

Air Operations in Somalia, 1991-1994

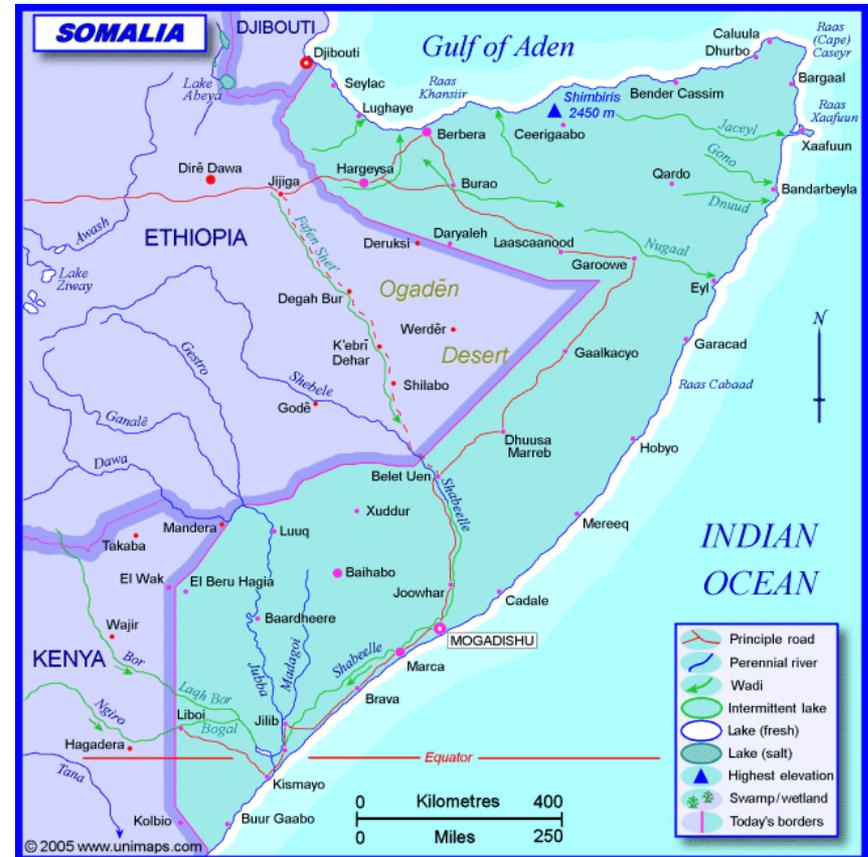
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Game Plan

- Background and Setting
- Early UN Operations
- Restore Hope/UNITAF
- Air Operations and UNOSOM II
- Battle for Mogadishu
- US Withdrawal

Geography and Setting

- 637,657 sq Kilometers slightly smaller than Texas
- Located in a strategic location on the Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden
- Key major cities: Mogadishu, Kismayo, Baidoa, and Berbera
- Population 9.8 million people



From Colony to Cold War

- From 1880s until 1960, it was divide up into colonies of Britain, Italy and France
- Moved toward democracy from 1960 until 1969
- Siad Barre seized power and with the Supreme Revolutionary Council he ruled Somalia until 1991
- Allied with Soviets from 1972 until 1977
- Fought Soviet backed Ethiopians from 1977-78
- He broke with Soviets over their support of Ethiopia



1991 the Collapse of Siad Barre

- In Jan 1991 Barre was thrown out of power and the central govt collapsed
- Civil war based on clans between Farah Aideed and Ali Mahdi
- Soon the agricultural bread basket is destroyed
- Aideed controls most of Mogadishu
- Al-Qaida established in Sudan



Ecological Disaster

- Over 300,000 people die from famine by early 1992
- Many die in violence between factions
- UN decides to re-enter the country
- Aideed and Ali Mahdi raid UN relief supplies
- UNOSOM, United Nations Somalia, authorized by UN on April 24, 1992



Three Phases of US Involvement in Somalia

- Provide Relief/UNOSOM I, 15-August to 9 December 1992, BG Frank Libutti USMC
- Restore Hope/ UNITAF, 9December- 4 May 1993, LTG Robert Johnston
- USFORSOM/UNOSOMII, 4 May 1993- 31 March 1994, MG Thomas Montgomery



Operation Provide Relief

- Security Council Resolution 767 called for immediate airlift of supplies into southern Somalia
- USAF would fly 2,500 sorties with C-130s and C-141 that would provided 28,000 metric tons of food
- The operation would be staged out of Mombasa Kenya
- USAF promised 28 C-141s but was bale to deliver only 12
- Bush Elder feeling pressure because of Balkan problems



From Provide Relief to Restore Hope

- UN troop levels grew to over 4,200 UN forces can not protect the distribution of aid
- US military do not use NGOs for HUMINT
- Poor IPB before Restore Hope
- After a great deal of media pressure Bush decides to commit 28,000 troops along with 10,000 from other nations to ease the humanitarian crisis
- UN has more ambitious goals of nation building and disarming the militias



Restore Hope

- SEALs do recon three days before landing
- F-14As do ISR from CVBG
- Marines and Seals arrive first in great publicity
- 9 hours after landing a primitive AOC and JFACC established
- Most air assets were Marine, Navy, or Army helos
- SEALs secure airport



Early Problems of Restore Hope

- Increased air traffic taxed Mogadishu's air traffic control
- Problems of air traffic created problems of refueling
- Small and poor harbor created problems for ship born supplies
- Air power is used for PSYOPs



Early Successes of Restore Hope

- Civil Military Operations Center or CMOC is created to interface with NGOs
- 9 air fields were rebuilt: Baledogle and Baidoa were taken by helos
- Airlift can not be a substitute for convoys
- Roads and LOCs were in rough shape
- Some mines on the road
- US and UN forces throughout countryside



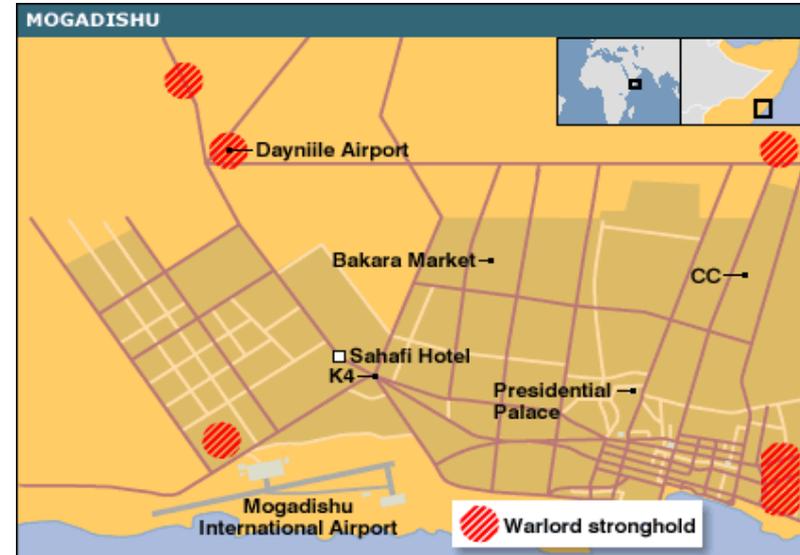
Effectiveness of UNITAF

- Somalis were afraid of offensive air assets like F-18s or attack helos
- Presence missions by AH-1 Super Cobras during meetings with Aidid and Ali Mahdi
- General Johnston and ambassador Oakley were a good team
- US operating under the Powell Doctrine
- US begins to overshadow UN efforts



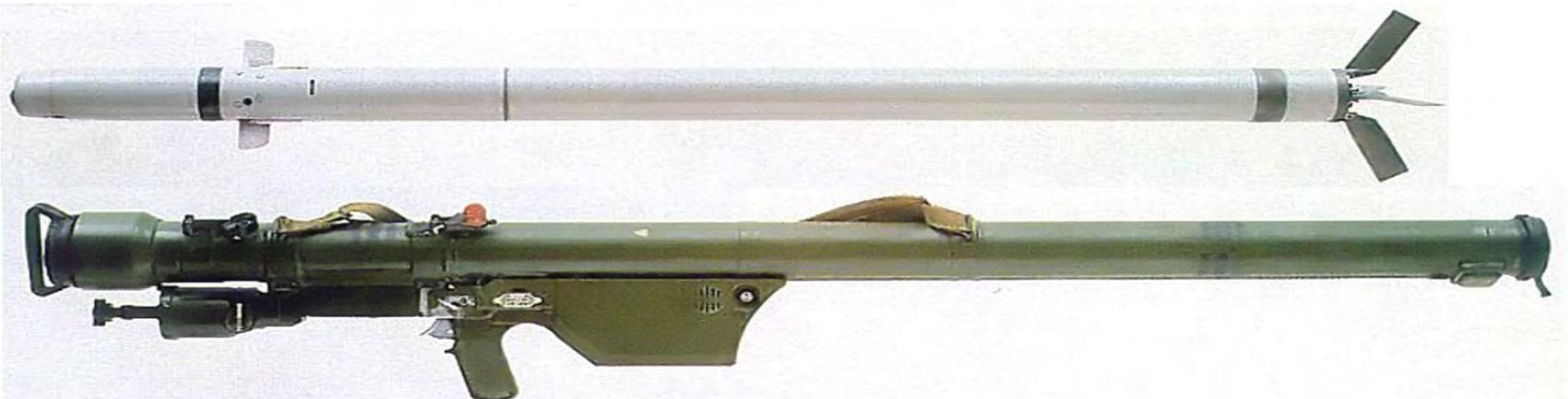
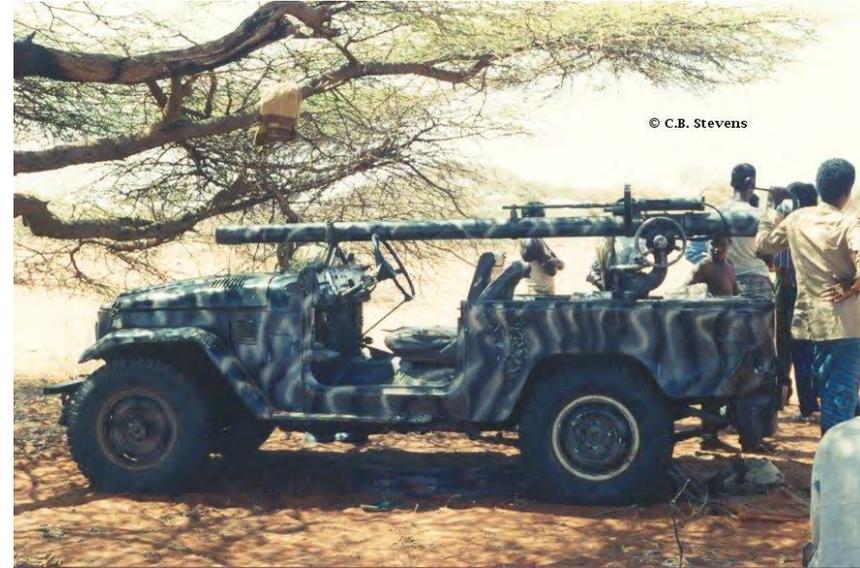
Problem of Urban Air Operations

- US had poor maps of Mogadishu
- Heat and carrying water caused problems for helos
- Urban environment the most difficult for air operations
- Limited ability of CAS and AI because of ROEs regarding peacekeeping
- Is an AC-130 an effective peacekeeping tool?



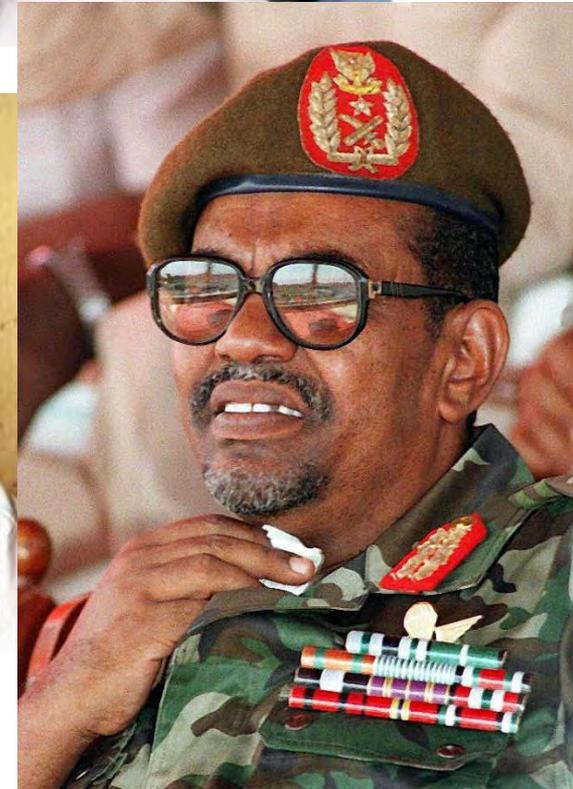
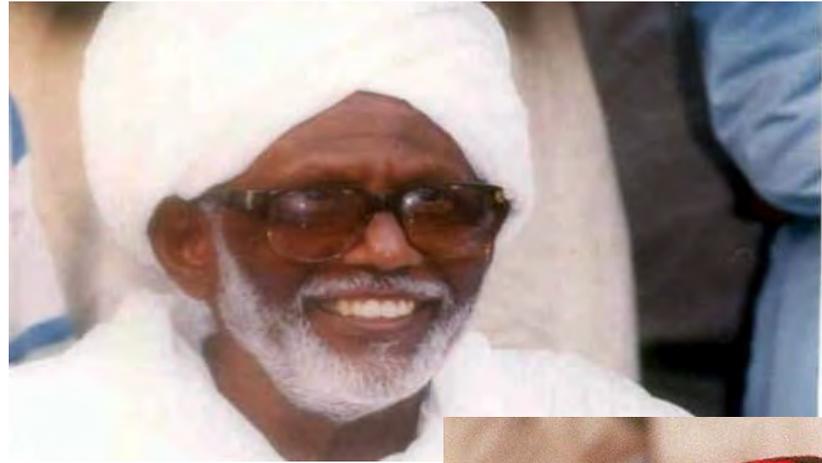
Enemy Threat to Air Operations

- Oakley wanted to limit air attack operations because of Somali public opinion
- Somalis knew urban environment
- Technicals (trucks with machine guns) were a target but very mobile and elusive
- Aidid did not have access to the entire city; could Quds force help this?
- The enemy had SA-7, Soviet machine gun AAA



A New Enemy

- February meeting in Khartoum between Al-Qaida, Beshir, Turabi, and the Iranians
- Somalia becomes part of Iranian strategy
- UBL visits Somalia
- Al-Qaida and Quds force inserted in late spring
- Volunteers form Iraq and Pakistan land on remote shores of Somalia
- Iranians give Somalis Stingers
- Iranians provoke conflict in Somalia in June through October



UN and US C2 and Air Power

- Somali communications through runners
- UN staff had little impact on planning air ops
- UN processed requests for support
- JFACC only controlled Navy and USMC air ops not Army attack Helos
- US communications and ATOS from HQ in Mogadishu to Aegis class cruiser to carrier
- JFACC run entirely by US personnel



Offensive Air Support and Humanitarian Operations

- OAS focused on helping Humanitarian relief
- There had been problems with hijacked convoys
- OAS brought more road security
- UN ground ops centered around protecting convoys
- ATO processed 2,500 sorties a day
- At Kismayo attack helos went against Morgan's militias in conjunction with Belgian ground forces



UNOSOM II

- In the Spring UNOSOM II stood up US ground forces mostly gone
- Turkish General Bir in charge and QRF under MG Montgomery
- Only air available was AC-130s in Kenya and army attack helos
- With UNOSOM II most OAS Forces went away
- The US demanded that the UN take a leading role



UNOSOM II (continued)

- All OAS ops would shift from proactive to reactive
- UNOSOM had no control of air assets
- Aggressive UN agenda to disarm militias and nation building
- Had to use Civilian Contractors for air crews
- Reduction of ground patrols
- Air power had brought Somalis to bargaining table
- After July Army and USAF provided OAS
- UN officers were indifferent to air ops

Ambush and Escalation

- UNOSOM II had real problems with C2
- June Pakistani troops are ambushed and killed
- No air cover for Pakistanis
- They did not have FACs who could speak English
- UNSOM II did not understand air ops
- Local UN units tried to broker deals with local clans
- No cohesive air ground strategy



Task Force Ranger

- During the summer violence escalates and US becomes more involved
 - AC130 strikes in June but then limited by White house
 - Italians launch air ground attacks
- In August US Army MPs killed by mines
- White house decides to go on offensive and creates Task Force Ranger
 - Rangers, Delta, and SOAR
- Rangers under the command of MG Garrison
 - Don't answer to QRF or UN
 - Chain of command JSOC, CENTCOM, White house
- Breakdown of coalition warfare



Battle for Mogadishu

- In September Aidid declared an enemy of US
- September US aircraft kill civilians in Mogadishu; Somalis ready to stand up against US
- Quds Force, Al-Qaida, Iraqis now dominant
- These terrorist use Aidid for cover
- Some key Somali leaders captured in raid but real bad guys are missed
- Poor HUMINT for JSOC elements



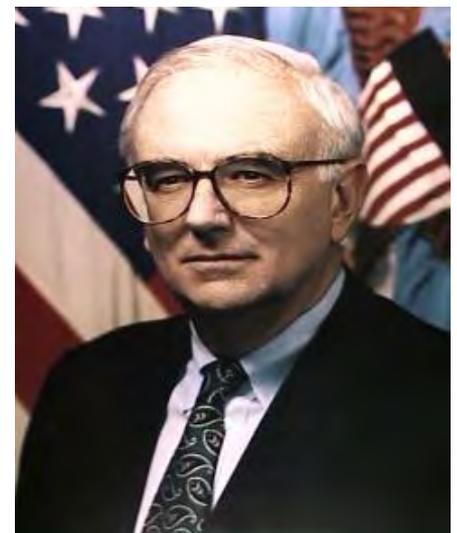
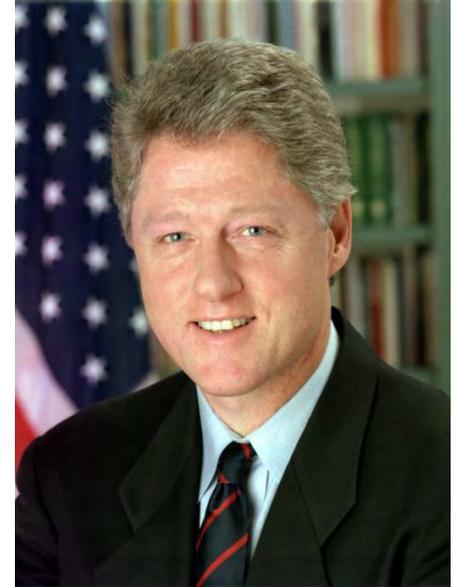
Battle of Mogadishu (continued)

- Two helos shot down
- CSAR was difficult; continuous covering fire from helos throughout the night
- Cobra crew became adept at night operations; used FLIR
- QRF was waved off and AC-130s were not used
- UN forces used at the end of the battle



Withdrawal of US/UN Forces

- Clinton announces the withdrawal of US forces from Somalia by March 31, 1994
- Secretary of Defense Les Aspin is fired; criticism over shortage of air power
- Brief surge of US forces to help withdrawal
- Loss of international support for UNOSOMII
- Final UN exodus in March 1995
- Somalia descends into chaos



Recent Air Operations in Somalia

- CJTF Horn of Africa stood up in 2002 at Camp Lemonier in Djibuti
- Expeditionary airfields in Ethiopia
- Islamist in control in Mogadishu
- Pro-US government in Baidoa
- Ethiopian air-ground attack; take Mogadishu Christmas 2006
- AC130 strikes against Al-Qaida
- Combat between Ethiopians/African Union forces against Islamists 2006-2009



Conclusions for Military Professionals

- Coalition warfare is difficult
- Coalition partners must have agreement on policies
- Somalia operation failed because objectives were changed without congruent military force
- Failure of UN forces to understand the importance of air power caused failure of UNOSOMII
- The battle of Mogadishu showed problems inside JSOC; especially coordination of air power
- This was the first battle with Al-Qaida and US faced a more serious foe than has been previously portrayed
- The Horn of Africa has become a key battleground in the global insurgency
- Because of Black Hawk Down Syndrome US will only fight surrogate/proxy operations in Somalia.

Questions????

