

United Nations acts to save Somalia

The UN has unanimously approved the world's biggest armed humanitarian aid project to safeguard the delivery of food and medicine to refugee camps. It is the first time that military force under a unified command has been authorised to support a relief operation



The military mission:

Up to 28,000 U.S. troops and Marines plus 2,000 French troops and an undetermined number of soldiers from Italy.

Other countries considering sending troops include Belgium, Canada, Egypt, Kenya, Nigeria, Pakistan and Zimbabwe

The mandate:

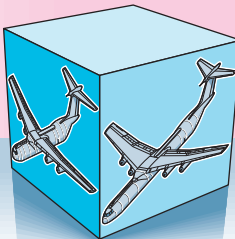
'To use all necessary means to establish as soon as possible a secure environment for humanitarian relief operations in Somalia.'

The UN resolution says nothing about disarming combatants or restoring law and order



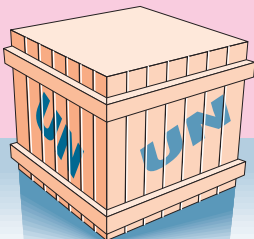
STAGE 1

Advance party of 1,800 Marines to secure Mogadishu airport and port. HQ to set up communications infrastructure



STAGE 2

16,000 Marines followed by 10,000 infantry to fly in from U.S. to control roads, air strips and feeding centres



STAGE 3

Troops deployed to guard food convoys. It is hoped that the large international presence will deter rival clans from violent opposition