 1203, under continuous review and to remain prepared to carry out air strikes should they be required, given the continuing threat of a humanitarian crisis.

2.15. There were some doubts as to whether the October agreements would deliver a lasting settlement, but the international community recognised the vital breathing space which they provided. Those who had been forced from their homes would be able to return, and a humanitarian crisis was thus avoided that winter. The international community was therefore determined to try to make the agreements work. The UK played a leading role in both the OSCE

and NATO missions. The UK provided significant numbers of personnel for the OSCE mission. The RAF provided two PR9 Canberra reconnaissance aircraft to the air verification mission. The UK also provided personnel for the Verification and Coordination Centre in Macedonia which facilitated liaison between the two operations, including a Brigadier as the head of this centre. In December, NATO agreed to the deployment of a force to Macedonia, designed to ensure the security of the OSCE verifiers, the first deployment of NATO ground forces to the Kosovo theatre of operations. Further details of both the OSCE mission and the NATO Extraction Force are given in [Chapter 8](#). Throughout this period, there was regular dialogue with Russia at NATO in the NATO/Russia Permanent Joint Council.

2.16. Although the situation stabilised for a short time, the violence continued on both sides. The Kosovo Verification Mission played a useful role in giving the international community a direct monitoring presence in Kosovo. But it was unable, under the terms of its mandate, to prevent the build-up of violence. In late December 1998/early January 1999, Yugoslav/Serbian security forces operations began to intensify. The KLA was also active, moving into territory which had been vacated by Yugoslav/Serbian forces as part of their partial compliance with the October agreements. Between 24 and 27 December, Yugoslav/Serbian security forces carried out a major operation in the Podujevo area, killing at least 9 Kosovo Albanians and forcing 5,500 to flee their homes. Heavy fighting followed shortly thereafter in the Decane area. A Serbian café in Pristina was attacked with a grenade on 6 January, and the KLA kidnapped a number of Yugoslav army personnel on 8 January (their release was subsequently negotiated by the Kosovo Verification Mission).

2.17. A particularly brutal example of the way in which Yugoslav/Serbian operations against the KLA involved wider, disproportionate and indiscriminate use of force was the massacre in the village of Racak on 15 January 1999, which left 45 Kosovo Albanians dead. The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia described the incident as follows: "On or about 15 January 1999, in the early morning hours, the village of Racak was attacked by forces of the FRY [Yugoslavia] and Serbia. After shelling by VJ [Yugoslav Army] units, the Serbian police entered the village later in the morning and began conducting house-to-house searches. Villagers, who attempted to flee from the Serb police, were shot throughout the village. A group of approximately 25 men attempted to hide in a building, but were discovered by the Serb police. They were beaten and then were removed to a nearby hill, where the policemen shot and killed them. Altogether, the forces of the FRY [Yugoslavia] and Serbia killed approximately 45 Kosovo Albanians in and around Racak." This single incident captured international media attention and also convinced the leaders of the international community that the prospect of a humanitarian catastrophe was again real, and that accelerated activity on the diplomatic and military tracks was necessary.

2.18. Despite a November 1998 Security Council resolution condemning Yugoslavia's non-compliance with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, Yugoslavia refused to allow the Tribunal's chief prosecutor, Judge Louise Arbour, access to investigate Racak. Belgrade also ordered Ambassador William Walker, the head of the OSCE verification mission, to leave the country when he condemned the killings, although this decision was subsequently suspended following intense international pressure. A Security Council Presidential Statement and EU demarche calling for an independent investigation of the Racak killings fell on deaf ears.

2.19. On 28 January, NATO issued a "solemn warning" to Milosevic and the Kosovo Albanian

leadership. This increased military pressure was paralleled by accelerated activity on the diplomatic front. On 29 January, the Contact Group summoned the Yugoslav/Serbian and Kosovo Albanian leaderships to talks at Rambouillet in France. Greater emphasis was added to this summons the next day when NATO issued a statement reaffirming its demands, and delegating to the NATO Secretary General, Javier Solana, authority to commence air strikes against targets on Yugoslav territory, should such action be necessary.

2.20. The negotiations at Rambouillet in February 1999, co-chaired by the UK and France, presented the Yugoslav/Serbian governments and the Kosovo Albanian delegation with proposals for an equitable and balanced agreement on interim self-administration for Kosovo. The proposals reflected the results of previous rounds of consultations with the parties, US negotiator Chris Hill having spent several months engaged in shuttle diplomacy between Pristina and Belgrade, and would have protected the rights of all sides, including extensive provisions for minority rights. They recalled the international community's commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Yugoslavia, provided for democratic self-government in Kosovo and specified that amendments would require the consent of all parties. The proposals were put to the two sides by a team of negotiators consisting of Chris Hill of the US, Boris Mayorksy of Russia and Wolfgang Petritsch, who represented the EU.

2.21. The Rambouillet Accords were explicitly an interim settlement, which was carefully framed so as not to prejudice the future status of the province. The agreement made provision for an international meeting to be held after three years to determine a mechanism for an enduring settlement for Kosovo. Independence was neither ruled in nor out. Both the Yugoslav/Serbian and Kosovo Albanian delegations were aware that Contact Group policy was opposed to Kosovo independence. Yugoslav/Serbian forces would have stayed in Kosovo under the terms of the proposed Rambouillet settlement to help give the Kosovo Serbian population greater confidence in the agreement. The first round of talks was suspended on 23 February, with both sides expressing broad agreement to the principle of substantial autonomy for Kosovo, and the Yugoslav/Serbian delegation expressing readiness to return to a second round of talks to discuss all aspects of implementation. In the light of this progress, a second round of talks was convened in Paris on 15 March to discuss implementation of the agreement.

2.22. While the talks in France were continuing, the UK was leading the way in preparing for a possible ground force to support any peace agreement which might emerge. Further details are given in [Chapter 8](#).

2.23. At the second round of talks, the Kosovo Albanians accepted the documents negotiated at Rambouillet, and signed the Rambouillet Accords on 18 March. It became clear, however, that the Yugoslav/Serbian side was under instructions not to agree to anything at all. Instead of discussing implementation, they sought to re-open large parts of the political text to which they had previously indicated their agreement. All members of the Contact Group, including Russia, refused to accept this backtracking. It has been suggested since that the Serbian delegation balked at plans for a NATO-led military peace implementation force. The texts included provision for a multinational military peace implementation force in Kosovo, similar to the highly successful force in Bosnia. This was essential, as the events of the preceding months had made clear that unarmed international verifiers would be unable to uphold any agreement, and would give both sides the confidence they needed to enable a return to normality. It has been claimed that the draft documents would have given the NATO force unprecedented powers of access in Yugoslavia, and the Yugoslavs were therefore right to reject the draft agreement. But this

ignores several facts:

- that the Yugoslav/Serbian team at the talks did not suggest that there was any problem with the document at the time;
- that the draft Status of Forces Agreement was similar to those already in force for SFOR in Bosnia, with Yugoslavia having agreed in that context to allow NATO forces to travel through Yugoslavia on the way to and from Bosnia;
- and finally, that the drafts were just that – working documents which were ready for discussion with the Yugoslav/Serbian side. But they refused even to discuss texts.

2.24. With a renewed Yugoslav/Serbian offensive underway in Kosovo, and reports of up to 250,000 internally displaced persons within the province, the talks were adjourned on 19 March. On the same day, and with the intensified Yugoslav/Serbian security force offensive making it impossible for his personnel to do their work, and putting them in direct danger, the OSCE Chairman in Office – the Norwegian Foreign Minister, Knut Vollebaek – announced the immediate withdrawal of the OSCE verifiers. Their mission had not brought the lasting peace that had been hoped for. But that was no fault of the verifiers who had put themselves in considerable danger as they carried out their duties, negotiated local ceasefires and the return of hostages. Most of all, the October Agreement and the efforts of the verifiers had prevented a humanitarian crisis during the winter of 1998/1999. The failure of Milosevic to stick to the terms of the Holbrooke agreement showed that an armed international presence in Kosovo was now the only way of ensuring his compliance. The verifiers withdrew from Kosovo during the night of 19/20 March, without difficulty.

2.25. At the instigation of the Allies, US Envoy Richard Holbrooke flew to Belgrade on 22 March in a last-ditch effort to persuade Milosevic to back down and prevent further suffering on the part of the Kosovo population and the risk of military confrontation. But Milosevic remained intransigent. The nineteen NATO democracies had made every effort to find a diplomatic solution to the crisis, but NATO now had no choice but to act if a humanitarian catastrophe was to be prevented.

2.26. On 23 March, the Prime Minister confirmed to the House of Commons that the UK stood ready with the rest of NATO to take military action. On the same day, following final consultations with Allies, Javier Solana directed NATO's Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) General Wesley Clark to initiate air operations in Yugoslavia. They began at 1900 Greenwich Mean Time the following day, 24 March 1999, and continued until Milosevic agreed to NATO's demands, 78 days later.

2.27. It was known that a spring offensive against the KLA had been planned, and experience from Summer 1998 – when a quarter of a million Kosovo Albanians were driven from their homes – indicated the likelihood of it being accompanied by civilian casualties, destruction and displacement. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees reported that by 23 March 1999, assistance had been provided to 400,000 people displaced or otherwise affected by fighting within Kosovo, and to 90,000 refugees outside the province, altogether about a quarter of the total population of the province.

2.28. With the build up of Serbian forces, and the start of their renewed offensive during the

Paris talks, it was clear that NATO had to act without delay. Despite the fact that the Serbian offensive was already underway well before the bombing campaign began, NATO was conscious that Milosevic might seize upon military action as an excuse to escalate further the tempo of his operations. But while it was anticipated that the offensive could involve large scale operations against the KLA similar to the summer of 1998, with similar dire consequences for the civilian population, we did not expect the full horror and extent of the brutality, as the Serbian forces set about the widespread ethnic cleansing of the Albanian population of Kosovo. Given the past record of Milosevic and his forces, we believed there would be continued violence and repression, including against civilians, hence our determination to act, but we did not expect the deliberate targeting of civilians on the scale which occurred. On 9 April, the German Defence Minister, Rudolf Scharping revealed details of a Serbian plan, code-named Operation Horseshoe, the existence of which provided evidence that the expulsion of Kosovo Albanians from the province had been considered and planned in advance.

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Chapter 3

The Period of the Conflict

3.1. As NATO air strikes began, many in the international community hoped that, as in the past, Milosevic would give way once he had been shown that the international community was serious, and determined to achieve its objectives. But we were prepared both politically and militarily in case he did not.

3.2. The UK was clear that the military action taken was justified in international law as an exceptional measure and was the minimum necessary to prevent a humanitarian catastrophe. All NATO Allies agreed that there was a legal base for action.

3.3. NATO acted in support of the demands made repeatedly by the international community to Milosevic, the most important of which was the need to bring an end to the repression in Kosovo. As the situation in Kosovo rapidly deteriorated as Milosevic's forces wreaked havoc, these objectives evolved, including a requirement that the refugees ethnically cleansed from the province should have a right to return. But the essential goals of the Alliance's campaign did not change. NATO's action had limited military objectives: to disrupt the violent attacks of Milosevic's forces and to weaken their ability to continue these activities.

3.4. In late March, when Milosevic showed no sign of responding to NATO's air operations, the range of attacks was widened to cover carefully selected targets of high military value across Yugoslavia. It appeared that Milosevic had decided to ride out the storm in the hope that the unity of the Alliance would crumble. This turned out to be another fundamental error of judgement on the part of the Belgrade regime. As the campaign continued, so Allied determination to succeed strengthened.

3.5. Attacks on mobile targets in Kosovo had always been part of the military planning, but as the horrific campaign of ethnic cleansing unfolded in Kosovo (by the end of the conflict, well over a million civilians had been forced out of Kosovo or were displaced within the province), this aspect of the operation took on additional importance. Attacks against dispersed and concealed targets are always difficult, and so it proved in this operation. Further details on the conduct of military operations during the conflict are addressed in chapters [7](#) to [9](#).

3.6. There was widespread support throughout the international community for the action taken by NATO. A draft Security Council resolution condemning NATO's action and calling for it to be halted was defeated on 26 March.

3.7. The solidarity of the Alliance was reinforced when Alliance Foreign Ministers met in Brussels on 12 April. At this meeting, NATO's political objectives were confirmed, demanding that Milosevic:

- ensure a verifiable stop to all military action and the immediate ending of violence and

repression;

- ensure the withdrawal from Kosovo of the military, police and paramilitary forces;
- agree to the stationing in Kosovo of an international military presence;
- agree to the unconditional and safe return of all refugees and displaced persons and unhindered access to them by humanitarian aid organisations;
- provide credible assurance of his willingness to work on the basis of the Rambouillet Accords in the establishment of a political framework agreement for Kosovo in conformity with international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

3.8. These objectives were reiterated by Alliance leaders at the NATO Summit on 23/24 April in Washington. The breadth of the political and practical support from the countries of the region was perhaps best seen at this Summit where there was wholehearted support from NATO's Partnership for Peace partners for NATO's actions (Russia and Belarus had stayed away). NATO came through the Summit strengthened and was determined to continue the air campaign for as long as it took to achieve its objectives – this determination was shown by the agreement at the Summit that the air campaign should be further intensified.



3.9. NATO's demands mirrored very closely those made by the UN Secretary General on 9 April. They were also the basis for the principles later adopted by the Foreign Ministers of the Group of Eight (G8) countries (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, the UK and the US) on 6 May 1999, which called for:

- an immediate and verifiable end of violence and repression in Kosovo;
- withdrawal from Kosovo of military, police and paramilitary forces;
- deployment in Kosovo of effective international civil and security presences, endorsed and adopted by the United Nations, capable of guaranteeing the achievement of the common objectives;

- establishment of an interim administration for Kosovo to be decided by the Security Council of the United Nations to ensure conditions for a peaceful and normal life for all inhabitants in Kosovo;
- the safe and free return of all refugees and displaced persons and unimpeded access to Kosovo by humanitarian aid organisations;
- a political process towards the establishment of an interim political framework agreement providing for a substantial self-government for Kosovo, taking full account of the Rambouillet accords and the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the other countries of the region, and the demilitarisation of the KLA;
- a comprehensive approach to the economic development and stabilisation of the crisis region.

3.10. The principles agreed by G8 Ministers set the framework for the proposals for an end to the conflict presented to Milosevic by the EU and Russian envoys, Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari and former Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, in early June.

3.11. In agreeing to the G8 principles, Milosevic accepted a settlement whose provisions were significantly more stringent than those which had been on offer at Rambouillet. Unlike the outcome provided for under the Rambouillet Accords, the Yugoslav and Serbian authorities no longer had any say in the running of the province. While the demilitarisation of the KLA was still a condition of the settlement, a full withdrawal of Yugoslav/Serbian forces from Kosovo was also required. Under the provisions of the Rambouillet texts, some of these forces could have remained.

3.12. Converting Milosevic's acceptance of the G8's demands into reality on the ground fell to the KFOR commander, Lieutenant General Sir Mike Jackson. On 9 June, after four days of tough negotiations, he and representatives of the Yugoslav Army and the Serbian Interior Ministry Police signed a Military Technical Agreement. On 10 June, Yugoslav/Serbian forces began to withdraw from Kosovo. Their replacement by KFOR was carefully co-ordinated to avoid misunderstandings and the risk of clashes. As soon as Yugoslav/Serbian forces started to withdraw, the NATO Secretary General announced that NATO air strikes had been suspended. The UN Security Council then adopted Resolution 1244 which endorsed the agreements, provided a mandate for KFOR and established the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). NATO forces entered Kosovo on 12 June. There were no clashes with Yugoslav/Serbian forces. This well organised and executed withdrawal suggested strongly that these were disciplined troops acting on orders from above, and that Milosevic could have halted the appalling violence any time he had chosen.

3.13. On 11 June, a number of Russian troops left their SFOR duties in Bosnia and drove through Serbia to Pristina airport. After consultation, the NATO commanders agreed that no action need be taken. While the Russians had acted without prior consultation with either NATO or KFOR, the deployment of this contingent did not create any practical impediment to KFOR's work. Effective working relations were quickly established with the Russian forces, which were integrated into KFOR a week later, and which continue to play an important role in the force.

3.14. The air campaign was formally terminated by the NATO Secretary General on 20 June, following the completion, on time, of the Serb withdrawal from Kosovo. The following day, Lieutenant General Sir Mike Jackson accepted on behalf of NATO the undertaking by the KLA to demilitarise within 90 days, an undertaking met on 21 September.

The Humanitarian Crisis

3.15. The barbarity of the campaign of ethnic cleansing by Milosevic's forces hardened the determination of the international community that he should not succeed in this aim. But it also confronted the international community with an immediate and substantial challenge – the need to care for the mass of refugees forced out of the province.

3.16. In a huge international effort, the various aid agencies and humanitarian organisations in the region responded quickly to the massive flows of refugees. These refugees joined many others who had left in the months before the most recent intensification of Yugoslav/Serbian security force operations, and before the NATO campaign which had responded to it. NATO forces pre-positioned in the region in readiness for the planned peace implementation mission inside Kosovo helped the Macedonian authorities, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and others to cope with the crisis.

3.17. In close co-operation with the Department for International Development, UK military personnel erected 2,660 tents, distributed 129,000 meals, moved 120,000 pallets of aid, and provided medical treatment to 7,000 individuals. The situation was serious in Macedonia, where the majority of NATO forces were based, but even greater numbers of refugees were arriving in Albania. NATO responded by establishing a force in Albania (the Albania Force or AFOR), under the command of a British General, Lieutenant General John Reith, to help cope with the influx of refugees.



Crimes against Humanity

3.18. The UK, with our international partners in NATO and the Contact Group, as well as in the UN Security Council, consistently condemned the callous and brutal actions of the Yugoslav/

Serbian security forces in the period leading up to and including the crisis, which later became all-out ethnic cleansing. The UK Government was always even-handed, and violence perpetrated by both sides (including by the KLA) was condemned. But the scale and scope of the actions by Yugoslav/Serbian security forces against Kosovo Albanian civilians during the conflict was in an entirely different league.

3.19. The atrocities committed by Yugoslav/Serbian forces have also been documented by independent observers, notably the OSCE and Human Rights Watch, whose reports (published in December 1999 and February 2000 respectively) can be found on the internet at the addresses listed in [Annex E](#). These reports contain descriptions of appalling acts of violence and repression:

- "Arbitrary killing of civilians was both a tactic in the campaign to expel Kosovo Albanians, and a tactic in itself."
- "Albanian civilians experienced an onslaught over many days or weeks combining arbitrary violence and abuse with an overall approach that appeared highly organised and systematic. Everywhere, the attacks on communities appeared to have been dictated by strategy, not by breakdown in command and control."
- "Rape and other forms of sexual violence were applied sometimes as a weapon of war"
- "There is chilling evidence of the murderous targeting of children with the aim of punishing adults and terrorising communities."
- "The violence meted out to people, as recounted vividly, particularly in the statements of refugees, was extreme and appalling. The accounts of refugees also give compelling examples of the organised and systematic nature of what was being perpetrated by Yugoslav and Serbian forces, and their tolerance for and collusion in acts of extreme lawlessness by paramilitaries and armed civilians."

(All quotes above from "Kosovo/Kosova As Seen, As Told", Part I, Executive Summary)

- "Another factor in assessing the higher level of civilian deaths in Kosovo is the possible Yugoslav use of civilians for "human shields". There is some evidence that Yugoslav forces used internally displaced civilians as human shields in the village of Korisa on May 13, and may thus share the blame for the eighty-seven deaths there."

(Human Rights Watch: Civilian Deaths in the NATO Air Campaign – Summary Section, Principal Findings, paragraph 7)

- "In one major incident – Dubrava prison in Kosovo – the Yugoslav government attributed ninety-five civilian deaths to NATO bombing. Human Rights Watch research in Kosovo determined that an estimated nineteen prisoners were killed by NATO bombs on May 21 (three prisoners and a guard were killed in an earlier attack on May 19), but at least seventy-six prisoners were summarily executed by prison guards and security forces subsequent to the NATO attack."

(Human Rights Watch: Civilian Deaths in the NATO Air Campaign – Summary Section, International Humanitarian Law and Accountability, paragraph 4)

(Human Rights Watch estimates of numbers of Yugoslav civilians killed are included in [chapter 7](#).)

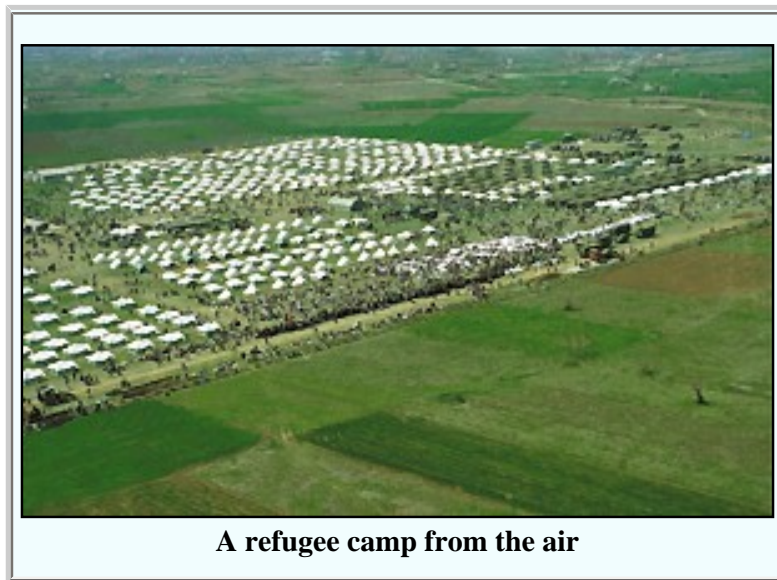
3.20. The UK estimates that at least 10,000 Kosovo Albanian civilians were killed in Kosovo between June 1998 and June 1999. This figure is based on a variety of sources including debriefing of refugees, eye witness accounts, reports from Non-Governmental Organisations and media reporting. International Organisations such as the UN High Commission for Human Rights have used the same figure in their reports on the atrocities.

3.21. The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), which is an independent tribunal, is responsible for investigating alleged crimes against humanity in Kosovo. The ICTY Prosecutor, announcing preliminary figures on 10 November 1999, said that work was complete on 195 of 529 known grave sites and, of the 4,256 bodies reported buried at those sites, 2,108 had been exhumed.

3.22. This does not, of course, represent the complete picture. Cold weather conditions caused the ground to freeze in the winter, and further examinations were therefore postponed until after the winter, with exhumations resuming with the Spring thaw. Forensic work will continue throughout this year.

3.23. Besides known grave sites, we expect other sites to come to light as work progresses. A high proportion of bodies may never be recovered given the degree to which Yugoslav/Serbian forces, fearing criminal charges, attempted to destroy them by dumping them in rivers or by burning them. Many victims were left where they fell, to be buried in individual graves by their families. A large proportion of victims were not buried in mass graves so it would be a mistake to equate the number of bodies in mass graves to the total number of dead.

3.24. On 27 May 1999, ICTY announced the indictment of Milosevic and four other senior Yugoslav/Serbian figures (Milutinovic (President of Serbia), Sainovic (Yugoslav Deputy Prime Minister), Ojdanic (Chief of the Yugoslav General Staff) and Stojiljkovic (Serbian Minister of Internal Affairs)) for crimes against humanity and violations of the laws and customs of war in Kosovo.



A refugee camp from the air

Why did Milosevic concede?

3.25. What forced Milosevic to concede? We will probably never know exactly, but it is clear that the effective application of military pressure was fundamental to the achievement of our objectives. The following factors are likely to have been those most influential:

- the continuing solidarity of the Alliance, and Milosevic's inability to divide the Allies, despite repeated attempts;
- the determination of the international community, including the states of the region and, crucially, Russia, to force him to accept a negotiated solution;
- the continued increase in tempo of the air operations, and the damage and disruption they had caused, and were likely to continue to cause if operations continued, to the command and control and operations of his security forces;
- his indictment by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, and the indictment of four other key members of his regime, which would have added to the pressure on him and those around him;
- and the build-up of ground forces in the region, the confirmation at the NATO Summit that all options remained under review, and the suggestions from the UK and other Allies that an opposed ground entry operation could not be ruled out.

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Chapter 4

Learning and Implementing the Lessons

4.1. The MOD and the Services have well-practised systems for learning and implementing lessons from operations. The Kosovo operation is no exception, with a specially established team tasked to co-ordinate the Department's internal and external lessons-related activity, working closely with the Directorate of Operational Capability in the co-ordination and evaluation of lessons. The Directorate of Operational Capability will monitor the implementation of the lessons identified, and help to ensure that the required action is taken.

4.2. As part of the process of learning lessons, and drawing on our experience in the Strategic Defence Review, MOD assisted in the organisation of two seminars on Kosovo lessons, in conjunction with the Royal Aeronautical Society and the Royal United Services Institute. These seminars attracted a broad spectrum of participants from a number of nations, and helped give a wider perspective on events and particular issues, which was valuable in our process of reflection on the key lessons. We are keen to organise such meetings again in the future.

4.3. All commanders directly involved in operations, in theatre, in the command chain or elsewhere, were asked to make reports through their chain of command on their experiences during the operation, and to recommend areas where they believe improvements can be made to equipment or procedures for future operations. They have been asked to make their reports frank and as critical as required – bland reports would be of little value. For this reason, if such reports are ever leaked, as has happened after the Kosovo operation, they can lead to criticism. Such criticism ignores the fact that we commission such reports in order actually to identify problems and then do something about them. We consider constructive criticism to be a strength, and we will continue to encourage it in the future.

4.4. Ensuring that the lessons we have learned are the right ones, and weighing them against our other priorities can take time. As important as learning the lessons is ensuring that we do not learn the wrong lessons – lessons which may be peculiar to a particular operation. This is particularly important as the Defence budget is finite, and difficult judgements are constantly required in order to decide how best to spend our resources.

4.5. Nevertheless, rapid decisions have been made. In March this year, the Defence Secretary announced that the UK would proceed with trials of enhanced secure air-to-air communications and the integration of Maverick anti-armour missiles onto the Harrier GR7. These were to address crucial capability lessons which had emerged from the Kosovo conflict, on which early action was required. More details of these projects are given in [chapter 7](#). Action was also taken during the campaign, and since, to acquire equipment through the Urgent Operational Requirement process – this is addressed in more detail in [chapter 6](#).



Chapter 5

International Co-operation

Key lessons

- Military planning and operations are one part of the overall international effort, and must be co-ordinated with the other means of persuasion at our disposal, primarily political, diplomatic and economic measures.
- NATO proved itself to be a capable and effective crisis management organisation. Solidarity and firmness of purpose were key NATO strengths.
- NATO Allies and EU partners must work together to improve their capabilities through the Defence Capabilities Initiative and the European Headline Goal. This will increase their ability to act and strengthen Europe's partnership with the US.
- The international community needs to be better able in future to establish quickly a civil implementation presence.

General

5.1. The fact that we were successful in achieving our objectives represented the co-ordination of effort in a number of fields – political, diplomatic and economic as well as military. In all future crises, we are likely to have similar tools at our disposal, and should use them all to their maximum potential. As was the case in Kosovo, military force should always be the option of last resort.

5.2. Kosovo demonstrated the importance of being able to back up words with action, so that the threat to a potential opponent is credible. It also demonstrated the value of international cohesion. As in Spring 1999, we must in future be prepared to use force for as long as required to achieve our objectives. In the case of Kosovo, the establishment and maintenance of Alliance solidarity was a crucial consideration in planning and executing the NATO campaign.

Bilateral and multilateral co-operation

5.3. The UK kept in regular contact with its Allies and partners both bilaterally and in multilateral fora. The role of each of the international organisations most involved is detailed below. In addition, a key means of co-ordinating policy during the campaign were the significant number of

telephone calls between the Prime Minister and his counterparts. The Foreign Secretary also spoke regularly to his opposite number in other Allied and partner countries, as did the Defence Secretary, the International Development Secretary and the Chief of Defence Staff, and officials in all these departments.

5.4. It was particularly important to keep in contact with the countries of the region (see below), and the Prime Minister and other Ministers made several visits to the region, including Albania and Macedonia – those countries most affected by the refugee crisis - to offer solidarity and practical assistance.

NATO

5.5. Our involvement with Kosovo over the last few years has proved the value of the Alliance to the UK and the security of Europe. NATO played a fundamental role in underpinning the diplomatic attempts to find a resolution in the period leading up to the air campaign, in leading the air campaign and other military operations in support, including a major humanitarian effort, and in leading KFOR since the end of the conflict. NATO will remain the organisation of choice for operations of a similar scale and complexity in the future, and certainly for operations where Europeans and the US wish to act together. NATO remains the cornerstone of our security and defence policy.

5.6. Achieving agreement between nineteen Allies is a significant signal of collective determination. Taking decisions by consensus demonstrates solidarity, and helps to achieve and maintain firmness of purpose. These were key strengths of the Alliance during the Kosovo campaign.

5.7. The North Atlantic Council set the political parameters and objectives for the campaign, provided guidance for the NATO Military Authorities and oversaw their activities, assisted by the Military Committee. Neither the Council nor the Military Committee became involved in the micro-management of the campaign, which was left to the military commanders, operating within the framework established by the Council. The Council and the Military Committee also provided invaluable fora for Allies to be briefed by the military authorities on the progress of the operation and to share information.

5.8. NATO co-operated closely with its partners in the region through the well evolved mechanisms for consultation which are part of Partnership for Peace. This and other aspects of co-operation with governments in the region are addressed in paragraph 5.27 below.

5.9. NATO's integrated military structure proved its worth in the Kosovo operation. Through it, those Allies who participate have been accustomed for many years to working together. NATO had also learned from its experiences in Bosnia, in the bombing campaign in 1995 and in the peacekeeping operation which followed the Dayton Peace Agreement later the same year. Kosovo was a far sterner test than either of these operations, but the basic building blocks of common working practices and technical interoperability in many fields made the task very much easier.

5.10. Lessons have been learned at NATO, and planning procedures and the functioning of the headquarters in Brussels are being updated as a result. NATO and the UK have learned

practical lessons on the ways in which NATO planning is conducted and strategic direction is issued through the command chain. The planning procedures for NATO non-article 5 (ie non-collective defence) operations are being considerably streamlined, which should result in speedier operational planning and comprehensive and effective contingency planning in peacetime. Changes in NATO headquarters procedures include the recognition of the need for reinforcement of the media operations section during a crisis, to help meet the demand for rapid information flow. These changes will be tested through exercises.

5.11. The main focus of lessons activity at NATO is now on ensuring that all (but particularly the European) Allies modernise their capabilities to ensure that we are better prepared for future operations. The Defence Capabilities Initiative (DCI), which was agreed at the NATO Summit in April 1999, but which originated before the Kosovo campaign, provides a framework for this. It covers many of the areas in which we have learned lessons from the air operation and KFOR, and action on these lessons will therefore be incorporated into work implementing the DCI. The DCI focuses on five key areas of capability that are crucial for the successful conduct of future operations:

- deployability and mobility
- sustainability and logistics
- effective engagement [ie effective weapons and equipment]
- survivability of forces and infrastructure
- NATO Consultation, Command and Control

5.12. Achieving real improvements in capability is, ultimately, a matter for nations, who must be prepared to rethink forward defence programmes and allocate, or reallocate, resources as necessary. Many of the capability enhancements identified in the DCI will not come cheaply, and NATO Allies must be ready to seek solutions to critical shortfalls in strategic lift, precision guided munitions and other areas, either on a national or a multinational basis.

5.13. The implementation of the DCI has already resulted in progress. Important achievements so far include the good start in implementing NATO's Multinational Joint Logistics Centre concept, which will improve the co-ordination of multinational logistics support to NATO forces, and the development of mechanisms for the exchange of lessons learned from operations involving multinational formations (such as the Allied Command Europe Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) and the Allied Command Europe Mobile Force Land (AMF(L)), whose headquarters were used so successfully in Kosovo and Albania). Important work is in hand in other areas, including efforts to increase strategic lift capability and the security of NATO's Communication and Information Systems (CIS). The UK looks forward to further useful progress through this Initiative.

European Security

5.14. The European Union (EU) played a substantial role in the diplomatic efforts to find a solution from the very outset, and played a key role in applying political and economic pressure

on Yugoslavia during the conflict, applying sanctions on Milosevic's regime, many of which still remain. President Martti Ahtisaari of Finland was the EU's envoy, and played the key diplomatic role, alongside Russian envoy Viktor Chernomyrdin, in obtaining Milosevic's agreement to the international community's demands.

5.15. The Kosovo conflict reaffirmed, however, the reliance of European Allies on the ability of the United States to provide military capability quickly and effectively in large scale operations such as the Kosovo conflict. Areas in which European key capability shortfalls were obvious were:

- precision all-weather strike;
- strategic lift;
- Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance;
- Suppression of Enemy Air Defence/Electronic Warfare;
- Air to Air Refuelling.

5.16. Europe needs to do much better in future. These shortfalls are being addressed through NATO's DCI and the European Defence Initiative, particularly the Headline Goal agreed at the Helsinki European Council in December 1999. These two initiatives are mutually reinforcing.

5.17. As things stand now, we could not have conducted the air campaign at the same intensity and in the same format without the US. But we have never claimed that Europe should want to or be able to do everything alone. We will continue to have common interests that mean common action. We are also looking to strengthen the ability of the EU to take decisions and to act in response to crises, if necessary militarily, where NATO as a whole is not engaged. We and our European Allies and partners need to be able to pull our weight by investing in the capabilities we all need collectively to conduct demanding operations, both to act effectively in future Alliance operations, or in EU-led or other coalition operations. Those involved on both sides of the Atlantic must also minimise the risk of a technology gap opening up between Europeans and the US, which has been investing heavily in capabilities at the cutting edge of technology, for example in the extensive transmission of data by digital means. We need to work together through the Defence Capabilities Initiative and European Defence Initiative.

5.18. Notwithstanding these problems, there were many positive aspects to the European contribution. European air forces played a significant role in the air campaign, and were able in particular to provide a number of the scarce force multipliers such as Air to Air Refuelling aircraft and intelligence gathering assets – both areas where the UK was able to play a major role.

5.19. The ground force in Kosovo has been predominantly European from the outset. The NATO-led Extraction Force in Macedonia, the first NATO Kosovo-related ground presence in the region, was almost wholly European and was the first ever NATO force to be led by a French officer. KFOR was initially commanded by a UK officer, Lieutenant General Sir Mike Jackson, and the force which entered Kosovo was overwhelming European, with the UK providing about forty percent of the total force at the outset. We were able to deploy UK forces, including the

headquarters of the ARRC (for which we are the Framework Nation), quickly to theatre to meet the need for urgent reinforcement at this vital time. Since then, the number of contributors to KFOR has grown (by May 2000) to 39, including 20 non-NATO countries, but European Allies continue to provide the majority of the force. Lieutenant General Jackson was succeeded by a German officer, General Reinhardt, who was in turn succeeded on 18 April by a Spanish officer, Lieutenant General Ortuno. The latter's headquarters is formed around a nucleus provided by the five-nation EUROCORPS formation.

The United Nations

5.20. Throughout the Kosovo crisis, the UK sought to place the United Nations at the heart of the international community's response, from the adoption of Security Council Resolution 1160, which imposed an arms embargo on Yugoslavia early in the crisis, to the agreement on UN Security Council Resolution 1244, confirming the end of the conflict and the establishment of the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the NATO force, KFOR.

5.21. We would have welcomed the express authorisation of the UN Security Council through a resolution before the NATO air campaign. This would have represented the strongest possible expression of international support. But discussions at the United Nations in New York had shown that such a resolution could not be achieved. Nevertheless, the UK and our NATO Allies, and many others in the international community, were clear that as a last resort, all other means of resolving the crisis having failed, armed intervention was justifiable in international law as an exceptional measure to prevent an overwhelming humanitarian catastrophe in Kosovo.

5.22. Despite the lesson from our experience in Bosnia that the international community should be ready sooner to get the civil implementation presence up and running as quickly as possible, progress here was much slower than we would have wished. A complex negotiation between international institutions was required to secure agreement to the structure of UNMIK. The international community needs to be better able in future to establish quickly a civil implementation presence, and this will be one of the issues we will take forward in our dialogue with the UN and UN agencies (see below).

The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe

5.23. The Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) played an important role in running the Kosovo Verification Mission. The verifiers provided the international community with eyes and ears on the ground in the tense period between October 1998 and March 1999, creating a vital breathing space during the winter to enable those driven from their homes to find shelter. The OSCE had had no experience of an operation on this scale, but learned quickly, and did a good job. It is now making a valuable contribution to the civil administration and reconstruction of Kosovo, through UNMIK, alongside the EU, the UN and others.

Arms Control

5.24. During the air operation, Russia exercised its rights under the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty to inspect Allied forces in Italy and, under the Vienna Document 94, to inspect them in Albania and Macedonia. NATO exhibited the maximum degree of openness consistent with operational security and in keeping with the terms of the two Agreements, both during the

inspections and subsequently during a Vienna Document 94 Observation event, held in Macedonia in July. It co-operated closely with the Albanian and Macedonian authorities who had prime responsibility for implementing the Vienna Document 94 on their territory.

5.25. Measures are now being considered in NATO to refine Alliance arms control procedures for collective military operations.

Regional cooperation and links with host governments

5.26. There was good co-operation with host governments in the region throughout the lead up to and during the air campaign. Allies in the region gave considerable support to the forces stationed on their territory. Italy played a crucial role, with numerous NATO aircraft based there, but UK aircraft also operated from France and Germany, and travelled through the airspace of other Allies and partners during their missions. Ground forces regularly travelled through Greece to Macedonia as the build-up of KFOR continued. We received excellent co-operation from the Governments of all these countries.

5.27. The solidarity of our Partnership for Peace partners in the region, and the practical support they offered to the air campaign and to the build up of ground forces, was vital to the achievement of our objectives. NATO could not have conducted the campaign without the support of the neighbouring countries in allowing basing of NATO aircraft, giving overflight rights and in providing Reception, Staging, Onward Movement and Integration (RSOI) facilities for our land forces as they deployed.

5.28. The role played by Albania and Macedonia in particular was outstanding. They gave extensive help to the refugees, supported our ground forces and gave their political support to our objectives.

5.29. Allies, and the international community as a whole, recognised the importance of this contribution by our partners in the region. We had been in regular contact with them throughout the build up to the crisis. This continued during the conflict, and is ongoing today. The Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, the political umbrella for NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP), provided a key forum for dialogue with partners during this period, including at the NATO Summit. The Stability Pact launched under the German Presidency of the EU is designed to deepen co-operation with our partners in the region. In all future operations, we should recall the benefits of close co-operation which were emphasised in Kosovo, and maintain maximum transparency, and access for our partners' leaders to our own.

Cooperation with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), other agencies and non-governmental organisations

5.30. The UNHCR was responsible for co-ordinating the international response to the humanitarian crisis in the region, and good working links were established by both NATO and the UK with the UNHCR at headquarters level. The UNHCR was initially overwhelmed by the sheer scale of the crisis, but we and our other Allies and partners did what we could to assist, and did so in close co-operation with the UNHCR. The UK seconded military planners to UNHCR to help in their efforts. Contacts with Non-Governmental Organisations were conducted in part through UNHCR and partly bilaterally, in the UK and in theatre, with the Department for International Development (DFID) in the lead.

5.31. Our experience during the conflict suggests that more can be done to strengthen links between the military and humanitarian organisations. Specifically, a relationship should be fostered with the Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), which is generally the lead UN body responsible for co-ordinating the international response to humanitarian crises. Greater understanding of the capabilities, limitations and cultures of the major humanitarian agencies and Non-Governmental Organisations should be encouraged through exchange of information and sharing of expertise. A joint MOD/DFID symposium was held in October 1999 to consider how best to achieve this understanding and take forward co-operation between MOD, DFID, other Government departments and other organisations on humanitarian operations. It was attended by representatives of over 20 international agencies, Non-Governmental Organisations and academic institutions. The need for co-operation at an early stage of planning was agreed, and mutual training opportunities were discussed. The UK is also participating in studies under the auspices of the UN Secretary General into future arrangements for Peace Support Operations.

5.32. DFID and MOD are currently examining ways of improving their co-operation at both the planning and operational stage to further enhance awareness of the humanitarian consequences of military operations and co-ordination of response capabilities. We are always open to dialogue with organisations involved in this field.

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Chapter 6

Key Defence Capability Issues and Joint Lessons

Key lessons

- The performance by UK personnel was superb, but work must continue to alleviate overstretch and its consequences.
- Although levels of operational commitment have been much reduced from the peaks of mid-1999, there is a need in the personnel field to focus on the key 'Policy for People' issues, making progress towards manning balance in all three Services and investing in and valuing Service personnel and their families.
- The conclusions of the Strategic Defence Review were vindicated.
- UK crisis management structures proved to be effective.
- The importance of media operations was reinforced.
- There was in general a good flow of intelligence, but there is a need for better supporting secure communications systems in order to improve the flow of intelligence to those who require it.
- An improved Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance capability will be a key requirement for future UK military operations.
- The planning and conduct of military operations must continue to reflect political realities and requirements.
- To maintain our flexibility of action and the highest possible level of uncertainty in the minds of our adversaries, we should plan for as many military options as necessary.
- When a clear commitment is made to use force, as was the case in the air campaign, it will be important to sustain this for as long as necessary to achieve the agreed objectives.
- The importance of the maximum possible accuracy of attack

and minimisation of collateral damage in military operations was underlined.

- We must continue to prepare our fighting forces in all three Services for the most exacting military tasks. A soldier trained and equipped for war may play an effective role in a peacekeeping operation (and may acquire additional skills for this purpose), but one trained just for peacekeeping is not prepared for high intensity operations.
- The requirement for, and value of, Reserve forces was reinforced. Areas requiring further work to refine the arrangements for compulsory mobilisation were identified.
- We must be prepared for our adversaries to make extensive use of asymmetric tactics in future operations.
- Our capabilities for conducting information operations need to be further developed.
- We must prepare fully to enable UK armed forces to meet the challenge, and reap the benefits, of digitisation.
- The importance of strategic lift was re-emphasised.

Joint Lessons

6.1. Experience of the Kosovo campaign, in all three major warfare environments (sea, land and air), underlined the extent to which our operations are joint, and this is borne out by the many lessons which have joint applications. This chapter draws together the key defence and joint capability lessons – lessons which have arisen in the particular context of one aspect of the operation are covered in the separate chapters which address each of these aspects in turn. The chapters which follow are not, however, accounts of operations involving single Services – they describe the conduct of the air, ground and maritime aspects of the campaign, and highlight quite clearly the joint nature of these efforts, forming part as they did of a joint campaign. Just as one example, the air operation involved assets from all three Services – aircraft and missiles from the Royal Navy, Army aerial surveillance assets and Royal Air Force aircraft.

The performance of our people

6.2. UK Service men and women, and civilians, from across the entire spectrum of defence activity, played an outstanding role in the Kosovo conflict, under the greatest of pressures, and are a credit to this country.

6.3. The unprecedented peacetime levels of operational commitment brought about by the Kosovo conflict, coupled with the fact that the changes to the force structure recommended by

the Strategic Defence Review were not yet in place (see below), meant that overstretch for many individuals was excessive. It was only through the highest sense of duty from our Service personnel, and sacrifice from their families, that we were able to achieve our objectives. This deserves recognition and our thanks.

6.4. Since last summer, we have worked to reduce force levels where possible – both in the Balkans and elsewhere around the world – in order to reduce overstretch on individuals and units. For example, the proportion of the Army committed to operations (including those preparing for or recovering from operations) has fallen from 47% last summer to 27% – slightly under the level it was at in May 1997. In addition to reducing commitments, our focus has been on two key themes of our ‘Policy for People’:

- continuing progress towards manning balance in all three Services, not just through recruiting, but also, in particular, through measures to aid retention of serving personnel; and
- investing in Service personnel and their families, to demonstrate the value we attach to them. The focus here, given the levels of operational commitment, has necessarily been on operational welfare measures.

6.5. We have adopted innovative and flexible approaches to reduce the burden on Service men and women – such as making more use of Reserves (see below), greater use of the Military Provost Guard Service to reduce the onerous guarding task for regular soldiers, and contractorisation of functions where possible – for example in the case of wide area communications in Bosnia and Kosovo (see paragraph 8.27 below). Other measures we have taken include:

- increasing the allowances for separated service (Longer Separated Service Allowance and Longer Service at Sea Bonus), so that those who suffer more than 280 paid days separation in a two year period will receive a £1000 bonus, and those who suffer more than 365 paid days will get £2000. We have also reduced the qualifying periods for these allowances and increased the daily rates at which they are paid;
- in the Royal Navy, introducing a new 2-year short engagement for sailors to relieve some of the problems of gapping;
- introducing a new minimum Army engagement of 4 years (rather than 3 as previously) to increase the return on service from soldiers; and
- in the RAF, work continues to identify a RAF Crisis Manpower Requirement, which will enable a better match of planned resources to commitments. Further measures to ease the burden of overstretch have been introduced in the interim, including the introduction of a Separated Service Recording System and the reduction in levels of non-operational tasking.

6.6. Improvements to operational welfare, both for Service personnel and for their families have included:

- increasing the Welfare Telephone Allowance, twice, from 3 to 20 minutes per week;
- trialling 'Electronic Blueys' to allow families to keep in touch via the internet and, to ensure that this facility is available as widely as possible, we have installed internet terminals at unit and family centres around the country;
- introducing Post Operational Tour Leave. For the Army this equates to an extra 20 working days leave on return from an operational deployment lasting six months or more. The other Services get extra leave dependent on the time spent on operations and the conditions under which they have served; and
- for families, introducing greater flexibility into the Concessionary Travel Scheme so that families based overseas can have more choice in how they return to the UK.

6.7. We are also looking ahead to the challenges of tomorrow. We have developed and implemented an Armed Forces Overarching Personnel Strategy so that, for the first time, the Armed Forces collectively have a coherent and overarching strategy within which to develop their personnel policies. This overarching strategy will be underpinned by individual Naval, Army and RAF strategies, and supported by an Action Plan. The Strategy will also be supported by greater use of attitude surveys to seek the views of personnel and their families.

6.8. We recognise too, and are proud of the fact, that civilians throughout the Ministry of Defence worked very hard to help the UK and NATO achieve our objectives, from the headquarters in London, Brussels and in theatre, to all those working in support of military units across the country and in Germany. We have now put in place measures to provide rapid reinforcement of those areas most affected in a crisis, which should ensure that we have sufficient suitably qualified individuals available to sustain the support of operations over a long period if necessary.

The Strategic Defence Review

6.9. The Strategic Defence Review (SDR), the results of which were announced by Lord Robertson in July 1998, stated that we had a fundamental interest in the security and stability of Europe as a whole. In addition it highlighted our determination to be a force for good in the world. Nowhere has our determination to act in defence of these principles been better demonstrated than in the NATO-led Kosovo campaign in 1999.

6.10. The planning assumptions made in the SDR were tested and vindicated during the Kosovo crisis. The SDR planning assumptions are analytical tools used for planning long term force structures. They are not designed as templates for specific operations. As explained during the review, we may in particular circumstances decide to do less than assumptions provide for, or we may be able to do more. We concluded in the SDR that future operations will almost always be conducted in coalition with our partners and Allies. Operations in the Balkans have borne this out. From the value of close inter-Service co-operation to the importance of precision weapons and Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance capabilities, the SDR conclusions have proved their worth. Our programme to adjust the structure, equipment and capabilities of the forces has been validated. The importance of taking forward the Review cannot be over-stated. It is essential to building armed forces that are capable of serving the UK's interests for the next fifteen to twenty years. It is also essential for the maintenance of a flexible, deployable and

substantial UK contribution in the Balkans.

6.11. While the SDR planning assumptions provide guidance on scales of effort, concurrency and endurance, the agreed SDR force structure is not yet in place nor has full manning been achieved. Consequently, operations in Kosovo last summer led to overstretch which would not have occurred had the SDR been fully implemented. This is regrettable and placed additional strain on our forces. But enhancements and restructuring being conducted under the SDR were so radical that it was always going to take time to implement, and it speaks highly of our armed forces that they rose to the challenge so well. The changes that we are introducing should help to avoid similar problems arising in the future.

6.12. While the costs of the Kosovo deployment have had no impact on the affordability of programmes set out in the SDR, the pace and scale of military operations in the past two years, including Kosovo-related operations, have led to delays in the full implementation of the SDR. Units have been operationally engaged and therefore unable to take forward restructuring. Some force elements, particularly those in the Army's formation readiness cycle, whose training has been disrupted by the deployment to Kosovo, will not be at full readiness levels as soon as planned. These delays as a result of events beyond our control are disappointing, but the MOD remains committed to full implementation of the SDR, and the process is being taken forward as quickly as possible.

6.13. The MOD's new strategic planning process, which was introduced following the SDR, ensures that there is a policy-led re-evaluation of defence plans every year. Our experience validated the key assumptions we made in the SDR, which will deliver force structures that are well matched to the sort of operation we faced in Kosovo. But that does not mean we can afford to rest on our laurels. Instead, we have ensured that the lessons we have learned from the operation are fed into the strategic planning process, with our detailed planning assumptions being updated as necessary. This will ensure that our forces continue to evolve and are prepared for the challenges which they are likely to face in the future.

The UK Defence Crisis Management Organisation

6.14. We were pleased with the performance of the UK Defence Crisis Management Organisation during the air campaign. Experience gained in Operation DESERT FOX, the operation against Iraq in 1998, proved invaluable in preparation for the Kosovo operation. The management of the UK aspects of the air campaign was focused on MOD and the Permanent Joint Headquarters (PJHQ) at Northwood, which together form the Defence Crisis Management Organisation, with Headquarters RAF Strike Command at High Wycombe playing the major supporting role. PJHQ was also the initial point of contact for the commanders in theatre – the NATO operational focus for the air operation was at the Combined Air Operations Centre in Vicenza, Italy, and PJHQ stayed in constant contact with the UK representative there.

6.15. The military effort co-ordinated by PJHQ was truly joint between the three Services. The Army (principally through Headquarters Land Command at Wilton, near Salisbury) assisted in planning for a ground operation to follow the air campaign. We hoped this would be a peacekeeping force, but realised we also needed to prepare to fight our way into Kosovo if Milosevic had continued to reject our demands. The significant role played in the operation by HMS SPLENDID, our first submarine to be equipped with Tomahawk Land Attack Missiles (TLAM), as well as that played by other naval assets, meant the full involvement of Fleet

Headquarters at Northwood. Other headquarters in all three Services were also involved, along with various MOD agencies. Twice daily video conferences at MOD regularly involved PJHQ, Fleet Headquarters, Land and Strike Commands, the Defence Transport and Movement Agency in Andover and the UK Delegation/Military Representative to NATO in Brussels. By this means, and intensive staff contact at all levels, those most closely involved were kept in regular touch with the latest thinking in Whitehall and the MOD headquarters.

6.16. The division of responsibilities within the Defence Crisis Management Organisation is dependent on the particular operation at hand. In the Kosovo operation, there was a very high level of political interest and involvement in both the air and ground operations, and the emphasis was therefore on the MOD to develop national strategy and options, and explain them in detail to Ministers, although PJHQ was heavily involved throughout. In other operations involving UK forces, for example East Timor, PJHQ has played a more prominent role. A key part was played in this process by the Chiefs of Staff who met regularly (usually daily, and often several times a day) to ensure that considered and expert military advice was always available as the crisis developed, assisting the Chief of Defence Staff in his role as primary military adviser to Ministers.

6.17. There was also a considerable co-ordination effort required across UK Government before, during and after the air campaign. Looking specifically at the period of the air campaign, the MOD was the focus for the management of the military aspects. The morning meeting chaired by the Defence Secretary in the Defence Crisis Management Centre located within the MOD in London was attended by representatives of all Government Departments involved in the management of the crisis.

Wider Government Activity

6.18. The Kosovo crisis was a period of intensive activity across UK Government. The overall effort was co-ordinated by regular meetings of the Ministers involved, with the Prime Minister closely involved at all times. Different Government departments took the lead in various areas, but again involved closely all those with an interest in their work. The Foreign Secretary and his officials continued close consultation with Allies and partners, including Russia, in an attempt to find a diplomatic solution, and also prepared in detail with other Government departments for the implementation of any agreement. The Department for International Development led the UK's response to the humanitarian crisis. It worked closely with the MOD and PJHQ, UK forces in Macedonia and Albania, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and Non-Governmental Organisations to provide an emergency response to the tide of humanity forced to flee Kosovo by Milosevic's persecution. The Cabinet Office played a significant co-ordinating role. The Treasury, Home Office, Department of Health and other Departments were kept closely involved, as appropriate.

6.19. Ministers were concerned to ensure Parliament and public opinion was as fully informed as possible. During the course of the air campaign, there were 13 statements and 6 debates in Parliament, in addition to the daily Press Conferences involving Ministers from MOD and other Departments, as well as senior military officers.

6.20. Government departments worked together closely and effectively, despite the lack of interoperable secure Information Technology (IT) systems. Greater connectivity between IT systems is being investigated, but in the meantime steps are being taken to ensure that MOD

secure IT systems are available to users in other Departments. This will speed up the distribution of important material and allow greater information sharing. It will be of considerable benefit in a crisis, but also in day-to-day work. The insufficient number of secure telephone communications systems across Government, and the smaller number which are also interoperable with all Allies, caused some problems, and action is being considered.

The importance of media in military operations

6.21. As a department of State in a mature democracy, we had a responsibility to inform the public about developments in the conflict. Milosevic could not defeat us militarily. But loss of public support had the potential to fracture NATO solidarity and lead to an outcome short of our objectives. Satisfying the media appetite for timely news stories was a major challenge in an age of instant, 24 hour media operations, and in particular given the multinational nature of the operation.

6.22. Information was also important in our campaign against Milosevic. In many ways getting our messages across in the broadcast and written media was as crucial as the military campaign. It was vital to keep public opinion properly informed. Even where the issues were straightforward and as morally clear as they were in Kosovo, at times we had to work hard to prevent a muddying of the waters. We needed to cut through Milosevic's propaganda and control of broadcast outlets in Kosovo and Serbia to let people know the truth, and to let an informed public decide what was right. We had to get our messages over (and keep on getting them over) to three audiences:

- the public in the UK and Allied countries;
- Kosovo Albanians and others in the region;
- Milosevic and his supporters.

6.23. All this had to be co-ordinated with similar responses in Brussels and in NATO capitals. Our focus was on setting up efficient and streamlined systems aimed at ensuring the flow of accurate, timely and truthful information to the media. This included:

- The daily MOD Press Conference and press pack;
- ad hoc background briefings for the media;
- a joint FCO/MOD web page;
- and occasional special facilities, such as the visit to Kosovo organised for journalists from Russia, so that they could see what was happening on the ground.

6.24. We worked very hard to make sure that the information we provided was timely and accurate. This posed a huge challenge over a long period, but we believe we succeeded. The information we gave was always the best available at the time, and although mistakes were sometimes made, we did not at any stage deliberately distort any information we provided to the media.

6.25. Our decision to have a press conference almost every day of the campaign, involving the other main government departments engaged in the crisis, was vindicated. The effort which we put into these events was matched at NATO and by several of our Allies, and together these press conferences played a key role in making information available every day to a very wide audience, including refugees and Milosevic and his regime. We believe this played an important role in maintaining and demonstrating UK and NATO resolve.

6.26. Use of the internet was successful. The special web site on Kosovo operated jointly by the MOD and the Foreign Office received nearly 7 million hits during the crisis, more than double the usual rate. Many of our readers were from overseas, including within Serbia. In future we plan to make even better use of the internet to get information rapidly to the public.

6.27. In a future operation, we would want to improve our capability to pick up what is being said by the media, particularly coverage of information coming from an adversary, so that we can respond to misleading or wrong stories more quickly. We have set up systems and procedures to do this.

6.28. In-theatre media operations worked satisfactorily. But the "pool" arrangements which we operated for journalists whereby a limited number agree to share material in return for privileged access fast became redundant after forces had entered Kosovo. It was clear that the resourcing of in-theatre media operations, and the training of media operations staff needed to be addressed in the light of Kosovo experience, and this is being pursued.

6.29. However, the single biggest lesson in this area is that the requirement to provide rapid and accurate information will continue to grow, and we need to be ready for this. We have put in place procedures for reinforcement in a crisis, are improving training for staff who deal or who may in the future deal with the media, and are working to heighten awareness of working with the media in general across the MOD.

Intelligence

6.30. Intelligence played an important role in the lead up to and during the crisis in two particular fields:

- informing decision-makers (and the public) of key developments;
- targeting – the selection and clearance of targets.

6.31. The Defence Intelligence Staff (DIS) provided all source intelligence assessments, specialist intelligence collection assets, targeting, imagery and geographic support services before, during and after the Kosovo air campaign. The DIS provided intelligence analysis to the MOD at the strategic level, and contributed to the formation of an overall UK intelligence picture through the Joint Intelligence Committee process, to which the other intelligence agencies also made a significant contribution. Further important intelligence activities included monitoring of the UN arms embargo, the production and distribution of mapping, utilising imagery resources to track refugees and detect mass graves, and the provision of information on atrocities to ICTY.

6.32. The Permanent Joint Headquarters (PJHQ) at Northwood had the key national responsibility for operational intelligence, including targeting, but relied heavily on the Defence Intelligence Staff (DIS) for analytical and imagery support.

6.33. A comprehensive lessons review was undertaken across the intelligence community. Many positive lessons were learnt but improving secure Information and Communications Technology (ICT) at both the strategic (eg within the UK and with coalition partners) and operational (theatre) levels to enable the passage of intelligence and targeting information across and between these levels, is a major concern. Further concerns include the increased demand for imagery arrangements to support information operations and the timely public release of material to the media:

- on the first, we are working to ensure maximum possible transparency with our Allies to ensure personnel working together in a military operation have the same access to intelligence of importance and relevance to the operation;
- on the second, commanders in theatre are already supplied with good intelligence from the UK, but we are also looking at how best to provide real-time information to the commanders and forces on the ground about the disposition of their opponents, including intelligence material obtained by Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance assets; and
- on the last, there was great pressure to release intelligence, particularly imagery, to inform public opinion, but maintenance of operational security also remained important. We are now looking to streamline procedures for the sanitisation, declassification and release of intelligence into the public domain.

6.34. For more details of operational aspects of intelligence, including Battle Damage Assessment, see chapters [8](#) and [9](#).

Planning for future military operations

6.35. Planning for future military operations, to be useful and relevant, needs to take into account diplomatic, legal and political factors. Planning should cover as many military options as necessary, but, in practice, priority will usually be given to one or more of these. This was the case with the air campaign option in the Kosovo crisis. In the course of the Kosovo crisis, NATO considered a wide range of options. The priority given to making a success of the air campaign meant that some others were not pursued in detail. But all options remained on the table, as the NATO Secretary General made clear during the campaign. And the bottom line is that maintaining NATO unity made possible the achievement in full of our shared objectives.

6.36. Within this context, planning for a range of options will help maintain our flexibility of action and the highest possible level of uncertainty in the minds of our adversaries. It will also be important in future operations, as was the case in the Kosovo air campaign, that when a clear commitment is made to use force, this is sustained for as long as necessary to achieve the agreed objectives. If potential opponents are convinced of our purpose and determination, they are less likely to push us to the use of force.

Accuracy and the minimisation of collateral damage

6.37. The legal requirement to minimise collateral damage is addressed in more detail in [chapter 7](#), putting this issue into the context in which it was primarily considered during the Kosovo operation. However, it is an issue of importance to joint operations, and operations by all three Services individually, and must be taken fully into account in future planning.

Preparedness for high intensity operations

6.38. Our preparations for a possible opposed ground entry operation reinforced our conviction that it is essential for UK armed forces in all three Services to be trained and equipped for the full spectrum of possible tasks, including the challenges of war fighting (high intensity operations). While our forces need to be trained in the special skills required for peacekeeping and other lower intensity operations, this must not be at the expense of their readiness for more demanding joint, all arms warfighting operations. A serviceman trained and equipped for war may do an effective job on a peacekeeping operation, and can acquire additional special skills for this purpose, but one just trained for peacekeeping is not ready for high intensity operations.

The Reserve Forces

6.39. The UK relies heavily on the contribution made by the Reserves to our Armed Forces and they are integral to our ability to expand our forces in times of crisis. Contingency planning for compulsory mobilisation for Kosovo focused attention on a broad range of Reserves issues - strategic, legislative and procedural. In some areas, mobilisation planning had not been adequately updated since the end of the Cold War, nor did it facilitate the more ready use of Reserves, a principle of the recent SDR and underwritten by new legislation (the Reserve Forces Act 1996). These weaknesses could have affected the Department's ability to utilise the UK's Reserve Forces effectively, and anomalies in procedures could have caused presentational difficulties. Several strategic issues concerning the capability of the Reserves identified in the planning process are being addressed by a group within the MOD (the Mobilisation Steering Group), and will be the subject of decisions by Ministers.

Use of asymmetric tactics by our adversaries

6.40. The likelihood of increased use of non-conventional military tactics (otherwise known as asymmetric tactics) by our future adversaries is covered in more detail in the context of NATO air operations in [chapter 7](#). We need to be alive to this in future joint operations, and prepare as fully as possible to deal with it.

Information Operations

6.41. Information operations comprise actions taken to influence decision makers, in support of political or military objectives, by affecting their information, communications and information systems, and command and control systems. Information operations is more an integrating strategy than a new capability, drawing together existing military capabilities, including command and control warfare, with emerging technologies. The concept of information operations is still in the early stages of development, and our ability to influence key decision-makers through carefully targeted information operations is still relatively limited. The full potential of information

operations was therefore not realised during the campaign. As a result of the lessons learned from the Kosovo operation, MOD has now developed a framework information operations policy, which will be further defined in the coming months, and has put in place new management structures for information operations which will oversee the development of new capabilities. This will require the commitment of additional resources. Joint doctrine is also being developed by the Joint Doctrine and Concepts Centre.

Information Superiority

6.42. An improved Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance capability is of great importance to all three Services. In the Kosovo operation, this came particularly to the fore in the air operation (and is addressed in more detail in [chapter 7](#)), but as we look to a joint all-weather precision attack capability and to better inform commanders at all levels, an improved capability would be of benefit across the board. In recognition of the importance of joint applications, and solutions, one of the four 2 Star Capability Managers in the newly-established Central Customer organisation has been given responsibility for Information Superiority. The Central Customer organisation has been specifically designed to construct the forward equipment programme by reference to capability needs rather than ultimate user Service; this should ensure that cross-cutting capabilities such as those associated with Information Superiority receive appropriate resource priority.

Command, Control, Communications and Computer (C4) Systems

6.43. The Capability Manager (Information Superiority) also has lead responsibility in the area of Command, Control, Communications and Computer (C4) systems. More details on a number of issues which arose in this area are given in chapters [7](#) and [8](#), relating to the effect which they had on air and ground operations. This is an area of crucial importance to future capability, not least given the progress in this field being made by the US in particular. Digitisation is a key challenge which we must meet. We are now making considerable use of e-mail and Video Conferencing facilities, making possible greater (and instant) contacts between individuals and headquarters, and an enormous amount of information is readily available at our fingertips. This is a great asset, but information management and the supporting communications are also key challenges. We need to ensure that the latest technology in this field is available to all those who require it, including the commanders on the ground.

Urgent Operational Requirements

6.44. There were a number of occasions during the campaign when new types or additional supplies of equipment were required. Our procedures provide for the rapid procurement of equipment during operations, through the Urgent Operational Requirement (or UOR) process. The UOR process assists us in using defence resources to best effect, without tying them up unnecessarily in stockpiling all the assets that could conceivably be needed for every kind of military contingency. Getting the balance right requires careful judgement by planners. Expenditure on UORs for Kosovo during financial year 1999/2000 has been some £136 million, with the largest item being the approximately £50 million spent on the linked Improved Tented Camps (ITC) and Temporary Field Accommodation (TFA) projects, providing accommodation for our forces in Kosovo. The equipment bought in this way was specifically required for the operation undertaken. Had the operation been different – for example an opposed ground entry

– equipment of other types is likely to have been required and procured.

Logistics

6.45. The new Defence Logistics Organisation was established on 1 April 2000, and comes into a solid inheritance. Certain logistics aspects are dealt with in more detail in chapters [7](#), [8](#) and [9](#), but overall the key issues are the ability to deploy effectively using strategic sealift and airlift, and to sustain our forces in theatre, including Expeditionary Campaign Infrastructure and stockpiles of ammunition and other supplies.

Strategic Lift

6.46. During the Kosovo operation, we made considerable use of commercial strategic lift assets, and our current vulnerability and requirement for a strengthened national defence capability in this area was confirmed. On this occasion, the fact that we deployed our land forces in significant numbers earlier than our Allies helped to avoid the worst of the difficulties that result from competition for commercial assets. But we cannot guarantee that we will have this time and flexibility of action next time. Specifically, had we needed to deploy sufficient resources for an opposed entry operation, we would have been likely to require significant strategic sealift and outsize strategic airlift assets. The United States may well have needed all its own assets for its own purposes, and commercial assets of this nature, particularly in airlift which are few in number and not always available, would have been in high demand. In certain cases such assets were registered in countries whose governments were unsympathetic to the NATO campaign, and this caused difficulties. As part of our planning for a possible opposed entry option, a movements plan was produced with details of how we could assemble the significant lift capabilities which would have been required. Given the fact that the UK was planning for such a contingency before others, we assessed this plan to be workable. However, in operations in future where we do not have similar time to prepare, a national strategic sealift and outsize strategic airlift capability will be essential.

6.47. The flexibility of our maritime strategic lift assets in moving significant quantities of heavy equipment, principally by the Royal Fleet Auxiliary, including the two Roll-on Roll-off (RO-RO) vessels which they operate on long term charter, confirmed the utility of such a capability. Use was also made of commercial sealift assets to transport assets to the region and to carry out other required tasks so as to release our own vessels for Kosovo-related tasks. The ratio of RO-ROs on ad hoc charter to MOD vessels was two to one.

6.48. Some use was made of airlift in order to deploy resources and personnel into theatre, but because we prepared and deployed well in advance, most heavy equipment was able to deploy by sea. The use of commercial airlift assets was constrained because it was unable to operate to all destinations, due to the risks involved and the difficulties in using aircraft from some countries opposed to the NATO operation. The cost of the air and sea strategic lift for the operation (which includes hire of assets to 'backfill' routine tasks elsewhere) was some £16 million.

6.49. The experience of the Kosovo operation has therefore vindicated the conclusions on strategic sealift and airlift in the SDR, designed to maintain our flexibility and speed of response in future operations, in particular for those involving Joint Rapid Reaction Forces (JRRF). Work is currently underway on the acquisition of 6 RO-ROs under the Private Finance Initiative. On 16

May 2000, the Government announced that the UK's future strategic airlift requirement would be met in the short to medium term by leasing four C17 Globemaster aircraft from the Boeing company, and in the longer term, from the latter part of this decade onwards, that our needs would be best met by the A400M aircraft from the Airbus Military Company. At this point, our commitment to A400M is conditional in that it is based on assumptions that are dependent both on our potential partners and on Airbus - on their commitments to sufficient numbers of aircraft at launch and the establishment of a viable programme. The UK will order 25 aircraft in the A400M initial launch.

Financial management and costs

6.50. The additional expenditure incurred by MOD due to operations in Kosovo is currently estimated to be £342 million for the financial year from 1 April 1999 to 31 March 2000, and together with expenditure in 1998-99 of almost £14 million, this provides a total of £356 million. This includes provision for the replenishment of some of the ammunition expended during the air campaign, but decisions have not yet been taken on the replenishment of the majority of ordnance used as future stockpile requirements are assessed.

6.51. The MOD attaches great importance to the financial control of its activities, including operations, and has made significant improvements in this area over recent years, responding positively to constructive criticism from the National Audit Office and others. Civil secretariat staff were deployed with UK forces to theatre, and entered Kosovo with KFOR on day one of the operation.

6.52. The Defence budget does not contain provision for major overseas operations. The MOD has accepted the costs of certain overseas operations where this can be achieved without detriment to other commitments; where it cannot, the Defence Secretary will submit a claim on the Reserve. It has been agreed by the Treasury that the net additional costs of major operations, such as Kosovo and Bosnia, should be a legitimate charge to the Reserve.

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Chapter 7

Air Operations - Conduct and Lessons

Key lessons

- The conduct of military, including air, operations must reflect political realities. Current doctrine should remain essentially unchanged, but its practical implication should always take account of these wider considerations.
- The effective performance of the Tomahawk Land Attack Missile in UK service was proved.
- There is a need for the UK and its Allies and partners to improve capabilities in the following areas:
- Precision joint all-weather attack capability against both static and mobile ground targets;
- Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR);
- improved secure communications/data links, and better "sensor to shooter" links;
- Electronic Warfare/Suppression of Enemy Air Defences;
- Air to Air Refuelling;
- Battle Damage Assessment.

Strategy and planning

7.1. NATO launched military operations only as a last resort when it was clear that the diplomatic track would not deliver a solution, whilst at the same time the humanitarian situation on the ground had deteriorated to such an extent that outside intervention became essential in order to avert a humanitarian catastrophe.

7.2. Targets for air strikes were selected by the NATO Military Authorities, acting in accordance with guidance agreed by the North Atlantic Council on broad sets of targets and the requirement to minimise collateral damage. The North Atlantic Council was not involved in the detailed

process of target selection. Individual Allies were responsible for the clearance of the targets assigned to them by NATO.

7.3. The Allies hoped that the air operation would be short, and that Milosevic would again, as he had in the past, back down when confronted with the threat or use of force. But they did not take this for granted, and when he did not, operations were intensified to increase the pressure on Milosevic, his regime and his forces in order to achieve NATO's objectives. It would have been possible at any time for Milosevic to bring the air operation to an end by withdrawing his forces from Kosovo. The initial phase of the air operation was designed to degrade the Yugoslav Integrated Air Defence System, the Yugoslav/Serbian Command and Control infrastructure, airfields and aircraft and deployed heavy weapons in Kosovo. The subsequent phase widened the operation to include targets of high military value across Yugoslavia.

7.4. There have been criticisms of the graduated approach adopted by NATO, because it did not conform to the classic doctrine of air power, which suggests early and heavy strikes against strategic targets. In the case of Kosovo, however, this overlooks three important factors. First, it was possible that Milosevic may have decided to concede after the initial strikes. An overly intensive and destructive start to the campaign might have precluded this possibility. Secondly, the launch of a major military campaign was in domestic, legal and political terms not an easy decision for a number of NATO Allies. Concern about public opinion was evident in some countries. A graduated approach to the start of the air operation made it possible to build support for the aims and objectives of NATO's strategy. We should not draw the lesson from this that established doctrine needs to be amended, as in many future cases it may remain appropriate, but judgement will always be required on its practical application, taking account of the political realities of the situation. Finally, the operation was designed in phases (as described above), and targets throughout Yugoslavia were attacked in significant numbers from the outset.

7.5. The air operation was pursued on two axes, against strategic targets of high military value, for example headquarters buildings in Belgrade, and tactical targets in and around Kosovo such as military vehicles and heavy weapons. Both axes were essential in pursuing NATO's military objective, to degrade the capabilities of Yugoslav/Serbian security forces and to limit their ability to continue their activities in Kosovo. We have been criticised for pursuing tactical as well as strategic targets, as this demanded the commitment of significant resources. Planning had always assumed that we would attack targets on both axes, but the level of attention we gave to fielded forces was increased in response to the shocking scale on which Milosevic's forces pursued their policy of ethnic cleansing.

7.6. Attacks against tactical targets in Kosovo proved to be a significant challenge to the Alliance, given the difficulties in locating and positively identifying targets. The Yugoslav/Serbian security forces concealed their assets to a considerable extent, and were adept at deception techniques, including the use of decoys. But we were successful in that our efforts in Kosovo forced the security forces to conceal their tanks and heavy weapons from NATO attack, and thus limited their ability to use these weapons against Kosovo Albanians. Through attacks, and the threat of attack, NATO aircraft influenced the situation on the ground.

7.7. The Kosovo campaign was notable for the wide use of asymmetric (that is to say non-conventional) tactics by the Yugoslav/Serbian forces. Examples included: the location of tanks and other military equipment in the middle of villages and in other locations where the Yugoslav/Serbian forces knew that our concern to minimise collateral damage would prevent us from

targeting them; at least one case of the use of human shields was documented by Human Rights Watch, and the OSCE suggest there may have been more; attacks against civilians; and extensive disinformation/propaganda. In future, if potential adversaries consider themselves unable to oppose us by conventional means, they may increasingly resort to other techniques such as those outlined above. We and our Allies will continue to prepare ourselves for this challenge.

Accuracy and the minimisation of collateral damage

7.8. Our experience in the Gulf War had demonstrated the need for precision attack capabilities, and the extent to which we have improved our capabilities in this field was proved in Operation DESERT FOX, the operation against Iraq in December 1998. Building on this success, Kosovo was one of the most accurate air operations ever mounted, and resulted in very few instances of collateral damage. (DESERT FOX was a much shorter operation, and used a far greater percentage of precision munitions than was the case in Kosovo.)

7.9. Collateral damage is the term used to describe the unintended loss of civilian life, or injury to civilians, or the damage to civilian property, which is caused by attacks on military objectives. Accuracy in attack, and taking of all feasible precautions with a view to avoiding, and in any event, minimising collateral damage, are important both politically and legally. We made the point repeatedly during the Kosovo campaign that our dispute was with the policies of Milosevic and his regime – we were not at war with the people of Yugoslavia. It is not possible to avoid some collateral damage in any significant armed conflict. This fact is recognised by international law, which outlaws attacks on military objectives which may be expected to cause collateral damage which would be excessive in relation to the concrete and direct military advantage anticipated. All pre-planned UK targets were assessed against the requirements of international law, and where UK pilots were authorised to attack opportunity targets, or needed to defend themselves, they did so with meticulous regard for the rules of engagement. The UK went to great lengths to minimise the risks of any civilian death, injury or damage. This was in marked contrast to the flagrant disregard for human life shown by the Yugoslav/Serbian forces, whose actions provided clear evidence of the need for NATO to have acted.

7.10. Although NATO has no independent means of verifying the number of civilian casualties, Human Rights Watch estimated in their report of February 2000 (available on the internet, address at Annex E) that there were only 90 incidents of collateral damage which involved fatalities. Moreover, about two thirds of the deaths they reported to be as a result of just 12 of these incidents. If this figure is correct, out of a total of some 10,500 strike sorties conducted by NATO forces, during the course of which some 23,600 pieces of ordnance were delivered, less than one percent of all missions led to unintended fatalities.

7.11. Human Rights Watch have estimated that between 488 and 527 Yugoslav civilians were killed as a result of NATO air strikes, far fewer than the (varying) estimates by the Yugoslav authorities, which range between 1200 and 5700.

7.12. The decision by NATO that operations should be flown at medium altitude (above 15,000 feet) was taken in recognition of the threat from Yugoslav air defences, which continued throughout the campaign. It has been alleged that this increased the risk to innocent civilians, but munitions were delivered from this altitude with great accuracy. If ever our pilots were in any doubt about the targets they had been tasked to attack, they did not drop their munitions. The

15,000 feet minimum operating altitude was introduced to ensure that NATO aircraft operated at an acceptable level of risk but, as the operation progressed, some NATO aircraft operated at lower altitudes when necessary to acquire and identify targets.

7.13. While we took every care to minimise the risk to our pilots, there was no requirement for "zero casualties", as has been alleged. Our decisions on tactics were based on a balance of risk against potential gains – we rightly took sensible precautions, and our tactics were successful. Our pilots faced a continual threat from ground-to-air missiles and Anti-Aircraft Artillery, including at medium altitude, and there was always a risk, despite the counter-measures deployed. It is a testimony to the exceptional skill of our aircrew, who were forced to manoeuvre aggressively and deploy counter-measures to defeat the threat from these weapons, that no UK aircraft were shot down. Only two Allied aircraft were lost over Yugoslavia (neither UK aircraft), and in both cases the aircrew were recovered safely. (See also paragraph 7.35 below on Combat Search and Rescue capability.)

7.14. Despite the emphasis on medium level operations during the Kosovo campaign, RAF aircraft were ready to fly at low level if required, and planned to do so in support of any opposed ground operation. Maintaining the skills required for flying at low altitude therefore remains important.

How much damage was done?

7.15. The short answer is enough. As discussed earlier in the paper, the success of the air operations, although essential, is unlikely to have been the sole reason why Milosevic eventually agreed to the international community's demands, but it is certain to have had a substantial effect.

7.16. NATO attacked a total of 440 static targets during the air campaign, with more than three-quarters assessed to have suffered moderate to severe damage. NATO figures suggest that the targets destroyed or significantly damaged included:

- 14 command posts
- 10 military airfields
- over 100 military aircraft
- 34 road bridges
- 11 railway bridges
- 29% of all Yugoslav/Serbian ammunition storage capacity
- 57% of petroleum reserve capacity
- all Yugoslav oil refineries.

7.17. General Clark (the Supreme Allied Commander Europe or SACEUR) made public NATO's

Battle Damage Assessment of attacks against mobile targets on 16 September 1999. The text, which includes a detailed explanation of the Battle Damage Assessment validation process, is available via the NATO internet site (address available in annex E to this report). In short, he reported validated strikes on 93 tanks, 153 armoured personnel carriers, 389 artillery pieces and mortars and 339 military vehicles. It is not always possible to ascertain whether a target has been totally destroyed or what degree of damage it has sustained.

7.18. The UK and NATO have been accused of deliberately inflating the success of the campaign in public statements during the conflict. This is untrue. Public statements were always based on the best available information at the time. It would have taken some considerable time to ensure that all our assessments were 100% accurate. We judged it important to release as much information as possible as soon as we could.

7.19. The information which is often released in public shortly after an attack is based on initial reports, and its accuracy therefore cannot be guaranteed. Although these predictions are sometimes referred to as "Battle Damage Assessment", it is quite different from Military Battle Damage Assessment, which is a three phased assessment, and which usually takes some time to complete. Military Battle Damage Assessment examines:

- (a) the effectiveness of an individual attack against a single target;
- (b) the effectiveness of attacks in meeting the targeting objectives, based on a number of attacks against a target system; and
- (c) the effectiveness of the overall campaign to date measured against the commander's strategic objectives.

7.20. Various systems were employed to assess battlefield damage, all complementary to each other rather than being mutually exclusive. Reconnaissance aircraft, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, satellite imagery and other intelligence gathering systems all provided data that could be used to assess the amount of damage caused by the NATO bombing campaign.

7.21. In the light of our experience during the air campaign, the UK national Battle Damage Assessment/targeting process has been fully reviewed and a series of recommendations for follow-up action highlighted. These include:

- the need to ensure the most appropriate mix of Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance assets is available to provide Battle Damage Assessment;
- sufficient background information should be compiled to enable the accurate assessment of the impact of operations and of an adversary's remaining capability;
- and the limitations of the human eye and weapons systems video should be recognised and, where possible, supporting intelligence material obtained.

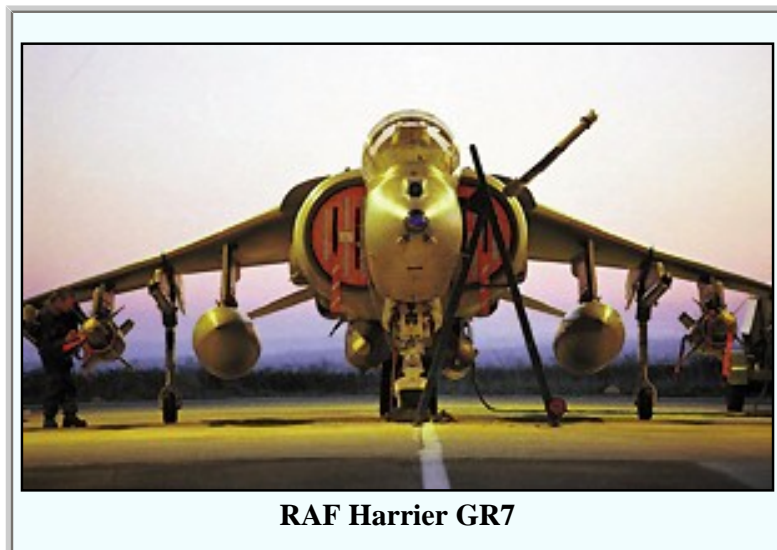
7.22. The recommendations of this review of the Battle Damage Assessment process will be included in future standing operating procedures.

Command arrangements

7.23. The overall NATO commander of the air operation was General Clark (SACEUR). Admiral Ellis, the Commander in Chief of Allied Forces South (CINCSOUTH) was the Operational Commander under General Clark, and had Operational Control (OPCON) of all assigned air forces. Tactical Control (TACON) was delegated by SACEUR through CINCSOUTH to Commander AIRSOUTH (Lieutenant General Short), the Combined Force Air Component Commander (CFACC), who operated from the Combined Air Operations Centre (CAOC) in Vicenza, Italy.

7.24. National Command of all UK forces in Italy involved in Operation ALLIED FORCE was delegated from MOD through the Chief of Joint Operations at Northwood to the Commander British Forces Italy (Air) (CBFI(Air)). HMS SPLENDID remained under national command throughout the operation, under the Operational Command of the Commander in Chief Fleet at Northwood.

The UK's contribution to the air operation



7.25. The contribution made by UK armed forces to the air operation is detailed in Annexes B, C and D.

7.26. Both Royal Navy and Royal Air Force assets were directly involved in air strikes, with Army assets such as the Phoenix Unmanned Aerial Vehicle operating in support. Operation ALLIED FORCE saw the first operational use of UK Tomahawk Land Attack Missiles (TLAM), a highly effective and highly accurate capability which was fully integrated into the wider operation. UK TLAM made a significant contribution throughout the operation, but especially in the early stages. The UK TLAM operational capability was developed and available particularly quickly, not long after trials were completed. UK TLAM operations were conducted in close co-ordination with US cruise missile operations. The significant utility of this capability has been proven, and is soon to be complemented by a RAF air-launched capability, Storm Shadow, a Conventionally Armed Stand Off Missile (CASOM). The Royal Navy has modified its TLAM operating procedures in the light of experience gained during the operation.

7.27. The UK's initial commitment of aircraft for strike operations was eight RAF Harrier GR7s of

No 1 Squadron from RAF Wittering deployed to Gioia del Colle. These were supplemented by a number of aircraft in vital support roles, including two TriStar tankers at Ancona, three E-3D Airborne Early Warning (AEW) aircraft from Nos 8 and 23 Squadrons and a Nimrod from No 51 Squadron. All of these aircraft were based in Italy during the operation.

7.28. An additional four GR7s moved to Gioia del Colle on 28 March. When NATO requested more strike aircraft, eight Tornado GR1s flew air operations from their base at RAF Bruggen, Germany, supported by three VC10s from the same location. These long range missions initially required significant amounts of in-flight refuelling and long hours in the cockpit for the crews. In late April, the UK responded to a NATO request for more aircraft and a further four Harrier GR7s together with an additional TriStar tanker aircraft were sent to the region. When NATO again requested an increase in the number of strike missions, the decision was taken to deploy forward a force of twelve Tornado GR1s to the Solenzara Air Base in Corsica. With the assistance of the French Government and in close co-operation with the French Air Force, the Tornados operated from Corsica from 1 June. The move also allowed a rationalisation of Air to Air Refuelling assets committed to the campaign, and the VC-10 tanker fleet was re-deployed to Italy to support the overall NATO refuelling effort, rather than just the Tornado missions.

7.29. The E-3D aircraft, although originally designed as AEW aircraft, were employed in the Airborne Warning and Control (AWACS) role as part of a complex command and control operation guiding hundreds of Alliance aircraft in what had become the busiest airspace in the world. This stretched the aircraft's resources, and the long term sustainability of using the aircraft in this role is being addressed.

7.30. There was a very real threat to unarmed NATO aircraft such as tankers and E-3Ds, and two Serbian Mig 29s were in fact shot down over Bosnia by NATO fighters. In recognition of the dangers which these personnel faced, several tanker and E-3D pilots and mission crew were decorated, including the first Distinguished Flying Cross ever to be awarded to a tanker pilot.

7.31. Largely unnoticed by the media, but vital nonetheless, was the role of the Air Transport Force, whose Hercules C-130, VC10 and TriStar transport aircraft flew over 500 sorties into the Balkans theatre during the period of the conflict. These missions supported the UK's humanitarian relief effort, the air operation and the build up and sustainment of ground forces. These efforts were supplemented by use of chartered civilian aircraft, including heavy lift aircraft which could carry loads too big for the RAF's aircraft. By early June, the total number of Support Helicopters in theatre numbered eight Chinooks and six Pumas, the largest Support Helicopter deployment since the Gulf operation.



A Chinook takes off from a bridge as British troops move into Kosovo

7.32. By far the single largest contribution of aircraft to the operation came from the US, but other members of the Alliance provided a similar proportion of their available aircraft. By the end of the operation over nine hundred aircraft from fourteen countries had taken part in the operation.

Weather

7.33. One of the major obstacles in pursuing the campaign was the weather. Only on 21 out of the 78 days of the campaign was the weather judged to be "favourable" for air operations. We had known that the weather at this time of the year would be bad, but the timing of the campaign was not in our hands – it was Milosevic's actions which determined when we had to act. Inevitably, the weather had an effect on the tempo of the air campaign, but NATO commanders were able to continue operations at a lower intensity through the use of various assets including UK and US TLAM, other US cruise missiles, and the US Global Positioning System (GPS)-guided Joint Direct Attack Munition (JDAM). Following trials in the UK, which had confirmed the accuracy of such methods, UK pilots were cleared to use non-guided ("dumb") bombs through cloud against targets where the expected collateral damage (if any) was not excessive in relation to the direct and concrete military advantage anticipated, verifying their exact position by use of GPS equipment.

Weapons stockpiles

7.34. Sufficient numbers of weapons were available throughout the operation, with contingency plans in place to ensure that additional weapons would be available if needed, although these were not in the event required. Precision Guided Munitions were in particularly high demand during this operation, and this put our stockpile of this weapon under some pressure. Nevertheless, the majority of our stockpile of each of the weapon types used remained available at the end of the conflict, which would have enabled us to continue air operations for some time thereafter. Current stockpile guidance is being reviewed in the light of experience of the air operation and the planning for a ground operation, to ensure that we have the right quantity and balance of weaponry in stock.

Combat Search And Rescue

7.35. We relied on our Allies, particularly the US, for Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR) capability. The effect on the morale of Allied aircrew of the successful operations to rescue the US aircrew on two occasions was very considerable, and showed the professional competence of the Allies, while denying Milosevic propaganda opportunities. We are looking at the requirement for a UK or European capability.

Equipment

7.36. Our experiences of the campaign have highlighted areas of capability where we and our Allies and Partners can do better in the future. In taking forward action on these capability gaps, it is not necessary for the UK to look for enhancements in all these areas. We will act together with our Allies and partners through the Defence Capabilities Initiative and the European Defence Initiative, as well as nationally through the usual defence programme procedures.

Precision Attack

7.37. Precision Guided Munitions including the Royal Navy's TLAM, the Royal Air Force's Laser Guided Bombs (Paveway II and Paveway III) achieved good results. We had built up our precision attack capability as a consequence of lessons from the Gulf War, and this paid dividends, with our laser-guided systems performing well, and in accordance with expectations. Nevertheless, the limitations of our current laser guided systems in poor weather were highlighted, as cloud cover often prevented laser designation of targets, accurate delivery of ordnance became impossible, and was therefore not attempted.

7.38. The RAF already has a well-practised low-level all-weather attack capability against static targets, but not with precision. Given the strong possibility that future operations could again be from medium altitude, we are considering how best to be prepared for such an eventuality. The United States was very pleased with the performance of its GPS-guided JDAM, which was used accurately and effectively in all weathers. We are looking at the feasibility of developing a similar system for use by UK aircraft that may provide us with an effective means of engaging targets in all weathers. Decisions will be made in due course.

7.39. Despite the considerable utility of Precision Guided Munitions, there remains an effective role to be played by non-guided munitions. Particularly if the location of the aircraft can be verified by use of GPS systems, a non-guided bomb can be dropped with considerable accuracy. Targets for such bombs should obviously be considered carefully, but where the target is large (eg a munitions storage site) and there is a limited risk of collateral damage, it remains an alternative option. Ultimately, in this and other examples, weapon selection is always tailored to the selected target.

Attacks against mobile ground targets

7.40. As described above, NATO encountered significant difficulty in locating and positively identifying mobile ground targets. Given the long period over which the crisis had been developing, the Yugoslav/Serbian security forces had had time to disperse their personnel, equipment and logistics resources. Their war-fighting doctrine places great emphasis on dispersal, the use of camouflage, dummy targets, concealment and bunkers and they applied this doctrine competently. We knew that they would use these tactics, which are difficult to

counter. We can expect future opponents to use these tactics also, and we will look at what we can to improve current detection methods.

7.41. In order to engage such targets more effectively, we and our Allies and partners need to look to acquire/develop:

- an improved Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance capability, to enable us to detect the right targets, in all weathers, and to distribute the intelligence to those who need it in timely fashion. Our planned all-weather Airborne Stand Off Radar (ASTOR) aircraft will greatly enhance our battlefield surveillance capability, alongside existing Allied capabilities such as the US JSTARS and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, including the UK Army's PHOENIX and planned successor systems such as SENDER and SPECTATOR. As technology advances, it should also become easier to detect where assets have been concealed;
- improved real-time "sensor-to-shooter" communications/data links (to enable faster communication between intelligence gathering assets and the means of attacking the target eg a pilot in an aircraft on patrol);
- in certain cases, additional types of weaponry to maximise the chance of success against a given target. We believe it remains appropriate to retain a range of capabilities, to tailor the response to the target. We were impressed by the performance of the Maverick anti-armour missile during the operation, and the Defence Secretary announced in March 2000 trials of this system on UK aircraft. Possession of such a missile during the Kosovo air operation would have enabled us to target tanks, other armoured vehicles and similar targets (eg air defence assets) more effectively, and with a low risk of collateral damage as the missile is locked onto the selected target before launch. Maverick would be complementary to the planned Brimstone missile, as the latter would be excellent for attacks on groups or columns of vehicles in war scenarios like the Gulf in 1991, as it is designed to seek out and destroy armoured targets autonomously.

Secure communications

7.42. The lack of a compatible secure air-to-air communications system with all Allies during the air operation caused problems, as we were unable to exchange freely some operationally sensitive information. Along with most Allies we used frequency-hopping technology and transmission security measures, which provided some degree of protection. Increasing advances in the technology available to countries such as Yugoslavia will make these procedures and systems more vulnerable and there is a need to enhance the security of communications in a combined and joint framework. Some NATO and US aircraft therefore are now making use of encrypted communications equipment. We have recognised this as a key lesson, and priority action on this issue was announced by the Defence Secretary in March 2000. We are now trialling enhanced secure air-to-air communications on a number of RAF aircraft, and if this proves successful, we will consider widening its fit.

Electronic Warfare and Suppression of Enemy Air Defence

7.43. Electronic Warfare (EW) and Suppression of Enemy Air Defence (SEAD) capabilities were

vital force enablers during the air campaign. The first stage of the air operation was aimed at (and succeeded in) degrading the Yugoslav Integrated Air Defence System, but as a threat remained, force packages were escorted by EW and SEAD-capable aircraft to counter these threats as they arose. The bulk of this effort was provided by the United States, although other Allies, including the UK to a very limited extent (see below), played a role. We are looking at SEAD capability, and at whether a significantly increased capability could be achieved by improved Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance and better sensor-to-shooter links (as described in the section on attacks against mobile ground targets) rather than by buying more SEAD-capable aircraft to ensure that all sorties are escorted.

7.44. We are also looking at fitting improved missile approach warning systems to our aircraft, as well as improving countermeasures.

Air to Air Refuelling

7.45. Air-to-Air Refuelling (AAR) aircraft performed a vital role as force multipliers, but these assets were in short supply during the air campaign. Although some other European nations have limited numbers of AAR aircraft, the UK has by far the largest and best probe-and-drogue AAR capability. The RAF AAR aircraft committed to the operation spent much more time refuelling aircraft of other Allies, including US fighters, than our own aircraft. By the end of the operation 85% of their fuel had been spent refuelling aircraft from other countries. It is clear that more resources need to be invested in this area, but given our existing capability, and our plans to renew it through a major public private partnership, this is more of a priority for our European Allies and partners than ourselves.

Cluster Bombs

7.46. The use of cluster bombs by UK armed forces during the Kosovo conflict has attracted adverse media comment. UK armed forces will always use the weapons systems judged most effective against a given target, taking into account the need to minimise collateral damage. The bomblets are designed to detonate on impact but, as with any other similar munitions, a small percentage failed to do so. The manufacturer's estimated failure rate for the RBL 755 cluster bomb used during the Kosovo conflict is approximately 5%. Contrary to a number of stories in the media, cluster bombs should not be confused with anti-personnel type weapons that are specifically designed to lie dormant and detonate once disturbed. Cluster bombs are an effective weapon against area targets such as a group of soft-skinned military vehicles. Nevertheless, we have learned from the Kosovo campaign that it would be useful to have a capability to strike single vehicles more accurately, hence the trial of the Maverick missile.

7.47. We have been criticised for continuing to use cluster bombs after the US had ceased to use them for safety reasons. The type of cluster bomb used by the US was discovered to have a fault and was temporarily withdrawn from service, being returned to service shortly thereafter for use until the end of the conflict. The UK uses a different type, which continued to function normally, and there was thus no reason for it to be withdrawn.

Depleted Uranium

7.48. Depleted Uranium armour-piercing ammunition was used by NATO aircraft during the

Kosovo conflict, although not by the UK. Depleted Uranium based ammunition is used because of its unique capability as a kinetic penetrator against the most modern types of Main Battle Tank armour. At present, no satisfactory alternative material currently exists to achieve the levels of penetration necessary to defeat modern tanks. Depleted Uranium has a level of chemical toxicity that is similar to other heavy metals such as lead, and the health risks from exposure to it are assessed as low. Its use is not prohibited under any international agreements, and the International Committee on Radiation Protection does not list Depleted Uranium as a health hazard. As it is uniquely effective against certain targets, the use of Depleted Uranium ammunition by UK forces is retained as an option. Denying ourselves the most appropriate weapons would not help end conflicts quickly and could put our armed forces at greater risk of harm.

7.49. Public concerns about the use of Depleted Uranium are fully recognised, and the MOD is willing to consider carefully any peer-reviewed studies based on appropriately validated data on the environmental and health aspects of Depleted Uranium, and to examine the use of alternative materials in armour piercing munitions.

What is the cost of the improvements announced so far?

7.50. The cost of the improvements announced so far amounts to some £8 million for the trials of Maverick missiles and secure air-to-air communications systems. If these trials are successful and the MOD decides to procure these systems the total cost of these projects would be some £80 million to £90 million.

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Chapter 8

Ground Operations - Conduct and Lessons

Key lessons

- The decisions made in the Strategic Defence Review were vindicated, and enabled the UK to play a leading role in KFOR
- There is a need for the UK and its Allies and partners to improve capabilities in the following areas:
 - Readiness, deployability and sustainment
 - Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance
 - Close combat/force protection capability
 - Satellite and tactical communications

Strategy and planning

8.1. NATO began planning for ground operations in the summer of 1998, following a tasking from NATO Defence Ministers on 12 June. NATO planning covered a wide range of potential options designed to assist international efforts. These ranged from a ground presence in Albania to help halt arms smuggling through the deployment of a ground force in Kosovo to enforce a ceasefire or peace settlement (this was the option which was later developed into the Kosovo Force or KFOR) to an opposed entry into Kosovo and/or the rest of Serbia. All these options were on the table in 1998, and were examined by the NATO Military Authorities in consultation with Allies, who commented on the plans and developed their own supporting assessments and plans in the normal way.

8.2. Planning a military operation in detail is a significant time and personnel-intensive undertaking, and NATO and national planning priorities had therefore to be established. The Allies agreed that the first priority should be planning for an air operation and a subsequent peacekeeping operation to be inserted once a peace agreement or ceasefire had been reached. These were assessed (correctly) to be the most likely options for military action. There was no consensus in the Alliance at this stage for detailed operational plans for an opposed ground entry option to be developed, but the NATO Military Authorities were tasked to keep the existing initial planning under review. Similarly, military planners in the UK focused their efforts on the agreed priorities, and our planners were active in developing national plans for the deployment and operation of UK forces in support of both air and ground options.

8.3. As the diplomatic situation changed, further plans were developed. Milosevic's agreement to the NATO and OSCE Verification Mission proposed by US Envoy Richard Holbrooke in October 1998 required rapid preparations for the deployment of unarmed verifiers. The UK realised that

the only way of getting large numbers of verifiers in quickly, and thus to stabilise the situation in the initial stages of the mission, was to deploy Service personnel in addition to civilian volunteers. This was an unusual step to take, but our personnel proved well up to the challenge, and members of all three Services served with distinction in this difficult mission. By 10 December, 90 UK Service men and women had deployed, and by the time the Kosovo Verification Mission (KVM) was withdrawn in March 1999, there were 138. The UK also provided support in the form of armoured Landrovers.

8.4. The UK's preference at that time was well known to be an armed NATO peacekeeping force, as the only means guaranteed to stabilise the situation and to give Kosovo Albanians the confidence they needed to return to their homes (a judgement which was vindicated by events). However, it was clear that this option was not acceptable at that time, and we were therefore determined to give the verification alternative a chance. It proved not to be a long-term solution, but provided an important breathing space, and averted a humanitarian catastrophe that winter.

8.5. In December 1998, NATO agreed the deployment of a 1800 strong NATO-led force to Macedonia, designed to ensure the safety of the members of the KVM. UK planners were closely involved in the development of this Extraction Force. We were keen to deploy such a force not just as a signal of our determination to protect our nationals involved in the KVM, but also as the first NATO ground presence in the theatre. We continued planning in parallel for a peacekeeping force taking account of these developments, and the majority of the Extraction Force was later incorporated into KFOR, when their original mission was completed. This included the UK contribution, a company from 1st Battalion Kings Own Royal Border Regiment, equipped with Warrior armoured infantry fighting vehicles, some 380 UK personnel in all. Our contribution to the Extraction Force was the first time UK forces had deployed to a multinational operation at below battalion strength, and showed that this could be done successfully under special circumstances.

8.6. While the NATO and OSCE verification missions continued their work, and in parallel with the ongoing diplomatic negotiations at Rambouillet and in Paris, preparations for a peacekeeping force continued. NATO had completed its basic planning for such a force in the autumn of 1998, although it was recognised that the plans could only be finalised once the terms of any peace agreement or ceasefire were known. The UK judged it essential that NATO forces should be ready in significant numbers to move into Kosovo as soon as any agreement had been reached, and therefore led the way in the advance deployment of forces into Macedonia.

8.7. The UK's preparations for a peacekeeping force in Kosovo were not part of an invasion force, but a sign of our determination to be in a position to ensure the safety of all citizens of Kosovo as soon as an agreement had been reached. On 11 February 1999, the UK announced the deployment to the region of the first elements of the UK contribution to a NATO peace implementation force, which became the Kosovo force or KFOR. By 10 March 1999, some 4500 UK personnel had deployed, or were preparing to deploy, to Greece and Macedonia. These included personnel under Lieutenant General Sir Mike Jackson, from the Headquarters of the Allied Command Europe Rapid Reaction Corps (HQ ARRC) the headquarters nominated to launch the peace implementation operation in Kosovo, and for which the UK is the Framework Nation. By this stage, a number of our Allies were deploying ground forces to the region, or had declared their intention to do so.

8.8. Our hopes for an early peace agreement were dashed by Milosevic's intransigence, and NATO air operations became necessary. NATO forces remained ready to deploy quickly into

Kosovo in a potential peacekeeping operation. These forces could have been incorporated into a force put together to fight its way into Kosovo, but the force would have required significant restructuring and reinforcement before this became possible.

8.9. However, as Milosevic's campaign of repression and ethnic cleansing intensified, our ground forces became the front line providers of urgently needed humanitarian aid, working in support of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the host governments. KFOR's mission was adjusted to make support to the humanitarian crisis its top priority, while at the same time the force remained vigilant and prepared for any attack from Kosovo or the rest of Serbia. NATO also established a force in Albania (Albania Force or AFOR) to assist in the humanitarian relief effort in that country, and a sizeable number of NATO personnel deployed in Macedonia spent some time in Albania helping to construct refugee camps and providing other support.

8.10. We wanted to keep all military options open in order to maintain our flexibility of response and to keep Milosevic guessing as to our intentions. Nevertheless, we recognised the importance of maintaining Allied solidarity, and this consideration informed the conduct of the campaign. We therefore preferred to pursue the air campaign as the best means to achieve our objectives. While we did not rule out a ground campaign definitively, the Prime Minister and others put the emphasis at the beginning of the campaign on the fact that such an option would be difficult, the forces required would take time to put together, and that it was therefore not our intention or plan to pursue the option at that stage.

8.11. Nevertheless, we were pleased that Javier Solana, the NATO Secretary General, was able to make clear at the time of the NATO Summit in late April that NATO was keeping planning for opposed ground options under review. Nationally, we planned in detail for such an operation, and kept in close contact with SACEUR and other Allies. We believed it was essential for NATO to achieve its objectives before the onset of winter, and thus planning assumed any ground campaign would need to begin in the late summer. The size of any UK contribution to such a force (which NATO estimated could have required some 150,000 - 175,000 personnel) would have depended on what others were willing to provide, but we were prepared to provide up to 54,000 personnel from the Army, including some 12,000-14,000 from the Reserves.

8.12. Increasing discussion, including publicly, about an opposed entry operation is likely to have had a significant effect on Milosevic. The UK had made clear its readiness to conduct such an operation on a number of occasions. President Clinton and Defense Secretary Cohen also made clear at the beginning of June that the United States had not ruled out options beyond bombing in order to bring about a resolution. In future conflicts, and in the lead up to them, while we should always be aware of the political realities (and we would have been wrong to have put NATO cohesion at risk), we should try as hard as possible to keep all options open, and to convince our partners that this is important.

8.13. Following the negotiation of the Military Technical Agreement with the Yugoslav/Serbian security forces in early June, the deployment of KFOR into Kosovo went according to plan, with the force deploying as quickly as possible in order not to allow a vacuum to develop on the ground. The force which entered Kosovo on 12 June included some 8,000 UK soldiers out of a total of about 20,000, and some 2,500 more UK personnel joined them in the province within a few days. The spearhead of the UK's ground forces (5th Airborne Brigade), consisting of 1400 personnel, was inserted into Kosovo from the concentration area at Brazde, along the Kacanik Defile, by 8 Chinook and 6 Puma helicopters of the Support Helicopter Force in less than 3

hours. Our pre-deployment of forces had helped us to be prepared to get in quickly at the outset when it mattered, and we were pleased with our ability to rapidly deploy additional forces who were quickly ready for action. Increasing the readiness and deployability of ground forces was made a priority in the Strategic Defence Review, and proved its worth here.



Command arrangements

8.14. The UK delegated Operational Control of our land forces to Commander KFOR through General Clark (SACEUR), although national logistics elements remained under UK command. There were also exceptions for some elements of the UK force, including Satellite Communications and Electronic Warfare contingents, which remained under national Operational Command, although in some cases Tactical Control was released to COMKFOR. Once KFOR had deployed, Commander British Forces (COMBRITFOR) in Kosovo was delegated Operational Control of all UK land forces in theatre, including logistic elements but excluding the capabilities mentioned above.

The UK's contribution to the ground operations

8.15. The contribution made by UK armed forces to the NATO Extraction Force, KFOR and AFOR are detailed in [Annex C](#).

The Reserves

8.16. The Reserves make a vital contribution to the Regular Army, as evidenced by the fact that some 800 are currently deployed on operations in the Balkans, including some 340 in Kosovo. Had we proceeded with an opposed entry operation, we would have needed some 12,000 to 14,000 regular reservists and members of the Territorial Army in theatre. (We would have needed to call out more to allow for the percentage of reservists likely to be unavailable for deployment.) Our experience in the Kosovo campaign has underlined the importance of the Reserve Forces, and supported our decisions to enhance their flexibility and responsiveness.

Medical support

8.17. Medical support for KFOR is provided by regular personnel with reservists filling posts on a voluntary basis. UK units deployed with their own integral primary medical care support plus a field hospital facility. This facility has a telemedicine link with the UK for specialist advice. Transport of casualties to the field hospital facility is supplemented by an aeromedical evacuation capability in theatre and back to the UK. We are currently exploring the possibility of developing a multinational hospital facility with allies in Kosovo, on the lines of that provided in Bosnia, in order to share the task of providing hospital care to KFOR forces.

8.18. Planning for medical support to an opposed entry operation assumed a large proportion of the required manpower would be made up from formed TA medical units, with the three regular field hospitals being reinforced by individual reservists and Territorial Army specialist personnel.

Equipment

8.19. There have been many stories in the media since the campaign alleging equipment shortcomings. Very few revealed lessons learned during the Kosovo campaign itself, and in many cases action was already in hand to address these problems. To deal with the main areas:

Sustainability

8.20. The key issues related to sustainability were overstretch (addressed in [chapter 6](#)), Strategic Lift (see also [chapter 6](#)), Expeditionary Campaign Infrastructure, maintaining communications and the logistics chain. As noted above, there is a review underway of stockpile guidance, and this will take into account issues raised during the planning for an opposed ground entry operation.

Expeditionary Campaign Infrastructure

8.21. Following lessons from Bosnia and elsewhere, plans had been put in hand to develop a robust Expeditionary Campaign Infrastructure (ECI) capability to provide a good standard of accommodation and associated utilities for UK forces from all three Services deployed on operations. This plan provided for accommodation in three stages:

- On initial deployment, troops would use conventional tents which can be erected quickly to provide protection from the elements;
- For deployments of between 60 days and 6 months, tents would be enhanced by the addition of utilities such as showers and lavatories, heating and lighting, to enhance living standards; and
- For deployments lasting over 6 months, a full ECI capability would be deployed which would use the same utilities package as shorter deployments but would replace tents with easy-to-erect hard walled accommodation.

8.22. At the time of the Kosovo operation, these plans were still at the concept stage, but were quickly brought forward through the Urgent Operational Requirement process. Improved Tented Camps, based on the first two stages of the ECI concept, were deployed into theatre as quickly as we could manage it: within eight weeks of deployment into Kosovo (by mid-August), we had

provided well-insulated, well-heated tents for 6,000 troops, which were very well received by our forces. Delivery of the utilities package started shortly thereafter. Improved Tented Camps served us well until the deployment of Temporary Field Accommodation, although clearly we would have wished this to have happened sooner.

8.23. The Temporary Field Accommodation project has suffered disappointing delays, partly because of the need to change camp specifications to reflect operational conditions actually encountered in Kosovo and partly because of difficulties encountered by the contractor. When completed, however, Temporary Field Accommodation provides stand alone accommodation of a high standard, capable of withstanding extremes of summer and winter weather. It provides each soldier with his own bunk, together with shower, lavatory, laundry, kitchen, dining, power generation, heating/cooling and water and effluent treatment facilities.



8.24 . We have learned from our experiences in the Kosovo operation and it is planned that the Expeditionary Campaign Infrastructure requirement will progress into a programme that will support future operations. The Improved Tented Camp equipment procured for the Kosovo operation will, once returned from Kosovo, form the basis of a reserve for future operations.

Communications

(a) Satellite Communications

8.25. There was a large requirement for Military, deployable satellite communications equipment, particularly as the UK as HQ ARRC Framework Nation supplied the headquarters' communications. This was successfully met, although difficulties were encountered supplying man-portable satellite equipment for use by senior HQ ARRC commanders. This was overcome through NATO assistance. We are looking at future provision in this area.

(b) Tactical ground communications

8.26. The Army deployed to the region with the CLANSMAN insecure radio system. We have long been aware of the reliability and operational security shortcomings of CLANSMAN, which

has been in service since the 1970s. The BOWMAN tactical combat radio system is being procured to replace CLANSMAN, although this project has experienced some difficulties. BOWMAN has now been placed on a Smart Procurement footing to produce an affordable solution that will provide effective capability. Also as part of the Smart Procurement Initiative, we have separated from the BOWMAN project the requirement for a new short range personal role radio and we now plan to deliver these from the end of 2001.

8.27. In October 1999, we started to install a commercial protected communications system in Pristina, which overcame many of the reliability and security shortcomings of the CLANSMAN system. It was announced in February 2000 that a contract had been let to provide wide area communications in the UK sector in Kosovo, as well as in the UK sector in Bosnia, providing modern and reliable communications. As well as improving communications capabilities, this measure will enable some 150 communications personnel to return home. Taking into account pre-tour training and leave, 260 fewer communications personnel overall will need to be committed to UK operations in the Balkans, thus reducing overstretch in this heavily pressed sector.

Maintaining the logistics chain

8.28. The logistics chain to UK land forces in Macedonia and Kosovo ran through Thessaloniki in Greece. Despite some difficulties due to local ill feeling towards the air campaign among the Greek and Macedonian public, we received good co-operation from the Greek and Macedonian authorities. Equipment was moved to Macedonia and then Kosovo by road and rail, the Army's rail squadron later coming into its own in helping to re-open the Kosovo rail network. This represented the first deployment of UK's operational rail capability since 1947 and it contributed greatly to the successful deployment of forces. Another key Army capability which performed well were the Port and Maritime units which supervised the disembarkation of UK equipment in Greece and its onward movement. Civilian road haulage contractors were also engaged to move equipment and supplies during the campaign at a cost of about £4 million.



**British armour being unloaded from
RFA *Sea Centurion***

8.29. The operation emphasised the continued importance of Marchwood Military Port and South Cerney Air Mounting Centre. Use of Marchwood enabled the pre-positioning of equipment and

sustainment stocks in secure conditions prior to deployment, and enabled vessels and loads to be prepared in step with the political decision-making process. South Cerney was the staging centre for UK forces deploying as part of the OSCE verification mission and for part of KFOR, and provides accommodation and briefing facilities for forces ready to be deployed by air from nearby air bases at Lyneham or Brize Norton.

8.30. Improving the tracking of our assets has been a high priority for the MOD, in the light of critical but constructive comments in the past from the National Audit Office. We believe that we are now doing much better in this area, enabling efficient supply of required assets to theatre, and tracking assets deployed elsewhere so that they can be re-deployed if needed more urgently elsewhere. This is an issue of relevance to, and achievement in, all three Services.

Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance

8.31. The need for an improved Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance capability has already been mentioned in the context of air operations, but there is a clear requirement also for ground operations. Using the same collection methods, commanders on the ground should be supplied with information and intelligence as quickly as possible, ideally using the latest digital technology, as used by the US. We are looking at options to deliver such a capability as part of both the land digitisation and joint Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance programmes.

8.32. We are also looking at much wider provision of night vision technology, for both general surveillance purposes and situational awareness and for weapon sights.

Close combat/force protection capability

8.33. The Kosovo campaign has highlighted the requirement for greater attention to force protection and close combat capability. Had we been required to mount an opposed entry operation, there would have been an emphasis on infantry operations, given the difficult terrain. This sort of operation would have been ideally suited to the light and mobile forces which form part of the Joint Rapid Reaction Forces we are now developing following the Strategic Defence Review.

8.34. For future operations with similar requirements in mind, we have procured additional body armour and are looking at the requirement for additional mine protection for our vehicles.

8.35 . A number of known difficulties with the machine gun version of the SA-80, the Light Support Weapon, were reconfirmed during the Kosovo crisis. Although no major problems were reported with the SA-80 rifle itself during the crisis, we were already aware of problems with the weapon, particularly in extremes of climate. We already had action in hand to address this. In 1995 we commissioned trials to assess the reliability of the SA-80 weapon system. The trials identified a number of design problems that affected the both the rifle and the Light Support Weapon's performance.

8.36. The SA-80 remains overall an effective and extremely accurate weapon which is simple to operate. However, the final trials report, which we received in December 1999, demonstrated that significant improvements in the reliability of the SA-80 can be achieved by making a number of modifications to the weapon. We therefore intend to modify the SA-80 and the Light Support

Weapon, to make them amongst the best weapons in the world.

8.37 . We are also assessing whether the modified Light Support Weapon will meet the requirements of all users, for example whether a magazine-fed weapon like the Light Support Weapon can provide sufficient suppressive fire for infantry fire support groups.

8.38. A number of armed forces units are also being issued with the highly capable and accurate Long Range Rifle designed for precision fire support.

Personal Equipment

8.39. We recognise that it is essential that our personnel have confidence in the quality of their personal equipment. We have therefore been making a significant investment in recent years in this equipment (eg boots, combat dress, sleeping systems and load-carrying equipment), which is now of a far higher quality than ever before. This new equipment was used extensively by our forces in Kosovo, and is well liked by our forces.

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Chapter 9

Maritime Operations - Conduct and Lessons

Key lessons

- Aircraft carriers played a useful and versatile role in the operation.
- The flexibility of UK maritime strategic lift assets was proved.
- Interoperability with French maritime units was successfully achieved, with Royal Navy ships operating under French command for the first time.

Participating assets

9.1. A list of the Royal Navy and Royal Fleet Auxiliary units which participated in Kosovo-related operations is at [Annex B](#).

HMS SPLENDID and Tomahawk Land Attack Missiles

9.2. The significant and successful role played by the nuclear-powered submarine HMS SPLENDID and her TLAM capability as an integrated part of the air operation is dealt with in more detail in [Chapter 7](#).

HMS INVINCIBLE and the contribution of Fleet Air Arm Sea Harriers

9.3. The aircraft carrier HMS INVINCIBLE was on passage through the Mediterranean on her return from operational duty in the Gulf when the decision was taken on 9 April to divert her to operations in the Balkans. Her Sea Harrier F-A2s conducted 102 Combat Air Patrol missions as part of Operation ALLIED FORCE, and it was therefore possible for multi-roled aircraft which would otherwise have been given these missions to be switched to other tasks. In addition, INVINCIBLE's helicopters supported humanitarian relief operations in Albania. Throughout the campaign UK, French and, in particular US, aircraft carriers demonstrated remarkable flexibility and their unique ability to deliver air power where airfields are in short supply or unavailable.



Aircraft Carrier HMS INVINCIBLE

Ordnance clearance operations

9.4. Three Royal Navy ships contributed to the NATO operation to clear ordnance jettisoned by NATO aircraft in the Adriatic during the air campaign for safety reasons: HMS BULLDOG (a Coastal Survey Vessel) acted as a command platform, and HM Ships ATHERSTONE and SANDOWN took direct part in the operations. Operation ALLIED HARVEST surveyed all the declared jettison areas, and disposed of detected ordnance. HMS SANDOWN proved to be of particular value, being the only NATO minehunter available for much of the operation for disposals in deeper water.

Other naval operations

9.5. The Type 23 frigate HMS SOMERSET, subsequently relieved by HMS GRAFTON on 26 April, broke new ground by operating as part of the French FOCH aircraft carrier Task Group in the Adriatic, as escorts to the French aircraft carrier and patrolling the area.

9.6. Type 23 frigates HMS IRON DUKE and HMS NORFOLK were deployed to the region as part of NATO Standing Naval Forces patrolling the area and keeping the Yugoslav navy under constant surveillance. The submarine HMS TURBULENT also contributed to NATO operations in the Adriatic.

The Royal Fleet Auxiliary/Maritime Strategic Lift

9.7. The Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) played an important role in deploying and sustaining UK forces in the region. The two chartered but RFA operated Roll-on Roll-off vessels, RFAs SEA CENTURION and SEA CRUSADER, were both fully occupied from early 1999 onwards deploying Army assets to the region in preparation for KFOR.

9.8. RFA ARGUS was deployed to the region in May 1999, providing a platform for helicopter operations, with the capability to act, if required, as a casualty reception facility. It was not in the event required for the latter task. Helicopters based on the ship made a useful contribution to the

humanitarian relief effort in Albania, as well as to maritime operations in the Adriatic.

Command arrangements

9.9. HMS SPLENDID remained wholly under national command throughout the operation. The UK Carrier Task Group remained under the Operational Command of the Chief of Joint Operations at Northwood. Command of the vessels in NATO Standing Forces was delegated to the Force Commanders through the NATO Chain of Command. UK ships in the French FOCH Task Group were under French Operational Control.

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Chapter 10

Looking to the Future

10.1. The international community has taken on a complex long-term challenge in Kosovo. This is to create a pluralist, democratic, self-governing and law-abiding Kosovo; where prosperity is based on free markets, including investment from outside; where the rights of minorities are respected; and which is beginning to integrate into the European mainstream. We know this is a major challenge. But there should be no doubt that we are determined to see the job through to its conclusion. This will involve a concerted effort by NATO and its Partners within KFOR, the UN, EU, OSCE, other organisations and nations individually.

10.2. Peace, security and stability in Kosovo are key to the future. We must ensure its people can live without fear, whether of external aggression or repression, or internal lawlessness. Our armed forces will continue to play a key role in helping to shape the new Kosovo, both by ensuring that there is no further risk from Serb forces, and through helping to enforce law and order in Kosovo. We will ensure that our forces are at the right strength and have the right equipment for whatever new challenges are thrown up. For example, we announced in March 2000 the deployment of additional Gazelle helicopters, a Phoenix Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) battery, and troops trained in reconnaissance in response to developments on the ground. But equally, we will ensure that troops stay in Kosovo only as long as necessary.

10.3. Police are also vital in Kosovo. The OSCE is running a school to train local policemen, and the United Kingdom provides 40 instructors. While the indigenous force is building-up, police volunteers from other countries are operating under UN auspices, alongside KFOR. Sixty officers from the Royal Ulster Constabulary have been in Kosovo since late 1999, and these were joined in May 2000 by about sixty officers from the Ministry of Defence Police. The Government has also offered to send up to twenty officers from the National Criminal Intelligence Service to strengthen UNMIK's ability to tackle organised crime.

10.4. Examples of our successes in the security field include:

- The Kosovo Liberation Army has been demilitarised. Over 8,000 weapons have been handed in and 4,000 have been confiscated;
- There have now been 350 graduates (of whom 100 have been women) from the local police training school, including Serbs and other minorities;
- Several hundred suspected criminals are being held in detention;
- There has been a sharp decline in the murder rate, from nearly 40 a week in mid-June 1999 to five a week in March 2000;
- Over 300 hundred local judges and prosecutors have been appointed by UNMIK;

- A new legal system has been established, and is accepted by Kosovars; and
- ICTY has examined 200 grave sites.

10.5. However, an improved security situation is not sufficient. We need also to rebuild civil society in Kosovo. Kosovo has to recover not only from the depredations of the Milosevic years, but also from fifty years of communism.

10.6. We have made good progress over the last year with the reconstruction of Kosovo. For example:

- More than 810,000 refugees and 500,000 people internally displaced within Kosovo have returned to their homes;
- Over one million square metres of land has been demined or cleared of unexploded ordnance, which include substantial numbers of mines laid by Yugoslav/Serbian forces as well as unexploded NATO bombs. 15,000 mines or bombs have been removed from public areas. 16,100 houses, 1,165 schools and about 2,000 kilometres of road have been demined or cleared of unexploded ordnance;
- A thousand schools were re-opened last autumn, a quarter of them having been repaired and refurbished. 90% of children are now back in school. 300,000 children can now be taught in their own language for the first time in 10 years;
- UNMIK secured the agreement of the Kosovo Albanian political leadership to co-operate in the new Joint Interim Administrative Structures (JIAS). Kosovo Serbs have also agreed to participate, initially as observers;
- Over 80 post offices have re-opened and Kosovo's first private foreign bank is now operating;
- Most of the twenty departments in the new joint administrative structures have been established, bringing together UNMIK administrators and the people of Kosovo. International nominees and inhabitants of Kosovo have been appointed to posts to run these structures;
- a Kosovo customs service has been established;
- KFOR has distributed over 1,000,000 roofing tiles, 18,000 stoves and 4,000 truckloads of firewood;
- 229 km of railway has been made operational; and
- 200 km of roads have been repaired or rebuilt.

10.7. That is just a start. With UNMIK in the lead, we will continue to work with the people of Kosovo to build an open society, with a market economy, free media and plural democracy.

Kosovo Serbs have a real future in the province as a fully-integrated part of a democratic multi-ethnic Kosovo. They must help us to make democratic self-government for all the peoples of Kosovo a reality. In turn, the Kosovo Albanians in particular must also accept the need for tolerance and a multi-ethnic Kosovo. KFOR and UNMIK have taken tough action against the extremists on both sides, and will continue to do so. They are few in number, and we are determined they will not succeed in destabilising the province and undoing the good work which has already been done. There is broad international consensus behind efforts to create an open and tolerant society in Kosovo, part of a wider regional strategy to modernise the states of the former Yugoslavia. Croatia's decision to reject nationalism and embrace democracy and engagement with the European Union shows the way ahead.

10.8. The United Kingdom has invested very substantial manpower and financial resources in Kosovo. In addition some 3,500 service personnel assigned to KFOR, and some 180 police officers, we have provided manpower to support operations in Kosovo by the ICTY and the OSCE. We have over 30 civilian secondees working on human rights and the rule of law, democratisation, media development, elections and administration. In financial terms our contribution includes:

- nearly £26 million to the cost of the UN operation;
- over 10% of the costs of OSCE operations in Kosovo – over £6 million for this year; and
- some £90 million in bilateral aid to the region since the start of last year.

10.9. Following the Lisbon Summit in March this year, the EU will be playing a new role in galvanising international support for, and helping shape the medium term strategy of, the international effort in Kosovo. Already last year the EU provided some 500 million euro (some £300 million) to the region. This year, the EU is making available 360 million euro (some £220 million) for Kosovo. In eight months, EU assistance has made a big difference to life in Kosovo. It has made possible, for example, the urgent repair of large numbers of homes and the emergency repair of transport infrastructure and education facilities. The EU has established a Customs Service for Kosovo, and is laying the foundations for a viable economy - essential for Kosovo's long-term future.

10.10. UN Security Council Resolution 1244 commits us to establishing self-government for Kosovo within Yugoslavia. That requires a political process between Kosovo and the rest of Yugoslavia to determine what that status should be. That in turn needs a government in Belgrade that is truly democratic, respects the rule of law and the rights of minorities, and does not see violence as the main means for solving its problems. It is clear that democracy will be unable to flourish whilst Milosevic remains in power in Belgrade. But it is equally clear that the international community keenly wants to re-establish normal relations with a democratic post-Milosevic Yugoslavia, and see it restored as a prosperous and thriving country at the heart of the Balkans, on the way to integration within Europe.

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Annex A

Chronology

1997

16 December – NATO Foreign Ministers confirm NATO's interest in stability extends beyond Bosnia to the surrounding region, and express concern at escalating ethnic tension in Kosovo.

1998

January-February – Escalating number of murders, kidnappings, Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) ambushes on armed Serbian Police patrols (MUP) and heavy handed security force responses.

28 February - 1 March – Following attack on Serbian police patrol, security forces launch heavy handed operations in Drenica area leaving up to 30 Kosovars dead.

5 March – North Atlantic Council expresses profound concern over violent incidents in Kosovo, in particular Serbian police's brutal suppression of peaceful demonstration in Pristina on 2 March 1998. Condemns the violent repression of non-violent expression of political views as well as terrorist acts to achieve political goals.

5-8 March – Serbian Police launch further operations in Drenica killing at least 51 people.

10 March – Foreign Secretary makes a statement in the House of Commons condemning Drenica killings.

31 March – UN Security Council Resolution 1160, co-sponsored by UK, highlighting the impending humanitarian catastrophe in Kosovo and imposing an arms embargo on Yugoslavia is adopted.

6 May – North Atlantic Council commissions advice on options for more active NATO engagement in Albania and Macedonia through the Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme and options for a NATO military contribution to international and Albanian efforts to monitor the security situation on the Albania/Kosovo border.

28 May – NATO Foreign Ministers express concern at situation in Kosovo and deplore continuing violence; state support for a political solution providing an enhanced status for Kosovo, preserving territorial integrity of Yugoslavia and safeguarding human and civil rights of all inhabitants of Kosovo whatever their ethnic origin; and decide to enhance and supplement Partnership for Peace activities in Albania and Macedonia.

11-12 June – NATO Defence Ministers direct NATO Military Authorities to assess and develop

full range of options for operations that might become necessary to reinforce or facilitate efforts to achieve a solution.

15 June – NATO exercise (code name Determined Falcon) takes place over Albania and Macedonia demonstrating NATO's capability to project power rapidly into region. Over 80 aircraft involved, including 4 RAF Jaguar aircraft. All Allies who have air forces participate.

24 June – North Atlantic Council commissions contingency planning on a precursor stage of air operations – including exercises and surveillance.

17-22 July – NATO Partnership for Peace exercise (code name Co-operative Assembly) takes place in Albania.

12 August – NATO Secretary General issues statement confirming that North Atlantic Council had reviewed a full range of ground and air options to bring an end to violence and create the conditions for negotiations, and that informal force generation was to begin.

18 August – Yugoslav/Serbian authorities claim all of Kosovo now under their control.

23 August - 5 September – Yugoslav/Serbian forces launch major offensives in Suva Reka, Lipljan, Stimlje, Malisevo, Glogovac and Prizren areas. Heavy civilian casualties.

24 August – UN Security Council President issues statement expressing concern about situation in Kosovo and calling for immediate ceasefire and meaningful political dialogue.

9 September – NATO Secretary General, Javier Solana, issues press statement noting that NATO has completed contingency planning for a full range of military measures.

10-18 September – NATO Partnership for Peace Exercise in Macedonia (code name Co-operative Best Effort).

21 September – Prime Minister addresses UN General Assembly: condemns Belgrade's scorched earth tactics and forcible creation of hundreds of thousands of refugees, and underlines international community's responsibility to prevent, by any means necessary, the looming humanitarian disaster.

23 September – UN Security Council adopts UK-drafted Security Council Resolution 1199, highlighting impending humanitarian catastrophe in Kosovo and demanding ceasefire in Kosovo and start of real dialogue.

24 September – NATO Defence Ministers informal meeting in Vilamoura, Portugal focuses on crisis in Kosovo. North Atlantic Council approves issuing of Activation Warning order (ACTWARN) for Limited Air Option and Phased Air Operation (code name Operation ALLIED FORCE).

1 October – UK convenes urgent meeting of the UN Security Council to discuss Kosovo at which Council members express outrage at events in Kosovo.

8 October – KLA declares a ceasefire, but continue attacks against security forces and kidnapping and executing ‘collaborators’ during October, November and December. North Atlantic Council approves Operation Plan for Phased Air Operations.

12 October – Following discussions in Belgrade, US envoy Richard Holbrooke reports agreement in principle with Milosevic on verification missions and political process, but there is not yet a signature.

13 October – North Atlantic Council agrees Activation Order (ACTORD) for Phased Air Operation and Limited Air Option, to begin in approximately 96 hours. Holbrooke returns from negotiations with Milosevic in Belgrade to brief North Atlantic Council.

15 October – NATO Secretary General, Chairman of NATO Military Committee and NATO’s Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) meet Milosevic in Belgrade to press him to comply with UN Security Council Resolution 1199. SACEUR and Yugoslav Chief of General Staff sign agreement establishing NATO air verification mission over Kosovo (code name OPERATION EAGLE EYE)

16 October – Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Chairman in Office, Polish Foreign Minister Geremek, signs agreement with the Yugoslav authorities establishing 2,000-strong Kosovo Verification Mission. NATO extends deadline for Yugoslavia to comply with terms of Holbrooke agreement until 27 October.

17 October – A US U2 reconnaissance aircraft makes the first NATO verification flight over Kosovo.

19 October – Foreign Secretary announces to Parliament that the UK will initially provide 150 verifiers to Kosovo Verification Mission, rising to 200 or 10% of the mission strength.

20 October – SACEUR meets Milosevic in Belgrade, and presses him to comply with the terms of his agreement with Holbrooke.

24 October – UN Security Council adopts UK-drafted Security Council Resolution 1203, highlighting impending humanitarian catastrophe, welcoming Holbrooke agreement and setting up of Kosovo Verification Mission, and reiterating demands of Security Council Resolution 1199. Russia & China abstain.

25 October – OSCE Permanent Council formally sets up Kosovo Verification Mission. SACEUR and the Chairman of the NATO Military Committee meet Milosevic to deliver message demanding compliance with UN Security Council Resolution 1199. Yugoslav & Serbian authorities subsequently issue statement noted by SACEUR and the Chairman of the Military Committee agreeing to reduce force levels to those preceding outbreak of hostilities (February 1998). Withdrawal to be completed by 27 October 1998.

27 October – Yugoslavia comes into compliance with Holbrooke agreement, following departure of 4,000 special police from Pristina, but security forces immediately start secretly re-entering Kosovo. North Atlantic Council agrees to keep compliance of the parties under continuous review, to maintain the Activation Order for air strikes and to remain prepared to carry out air

strikes should they be required.

4 December – North Atlantic Council agrees Activation Order for the Extraction Force (code name Operation JOINT GUARANTOR)

7 December – First UK personnel deploy to Macedonia to join the Extraction Force. UK contribution eventually totals some 380 personnel made up of an Infantry Company Group with Warrior armoured infantry fighting vehicles plus support.

14 December – Two gunmen attack café in Pec killing 6 young Serbs.

17 December – NATO Defence Ministers agree that NATO will maintain pressure to ensure compliance. They call on all parties to cease all forms of violence and provocative behaviour, comply with Security Council Resolutions and resolve the crisis through negotiation.

1999

8 January – KLA ambushes Serbian Police convoy near Suva Reka and kidnaps 8 Yugoslav Army members at Stari Trg. Members of the Kosovo Verification Mission broker deal leading to release of 8 Yugoslav Army hostages on 13 January and 9 KLA members on 23 January.

10 January – Heavy fighting between Serbian Police and KLA in Decane area

15-16 January – Massacre at Racak: 45 Kosovo Albanians killed.

16 January – Ambassador Walker, Head of the Kosovo Verification Mission, condemns the Racak massacre.

17 January – North Atlantic Council issues statement condemning Racak massacre, calling for those responsible to be brought to justice, for Milosevic to comply with his commitments and reaffirms that the Activation Orders for air operations remain in effect. European Union demarche delivered in Belgrade condemns massacre and insists on independent investigation of it.

18 January – Yugoslavia refuses to allow Judge Arbour Head of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) to investigate Racak and orders Ambassador Walker to leave Yugoslavia (later rescinded following international pressure). Foreign Secretary makes statement to the House of Commons on Kosovo condemning the massacre at Racak and the continued activity in the area of Yugoslav/Serbian security forces. Calls on both sides to begin meaningful negotiations on the basis of the Contact Group proposals. UN Security Council condemns Racak massacre and calls for an immediate and full investigation including full and complete co-operation with ICTY.

19 January – SACEUR and the Chairman of the NATO Military Committee visit Belgrade to press Milosevic on Yugoslav Army compliance and access for ICTY.

20 January – NATO decides to increase readiness of assigned forces so air operations could begin within 48 hours of a decision. Defence Secretary announces deployment of 4 additional RAF Harrier GR7s and a tanker aircraft to Italy, bringing UK total to 8 Harrier GR7s and 2

tankers.

28 January – NATO issues "solemn warning" to Milosevic and the Kosovo Albanian leadership, noting that NATO is increasing its military preparedness and "stands ready to act". Demands immediate Yugoslav/Serbian compliance with the October agreement, immediate KLA cease-fire and both sides' co-operation with the Kosovo Verification Mission and the ICTY.

30 January – North Atlantic Council issues statement reaffirming NATO demands. The North Atlantic Council also agrees that the NATO Secretary General may authorise air strikes against targets on Yugoslav territory.

1 February – NATO Secretary General confirms that if no agreement is reached by the deadline set by Contact Group, NATO is ready to take whatever measures are necessary to avert a humanitarian catastrophe.

4 February – Defence Secretary agrees to put a number of units on standby for possible deployment to Kosovo as contingency measure (4 Armoured Brigade Headquarters, the Lead Armoured Battle Group, artillery, engineering and logistics support, a total of around 8,000 personnel).

6 February – a bomb kills 3 in Kosovo Albanian-owned shop in Pristina. The Foreign Secretary and the French Foreign Minister open the peace talks at Rambouillet in France.

14 February – Contact Group Foreign Ministers meet in Paris and decide to extend Rambouillet talks until 20 February.

19 February – Foreign Secretary arrives in Rambouillet to press parties to conclude agreement. US envoy Chris Hill flies to Belgrade – Milosevic refuses to see him.

20 February – Contact Group Foreign Ministers meet at Rambouillet and decide to extend the Rambouillet talks until 23 February.

22 February – Yugoslav/Serbian forces begin 2 day offensive operation west of Vucitrn resulting in 4,000 Kosovo Albanian villagers fleeing. Defence Secretary confirms to House of Commons deployment of some 2,225 personnel of 4 Armoured Brigade HQ and the Lead Armoured Battle Group to Greece and Macedonia, plus advance party for HQ ARRC.

23 February – End of the Rambouillet talks, with neither side signing the Rambouillet Accords, but consensus being reached on substantial autonomy for Kosovo and both sides committing themselves to attend a follow-up conference covering all aspects of implementation.

5 March – UN High Commissioner for Refugees estimates there are 210,000 displaced people in Kosovo. Foreign Secretary/French Foreign Secretary issue a joint statement which notes follow-up conference scheduled for 15 March and states that those who block successful finalisation of Rambouillet "will be held responsible".

15 March – Talks resume at Kleber Centre in Paris. Kosovo Albanian delegation say they accept 23 Feb agreement in its entirety. Yugoslav/Serbian delegation refuses to negotiate. Defence

Secretary agrees diversion of HMS SPLENDID (first Royal Navy submarine with Tomahawk Land Attack Missile capability) to Adriatic.

18 March – 40,000 Yugoslav Army and Serbian Police troops (one third of total Yugoslav armed forces) and 300 tanks massed in and around Kosovo. Kosovo Albanians sign Rambouillet Accords.

19 March – UN High Commissioner for Refugees reports up to 250,000 Displaced People in Kosovo and a further 180,000 in need of assistance. Reports at NATO that major Yugoslav Army and Serbian Police campaign in Kosovo underway. Paris peace talks adjourned. Co-chairs make clear talks will not resume unless Yugoslav/Serbian side accepts Rambouillet Accords, and warn against any Yugoslav/Serbian military offensive on the ground. OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Norwegian Foreign Minister Knut Vollebaek, announces immediate withdrawal of Kosovo Verification Mission.

20 March – Kosovo Verification Mission verifiers complete their withdrawal.

21 March – Major Yugoslav/Serbian security forces offensive continues in central Drenica resulting in 25,000 Kosovars fleeing their homes in a 3 day period.

22 March – Most of Srbica reportedly burnt to the ground. 15,000 people displaced from Central Drenica region. Foreign Secretary meets US envoy Richard Holbrooke and others in Brussels before Holbrooke flies to Belgrade for last ditch attempt to secure agreement and avoid bombing. Agree that Holbrooke will press Milosevic on compliance on the ground and to accept the Rambouillet accords. NATO Secretary General consults Allies on moving to air operations – North Atlantic Council authorises him to decide, subject to further consultations, on a broader range of air operations if necessary. Defence Ministers of France, Italy and UK issue joint statement reaffirming readiness to take whatever measures are necessary to avert a humanitarian catastrophe.

23 March – Prime Minister makes statement to the House of Commons confirming UK stands ready with its Allies to take military action. Following consultation with all Allies, NATO Secretary General orders operations to begin.

24 March – NATO air strikes begin at 1900 Greenwich Mean Time. Deputy Prime Minister makes statement to the House of Commons confirming the launch of NATO action.

26 March – 2 Serb Mig-29 fighter aircraft shot down by NATO aircraft over eastern Bosnia.

27 March – US F-117 stealth aircraft downed over Serbia. Pilot rescued safely. Defence Secretary agrees deployment of land-based Close Air Defence assets to Macedonia.

28 March – NATO Secretary General directs initiation of broader range of air operations against targets in Yugoslavia to allow NATO commanders to intensify their action. Defence Secretary agrees to commitment of extra 4 RAF Harrier GR7s, 8 Tornado GR1s and 1 VC10 tanker.

29 March – Refugees claim that Serb forces are ethnically cleansing Pec. NATO warns Milosevic that he and his military commanders would be held responsible for war crimes

committed in Kosovo.

3 April – First air strike against target in central Belgrade.

6 April – 440,000 refugees reported to have left Kosovo since 29 March. NATO Secretary General issues statement, agreed by North Atlantic Council, in response to Yugoslav offer of a cease fire – unilateral cease fire insufficient, as before a halt in the bombing can be considered, Milosevic must meet demands of international community. Defence Secretary agrees to deployment of UK contribution to Headquarters Allied Command Europe Mobile Force (Land) (HQ AMF(L)), including Commander AFOR Lieutenant General John Reith, to command NATO forces conducting humanitarian operations in Albania.

7 April – UN Secretary General makes statement to Commission on Human Rights saying: genocide may be happening in Kosovo; universal outrage has been provoked by Serbian vicious and systematic ethnic cleansing; an international norm is emerging against the violent repression of minorities that will and must take precedence over concerns of sovereignty; no government has the right to hide behind national sovereignty to violate human rights.

9 April – Statement by UN Secretary General calls on Yugoslav authorities to end immediately the campaign of intimidation and expulsion of the civilian population; to cease all activities of military and paramilitary forces in Kosovo and to withdraw these forces; to accept unconditionally the return of all refugees and displaced persons to their homes; to accept the deployment of an international military force to ensure a secure environment for the return of refugees and the unimpeded delivery of humanitarian aid; to permit the international community to verify compliance with the undertakings above. Defence Secretary agrees to deploy HMS INVINCIBLE Task Group to the Ionian Sea.

12 April – Ministerial North Atlantic Council in Brussels issues declaration reaffirming NATO objectives.

13 April – North Atlantic Council approves Operational Plan for the NATO force in Albania (AFOR) (code name Operation ALLIED HARBOUR). The Prime Minister announces to the House of Commons the deployment of a second Armoured Battle Group to Macedonia, bringing the total number of UK forces in the region to some 6,300. Defence Secretary agrees deployment of the submarine HMS TURBULENT.

18 April – Defence Secretary approves use of RAF C130s for aeromedical evacuation of sick or injured refugees to the UK.

21 April – NATO Secretary General announces that NATO is reviewing its planning for ground options.

23-25 April – NATO Summit in Washington reaffirms NATO demands.

29 April – Defence Secretary announces commitment of 9 additional aircraft to the air operation – 4 RAF Harrier GR7s, 4 Tornado GR1s and a Tristar tanker.

1 May – US F-16 fighter aircraft downed in north-west Serbia. Pilot recovered safely.

7 May – Chinese Embassy in Belgrade hit accidentally by NATO bombs.

13 May – Defence Secretary agrees that 2 battalions of light role infantry and a mechanised infantry battalion should begin training in preparation for deployment to Kosovo.

14 May – Defence Secretary approves forward basing of Tornado GR1s at Solenzara, Corsica

27 May – Announcement by ICTY of indictment of Milosevic and four other senior Yugoslav/Serbian figures for crimes against humanity and violations of the laws and customs of war.

2 June – Finnish President Ahtisaari & and Russian envoy Chernomyrdin have meetings with Milosevic in Belgrade. In a speech to US Air Force Academy, Colorado, President Clinton makes clear that US has not ruled out options beyond bombing to bring about a resolution.

3 June – Milosevic agrees to Contact Group document presented by Ahtisaari and Chernomyrdin.

4 June – Defence Secretary agrees to reduce the notice to move of 3 infantry battalions and the early deployment of some elements of those units to Macedonia. The Defence Secretary also agrees to the deployment of RAF Helicopters to Macedonia.

5 June – Talks on Military Technical Agreement begin on Kosovo/Macedonia border.

9 June – Signature of Military Technical Agreement by Lieutenant General Sir Mike Jackson (Commander of the NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR)), Col Gen Marjanovic (Yugoslav Army Chief of the General Staff) and Lt Gen Stevanovic (Serbian Police), providing for withdrawal of Yugoslav/Serbian forces from Kosovo.

10 June – Yugoslav/Serbian forces begin to withdraw from Kosovo. NATO Secretary General announces bombing campaign has been suspended. UN Security Council Resolution 1244 adopted.

11 June – Russian troops arrive in Pristina and occupy airport.

12 June – KFOR troops enter Kosovo.

20 June – All Yugoslav/Serbian forces clear of Kosovo. NATO formally terminates air operation.

21 June – Military Technical Agreement signed by KLA requiring them to demilitarise within 90 days.

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Annex B

Maritime Operations - Assets Deployed

1. Ships of the Royal Navy

Vessel	Type/Class	Dates	Notes
Submarines			
HMS SPLENDID	Swiftsure class nuclear powered attack submarine	24 March - 11 June 1999	Armed with TLAM cruise missiles
HMS TURBULENT	Trafalgar class nuclear powered attack submarine	17 April - 12 May 1999	
Aircraft Carrier			
HMS INVINCIBLE	Aircraft Carrier	12 April - 21 May 1999	Sea Harriers and Sea Kings embarked
Frigates / Destroyers			
HMS NEWCASTLE	Type 42 Batch 1 Destroyer	12 April - 21 May 1999	With INVINCIBLE carrier group
HMS IRON DUKE	Type 23 Frigate	24 March - 11 June 1999	Attached to NATO Standing Naval Force Mediterranean (STANAVFORMED)
HMS SOMERSET	Type 23 Frigate	24 March - 26 April 1999	Attached to FS FOCH carrier group
HMS GRAFTON	Type 23 Frigate	26 April - 29 May 1999	With FOCH group - replaced SOMERSET
HMS NORFOLK	Type 23 Frigate	6-10 June 1999	Attached to NATO Standing Force Atlantic (STANAVFORLANT)
HMS COVENTRY	Type 22 Batch 2 Frigate	10-24 June 1999	Relieved HMS NORFOLK
Mine Counter Measures Vessels			
HMS ATHERSTONE	Hunt class MCMV	12 June - 26 August 1999	Part of Mine Counter Measures Force
HMS SANDOWN	Sandown Class MCMV	12 June - 26 August 1999	Part of Mine Counter Measures Force

Coastal Survey Vessel			
HMS BULLDOG	Coastal survey vessel	12 June - 28 July 1999	Part of Mine Counter Measures Force

Note

The Mine Counter Measures Force conducted Operation ALLIED HARVEST to clear ordnance which had been jettisoned in designated areas in the Adriatic Sea by Allied aircraft during Operation ALLIED FORCE. Some 93 bombs and missiles were located and destroyed of which HMS ATHERSTONE and HMS SANDOWN accounted for about 20%.

2. Aircraft of the Fleet Air Arm

Squadron	Aircraft	No of a/c	Embarked in	Notes
Jet Aircraft				
800 Sqn	Sea Harriers FA2	7	HMS INVINCIBLE	Conducted 102 Combat Air Patrols
Helicopters				
814 Sqn	Sea King Mk 6	7	HMS INVINCIBLE	Conducted flights in support of humanitarian aid missions in Albania
849 Sqn A Flt	Sea King Mk 2	3		
814 Sqn	Sea King Mk 6	3 on ARGUS	RFA ARGUS, RFA FORT AUSTIN	3 aircraft embarked when INVINCIBLE departed area
815 Sqn	Lynx Mk 3/8	1 per vessel	HMS NEWCASTLE, HMS IRON DUKE, HMS SOMERSET, HMS GRAFTON, HMS NORFOLK, HMS COVENTRY,	

3. Aircraft of the Fleet Air Arm

Vessel	Dates	Notes
Aviation training ship		
RFA ARGUS	24 May - 23 June 1999	3 Sea King Mk 6 helicopters on board
Support Tanker		

RFA BAYLEAF	12 April - 21 May 1999	With HMS INVINCIBLE Group
Stores Ship		
RFA FORT AUSTIN	12 April - 21 May 1999	With HMS INVINCIBLE Group
Strategic Sea Lift Vessels		
RFA SEA CENTURION	14 February 1999 - ongoing	Sea lift operation in support of KFOR continues
RFA SEA CRUSADER	9 December 1998 - ongoing	
Landing Ship		
RFA SIR GERAINT	28 April 1999 - ongoing	

4. Chartered Shipping

Chartered Shipping	Dates	Notes
Total of 21 Commercial Charter Sailings in support of KFOR	21 Feb 1999 - 6 Mar 2000	3 Sea King Mk 6 helicopters on board

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Annex C

UK Army Units Deployed

[These UK Army units, or elements of them, were deployed to Macedonia and Kosovo during 1998-99 as part of the Extraction Force and initial KFOR deployment]

Headquarters

- HQ Allied Command Europe Rapid Reaction Corps
- 3rd UK Division HQ and Signal Regiment
- 4 Armoured Brigade HQ and Signal Squadron
- 5 Airborne Brigade HQ and Signal Squadron
- 101 Logistic Brigade HQ and Signal Squadron

Royal Armoured Corps

- Household Cavalry Regiment
- King's Royal Hussars
- The Royal Artillery Regiment
- 4th Regiment Royal Artillery
- 5th Regiment Royal Artillery
- 7th (Parachute) Regiment Royal Horse Artillery
- 12th Regiment Royal Artillery
- 32nd Regiment Royal Artillery
- 47th Regiment, Royal Artillery

Corps of Royal Engineers

- 21 Squadron 33 EOD Engineer Regiment
- 9 Parachute Squadron Royal Engineers
- 21 Engineer Regiment
- 7 HQ Squadron, 21 Engineer Regiment
- 26 Armoured Engineer Squadron
- 1 Field Squadron
- 28 Engineer Regiment
- 64 HQ Squadron
- 42 Field Squadron
- 65 Field Park Squadron
- 1(UK) Armoured Division CRE
- 527 Specialist Team Royal Engineers
- 14th Topographical Squadron Royal Engineers
- 69 Gurkha Squadron Royal Engineers

Royal Corps of Signals

- HQ 1 Signal Brigade
- 2 Signal Regiment
- 7 Signal Regiment
- 14 Signal Regiment
- 16 Signal Regiment
- 21 Signal Regiment
- 30 Signal Regiment
- 204 Signal Squadron
- 210 Signal Squadron
- Army Tactical Computer System Support Team
- 604 Signal Troop

Infantry

- 1st King's Own Royal Border Regiment
- 1st Irish Guards
- 1st Green Howards
- 1st Battalion Royal Irish Regiment
- 1st Battalion Parachute Regiment
- 1st Battalion Royal Gurkha Rifles

Army Air Corps

- 659 Squadron Army Air Corps

Royal Logistics Corps

- 101 Logistics Brigade
- 29 Regiment Royal Logistic Corps
- 27 Transport Regiment Royal Logistic Corps
- 23 Brigade Support Squadron, 2 Close Support Regiment Royal Logistic Corps
- 77 HQ Squadron
- 91 Supply Squadron, 9 Supply Regiment Royal Logistic Corps
- 19 Tank Transporter Squadron
- 8 Transport Squadron
- 17 Port and Maritime Regiment, Royal Logistic Corps
- 23 Pioneer Regiment Royal Logistic Corps
- 98 Postal and Courier Squadron Royal Logistic Corps

Royal Army Medical Corps

- 2 Armoured Field Ambulance
- 5 Field Ambulance
- 22 Field Hospital

Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

- 2 Battalion Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

Band

- Household and Light Dragoons Band

Royal Military Police

- 4 Armoured Brigade Provost Company

Tactical Air Control Party

- HQ 1 Group

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Annex D

Royal Air Force assets involved in Operation Allied Force

Squadron	Aircraft	Date Deployed *	Notes
Strike Aircraft			
1 Sqn - Supplemented by entire Harrier Wing (RAF Wittering)	16 Harrier GR7	8 aircraft in theatre since January 1999; additional 4 on 28 March 1999; additional 4 on 7 May 1999	Operating from Gioia del Colle, Italy
14 Sqn (RAF Bruggen)	8 Tornado GR1	8 aircraft from 1 April 1999. Stood down 28 May 1999	Operating from RAF Bruggen, Germany
9 and 31 Sqns (RAF Bruggen)	12 Tornado GR1	6 aircraft from 29 May 1999; additional 6 on 30 May 1999. All 12 operational from 1 June 1999	Operating from Solenzara, Corsica
Support Aircraft			
39 Sqn (RAF Marham)	2 Canberra PR9 Reconnaissance	From November 1998 (1 remained on standby in UK)	Operating from Gioia del Colle, Italy as part of NATO Air Verification Mission
8 and 23 Sqns (RAF Waddington)	3 E3D AEW	2 aircraft already deployed for operations over Bosnia; 1 additional aircraft from 28 March 1999	Operating from Aviano, Italy
101 Sqn (RAF Brize Norton)	5 VC-10 tankers	3 aircraft from 31 March 1999 working with Tornados; 2 additional aircraft on 26 May 1999	Initial 3 operating from RAF Bruggen, Germany with Tornados, until end of May, then all from Ancona, Italy

216 Sqn (RAF Brize Norton)	4 Tristar tankers	2 aircraft already deployed since January 1999; 1 additional aircraft from 28 March 1999, 1 additional aircraft from 15 April 1999	Operating from Acona, Italy
51 Sqn (RAF Waddington)	1 Nimrod	Already in Theatre	Operating from Pratica Di Mare
Support Helicopters			
27 Sqn (RAF Odiham)	8 Chinook helicopters	2 helicopters from 5 June 1999; additional 6 helicopters from 10 June 1999	Operating from Skopje, Macedonia supporting KFOR
33 Sqn (RAF Benson)	6 Puma helicopters	4 helicopters from 5 June 1999; additional 2 from 10 June 1999	Operating from Skopje, Macedonia supporting KFOR
Ground Support			
Airfield activation and protection team		5-13 June 1999	Drawn from various units. Based in Pristina supporting KFOR

* May differ from date announced or committed

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Annex E

List of Kosovo-related sites of interest

This is a non-exhaustive list of Kosovo-related internet sites which may be of interest. Inclusion of a non-Ministry of Defence site address on this list does not necessarily infer Ministry of Defence endorsement of the contents of that site.

- **Ministry of Defence**
<http://www.mod.uk/>
- **Ministry of Defence Kosovo index page.** Includes link to Lord Robertson's Account of the Conflict
<http://www.kosovo.mod.uk/index.htm>
- **Foreign and Commonwealth Office Homepage**
<http://www.fco.gov.uk/>
- **NATO Official Homepage**
<http://www.nato.int/>
- **KFOR Online Homepage**
<http://www.nato.int/kfor/>
- **NATO & Kosovo: Index Page** [access to Operation Allied Force Operational updates, Morning briefings and Press briefings]
<http://www.nato.int/kosovo/all-frce.htm>
- **NATO & Kosovo: Operation Joint Guard** [KFOR Press statements and news conferences]
<http://www.nato.int/kosovo/jnt-grdn.htm>
- **NATO Basic Fact Sheet** [NATO's Role in Relation to the Conflict in Kosovo]
<http://www.nato.int/docu/facts/2000/kosovo.htm>
- **NATO Kosovo Strike Assessment**
<http://www.nato.int/kosovo/press/p990916a.htm>
- **US Defence Department [Lessons Learned] Reports on Operation Allied Force**
<http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/archive.html> (Document Archive - See under K on this page)
<http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/kaar02072000.pdf> (Direct link to PDF for downloading only)

- **French Ministry of Defence Lessons Learned Report on Operation Allied Force index**
(in French only)
<http://www.defense.gouv.fr/sites/defense/>
- **OSCE (Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe) Homepage**
<http://www.osce.org/>
- **OSCE Mission In Kosovo**
<http://www.osce.org/kosovo/>
- **OSCE Background Paper on Human Rights In Kosovo – As Seen, As Told**
<http://www.osce.org/item/17755.html> - Volume I, October 1998 - June 1999
- <http://www.osce.org/item/17756.html> - Volume II, 14 June - 31 October 1999
- **UNMIK (United Nations Mission In Kosovo) Homepage**
<http://www.unmikonline.org/>
- **UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) Kosovo Crisis Update**
<http://www.unhcr.org/news.html>
- **UNSCR 1244 United Nations Security Council Resolution 1124, 10 June 1999**
<http://www.un.org/Docs/scres/1999/sc99.htm>
- **Text of the Rambouillet Accords [US State Department]**
http://www.state.gov/www/regions/eur/ksvo_ambouillet_text.html
- **Text of the Military Technical Agreement – 9 June 1999**
<http://www.nato.int/kosovo/docu/a990609a.htm>
- **International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia Home page**
<http://www.un.org/icty/index.html>
- **Human Rights Watch Report into Civilian Deaths in the NATO Air Campaign**
<http://www.hrw.org/reports/2000/nato/>
- **Human Rights Watch Report – Kosovo: Rape as a weapon of "Ethnic Cleansing"**
<http://www.hrw.org/reports/2000/fry/index.htm>

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Annex F

Operation Allied Force statistics

Number of UK aircraft contributed to Operation ALLIED FORCE	
Harrier GR7	16
Sea Harrier FA2	7
Tornado GR1	12
E3D Airborne Early Warning	3
Nimrod	1
Tristar tanker	4
VC 10 tanker	5
Total number of NATO sorties	38,004
Total number of NATO strike sorties	10,484
Total Number of UK sorties	1,618
UK total made up of:	
Strike sorties - GR1 & GR7	1,008
Combat Air Patrols - FA2	102
Airborne Early Warning - E3D	184
Air to Air Refuelling - Tristar and VC 10	324
Total number of air munitions released by NATO aircraft	23,614
Total number of air munitions released by UK aircraft	1,011
UK total made made up of:	
1000lb unguided bombs	230
Paveway II 1000 lb laser guided bombs	236
Paveway III 2000 lb laser guided bombs	18
RBL 755 cluster bombs	531
ALARM anti radar missiles	6

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