

Srebrenica: a 'safe' area

Appendix XI

The organization and coordination of the
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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The organization and coordination of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

1. Introduction

The ‘apehouse’¹, as the headquarters of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs in The Hague is known, is a shining white steel and glass structure dating from the 1980s. Its various wings seem to probe the world around it like tentacles. Huge antennae sprouting from the roof only reinforce the image of an insect sending out its feelers in every direction. The car park at the side of the building – known as the ‘VIP entrance’ because it is where big black cars carrying prominent guests speed in under police escort – rather suffers from a lack of allure but does conjure up an image of directness: the high and mighty are whisked safely inside and can step straight out of their cars and into the lift up to the conference room or the minister’s office. Not a single drop of Dutch rain stains their bespoke suits, and no demonstrator has a chance to make his protest heard.

The Yugoslavia crisis would raise the question of how much this apparent efficiency corresponded with the reality of the Dutch government’s foreign-policy apparatus. Was the civil-service machine effective? And to what extent were those who spent their days, and sometimes much of their evenings, in this late 20th-century building able to project themselves into a war which seemed to have thrown part of Europe back into a dark and distant past? The Minister of Foreign Affairs was responsible for foreign policy, which from the late 1970s would specifically incorporate human rights. After the Second World War, the Netherlands had definitively turned its back on its previous policy of neutrality. From the 1950s, membership of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and European integration were central elements in Dutch foreign policy.

During the 20th century, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had developed from a fairly closed ministry managing a very small diplomatic service, consisting largely of aristocrats, to an institution more receptive to influence from Dutch society. With the rise of the audiovisual media, the Dutch people were – if not better, then certainly more directly – informed about developments in the world. This development was also reflected in a shift in emphasis in decision-making from the diplomats on the ground to the Ministry itself. During the decades immediately following the Second World War, several ambassadors – such as one-time Minister E.N. van Kleffens, H.J. van Roijen, D.U. Stikker and former Governor General of the Dutch East Indies Jonkheer A.W.L. Tjarda van Starkenborg Stachouwer – exerted a major influence over foreign policy.² But from the beginning of the 1960s, it was the civil servants inside the Ministry of Foreign Affairs who became the dominant players in policy formulation.³

From that same period dates the Ministry’s greater openness to ideas from wider Dutch society.⁴ Comparatively speaking, the Netherlands was thick with so-called non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and campaign groups concerned with foreign policy.⁵ The Dutch churches and trade union movement also started to pay more attention to international politics at around this time. Aid to countries in the developing world, which had begun in the late 1940s, was stepped up and

¹ This nickname, ‘*apenrots*’ in Dutch, is a corruption of ‘Aponrots’, a reference to the building’s architect, D.C. Apon.

² B. Zeeman, ‘Jurist of diplomaat? Eelco Nicolaas van Kleffens (1939-1946)’ (‘Lawyer or diplomat? Eelco Nicolaas van Kleffens (1939-1946)’), in Hellema et al. (eds.), *Ministers*, p. 149; C. Wiebes and B. Zeeman, ‘Nederlands diplomaat in bange dagen. Jan Herman van Roijen (1946)’ (‘Dutch diplomat in troubled times. Jan Herman van Roijen (1946)’), *ibidem*, p. 158; J. Bank, ‘Overal een ondernemer. Dirk Uipko Stikker (1948-1952)’ (‘An entrepreneur everywhere. Dirk Uipko Stikker (1948-1952)’), *ibidem*, pp. 193-194; J. Bosmans, ‘Een gedreven politicus. Wilhelmus Klaus Norbert Schmelzer (1971-1973)’ (‘A driven politician. Wilhelmus Klaus Norbert Schmelzer (1971-1973)’), *ibidem*, p. 235.

³ Cf. J. Bosmans, ‘Een gedreven politicus. Wilhelmus Klaus Norbert Schmelzer (1971-1973)’), *ibidem*, pp. 235, 239.

⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 235, 237-239; M. Kuitenbrouwer, ‘Een realistische idealist. Max van der Stoel (1973-1977, 1981-1982)’ (‘A realistic idealist. Max van der Stoel (1973-1977, 1981-1982)’), *ibidem*, p. 247.

⁵ See, for example, Malcontent, *Kruisocht*, p. 33.

institutionalized with the creation of the office of Minister for Development Cooperation. The new minister and his officials were housed in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs building. In particular the issue of human rights, which had remained very much in the background during the almost 20 years Joseph Luns was minister, gained a far more prominent position in foreign policy after his departure from Dutch politics in 1971.⁶

The 1970s also saw the beginning of harmonization of Dutch foreign policy with that of other EEC countries.⁷ However, the increasing importance of European integration did somewhat erode the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' central position. On the one hand, the prime minister's participation in the European Council of heads of government (plus the French head of state) increased his role compared with that of his colleague at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. On the other hand, virtually every Dutch ministry was now directly involved with matters of policy-making in Brussels.

Following a very long period of preparation, in 1987 the personnel of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs itself and of the Diplomatic Service were merged. This made the frequent changes of posting which had always typified the foreign service a feature of the Ministry, too. During the 1980s, the Ministry was swept by a series of swathing staff cutbacks, as a result of which some of the directorates discussed below contained no more than a handful of civil servants when the conflict in Yugoslavia broke out.

2. The ministerial organization

The Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister for Development Cooperation oversaw three directorate generals in the early 1990s: Political Affairs, European Cooperation and International Cooperation. It was the Director General of Political Affairs' (DGPZ) task to handle all aspects of foreign relations involving a policy component. This encompassed not only the coordination of those directorates directly under him, but also that of sections of the ministry which were nominally controlled by the two other director generals. This made the DGPZ both the *primus inter pares* of the three director generals and the senior political adviser to the Minister.

Directly under the DGPZ were four regional directorates (Asia and Oceania, Africa and the Middle East, Western Hemisphere and Europe), plus the Directorate of Atlantic Cooperation and Security Matters and the Directorate of UN Political Affairs. Moreover, the DGPZ and his counterparts from the other member states of the European Community (EC) sat on its Political Committee, which reviewed matters prior to their submission to the Council of Ministers.

As far as the issue of Yugoslavia was concerned, the main players at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were the Directorate of Atlantic Cooperation and Security Matters (DAV), the Directorate of UN Political Affairs (DPV) and the Europe Directorate (DEU). The composition and tasks of these organizations are described briefly below, insofar as they are relevant. This is followed by a survey of policy coordination, and finally a review of relevant official representation abroad. This summary therefore concentrates upon those sections of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs concerned with the purely political aspects of foreign policy. Those involved with humanitarian aid are not covered. Nor does this appendix examine the relationship between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Defence. This is addressed in the appendix devoted to the Ministry of Defence entitled 'Defence in a changing world'.

⁶ J. Bosmans, 'Een gedreven politicus. Wilhelmus Klaus Norbert Schmelzer (1971-1973)', in Hellema et al. (eds.), *Ministers*, pp. 237-238; M. Kuitenbrouwer, 'Een realistische idealist. Max van der Stoel (1973-1977, 1981-1982)', *ibidem*, pp. 243, 247, 248, 249, 252; D. Bosscher, 'Een onwennig minister. Christoph Albert van der Klaauw (1977-1981)' ('An uncomfortable minister. Christoph Albert van der Klaauw (1977-1981)'), *ibidem*, pp. 264-265; P. Rusman, 'De laatste Koude-Oorlogstrijder. Hans van den Broek (1982-1993)' ('The last Cold Warrior. Hans van den Broek (1982-1993)'), *ibidem*, p. 277.

⁷ J. Bosmans, 'Een gedreven politicus. Wilhelmus Klaus Norbert Schmelzer (1971-1973)', in Hellema et al. (eds.), *Ministers*, pp. 237, 239; M. Kuitenbrouwer, 'Een realistische idealist. Max van der Stoel (1973-1977, 1981-1982)', *ibidem*, p. 248.

3. The Directorate of Atlantic Cooperation and Security Matters (DAV)

Thanks to the long tenure as minister of the Atlanticist Hans van den Broek – from 1982 to early 1993 – the post of Directorate of Atlantic Cooperation and Security Matters became a far more central part of the Ministry than it had been before his time. The formal task of the directorate encompassed promoting Dutch security interests at international level – that is, within NATO, the Western European Union (WEU) and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) – plus arms control, verification and export policy, and Atlantic cooperation. In practice, the directorate was also concerned with relations with the United States and Canada, which were really the task of the regional Western Hemisphere Directorate.⁸

Like many of his predecessors, Van den Broek attached great importance to the appointment of able civil servants to this directorate.⁹ Since August 1990, its head had been Boudewijn van Eenennaam, who had mainly made his career within this directorate and, like Van den Broek, was a committed Atlanticist with a strong affinity with the American mentality. As director, he was given full room for manoeuvre by the minister.¹⁰ Van Eenennaam was a supporter of power politics, but in that respect suffered the disadvantage of living in the Netherlands. His perception of international politics was strongly coloured by the Cold War. His conviction that Serbia was the aggressor state in all the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia led him to believe that it must be treated firmly and forced into isolation.¹¹ His experiences during the Cold War were also behind Van Eenennaam's opinion that policy should be based not upon the principles prevailing in the region concerned but rather upon one's own standards and values. He was steeped in the idea that if the Netherlands wished to take the lead internationally with the provision of development aid and contributions to solving humanitarian crises, then it must be prepared to suppress the violence which tended to accompany such situations.¹²

In 1991 the directorate had two divisions, one military and one political, each led by a policy adviser. Herman Schaper headed the Political Division, Pieter de Savornin Lohman the Military Division. In April 1992 Schaper was succeeded by Frank Majoor. When Van Eenennaam became Deputy DGPZ in June 1993, Majoor became head of DAV. Its deputy head then became Maurits Jochems.

The directorate was made up of five bureaux. The focal point of its decision-making in respect of the former Yugoslavia was the Bureau of Military Cooperation (DAV/MS), which traditionally was concerned primarily with defence cooperation with the Netherlands' Atlantic and European allies. This bureau had a staff of three, initially headed by M.T. Vogelaar. When he became leader of the Dutch delegation in the European Community Monitoring Mission for Yugoslavia (ECMM) in spring 1992, Vogelaar was succeeded by the energetic and self-confident Kees Klompenhouwer. In matters related to Yugoslavia, he was supported by Robert in den Bosch, who had only recently joined the bureau. Both men stayed in these posts until one week prior to the fall of Srebrenica. In September 1993 Joep Wijnands joined DAV/MS, where he started by acting as back-up to In den Bosch.

Like Van Eenennaam, other members of the DAV staff were well known for their militant attitude and close identification with NATO. They had little faith in UN control of military operations.¹³

Although the DPV did maintain contacts with the Ministry of Defence, it was the Directorate of Atlantic Cooperation and Security Matters which increasingly became the central link between the foreign affairs and defence organizations. Over time daily contacts would become a matter of course, as

⁸ Van Walsum, *Nederland*, p. 49.

⁹ Interview M. Hennis, 09/03/99.

¹⁰ Interview M. Hennis, 09/03/99; L. Ornstein, 'Het stratego van de experts' ('The experts' game of stratego'), *Vrij Nederland*, 31/10/93, p. 11.

¹¹ Interview B.J. van Eenennaam, 22/08/00.

¹² Interview B.J. van Eenennaam, 22/08/00; TCBU, *Vertrekepunt*, III, hearing B.J. van Eenennaam, 05/06/00, p. 280.

¹³ Interviews M.R.O. Baron Bentinck, 12/04/00, and H.A.C. van der Zwan, 12/04/00.

In den Bosch – and following his departure from DAV, Wijnands – would attend the morning briefings held at the Defence Crisis Management Centre (DCBC) from about New Year 1994. In den Bosch and later Wijnands represented not only their own bureau, but the entire Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This made them *trait-d'union* between the Ministry of Defence and the directorates or even, in matters of sufficient importance, the overall leadership of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. DAV's involvement in the Yugoslavia crisis was not confined to NATO matters. The directorate demanded a say in all strategic military aspects of that conflict.¹⁴ As Yugoslavia evolved more and more from being a diplomatic issue into a military one, with NATO's role increasing all the time, so DAV's involvement grew compared with that of the other directorates.

The militant stance adopted by DAV officials opened up a gulf between its perspective and that of civil servants at the Ministry of Defence, who were more inclined towards traditional peacekeeping methods and avoiding provocation of the combatants by overt use of force.¹⁵

From the very early days of the conflict, DAV played a significant role in organizing the ECMM, the monitoring commission of the EC. Van Eenennaam headed a working party which coordinated policy aspects related to the ECMM. Its other members were Jan Hoekema (deputized by the deputy head of DPV, Joop Scheffers) and Hendrik Bentinck van Schoonheten on behalf of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, F.J.J. Princen and J.H.M. de Winter from the Directorate of General Policy Matters (DAB) at the Ministry of Defence, and Commander J. Waltmann (deputized by Brigadier G.G.M. van Leeuwe) on behalf of the Defence Staff.

In support of the ECMM's day-to-day work, a separate Liaison Office (DAV/LSO) headed by Karel van Oosterom was established. This office formulated the ECMM's tasks and was responsible for its logistics, setting up its regional offices and distributing its reports using COREU telegrams to the EC capitals. Later, following the formation of UNPROFOR, this task would be transferred to the DAV/MS. The Liaison Office consisted of two policy staff and an administrative officer from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, plus a military adviser who was responsible for the communication between DAV and the Defence Staff. Because there were difficulties at first in finding a suitable intelligence officer, Thom Karremans – later to become the commander of Dutchbat III – took up the post on 14 August 1991. He had most recently been head of the Arms Control Section of the Army Staff, but because he had already fulfilled two international appointments he was regarded as ideal for secondment to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Karremans found it easy working with the officials at the bureau¹⁶, and his appointment – which had originally been intended to last two weeks – was eventually extended until the end of the Dutch EC Presidency.

Christiaan Kröner, the Ambassador-at-Large (AMAD) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was also heavily involved in matters pertaining to the ECMM. It was he, for example, who led the mission's quartermasters.¹⁷ The Ambassador-at-Large, who until 1993 was also Deputy Director General of Political Affairs, was a 'roving' ambassador who could be dispatched by the DGPZ on important missions abroad. Kröner had also hoped to play a part in the negotiations in Yugoslavia itself, originally on behalf of Van den Broek and later as an assistant to the EU mediator, Lord Carrington. This role, however, eventually fell to Van den Broek's confidant and trouble-shooter, the Dutch ambassador to Paris, Henri Wijnaendts.¹⁸

¹⁴ Interviews Hattinga van 't Sant, 18/07/00; K.J.R. Klompenhouwer, 20/01/00.

¹⁵ Interviews R. in den Bosch, 19/04/00; B.J. van Eenennaam, 22/08/00; and K.J.R. Klompenhouwer, 13/12/99 and 20/01/00; NIOD, Coll. Kreemers. Interview B.J. van Eenennaam, 12/05/95.

¹⁶ Interview J.L. Sandee, 12/06/00.

¹⁷ "EG-kwartiermakers' in Belgrado" ('EC quartermasters in Belgrade'), *Trouw*, 10/07/91.

¹⁸ Interview P. de Gooijer, 01/07/99.

4. The Europe Directorate (DEU)

The influence of the regional directorates – the repositories of ‘institutional memory’ and analytical specialization in specific parts of the world – was curtailed under Van den Broek in favour of the Directorate of Atlantic Cooperation and Security Matters.¹⁹ Nevertheless, the Europe Directorate (DEU), responsible for bilateral contacts in Europe, was the most obvious department when it came to Yugoslav politics, which would eventually lead to one of its sections coordinating policy.

The original head of the Europe Directorate was Hendrik Bentinck van Schoonheten. The Europe Directorate was divided into two bureaux, one for Western Europe and the other for Eastern Europe. The latter was responsible for Dutch involvement in the former Yugoslavia. In 1991 the two bureaux had only three members of staff each. Western Europe was not regarded as being of particular interest from the perspective of bilateral relations: the emphasis here was upon multilateral diplomacy. During the Cold War there was an impression at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that it had little to do in Eastern Europe.

The three officials working in the Eastern Europe Bureau, which encompassed the Soviet Union, during summer 1991 were Harm Hazewinkel, Ellen Berends and F.R. Dorsman. Hazewinkel headed the bureau, as well as being Deputy Director for Europe. Prior to the outbreak of the conflict, it was also he who did most of the work related to Yugoslavia. In mid 1991, as the region began to demand more and more of the bureau’s attention, it was expanded with the appointment of the young diplomat Tony van der Togt. He was assigned exclusively to the Yugoslavia portfolio.

There were a number of personnel changes at the Europe Directorate in mid 1992. On 23 March Herman Schaper, hitherto Deputy Director for Atlantic Security, became head of the directorate. He would remain in the post until 1 August 1994. Hazewinkel, Berends and Dorsman all left the directorate at the same time. Hazewinkel became an adviser in the DGPZ. His old post was split. Leadership of the Eastern Europe Bureau was taken over by W.A. Bas Backer, who for the previous three years had been First Secretary in the Dutch Permanent Mission to the United Nations. His portfolio there included the Middle East and Eastern Europe. A new post of Deputy Head of the DEU was created, since it was now apparent that the subject of the former Yugoslavia was taking up too much of the Head of the Eastern Europe Bureau’s time. The new post was filled by Onno Hattinga van ‘t Sant. He concentrated upon Yugoslavia so as to leave Schaper free to deal with other matters. Bas Backer, who as Head of the Eastern Europe Bureau was mainly concerned with Russia, stood in for Hattinga van ‘t Sant when necessary.

Hattinga van ‘t Sant had spent the previous five years at the Dutch Permanent Mission to the European Community in Brussels. One of his main areas of responsibility there was the Mediterranean Working Party, which was concerned with relations between the EC and the other states around the Mediterranean, including Yugoslavia. In this role he was heavily involved in the termination of the Community’s treaty of cooperation with Yugoslavia and the initiation of economic ties with independent Croatia and Slovenia.

Hattinga van ‘t Sant was originally able to rely upon full-time assistance from Sandee. Van der Togt’s orientation was changed to the former Soviet Union. He was happy to be ‘taken off’ Yugoslavia, a region into which he had put much time without ever personally being convinced that the conflict could be solved from outside.²⁰ Van der Togt’s seat at the ‘Yugoslavia desk’ was thus taken over by Sandee, who remained there for three years. He seemed ideally suited to the position: he had studied history at the University of Utrecht, specializing in Eastern Europe and had taken a separate course in the history of the Balkans. One of his first jobs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was at the DAV, and involved providing support for the ECMM. There he had been Van der Togt’s counterpart in the Atlantic Directorate. He was then seconded to Portugal when it held the EC Presidency during the first

¹⁹ Interview M. Hennis, 09/03/99.

²⁰ Interview A.M. van der Togt, 04/05/00.

half of 1992. After some time another official, Thijs van der Plas, was added to Hattinga van 't Sant's team.

Schaper assumed the leadership of a somewhat marginalized Europe Directorate. The Regional Directorate Europe had experienced how differing policy threads existed alongside one another, not only at the Ministry but also within the European Community. At the beginning of the crisis, for example, the European Commission still adhered to the treaty of cooperation with Yugoslavia whereas the European ministers were already developing sanctions against the country. There were also policy contradictions. Whilst the DAV adopted a militant attitude towards Yugoslavia in the tradition of the Cold War, the DEU originally regarded any form of military involvement as 'extremely worrying'. It would draw the West into a quagmire.²¹ Schaper, who had transferred from the DAV to the DEU and so could see both sides of the argument, was able to improve the atmosphere between the two bodies. In mid 1992 he initiated a weekly Yugoslavia meeting for representatives from the directorates involved: the Europe Directorate itself, the Directorate of Atlantic Cooperation and Security Matters, the Directorate of UN Political Affairs, the Directorate for International Organizations, the Directorate of General Affairs, the Directorate of Economic Cooperation, the Directorate for European Integration, the Directorate of Multilateral Development Cooperation and Special Programmes, the Assistant Director General of Political Affairs, the legal adviser, the traffic adviser and, once appointed, the spokesperson on Yugoslavia, Rob Swartbol. A representative from the Ministry of Defence also attended.²² One major reason for instigating this regular forum was that the DEU lacked the information which was available to the DAV,²³ partly because of the latter's strong tendency to monopolize contacts with the Defence Ministry²⁴ and partly because its chief, Van Eenennaam, had a direct personal line to the Minister.²⁵

The chairmanship of these weekly coordination meetings fell upon Hattinga van 't Sant. The principal purpose of these meetings was to exchange information and to prepare papers from and for the Minister. At each gathering Hattinga van 't Sant outlined the latest political situation and a representative from the DAV described the military position. Then an assessment was made of the issues pertaining to the former Yugoslavia which were likely to arise during the coming week.

His position as chairman of the Yugoslavia meeting turned out to be a springboard for Hattinga van 't Sant to assume a more general coordinating role at an operational level. This would earn him the nickname 'Mister Yugoslavia'.²⁶ He monitored all the developments in the conflict, advised the Minister and – based partly upon material submitted to him by other sections – often wrote the statements sent to Parliament in the Minister's name. But the statements sent jointly on behalf of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defence seem for the most part to have been coordinated by the DAV. Hattinga van 't Sant also coordinated the compilation of the points of discussion used by the Minister in discussions with Parliament and fellow ministers, or at international meetings. In fact, Hattinga van 't Sant eventually ended up drafting these statements and notes himself, then distributing them for comment by a certain deadline before passing them on to the Minister. Finally, it was usually Hattinga van 't Sant who represented the Netherlands at the Brussels meetings of the EC's ad-hoc working party on Yugoslavia – the body which was attempting to coordinate European policy with respect to the region on a permanent basis. Before he joined the DEU, these gatherings were attended by Bentinck and Van der Togt.

Nevertheless, Hattinga van 't Sant's coordinating activities remained confined to directorate level. The Director General of Political Affairs did not attend his weekly Yugoslavia meetings. The

²¹ Interview A.M. van der Togt, 04/05/00.

²² For the agendas and conclusions of these meetings, see ABZ, DIE/2001/00023.

²³ Interview P. Bas Backer, 22/05/00.

²⁴ Interviews M.R.O. Baron Bentinck, 12/04/00; J.L. Sandee, 12/06/00.

²⁵ Interview A.M. van der Togt, 04/05/00.

²⁶ Interviews M.R.O. Baron Bentinck, 12/04/00; J.M. Vos, 24/06/00.

Minister and the DGPZ decided on basic policy, sometimes during direct telephone contact with the Permanent Representatives.²⁷

5. Directorate of UN Political Affairs (DPV)

The Directorate of UN Political Affairs (DPV) was responsible for contacts with the United Nations. From 1 July 1990, it was headed by Jan Hoekema, who had developed a particular interest in disarmament questions. On 17 May 1994, he exchanged his civil-service role for a political one, becoming an MP for D66 (Democrats). His place was taken by Dr P.M. Kurpershoek, who had already had plenty of experience with the Yugoslavia issue as Head of the Political Section at the Dutch Permanent Mission to NATO. The directorate included a Political Bureau. At the outbreak of the conflict, this was headed by G. R. Reinders. He had not yet had very much to do with Yugoslavia, since the United Nations had at first taken a reticent attitude towards the subject. That did not apply to his successor, Henk van der Zwan, who remained in the post until April 1995. He had previously been Deputy Head of the Legal Affairs Bureau, with special responsibility for the legal position of the staff. This proved useful in his new role, because when he joined the Political Bureau he was one of a staff of just three. That made it quite short-staffed, especially given the fact that the United Nations had begun to stretch its wings as regards peacekeeping operations since the end of the Cold War. As well as these missions, the Political Bureau was also heavily involved in the sanctions being imposed by the UN. These two aspects covered not only Yugoslavia but also Cambodia, Haiti, Somalia, Iraq, Libya and several other smaller operations. Van der Zwan succeeded in using his knowledge and contacts with regard to personnel affairs to expand the strength of his bureau to six or seven officials. His main staff were R.S. van Ees, Hans Würzner, Sigrid Kaag, Karin van Stegeren and, specializing in sanctions issues, Joep Janssen. There was also a German official on secondment to the Ministry, Philip Ackermann.

The DPV's most important contact in the field was the Permanent Mission of the Netherlands to the United Nations in New York. It also maintained contacts with the Ministry of Defence regarding peacekeeping operations. There were two types of meeting in this respect, general and specific, the former covering all peacekeeping operations and the latter covering those in specific operations like Yugoslavia or Cambodia. On the Ministry of Defence side, it was Commodore J. Waltmann and members of his Defence Staff who participated in these. The general meetings were held once every six weeks, alternately at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defence. The chairmanship rotated too. Hoekema chaired those held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Waltmann and later Brigadier A.M.W.W.M. Kolsteren chaired at the Ministry of Defence. In addition, from a later date there were regular Friday-afternoon meetings on Yugoslavia held in the Defence Crisis Management Centre (DCBC) bunker under the Ministry of Defence building in The Hague. As well as representatives of the armed forces and the Defence Staff, these were also attended by officials from the DAV and DPV.

6. Policy coordination

From 1989 the Secretary-General at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was Dr Bernard Rudolf Bot. His reputation was as one of the best Dutch diplomats of the period. However, the Secretary-General's role was not as prominent at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as it was in some other ministries. The primary responsibility for policy coordination rested not with him but with the Director General of Political Affairs (DGPZ). In order to filter the flood of documents, and to guard access to the minister, the office of Principal Private Secretary to the Minister had been created some years before.²⁸ This left the Secretary-General at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as little more than the head of the official

²⁷ Interview O. Hattinga van 't Sant, 18/07/00.

²⁸ Between 1991 and 1995, this position was held successively by Pieter de Gooyer, Marco Hennis and Rob Swartbol.

organization. Bot was disappointed that the incumbent minister, Van den Broek, and DGPZ Peter van Walsum formed a practised team who gave him no opportunity to play a strong part in policy matters.²⁹ Consequently, a disillusioned Bot departed for Brussels in autumn 1992, where he became Dutch Permanent Representative to the European Community.

Van den Broek now felt the need to appoint a secretary-general from outside the Ministry. His choice as Bot's successor fell upon Dirk Jan van den Berg, at the time Deputy Secretary-General at the Ministry of Economic Affairs. Van den Berg was therefore an outsider at a ministry that had little experience with outsiders being 'parachuted in' like this.³⁰ It was only a few months before Van den Berg witnessed the man who had brought him in with such aplomb, Van den Broek, leave for Brussels himself. On 2 January 1993 Van den Broek became European Commissioner for External Political Relations. However, Van den Berg had the good fortune that the new minister, Professor Pieter Kooijmans, was much more inclined to allow him to function as a secretary-general in the way he had been used to operating at the Ministry of Economic Affairs.

The DGPZ is the minister's most important political adviser. Together with the principal private secretary, he acts as a 'gatekeeper' to the minister and is responsible for the overall line and consistency of foreign policy. Peter van Walsum, a refined and respected diplomat, had been DGPZ since July 1989. His diplomatic career had prepared him well for the role he was to play during the Dutch Presidency of the EC during the second half of 1991, when the war in Yugoslavia was high on the Community's agenda. His diplomatic introduction to South-Eastern Europe had come more than 20 years earlier. From 1967 he had been posted in Bucharest, and from the Romanian capital he travelled to Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Greece and the European part of Turkey. In 1970 he was transferred to the Permanent Mission of the Netherlands to the United Nations, which is also where he would end his diplomatic career between 1998 and 2001. At the UN Van Walsum represented the Netherlands on the General Assembly Third Committee, which was concerned with human rights. In 1979 he was posted to the Dutch Permanent Mission to the European Community. His character was contemplative: he was a sharp analyst, but his reactions tended to be rather measured. This made him very different from the more direct Van den Broek, who felt that his DGPZ often responded too late.³¹

Van Walsum's deputy was Christiaan Kröner, the Ambassador-at-Large. He also had a direct aide, the political assistant. This office was originally held by Alfons Hamer and later by Dr P. de Heer. Van Walsum stepped down as DGPZ on 9 April 1993. His successor, Joris Vos, did not take up office until 17 May. This interval meant that Minister Kooijmans was left without one of his senior officials during a crucial phase in the conflict in the former Yugoslavia: when Srebrenica was in danger of falling for the first time, when the UN Security Council passed its first resolutions on Safe Areas, when US Secretary of State Warren Christopher consulted his European counterparts on Yugoslavia policy and when the Bosnian Serbs finally rejected the peace plan put forward by international mediators Cyrus Vance and David Owen.

The new DGPZ, Vos, was less independently minded than Van Walsum. He was more the loyal civil servant, a man who would very much see things from his minister's point of view.³² Vos selected Van Eenennaam as Deputy Director-General because he was convinced that the pair would make a good team.³³ Both were also very emotionally involved in the Yugoslavia issue.³⁴ The position of Deputy Director General of Political Affairs – PDGPZ in the Ministry's acronym culture – had until then been held by the Ambassador-at-Large. Vos, though, made it a separate post. But the position, which essentially involved doing everything Vos was unable to do for whatever reason, did not really

²⁹ Interviews B.R. Bot 07/09/00, and P. de Gooijer, 01/07/99.

³⁰ Wio Joustra, 'Minister kwetst ambtenaren met benoeming' ('Minister offends civil servants with appointment'), *De Volkskrant*, 01/05/92.

³¹ Interview P. de Gooijer, 01/07/99.

³² Interviews P. de Gooijer, 01/07/99; H. Hazewinkel, 17/04/00; K.J.R. Klompenhouwer, 20/1/00.

³³ Interview J.M. Vos, 24 and 25/06/00.

³⁴ Interview P.H. Kooijmans, 10/09/99.

suit Van Eenennaam's dynamic personality and preference for being 'on top of the case' as much as had his previous job as Head of DAV.³⁵ In fact, he remained very much involved with the former Yugoslavia during this period.

When hostilities broke out in Yugoslavia, the senior figures at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were Minister Van den Broek, DGPZ Van Walsum plus, to a certain extent, his deputy Kröner. There was also Van Eenennaam, in a rather unusual position, and the Minister's personal confidant, Wijnaendts. From this élite group, it was the DGPZ who was officially responsible for policy coordination – not to be confused with the coordination at operational level which was handled by Hattinga van 't Sant from the summer of 1992.

As far as the Yugoslavia portfolio was concerned, however, Van Walsum did not perform the coordinating role which might reasonably have been expected of him. One consequence of this was that policy pertaining to (the former) Yugoslavia remained distributed across three Directorates – Atlantic Cooperation and Security Matters, Europe and UN Political Affairs – where the main players had to develop policy proposals by mutual agreement.³⁶ To the staff in these three units, it was not always clear who should handle what aspect of Yugoslavia policy because there were often several aspects to one issue and these could to a certain extent be placed within the remit of any or all of the three directorates.³⁷ If there was no direction coming from above, at DGPZ level, then could the heads of directorates be expected to provide it? 'But then who was actually responsible for the matter?,' asked Klompenhouwer. 'That was not clear. No single task was ever formulated. One undisputed chief. Who would that be? ...it was typical of the management style. Let everyone just plod on and then we'll see who does best and talk to the Minister. That's an opaque way of working. You don't know what happens to what you produce. Nor do you know what is being asked of you. You don't know who has the initiative.'³⁸

Not only were there no directions filtering down to them, to the officials in the directorates it was often unclear what was going on at the highest level. A lot of information and policy suggestions were passed upwards through the hierarchy, but very few signals came back in the opposite direction.³⁹ This situation was exacerbated by the fact that the ministers, particularly Van den Broek during the Dutch EC presidency, discussed many matters directly with their foreign counterparts by telephone. And the DGPZ did the same with the ambassadors. Moreover, it was Van den Broek's custom not to make decisions based upon official documents but to call together a number of directorate chiefs and their closest staff for discussions in the early evening. The feedback on these various forms of verbal consultation at the highest level to the directorates often left a lot to be desired. Conversations were seldom minuted, as was the case at foreign ministries in other countries.⁴⁰ The same complaint applied to feedback from the Ministerial Council to the directorate officials. As one of the civil servants involved remarked:

'Preparing a document for the Ministerial Council was a trial. You never heard what had been decided in the Ministerial Council. For example, it sometimes happened that we were passed over when things occurred in the Ministerial Council or even that documents were presented to the Ministerial Council

³⁵ Interviews B.J. van Eenennaam, 22/08/00, and K.J.R. Klompenhouwer, 20/01/00.

³⁶ Interview K.J.R. Klompenhouwer, 20/01/00.

³⁷ Interview K.J.R. Klompenhouwer, 20/01/00.

³⁸ Interview K.J.R. Klompenhouwer, 20/01/00. Cf. Michiel van Hulst, 'Zwarte Maandag. Kroniek van een gemiste kans' ('Black Monday, chronicle of a missed opportunity'), in Labohm (ed.), *Waterdragers*, p. 196, in which the then Director General of European Cooperation, Ronald van Beuge, states that Van den Broek 'was always used to receiving contradictory advice, between which he could arbitrate'.

³⁹ Interviews P. Bas Backer, 22/05/00; K.J.R. Klompenhouwer, 20/01/00; J.L. Sandee, 12/06/00; R. Swartbol, 08/07/00; and A.M. van der Togt, 04/05/00.

⁴⁰ Interviews R. in den Bosch, 19/04/00; J.T. Hoekema, 05/03/98; K.J.R. Klompenhouwer, 20/01/00; R. Swartbol, 08/07/00; and A.M. van der Togt, 04/05/00.

which we had not seen in their final form... We were seriously handicapped, and that was also to do with the organization in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs itself. There was never any feedback from the Ministerial Council on a Monday morning because we have two ministers...'⁴¹

And even when something was recorded in writing, there was no distribution structure.

The same applied to the provision of such information to diplomatic missions abroad. At the foreign ministries of the countries to which they were accredited, Dutch ambassadors repeatedly found themselves being confronted with records of conversations – between the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs and his local counterpart or an ambassador – about which it was assumed that the Dutch diplomat had already been informed by The Hague. But that was not the case. And insofar as conversations were recorded, the report often lacked details of the Dutch side of the dialogue so that readers in overseas missions were unable to infer what the Dutch policy was.⁴²

Thus arose an extraordinary situation in which the Minister of Foreign Affairs was often well-briefed about the position of the Netherlands' EC partners through telephone contacts with his counterparts, yet civil servants in his own ministry had to scrape together the same information from embassy reports, the newspapers, press agencies and CNN.⁴³ The situation was mitigated somewhat during the second half of 1991 because of the very frequent ministerial meetings or gatherings of the EC Political Committee. These had to be prepared for, which led to preliminary discussions in Van Walsum's office. This temporarily reduced the need for structured coordination between the directorates. Moreover, once Hattinga van 't Sant began coordinating Yugoslavia meetings at operational level in the second half of 1992, he - as deputy head of DEU - gained direct access to the DGPZ.⁴⁴

Another question is how the Ministry organized its knowledge about Yugoslavia. According to Van Walsum, it took some searching but there did turn out to be sufficient expertise on the Balkans – including his own – available inside the Ministry.⁴⁵ But many other senior officials felt that there was a serious lack of knowledge about the Balkans in general and Yugoslavia in particular. Schaper claims that this lack of knowledge soon created a 'bottleneck'.⁴⁶ The ministerial official with the most relevant knowledge was Hazewinkel, Head of the Eastern Europe Bureau. Yet his directorate was marginalized and both he and his director were far less prominent than the self-confident civil servants in the DAV, who over the previous years had built up good access to the Minister and the Director General of Political Affairs. When hostilities began, several officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs rushed out to libraries and bookshops to find literature about Yugoslavia.⁴⁷ Like Schaper and Hoekema, Van Eenennaam had to admit in an interview with the magazine *Vrij Nederland* that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had largely approached the Yugoslav conflict using Western European logic, and so had seriously underestimated the degree of difficulty it involved.⁴⁸

⁴¹ '... As well as [the Minister of] Foreign Affairs, the Minister for Development Cooperation, each with their own teams. That was a very weak point in the Department's organization. The distribution of confidential documents, Ministerial Council decisions and minutes was also a very slow process. Several days would pass before you got to see them. That was something of a handicap. We often had to ask the Ministry of Defence what had been decided.' [Interview K.J.R. Klompenhouwer, 20/01/00].

⁴² Interview A.P.R. Jacobovits de Szeged, 21/09/00.

⁴³ Interview A.M. van der Togt, 04/05/00.

⁴⁴ Interview P. Bas Backer, 22/05/00.

⁴⁵ TCBU, *Vertretpunt*, III, hearing A.P. van Walsum, 22/05/00, p. 9.

⁴⁶ Herman Schaper in L. Ornstein, 'Het stratego van de experts', *Vrij Nederland*, 31/10/92, p. 12. See also interview N. Biegman, 03/07/00.

⁴⁷ Interviews B.J. van Eenennaam, 22/08/00 and A.M. van der Togt, 04/05/00; L. Ornstein, 'Het stratego van de experts', *Vrij Nederland*, 31/10/92, p. 11; Willem Wansink, 'scheepstoeter-diplomatie' ('Foghorn diplomacy'), *Elsevier*, 22/07/95.

⁴⁸ Leonard Ornstein, 'Het stratego van de experts', *Vrij Nederland*, 31/10/92, p. 11.

The lack of knowledge was also dismissed by civil servants with the argument that knowledge of the region had little policy relevance, assuming that there was a policy being developed:

‘We were very much swayed by the issues of the day... You reacted, and from the first moment you had to carry on reacting. I worked myself silly writing statements to Parliament. I had no time at all to think about policy and policy options, nor was I asked to. I have the feeling that that was done at the level of the DGPZ and the Minister, and perhaps one or two of the directors... Look, doing nothing wasn’t an option. What if that’s the conclusion your deeper knowledge of the Balkans leads you to? Yes, that’s all very well, but public opinion makes certain things impossible. You can’t say, “Yes, it’s all just terrible but as I see it we only have one realistic option and that’s to do nothing and wait, see how things unfold.” No... anything which tended towards that was simply not an option. We had to do something.’⁴⁹

Almost a year after the Dutch EU Presidency ended, Van den Broek himself would say, ‘I constantly hear Balkan experts tell me, “You underestimated the nationalist forces”. That may well be so, but what would we have done differently if we had evaluated them correctly?’⁵⁰ And even later he would add, ‘What would it have mattered if we had all been fully-fledged professors of Balkan history? (...) Even if you had read the histories of the Balkan Wars at the beginning of this century⁵¹ from cover to cover, what would you have learned for this situation?’ Van den Broek particularly called into question the policy relevance because the essence of Dutch policy lay in holding together the standpoints of the EC member states. Personal insights were of little value in that context.⁵² And, in any case, there was always the problem ‘that if you put two Balkans experts together, there is very little chance that they will agree’.⁵³

7. The Minister

The lack of sufficient coordination amongst civil servants meant that a great deal fell to the Minister, who in general did not have enough time to enlarge upon the basic outline of policy.⁵⁴ But during the Yugoslavia conflict, that was little problem for Minister Hans van den Broek who was known as a ‘bruiser’⁵⁵ with many years of experience. He also enjoyed a reputation as a ‘great brief expert’ and a fast reader.⁵⁶

The politician Van den Broek was born in Paris, where his father was correspondent for the newspaper *De Telegraaf*. Politically, he was discovered by CDA (Christian Democrat) leader Norbert Schmelzer, himself a former Minister of Foreign Affairs. Schmelzer first brought Van den Broek to The Hague as an MP. After spending a year as Junior Minister of Foreign Affairs, he became minister of that same department in November 1982. Van den Broek was on the right of his party, as his stance on such issues as abortion and euthanasia during his parliamentary years showed. As minister, he supported the deployment of cruise missiles in the Netherlands and opposed a unilateral oil boycott

⁴⁹ Interview A.M. van der Togt, 04/05/00.

⁵⁰ L. Ornstein, ‘Minister Van den Broek: ‘Ik zou zeggen: beginnen met een schot voor de boeg’’ (‘Minister Van den Broek: I’d say, start with a shot across the bows’), *Vrij Nederland*, 31/10/92, p. 10.

⁵¹ The twentieth.

⁵² Interview H. van den Broek, 02/12/99.

⁵³ TCBU, *Vertrekpunt*, III, hearing A.P. van Walsum, 22/05/00, p. 9.

⁵⁴ These shortcomings at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were referred to earlier and in a more general sense in Everts (ed.), *Controversies*, pp. 74 and 330.

⁵⁵ Interview K.J.R. Klompenhouwer, 20/01/00.

⁵⁶ Interviews B.J. van Eenennaam, 22/08/00; P. de Gooijer, 01/07/99 and H.A. Schaper, 12/04/00; P. Rusman, ‘De laatste Koude-Oorlogstrijder. Hans van den Broek (1982-1993)’, in Hellema et al. (eds.), *Ministers*, p. 269.

against South Africa. When the Lubbers-Kok government was formed in 1989, he had difficulty with the policy differences with the PvdA (Labour).⁵⁷ His public reputation was as a ‘cold fish’, but according to fellow politicians he could be quite emotional in private.⁵⁸

Van den Broek’s term of office exhibited all the advantages and disadvantages of a long ministerial incumbency. During more than eight years as a minister, he gathered a small group of trusted advisers around him. Boudewijn van Eenennaam was probably the most prominent member of that inner circle.⁵⁹ Van den Broek was a man of outspoken opinions,⁶⁰ who only became more convinced that they were right as his time in office went on.⁶¹ The ‘flip side’ of this was that it gave him the image of ‘a dominant man who would rather convince than be convinced,’ as fellow CDA politician Harry Aarts put it.⁶² Van den Broek’s argumentation was highly legalistic in tone. He was not very flexible and believed that once a politician had adopted a line, he should stick to it: ‘We do not waver’.⁶³

Van den Broek’s attitude was both the strength and the weakness of his ministry. ‘Of course he made a directive structure, a coordinating structure, unnecessary because he took care of that,’ says Klompenhouwer. ‘He was the boss and he did it himself. With just a couple of close advisers.’⁶⁴ The press, too, became increasingly tired of the Minister after almost a decade in office.⁶⁵ As did the political establishment,⁶⁶ including his own party, the CDA (Christian Democrats).⁶⁷

The key position taken by the Netherlands during the debate about the stationing of cruise missiles had massaged the egos of the ministers concerned. In a then still straightforward world, the idea had taken root that the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs ‘had a little, just a very little, say in world events’.⁶⁸ That would not have had any tempering effect upon the ego of Van den Broek, who was regarded by friend and foe alike as ‘arrogant’.⁶⁹ The impression he was to make on the Yugoslavs would be no different.⁷⁰

⁵⁷ Metze, *Stranding*, p. 178.

⁵⁸ Metze, *Stranding*, pp. 85 and 188.

⁵⁹ Interview M. Hennis, 09/03/99.

⁶⁰ Gualthérie van Weezel, *Rechts door het midden*, pp. 71 and 101.

⁶¹ Interview H. van den Broek, 02/12/99; cf. P. Rusman, ‘De laatste Koude-Oorlogsstrijder. Hans van den Broek (1982-1993)’, in Hellema et al. (eds.), *Ministers*, p. 269, 270.

⁶² L. Meijer & C. Welgraven, ‘Internationaal kan Henz Vendenbroek niet meer stuk’ (‘Internationally, Henz Vendenbroek can do no wrong’), *Trouw*, 13/07/91. See also Dankert in: Rehwinkel and Nekkers, *Regerendernijfs*, pp. 144, 151; Metze, *Stranding*, p. 188; Rob Meines, ‘De ster van Hans van den Broek staat er bleekjes bij’ (‘Hans van den Broek star wanes’), *NRC Handelsblad*, 28/01/92.

⁶³ L. Ornstein, ‘Minister Van den Broek: ‘Ik zou zeggen: beginnen met een schot voor de boeg’’, *Vrij Nederland*, 31/10/92, p. 10.

⁶⁴ Interview K.J.R. Klompenhouwer, 20/01/00. Cf. Edy Nicolassen, ‘Bijna te lang op het feestje gebleven’ (‘Almost been at the party too long’), *NRC Handelsblad*, 19/12/92.

⁶⁵ Interview B. Hiensch, 13/07/00; ‘steile calvinist alleen populair op aperots’ (‘Dour Calvinist only popular in apehouse’), *De Volkskrant*, 18/09/91; W. Joustra, ‘Ervaring bezorgt Van den Broek nog geen baan’ (‘Experience still doesn’t get Van den Broek a job’), *De Volkskrant*, 16/09/92; J. Tromp, ‘Van den Broek had geen minister meer moeten willen wezen’ (‘Van den Broek should not have wanted still to be a minister’), *De Volkskrant*, 08/10/91; J.J. Lindner, ‘Koks steun voor Van den Broek is dwaze keuze’ (‘Kok’s support for Van den Broek is crazy choice’), *De Volkskrant*, 19/12/92; J.L. Heldring, ‘Een te lang ministerschap?’ (‘Too long a minister?’), *NRC Handelsblad*, 28/01/92; P. Scheffer, ‘Van den Broeks tijd was gekomen’ (‘Van den Broek’s time had come’), *NRC Handelsblad*, 16/12/92; E. Nicolassen, ‘Bijna te lang op het feestje gebleven’, *NRC Handelsblad*, 19/12/92.

⁶⁶ J.T.J. van den Berg, ‘Een nieuwe start zonder minister Van den Broek’ (‘A new start without Minister Van den Broek’), *Trouw*, 01/02/92.

⁶⁷ W. Joustra, ‘Buitenlandse Zaken’ (‘Foreign Affairs’), *De Volkskrant*, 01/02/92; idem, ‘Ook in CDA taant gezag Van den Broek’ (‘Van den Broek’s authority waning even in CDA’), *De Volkskrant*, 26/11/92; L. Meijer, ‘Nu Van den Broek vertrekt, kan zelfs de oppositie niet zonder hem’ (‘Now that Van den Broek is going, even the opposition cannot live without him’), *Trouw*, 16/12/92.

⁶⁸ L. Ornstein, ‘Minister Van den Broek: ‘Ik zou zeggen: beginnen met een schot voor de boeg’’, *Vrij Nederland*, 31/10/92, p. 9.

⁶⁹ L. Ornstein & M. van Weezel, ‘Van den Broek kan de wereld weer aan, dartzel als een veulen’ (‘Van den Broek can face the world again, frisky as a foal’), *Vrij Nederland*, 11/04/92; L. Meijer & C. Welgraven, ‘Nederland is bijna te klein voor Hans

As far as foreign policy was concerned, Van den Broek was an ‘Atlanticist *pur sang*’.⁷¹ Piet Dankert, who was Junior Minister at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs during the Lubbers-Kok government, said that he never thought Van den Broek was much interested in Germany or France: ‘His concern lay much more with Britain and America.’⁷² The Minister was well-known for always wanting to join in when America was at war.⁷³ But the ‘small-but-valiant syndrome’⁷⁴ had not made Van den Broek a power obsessive. When it came to the future of Europe, he generally argued in moral terms.⁷⁵

Van den Broek’s final years in office were blighted by his troubled relationship with the Prime Minister, Ruud Lubbers. Lubbers had long admired Van den Broek. But in 1989, things began to cool down between them. Together with Minister of Finance Onno Ruding and parliamentary party leader Elco Brinkman, Van den Broek was one of three potential CDA candidates to succeed Lubbers. In order to assess their abilities, the party leadership decided that Ruding and Van den Broek should each prove themselves in a role other than that in which they had thus far made a name for themselves. The proposal was that Ruding become Minister of Foreign Affairs and that Van den Broek move to the Ministry of Justice. The plan failed because Van den Broek refused to leave ‘his’ ministry⁷⁶ – a decision which, in Lubbers’ view, disqualified him from the succession race.⁷⁷

However, the personal relationship between Lubbers and Van den Broek was only really damaged in autumn 1990 by a battle over foreign policy responsibilities.⁷⁸ The establishment of the European Council of Ministers in 1976 had drawn attention to the fact that the Dutch premier had far more limited foreign policy powers than most other members of the Council. Generally meeting twice a year, the Council was formally made up of the EC heads of government, the French president and the President of the European Commission. They were accompanied to these gatherings by their foreign ministers. But there were moments during such a summit – for example, during the closing dinner for the heads of government – when the Prime Minister was unaccompanied by his Minister of Foreign Affairs and in a position to exchange views with his counterparts. The Dutch premier was officially bound by a mandate drawn up by the government – and the foreign ministry in particular – but this was sometimes far from conclusive once he entered the Council chamber.⁷⁹ It was partly in response to this situation that, late in 1978, then Prime Minister Dries Van Agt had written that the primacy of the Minister of Foreign Affairs had ‘long since’ disappeared when it came to European aspects of foreign policy.⁸⁰

van den Broek’ (‘The Netherlands is almost too small for Hans van den Broek’), *Trouw*, 13/07/91; ‘Van den Broek mikpunt spot’ (‘Van den Broek butt of mockery’), *De Telegraaf*, 24/03/93; Jan Bron Dik, ‘De Hollanditis ligt gelukkig achter ons, er is weer internationaal respect’ (‘Fortunately, the Hollanditis is over: there is international respect again’), *CD/Actueel*, 16/01/93, p. 6; P. Rusman, ‘De laatste Koude-Oorlogstrijder. Hans van den Broek (1982-1993)’, in Hellema et al. (eds.), *Ministers*, p. 281.

⁷⁰ See, for example, Kadijevic, *View*, p. 46; interview A. Buha, 17/12/99; interview V. Jovanovic, 14/09/01.

⁷¹ Stermerdink, *Dromen*, p. 157; cf. Dankert in: Rehwinkel & Nekkers, p. 147; P. Rusman, ‘De laatste Koude-Oorlogstrijder. Hans van den Broek (1982-1993)’, in Hellema et al. (eds.), *Ministers*, pp. 269, 272, 275, 276; Van Walsum, *Nederland*, pp. 52 and 60; R. Meines, ‘Hans van den Broek. Atlanticus gaat naar Europa’ (‘Hans van den Broek: Atlanticist goes to Europe’), *NRC Handelsblad*, 15/12/92; W. Joustra, ‘Van den Broek bleef atlanticus tegen verdrukking en Europese wanhoop in’ (‘Van den Broek remained Atlanticist despite opposition and European despair’), *De Volkskrant*, 16/12/92.

⁷² Dankert in: Rehwinkel & Nekkers, p. 143.

⁷³ Stermerdink, *Dromen*, pp. 191-192; P. Rusman, ‘De laatste Koude-Oorlogstrijder. Hans van den Broek (1982-1993)’, in Hellema et al. (eds.), *Ministers*, p. 274

⁷⁴ This term is taken from Ben Knapen, ‘Het vaderland in Europa’ (‘The fatherland in Europe’), *NRC Handelsblad*, 29/06/91.

⁷⁵ See, for example, H. van den Broek, ‘Continuïteit en vernieuwing in Europa’ (‘Continuity and renewal in Europe’), *Christen Democratische Verkenningen* (1990)5, p. 208.

⁷⁶ Metz, *Stranding*, p. 39.

⁷⁷ Metz, *Stranding*, pp. 40, 188-189.

⁷⁸ For more on this issue, see also Rozemond, *Regeringsleider*.

⁷⁹ Schmelzer, *Minister-president*, p. 193.

⁸⁰ Quoted in Schmelzer, *Minister-president*, pp. 190-191.

Towards the end of 1990, the Minister of the Interior Ien Dales proposed in a memorandum to the Ministerial Council that – like the German Chancellor – the Prime Minister should be given executive authority so that he could adopt positions at his own discretion and on behalf of the government during European summits. Lubbers agreed: he was not just experiencing difficulties with his constitutional position at the twice-yearly summits, but he also wanted to keep in touch with his foreign counterparts as ‘a colleague in Europe’⁸¹ during other contacts, particularly by telephone. In a letter to Van den Broek he stated that he wished to have the same freedom of movement as the other heads of government, without hindrances regarding ‘information, contacts, presence, status’ and the like.

Van den Broek did not take lightly what he saw as an attempt by Lubbers to achieve excessive ‘European harmonization’ of the prime ministerial office and threatened to resign.⁸² Although the immediate conflict was smoothed over, it created a lasting rift between Lubbers and Van den Broek.⁸³ The pair did not stop squabbling, and on this point Van den Broek continued to give the impression of being – to quote the newspaper *Trouw* – ‘a whining child who just can’t get his way’.⁸⁴ Underlying the conflict were rumours that Lubbers might succeed Jacques Delors as President of the European Commission, an appointment which could eventually hinder the further development of Van den Broek’s own international career given the small number of international top positions available.⁸⁵

As concern about Yugoslavia mounted, Van den Broek soon had hardly any time for other matters.⁸⁶ This particularly applied to the draft treaty due to be signed by EC leaders in Maastricht at the end of 1991, one important aspect of which was a model for a European Political Union. Van den Broek had to largely turn over this dossier to his Junior Minister, Piet Dankert.⁸⁷ It was a move which would have disastrous consequences.

Under Dankert’s leadership the plan, drawn up by the Netherlands’ predecessor in the EC presidency, Luxembourg, was rewritten. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Luxembourg plan was based far too heavily upon an intergovernmental approach; The Hague preferred a supranational one. Moreover, The Hague objected to the proposed security cooperation, which it felt threatened to ‘tread on NATO’s toes’. On Monday, 30 September 1991, ‘Black Monday’, the Dutch draft proposal for political union was rejected by every other European Community member state

⁸¹ TK, session 1990-1991, *Handelingen*, p. 1129, (08/11/90)

⁸² Metz, *Stranding*, pp. 40 and 189; A.E. Kersten, ‘Een woud van verandering. Ontwikkeling van taak en organisatie van het ministerie’ (‘A forest of change. Developing the ministry’s task and organization’), in Van Ditzhuyzen et al. (eds.), *Jaar*, p. 74; TK, session 1990-1991, 21 865, no. 1; *ibidem*, pp. 1115-1133.

⁸³ Dankert in: Rehwinkel & Nekkers, *Regerendernijds*, p. 153; P. Rusman, ‘De laatste Koude-Oorlogstrijder. Hans van den Broek (1982-1993)’, in Hellema et al. (eds.), *Ministers*, pp. 269, 270, 272, 276-277, 281; ‘Duitsland verwacht veel van Nederland als voorzitter van de EG’ (‘Germany expects much from the Netherlands in EC Presidency’), *NRC Handelsblad*, 29/06/91; Victor, *Presidency*, 6.2.1.

⁸⁴ L. Meijer & C. Welgraven, ‘Nederland is bijna te klein voor Hans van den Broek’, *Trouw*, 13/07/91.

⁸⁵ ‘Had Lubbers Van den Broek maar op cake getrakteerd’ (‘If only Lubbers had just treated Van den Broek to cake’), *Trouw*, 18/06/91; J. Tromp, ‘Delors draait Lubbers in moeilijke positie. Premier vindt speculaties over EG-carrière vervelend en vervuilend’ (‘Delors puts Lubbers in difficult position. Premier finds speculation about EC career annoying and contaminating’), *De Volkskrant*, 26/06/91; O. Garschagen & W. Joustra, ‘Premier Lubbers over het Nederlands EG-voorzitterschap: ‘Ik hoor nergens een vals geluid’’ (‘Prime Minister Lubbers on Dutch EC Presidency: ‘I hear no bad notes’’), *De Volkskrant*, 27/06/91; O. Garschagen & J. Tromp, ‘De nieuwe voorzitter heet Lubbers’ (‘The new chairman is called Lubbers’), *De Volkskrant*, 27/06/92; L. Meijer & C. Welgraven, ‘Internationaal kan Henz Vendenbroek niet meer stuk’, *Trouw*, 13/07/91.

⁸⁶ Interview P. de Gooijer, 01/07/99; Elsbeth Tiedemann, ‘Terug naar Zwarte Maandag’ (‘Back to Black Monday’), *Elsevier*, 22/06/96, p. 14; M. van Hulten, ‘Zwarte Maandag. Kroniek van een gemiste kans’, in Labohm (ed.), *Waterdragers*, p. 194.

⁸⁷ Interview P. de Gooijer, 01/07/99; E. Tiedemann, ‘Terug naar Zwarte Maandag’, *Elsevier*, 22/06/96, p. 14; Michiel van Hulten, ‘Zwarte Maandag. Kroniek van een gemiste kans’, in Labohm (ed.), *Waterdragers*, p. 194; Hans Nijenhuis, ‘Nederland heeft niet het laatste woord’ (‘The Netherlands does not have the last word’), *NRC Handelsblad*, 25/09/91.

except Belgium.⁸⁸ In a statement to the assembled press, Van den Broek said, ‘We’ve been made to look like real idiots’.⁸⁹

It speaks volumes that the failure was partly due to poor consultation and a disregard of advice coming from the Netherlands’ EC partners and its own Permanent Representative in Brussels, Peter Nieman.⁹⁰ The signals that the plan would be poorly received were there, but they were not picked up because they were at odds with established views.⁹¹ Another cause of the fiasco was that, because of his battle with Van den Broek over areas of responsibility, Lubbers had not lobbied on behalf of the Dutch concept outside the country. He knew that Van den Broek did not appreciate his direct contacts with his foreign counterparts.⁹² Nieman, who did not agree with Van den Broek and Dankert, sought direct contact with the Prime Minister. But Lubbers saw it as his task to support the two ministers at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.⁹³ Bonn, which had originally appeared to support the Dutch ideas, dropped the plan when it became clear that Paris opposed it. The Franco-German axis proved too hard a nut for The Hague to crack.⁹⁴ ‘We lost the Treaty of Maastricht because the Germans hid behind the French skirts,’ said a disappointed Dankert.⁹⁵ ‘Adding insult to injury’, a week later Hans-Dietrich Genscher and Roland Dumas decided to ‘help’ the Dutch EC Presidency by calling a round of consultations about the European Political Union in Paris. When Van den Broek protested that the Presidency was being hijacked, Paris replied that the issue of creating the Union was too important to be left to the Netherlands.⁹⁶ It was only intensive repair work by Lubbers – yet another major setback for Van den Broek – which enabled the EC member states to agree to a revised draft treaty, one which looked very much like the original Luxembourg proposal, on 9 and 10 December 1991. After ‘Black Monday’, foreign and security policy would not become ‘federal’ matters but remain topics for intergovernmental agreement based upon unanimity.

The poor relationship between Van den Broek and Lubbers also left its mark on civil servants at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. ‘Every time we deal with General Affairs [the Prime Minister’s Department], feelings of mistrust gain the upper hand at our ministry and we no longer see things in proportion,’ said an anonymous senior official in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs towards the end of January 1992.⁹⁷ The repeated conflicts with the premier had by now seriously damaged Van den Broek and his Ministry.⁹⁸

⁸⁸ Dankert in: Rehwinkel and Nekkers, *Regerendernijis*, p. 150.

⁸⁹ M. van Hulten, ‘Zwarte Maandag. Kroniek van een gemiste kans’, in Labohm (ed.), *Waterdragers*, p. 194.

⁹⁰ ‘Premier erkent fouten bij presentatie unievoorstel EG’ (‘Premier acknowledges errors in presenting EC union proposal’), *NRC Handelsblad*, 10/10/91; E. Tiedemann, ‘Terug naar Zwarte Maandag’, *Elsevier*, 22/06/96, p. 16; M. Sie Dhian Ho, ‘Federatiekampioen of trouwe bondgenoot. Het Nederlandse beleid ten aanzien van de Europese en Atlantische Samenwerking’ (‘Federal champion or faithful ally? Dutch policy on European and Atlantic Cooperation’), in Van Ditzhuyzen et al. (eds.), *Jaar*, p. 303; Michiel van Hulten, ‘Zwarte Maandag. Kroniek van een gemiste kans’, in Labohm (ed.), *Waterdragers*, pp. 196-197.

⁹¹ Victor, *Presidency*, 6.2.2.1.

⁹² M. van Hulten, ‘Zwarte Maandag. Kroniek van een gemiste kans’, in Labohm (ed.), *Waterdragers*, p. 209. This disputes the claim that the premier wanted nothing to do with the matter until it was too late. For that claim, see Leonard Ornstein & Max van Weezel, ‘Van den Broek kan de wereld weer aan, dertel als een veulen’, *Vrij Nederland*, 11/04/92; ANP report, Coenraads, ‘EU-voorzitterschap. ‘Black Monday’ resultaat van grove inschattingsfouten’ (‘EU Presidency. ‘Black Monday’ result of gross errors of judgement’), 22/12/96, 08:52. Elsewhere, a distinction is drawn between private involvement by Lubbers, which is said to have taken place, and public involvement which did not, W. Joustra, ‘Competentiestrijd hield Lubbers af van ingrijpen’ (‘Battle over responsibilities stopped Lubbers intervening’), *De Volkskrant*, 11/10/91.

⁹³ Michiel van Hulten, ‘Zwarte Maandag. Kroniek van een gemiste kans’, in Labohm (ed.), *Waterdragers*, p. 206.

⁹⁴ Michiel van Hulten, ‘Zwarte Maandag. Kroniek van een gemiste kans’, in Labohm (ed.), *Waterdragers*, pp. 203-204.

⁹⁵ G.-J. Bogaerts, A. Brouwers & A. Elshout, ‘Graaien in Europa’ (‘Grab-bag in Europe’), *De Volkskrant*, 16/12/00.

⁹⁶ Victor, *Presidency*, 6.2.1.

⁹⁷ ‘Conflicten schaden aanzien v.d. Broek’ (‘Conflicts tarnish Van den Broek’), *NRC Handelsblad*, 28/01/92.

⁹⁸ M.C. Brands, ‘Wanneer betaalt Nederland eindelijk het Brusselse leergeld?’ (‘When will the Netherlands finally pay Brussels’ tuition fees’), *NRC Handelsblad*, 16/01/92; R. Meines, ‘Alles wat mis kon gaan rond reis ging mis’ (‘Everything which could go wrong with trip did’), *NRC Handelsblad*, 20/01/92; ‘Conflicten schaden aanzien v.d. Broek’, *NRC Handelsblad*, 28/01/92; R. Meines, ‘De ster van Hans van den Broek staat er bleekjes bij’, *NRC Handelsblad*, 28/01/92; J.L.

When Van den Broek was unexpectedly appointed as a European Commissioner in December 1992, he was succeeded on 2 January 1993 by Pieter Kooijmans, Professor of International Law at the University of Leiden. Kooijmans had extensive international experience, including as Junior Minister of Foreign Affairs (1973-1977), Dutch Representative to the General Assembly of the United Nations (1967 and 1973-1976), Head of the Dutch Delegation to the UN Committee on Human Rights (1982-1986 and 1992), Chairman of that Committee (1984-1985) and UN Rapporteur on Torture (1985-1992). In late 1991 and early 1992 he had been a member of a CSCE mission which visited all the Yugoslav republics and autonomous provinces to assess the human-rights situation. This meant that he had been to Bosnia, which he described at the time as ‘a place of tranquility’.⁹⁹ As Rapporteur on Torture, later in 1992 Kooijmans had been a member of the mission to Kosovo led by Tadeusz Mazowiecki, the Rapporteur of the United Nations Commission for Human Rights in the Former Yugoslavia. As a result of his visits to the region, Kooijmans felt a strong emotional involvement with the Yugoslavia issue.¹⁰⁰ He believed that the international community must do more¹⁰¹ and, in that regard, took the same line as Van den Broek ‘with complete conviction’.¹⁰²

Because the Lubbers government had no more than 18 months left in office, Kooijmans was regarded as a ‘caretaker’ minister when appointed.¹⁰³ But the combination of his proven expertise, his independent thinking, his ability to take decisions fast and the fact that he was not a ‘party baron’ won over many people.¹⁰⁴ ‘seldom has a minister had such a smooth introduction,’ wrote the daily *De Telegraaf* three months after he took up office. He was admired by both Left and Right as ‘amiable, inspiring, balanced, astute, courteous, almost charismatic’.¹⁰⁵

As minister, Kooijmans at first had no major ambitions because he was well aware that his term at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs would be short-lived.¹⁰⁶ Once in office, though, he would probably have liked to continue his job as a minister. However, the exclusion of the CDA from the new coalition formed in 1994 put an end to any such ambitions.¹⁰⁷

Kooijmans’ regal distance from the political arena also extended to his ministerial relationship with the Ministry of General Affairs, which under Van den Broek had been damaged by the conflict with Lubbers over primacy in foreign policy responsibility. According to Kooijmans, it was ‘absurd’ to

Heldring, ‘Een ongelukkig halfjaar’ (‘An unhappy six months’), *NRC Handelsblad*, 31/03/92; M. van der Stoel, ‘Grotere rol premier in buitenlands beleid’ (‘Bigger role for premier in foreign policy’), *NRC Handelsblad*, 15/07/92; K. Koch, ‘Die twee’ (‘Those two’), *De Volkskrant*, 31/01/92; W. Joustra, ‘Buitenlandse Zaken’, *De Volkskrant*, 01/02/92; ‘Pronk wil voor Lubbers meer armsglag in Europa’ (‘Pronk wants more elbow room for Lubbers in Europe’), *De Volkskrant*, 13/03/92; J. Tromp, ‘En Lubbers kijkt jaloers naar de groten der aarde’ (‘And Lubbers looks jealously at the great of the world’), *De Volkskrant*, 31/03/92; K. Koch, ‘Machteloze Apenrots’ (‘Powerless apehouse’), *De Volkskrant*, 10/04/92; L. Meijer, ‘Voor Lubbers nog geen allesverloren’ (‘All is not yet lost for Lubbers’), *Trouw*, 08/02/92; idem, ‘Zuid-Afrika vreet Van den Broek op’ (‘south Africa eats up Van den Broek’), *Trouw*, 18/03/92.

⁹⁹ P. Nijman & E. Bode, ‘Tussenpauze denkt al aan verlenging. Hoogleraar Kooijmans heeft het naar zijn zin als minister van Buitenlandse Zaken’ (‘Caretaker thinks of staying on. Professor Kooijmans is enjoying being Minister of Foreign Affairs’) *De Telegraaf*, 20/03/93.

¹⁰⁰ Femke Halssema, ‘Kleine stapjes. Het pragmatisch optimisme van Peter Kooijmans’ (‘small steps: Peter Kooijmans’ pragmatic optimism’), *de Helling*, 9(1996)3, p. 6.

¹⁰¹ Interview H.A. Schaper, 10/04/00.

¹⁰² Interview P.H. Kooijmans, 10/09/99.

¹⁰³ P. Baehr, ‘Pleitbezorger van de mensenrechten. Pieter Hendrik Kooijmans (1993-1994)’ (‘Champion of human rights. Pieter Hendrik Kooijmans (1993-1994)’), in Hellema et al. (eds.), *Ministers*, pp. 283 and 284.

¹⁰⁴ Interviews M. Hennis, 09/03/99 and J.M Vos, 24/06/99.

¹⁰⁵ P. Nijman & E. Bode, ‘Tussenpauze denkt al aan verlenging. Hoogleraar Kooijmans heeft het naar zijn zin als minister van Buitenlandse Zaken’, *De Telegraaf*, 20/03/93.

¹⁰⁶ Interview M. Hennis, 09/03/99.

¹⁰⁷ P. Baehr, ‘Pleitbezorger van de mensenrechten. Pieter Hendrik Kooijmans (1993-1994)’ in Hellema et al. (eds.), *Ministers*, pp. 292; C. Janssen & T. Ruigrok, ‘Peter Kooijmans’, *HP/De Tijd*, 12/03/93, p. 16; P. Nijman & E. Bode, ‘Tussenpauze denkt al aan verlenging. Hoogleraar Kooijmans heeft het naar zijn zin als minister van Buitenlandse Zaken’, *De Telegraaf*, 20/03/93; ‘Kooijmans voelt voor voortzetting ministerschap’ (‘Kooijmans would like to continue as minister’), *ANP*, 20/10/93, 15:54.

deny the premier an increasing role in foreign policy at European level by appealing to Dutch tradition.¹⁰⁸ The new minister also had a significantly better relationship with the Minister for Development Cooperation, Jan Pronk, than did his predecessor.¹⁰⁹

Kooijmans knew the Ministry and how its official apparatus worked because, as a member of the old ARP (Protestant Party), he had been Junior Minister of Foreign Affairs with particular responsibility for disarmament issues during the Den Uyl government of 1973-1977. The Ministry was pleased with its new minister because he was better able than his predecessor to listen to his officials and concentrated on overall policy, leaving the civil servants with more freedom of movement.¹¹⁰ More than Van den Broek, Kooijmans took decisions based upon documents compiled by junior officials.¹¹¹ Parliament, too, appreciated the 'caretaker' minister for his thorough knowledge of the briefs and his open style of consultation.¹¹²

Kooijmans tried to steer a middle way between Van den Broek's pro-Atlantic views and a stronger emphasis on a European policy. He was aware that the relationship with the United States would primarily be shaped by how capable the European countries were of adopting a more common policy.¹¹³

His own policy would be heavily influenced by his human-rights expertise.¹¹⁴ In 1991, Kooijmans had already come out as a proponent, under certain circumstances, of humanitarian interventions not sanctioned by international law. In his view, respect for national sovereignty should not obstruct the fulfilment of humanitarian needs.¹¹⁵ Moreover, he was a strong supporter of the use of Dutch troops in UN peacekeeping operations.¹¹⁶

In the new government which took office on 22 August 1994, the first so-called 'Purple Coalition', Hans van Mierlo became Minister of Foreign Affairs. Unlike Kooijmans, he had no

¹⁰⁸ O. van Boetzelaer, 'Minister Kooijmans. Het is niet zinnig premier grotere rol op buitenlands politiek terrein te ontzeggen' ('Minister Kooijmans: it is absurd to deny premier greater role in foreign policy'), *CD/Actueel*, 28/08/93. Kooijmans' milder attitude towards Department of General Affairs is also apparent from interviews A.L. ter Beek, 13/01/00; J.P.M.H. Merckelbach, 25/05/00; and Swartbol, 24/02/99.

¹⁰⁹ Interview P.H. Kooijmans, 10/09/99; R. Meines, 'Conflict tussen Pronk en v.d. Broek fundamenteel' ('Conflict between Pronk and Van den Broek is fundamental'), *NRC Handelsblad*, 05/05/92; 'Besluiteloos' ('Unresolved') and 'Kwestie Pronk-v.d. Broek voorlopig gesust' ('Pronk-Van den Broek dispute temporarily hushed'), *NRC Handelsblad*, 20/05/92; L. Meijer, 'Van den Broek niet altijd stille diplomaat' ('Van den Broek not always quiet diplomat'), *Trouw*, 09/04/92; 'Van den Broek vindt mensenrechten geen zaak voor Pronk' ('Van den Broek does not think human rights are a matter for Pronk'), *Trouw*, 10/04/92; 'Van den Broek wil ook beheer over ontwikkelingssamenwerking' ('Van den Broek also wants control over development cooperation'), *De Volkskrant*, 09/04/92; 'Van den Broek eist ook primaat ontwikkeling en ontwapening op' ('Van den Broek demands primacy over development and disarmament'), *De Volkskrant*, 10/04/92; 'Van den Broek en Pronk bevechten macht in de toekomst' ('Van den Broek and Pronk fight over future power'), *De Volkskrant*, 01/05/92; C. Janssen & T. Ruijgrok, 'Peter Kooijmans', *HP/De Tijd*, 12/03/93, p. 16; Olaf van Boetzelaer, 'Het is niet zinnig premier grotere rol op buitenlands terrein te ontzeggen', *CD/Actueel*, 28/08/93, p. 14.

¹¹⁰ Interviews P. de Gooijer, 01/07/99; J.L. Sandee, 12/06/00; R. Swartbol, 24/02/99; and J.M. Vos, 24/06/99; Dig Ishta quoted in C. Janssen & T. Ruijgrok, 'Peter Kooijmans', *HP/De Tijd*, 12/03/93, p. 16; Dankert in: Rehwinkel and Nekkers, *Regerendernijds*, p. 144.

¹¹¹ Interview K.J.R. Klompenhouwer, 20/01/00.

¹¹² P. Baehr, 'Pleitbezorger van de mensenrechten. Pieter Hendrik Kooijmans (1993-1994)', in Hellema et al. (eds.), *Ministers*, pp. 291.

¹¹³ P. Baehr, 'Pleitbezorger van de mensenrechten. Pieter Hendrik Kooijmans (1993-1994)', in Hellema et al. (eds.), *Ministers*, pp. 289-290.

¹¹⁴ P. Baehr, 'Pleitbezorger van de mensenrechten. Pieter Hendrik Kooijmans (1993-1994)', in Hellema et al. (eds.), *Ministers*, pp. 291; Dankert in Rehwinkel and Nekkers, *Regerendernijds*, p. 144.

¹¹⁵ O. van Boetzelaer, 'Rol Verenigde Naties' ('The role of the United Nations'), *CD/Actueel*, 11/05/91; O. van Boetzelaer, 'Kooijmans kan de juiste man op de juiste plaats zijn' ('Kooijmans could be the right man in the right place'), *CD/Actueel*, 16/01/93, p. 10; O. van Boetzelaer, 'Het is niet zinnig premier grotere rol op buitenlands terrein te ontzeggen', *CD/Actueel*, 28/08/93, p. 15; M. Meijer, 'Kooijmans: Verenigde Naties moeten bij vredesoperaties eigen grenzen kennen' ('Kooijmans: United Nations must know its own limitations in peacekeeping operations'), *CD/Actueel*, 28/10/95, p. 12.

¹¹⁶ P. Nijman & E. Bode, 'Tussenspauz denk al aan verlenging. Hoogleraar Kooijmans heeft het naar zijn zin als minister van Buitenlandse Zaken', *De Telegraaf*, 20/03/93.

experience in international politics. Van Mierlo's political career had mostly been played out in the domestic field. As its political leader, he had played a prominent role in the party Democraten '66 (D66, Democrats) since its foundation. After some serious electoral setbacks, D66 had experienced a recovery in 1986 under Van Mierlo. In the 1994 general election it won 24 seats in Parliament. Van Mierlo had both rational and personal reasons for accepting the appointment as Minister of Foreign Affairs: as well as an acknowledgement of his role as the 'spiritual father' of the Purple Coalition, it was the crowning moment in his own political career. As Foreign Minister, Van Mierlo was a *tabula rasa*. He had little administrative experience, although he had gained some experience as a minister – less than six months – at the Ministry of Defence. He did not have a reputation as a minister who ran his department on a tight leash, and his knowledge of the files was not great. In developing policy, rather than relying upon written briefs he preferred to cultivate ideas in conversation with his staff – an inspiring but time-consuming process.¹¹⁷ By his own admission, Van Mierlo had little more than general knowledge of the Yugoslavia issue when he took office in August 1994. Prior to that, he had left the detail to his party's foreign affairs spokesman.¹¹⁸ But he soon caught up: much of his time at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was devoted to Yugoslavia. He tried to achieve a good working relationship with Minister of Defence Joris Voorhoeve, but left him a great deal of room to act independently. Voorhoeve gained the impression that Van Mierlo and his ministry had little interest in the military aspects of the question.¹¹⁹ According to civil servants at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Van Mierlo relied heavily upon the Dutch Permanent Representative to the United Nations, fellow D66 member Niek Biegan. Both Biegan and Van Mierlo play down that reliance, claiming simply that they largely agreed on general policy matters.¹²⁰ Van Mierlo viewed the conflict in Yugoslavia primarily as a European matter, but was troubled that Europe was being so indecisive. He maintained close contacts with his German opposite number, Klaus Kinkel, but Dutch influence over international decision-making remained modest. Van Mierlo's style of formulating a standpoint in open discussion was not much appreciated by his counterparts elsewhere in Europe. His influence in that circle was very limited.¹²¹

8. The diplomatic missions

The Dutch government had permanent representatives to a range of international organizations. To the Netherlands, the most important in respect of the Yugoslavia issue were those to the European Community, NATO and the United Nations. The Dutch Permanent Representative to the EC and his counterparts from the other member states made up the 'Coreper', the *Comité de Représentants Permanents*. This was the final body to consider proposals before their referral to the EC Council of Ministers for a definitive decision. The Coreper was also charged with implementing mandates issued by the Council of Ministers, the council on which ministers of foreign affairs or other relevant ministers took seat.

The foreign ministers also met in another, informal forum known as 'Gymnich Meetings'. At least twice a year, usually at the end of a member state's six-month presidency of the EC, the European Council met (not to be confused with the Council of Europe). In the European Council, the Community's heads of government plus the President of France came together.

Until the beginning of 1993, the post of Dutch Permanent Representative to the EC was held by Peter Nieman. Then former Secretary-General at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Bernard Rudolf Bot took up the position. The Dutch Permanent Mission was the second smallest of all the EU

¹¹⁷ D. Hellema, 'Een charmante bewindsman' ('A charming minister') in: Hellema, Zeeman & Van der Zwan (eds.), *De Nederlandse ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken in de twintigste eeuw*. (The Hague, 1999), pp. 295-308; interview J. Vos, 24/06/99.

¹¹⁸ Interview H.A.F.M.O. van Mierlo, 10/02/00.

¹¹⁹ Interview J.J.C. Voorhoeve, 15/04/97.

¹²⁰ Interviews N. Biegan, 03/07/00 and H.A.F.M.O. van Mierlo, 19/05/00.

¹²¹ Interviews P. Neville-Jones, 15/11/01 and M. Rifkind, 16/11/01.

member states, after Luxembourg's, because the Dutch government believed on principle that the European Commission should be hampered as little as possible.¹²²

In 1970 the EC countries decided to set up European Political Cooperation (EPC), an intergovernmental forum to consult upon and coordinate their individual foreign policies. This form of cooperation was formally enshrined in the Single European Act of 1986, the first substantial revision and modification of the original European treaties. The Act stated that the member states were obliged 'to avoid taking any action or adopting any stance which might undermine their effectiveness as a cohesive force in international relations or within international organizations'.¹²³ The EC and European Political Cooperation were supposed to coordinate. But for the heads of government and foreign ministers involved, there was little difference between an EPC meeting and the rest of a European Council or EC Council of Ministers session. At EPC level, as well as regular telephone contact between the various foreign ministries, there was also another, more formal means of communication: the 'COREU', a telegram sent to all the other EC capitals.

The Treaty of Maastricht would codify diplomatic cooperation within the context of European Political Union. The Treaty was prepared by the Intergovernmental Committee (IGC). The first pillar recognized the existing European Community. The second pillar laid the foundations for a common foreign security policy. The third pillar paved the way for cooperation in the fields of Home Affairs and Justice. The Treaty came into force on 1 November 1993. At first it changed little in practical terms as far as a common foreign policy was concerned. The common defence policy made only slow progress.

Since 1989, Adriaan Jacobovits de Szeged, former Director General of Political Affairs (DGPZ), had been Dutch Permanent Representative to NATO. In 1993, he was succeeded by Bert Veenendaal.

Holding the rank of Ambassador, the Permanent Representative sat on the North Atlantic Council – also known as the NATO Council – the alliance's most important decision-making body. The council was chaired by the Secretary-General of NATO. Decisions of the then 16 NATO members were reached by consensus. Votes were seldom held. The Secretary-General summarized the discussion and circulated his résumé. During meetings the Council used a 'decision sheet', on which resolutions were recorded. A 'procedure of silence' applied: if no objection was received within a set deadline, a decision was adopted. If there was opposition to a text, the Council met again to reformulate it until all the members could agree. The Dutch Permanent Representative to NATO maintained contacts with both the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defence in The Hague.

The position adopted by the Permanent Representative to the North Atlantic Council was always based upon written instructions compiled before each meeting. They were compiled from a process of written and verbal consultation between Permanent Mission staff and the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defence in The Hague.¹²⁴ According to Jacobovits de Szeged, however, this was hardly ever done when Yugoslavia was on the agenda.¹²⁵ This is not as strange as it may appear, because the Dutch ambassadors to NATO were usually allowed great policy freedom. They were 'heavyweights' in Dutch diplomacy who had been specially selected for their ability to make the most of that freedom.¹²⁶

The North Atlantic Council met in ministerial session twice a year. At these gatherings, the member states were represented by their ministers of foreign affairs and defence. On occasion, there were also meetings at the level of heads of state and government leaders. One such meeting was held in January 1994, when the so-called 'Partnership for Peace' was agreed upon, the new policy relationship with the nations of the former Eastern Bloc. That meeting also discussed the issue of air support over Yugoslavia.

¹²² Jan Bron Dik, 'Permanent vertegenwoordiger bij EG' ('Permanent representative at EC'), *CD/Actueel*, 16/01/93, p. 12.

¹²³ Single European Act, Title III, Article 30.

¹²⁴ Interview L.W. Veenendaal, 17/08/00.

¹²⁵ Interview A.P.R. Jacobovits de Szeged, 21/09/00.

¹²⁶ Interview J.M. Vos, 24/06/00.

The chiefs of staff sat on the Military Committee, NATO's highest military organ. As well as a permanent diplomatic mission in Brussels, there was also a permanent military mission which formally operated under the responsibility of the Permanent Representative but which in practice was directed by the Chief of Defence Staff. This problem, which is found in all embassies containing sections which fall under other ministries of state, is exacerbated in the case of the NATO because of that organization's military function. During the Yugoslavia crisis, the inherent dichotomy was further intensified because in NATO decision-making military matters increased in significance compared with the political. The relationship between the two Dutch missions was difficult. Like their colleagues from most other member states, the Dutch military representatives tended to 'keep their cards close to their chests' where the diplomats were concerned, partly out of a fear of leaks.¹²⁷ Although the Permanent Missions to the EU and NATO were both based in Brussels, there was little or no contact between them.¹²⁸

At the beginning of the period covered by this report, the Dutch Permanent Representative to the United Nations was R. J. van Schaik. He was mainly concerned with the socio-economic aspects of the organization.¹²⁹ The Security Council and other political aspects of the UN were handled by J.M.V.A. (Jan) Count de Marchant et d'Ansembourg. Accordingly it was he who mainly dealt with peacekeeping operations and the Yugoslavia issue. He also felt a personal involvement with that region, having been born in Zagreb. D'Ansembourg left New York in August 1994 and was replaced as Deputy Permanent Representative by Herman Schaper.

When Dr Niek Biegman succeeded Van Schaik in September 1992, tasks within the mission were reassigned. Biegman, an Arabist by training, was married to a Croatian. He felt closely involved with the events in the former Yugoslavia and had outspoken opinions about Dutch policy towards the region; it had to be based upon the conviction that the conflict had been caused by Serbian aggression and that any concession to the Serbs was totally wrong.¹³⁰ It is therefore hardly surprising that, unlike his predecessor, Biegman was extremely active with regard to the issue of the former Yugoslavia.¹³¹ His reputation was that of an amiable and accessible man, who was highly respected by his immediate staff.¹³²

Like all Dutch Permanent Representatives to the United Nations, Biegman maintained close contacts with the Director General of Political Affairs and the Minister. Most of this communication was conducted on the telephone, and so has left few traces on paper.¹³³ Moreover, the pace of developments in New York often made it unavoidable that instructions from The Hague had to be issued by telephone rather than in writing. Only in important cases did the mission in New York request that written instructions be sent retrospectively. During Pieter Kooijmans' tenure as minister, Biegman's influence was limited because his personal involvement with the Yugoslavia issue was so well known at the Ministry and there existed a natural bureaucratic tendency in The Hague to dismiss strong opinions emanating from the missions.¹³⁴

¹²⁷ Interview L.W. Veenendaal, 17/08/00.

¹²⁸ Interviews A.P.R. Jacobovits de Szeged, 21/09/00; L.W. Veenendaal; and J.M. Vos, 24/06/00.

¹²⁹ For Van Schaik view of his work at the UN, see Lucas Ligtenberg, 'Het VN-apparaat heeft te veel loten gekregen' ('The UN apparatus has been given too much'), *NRC Handelsblad*, 08/08/92.

¹³⁰ Interviews N. Biegman, 03/07/00; P. Bas Backer, 22/05/00; M. Hennis, 09/03/99; Major E.A.W. Koestal, 24/05/00; C. Minderhoud; H.A. Schaper, 10/04/00; R. Swartbol, 24/02/99; J.M. Vos, 24/06/99; H.A.C. van der Zwan, 12/04/00.

¹³¹ Interviews C. Minderhoud, 02/06/00; H.A. Schaper, 10/04/00.

¹³² Interviews E.A.W. Koestal, 24/05/00, and R.P.H. van Veen, 16/08/00.

¹³³ Interviews O. Hattinga van 't Sant, 18/07/00 and H.A.C. van der Zwan, 12/04/00.

¹³⁴ Interviews M. Hennis, 09/03/99, and P.H. Kooijmans, 10/09/99.

As a long-standing member of D66¹³⁵ and a good friend of Minister Hans van Mierlo, Biegman is claimed by various civil servants at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to have exerted considerably influence when Van Mierlo was minister.¹³⁶

When Biegman did seek contact with the Directorate of UN Political Affairs (DPV), it was mainly with its head, Jan Hoekema. The strong direct links between the Permanent Representative and the Minister sometimes meant that the Directorate did not know exactly what the current policy situation was.¹³⁷ Another risk was that the Permanent Representative would appeal to the Minister or the Director General of Political Affairs (DGPZ) if he did not like an instruction issued by the directorate. The instruction concerned could then be, to use diplomatic parlance, 'refined'.¹³⁸ To prevent such backtracking, civil servants at the Directorate of UN Political Affairs tried to have their instructions confirmed by the Director General of Political Affairs or the Minister. If New York subsequently expressed dissatisfaction with that instruction over the phone, the official could fall back upon the confirmation.¹³⁹

The lead responsibility for day-to-day development of Dutch policy with regard to UN involvement in Yugoslavia lay with the Permanent Mission. Unlike the governments of many large nations, which issued their ambassadors to the UN with strict instructions, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs accepted that its diplomats in New York had to be given proper room to manoeuvre.¹⁴⁰

The Permanent Mission consisted of about 20 policy officials. Every autumn, during the annual session of the UN General Assembly held between mid September and mid December, they would be temporarily reinforced by MPs, representatives of employers', employees', women's and youth organizations and a number of additional policy staff flown in from the Netherlands. In the hierarchy, immediately under the Permanent Representative and his deputy were a large number of senior embassy secretaries each with their own portfolio. From spring 1992 one of those diplomats, Cora Minderhoud, was entrusted with matters pertaining to peacekeeping operations.

As early as the end of 1990, the operational chiefs of the Netherlands armed forces had called for the stationing of a military adviser at the Permanent Mission in New York.¹⁴¹ However, the Ministry of Defence's Directorate of General Policy Matters and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs decided after consultations that an appointment would be too expensive, 'and, moreover, would deliver insufficient added value'. But the Permanent Representative in New York noted that the presence of a military adviser would be desirable if the Netherlands were to become involved in important peacekeeping operations in the future.¹⁴² By the end of 1992, some 14 nations had such an adviser in New York. They ranged from traditional suppliers of UN troops like Canada and the Scandinavian countries to the likes of Brazil and Venezuela, which used the position as a sort of honorary posting. Once the Netherlands had made substantial contributions to both UNTAC, the peacekeeping force in Cambodia, and UNPROFOR in Yugoslavia during 1992, it became clear that the country could no longer postpone the appointment of a military adviser. There was a lack of military expertise at the Permanent Mission and peacekeeping operations were taking up an increasing amount of Minderhoud's time,

¹³⁵ Biegman had joined the party in 1976 and so was not, as is sometimes claimed, a founder member of D66; H. Camps, 'Leed deert Nederlanders, meer dan anderen' ('suffering upsets the Dutch more than others'). 'Niek Biegman, nieuwe ambassadeur bij de NAVO' ('Niek Biegman, new ambassador to NATO'), *Elsevier*, 20/09/97, p. 40.

¹³⁶ Interviews M.R.O. Baron Bentinck, 12/04/00; O. Hattinga van 't Sant, 01/08/97; M. Hennis, 09/03/99; J.M. Vos, 24/06/99; H.A.C. van der Zwan, 12/04/00.

¹³⁷ Interview H.A.C. van der Zwan, 12/04/00.

¹³⁸ Interview H.A.C. van der Zwan, 12/04/00. See also interview with M.R.O. Baron Bentinck, 12/04/00.

¹³⁹ Interview H.A.C. van der Zwan, 12/04/00.

¹⁴⁰ Interviews Colonel R.R.H. van Veen, 16/08/00 and H.A.C. van der Zwan, 12/04/00.

¹⁴¹ Sie LL. LL./621, memorandum from the Chairman of the Joint Services Head of Operations Committee, Brigadier P.H.M. Messerschmidt, to the Chairman and members of COCSB, 14/11/90, S90/139/3162.

¹⁴² Ibidem, Van den Broek 319 to PR UN, 25/10/90; index card re. ICOSCO 08/11/90; MARStaf. exh. no. S6109/4431Geheim, minutes of 56th ICOSCO, 08/11/90, agenda point 8; NIOD, Coll. Vandeweyer, disk 1, file Milavn.not. Note from the Defence Staff about the need for a military representatives at the United Nations, 12/06/92.

whilst her portfolio also included the Middle East and Central and Eastern Europe. Many of the contacts she had to maintain at the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), founded in 1992, were military professionals. There was a huge difference in culture between them and the diplomats at the United Nations, which must have handicapped Minderhoud in establishing contacts. Moreover, she did not always know which sections of the Ministry of Defence or the armed forces in the Netherlands she should refer particular information or questions to.

One person to be confronted with this lack of expertise was Colonel Raymond van Veen, Chief of the Royal Netherlands Army Crisis Staff. Minderhoud was at first unfamiliar with elementary military terms, so that she constantly had to seek explanations, either in New York or from the Army Crisis Staff or the Defence Staff in The Hague. The result was ‘confusion, delay, misinformation and misunderstanding’ – on both sides.¹⁴³ This was an impossible situation for both the Dutch Permanent Mission and the Crisis Staff.¹⁴⁴ At the same time, the Defence Staff felt the need to exercise greater influence within the military sections of the United Nations and to better promote Dutch military interests there.¹⁴⁵ When the Deputy Chief of Defence Staff, Henk van den Breemen, visited Biegman in summer 1992, the pair soon agreed that the appointment of a military adviser was desperately needed.¹⁴⁶ This time the Ministries of Defence and Foreign Affairs were quickly persuaded to agree.¹⁴⁷

Consequently, on 2 January 1993, Colonel Raymond van Veen joined the Dutch Permanent Mission to the United Nations as its military adviser, or ‘milad’ for short. He would remain in this new position until summer 1996. His job description was wide-ranging: to collect and report upon information which could be of importance to the political and military leadership of the Ministry of Defence for military-political, military-economic, strategic, tactical, technical or historical reasons. As well as hard facts, he would also have to monitor background, trends and potential developments so as to pre-empt topics which might become of interest to the defence chiefs. The main thrust of his work, however, was to maintain contacts with the DPKO about the planning and conduct of Dutch participation in UN operations.¹⁴⁸

With Van Veen in place, the Ministry of Defence soon discovered the advantages of having its own man in New York. So it was not long before the Colonel was doing more than his share of work in his new job. Biegman felt that Van Veen was being forced to take on too many operational issues and was not left with enough time to deal with policy matters. The Permanent Representative therefore insisted that a deputy military adviser be appointed.¹⁴⁹ In the autumn of 1993, Major Eddy Koestal arrived in New York, and in his wake a secretary. A year later, a warrant officer was added to the Military Section. Koestal had been sent to Yugoslavia in 1991 as an observer with the European Community Monitoring Mission (ECMM). After his return to the Netherlands, he became G3 in the Crisis Staff. His latest appointment was to some degree controversial, because as ECMM spokesman in 1991 he had incurred Van den Broek’s wrath by upsetting his delicate diplomatic ‘apple cart’ with a

¹⁴³ NIOD, Coll. Vandeweyer, disk 1, file Milavn.not. Note from the Defence Staff about the need for a military representatives at the United Nations, 12/06/92.

¹⁴⁴ Interviews E.A.W. Koestal, 24/05/00; C. Minderhoud 02/06/00; and R.P.H. van Veen, 16/08/00; Coll. Vandeweyer, disk 1, file Onderzoek. Defensiestaf, entry on the Defence Crisis Management Centre (DCBC) research, 21/11/92.

¹⁴⁵ NIOD, Coll. Vandeweyer, disk 1, file Milavn.not. Note from the Defence Staff about the need for a military representatives at the United Nations, 12/06/92.

¹⁴⁶ Interviews N. Biegman, 03/07/00, and R.P.H. van Veen, 16/08/00.

¹⁴⁷ ABZ, 999.0 UN/Operations/UNPROFOR/Yugoslavia. Ter Beek to Van den Broek, 23/10/92, S92/066/3112; ABZ, Governmental Archive: Coll. Van den Broek. Van den Broek to Ter Beek, 18/11/92. See also BSG. Arrangement of military adviser to PR UN, appendix from Lieutenant Colonel W.H.J. Logt, Head of the Foreign Relations Bureau of the Defence Staff, to Kooijmans et al., 06/05/93, DIS/93/071/1573.

¹⁴⁸ ABZ, PR NY. Note from E.A.W. Koestal, ‘PVVN New York’ (‘PR UN New York’).

¹⁴⁹ Interview Colonel R.P.H. van Veen, 16/08/00.

comment that recognition of Croatia would lead to an escalation of the war there. The Minister is said to have personally ensured that Koestal never spoke on behalf of the ECMM again.¹⁵⁰

The milad maintained direct contact with the DPKO about possible Dutch contributions to meeting UN needs with regard to peacekeeping operations. The DPKO was also his most important source of information. It ran separate 'desks' for the various peacekeeping operations. The UNPROFOR desk was amongst the largest with about 16 people. Van Veen – and later also his deputy, Koestal – would regularly visit it to catch up on the latest developments.

There was a monthly meeting of the military advisers at the UN, whose number grew rapidly after Van Veen's arrival. Their deputies also met periodically. These gatherings usually featured an invited guest, who would give a talk on topics such as the establishment of rules of engagement. Questions could be put and those present would provide a national update and other information. Van Veen's experience was that it was difficult to do business with his counterparts, because most of them were tied to far stricter orders from their capitals than were the Dutch diplomats.¹⁵¹ Van Veen, often accompanied by Biegman, was also present whenever a force commander visited New York and held a briefing there for the nations contributing troops. However, the Dutch milad did not think much of the opportunities available for putting questions at such meetings.¹⁵² There was no official contact whatsoever with the Netherlands' Defence Attaché in Washington.¹⁵³

The political aspects of peacekeeping operations remained the sole responsibility of Biegman, who kept in touch with DPKO head Kofi Annan and UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's own military adviser, the Canadian General Maurice Baril. Biegman generally took Van Veen with him to meetings with Annan.¹⁵⁴ Minderhoud or her replacement, J. S. Cohen, continued to gather information from the Security Council. The meetings of the nations supplying UN troops were usually attended by Biegman, Minderhoud and Van Veen, with one of the two diplomats always speaking at them on behalf of the Netherlands.

From the Netherlands, Van Veen received information from the crisis staffs of the various sections of the armed forces and from the Defence Staff, including situation reports. But, if anything, there was too much information rather than too little. Van Veen was therefore well aware of the problems facing Dutchbat, such as its supply difficulties. He discussed such issues at the Monday-morning meetings of the Permanent Mission.¹⁵⁵ Coded messages from Van Veen and Koestal were transmitted through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with the Ministry of Defence receiving transcripts. Because the coded traffic was always signed by Biegman, Van Veen had agreed with the Ministry of Defence prior to his departure for New York that any message which he had personally written would always contain the word 'milad' in the first sentence. The same was later done, *mutatis mutandis*, with coded traffic originating from deputy milad Koestal.¹⁵⁶

Coded messages from the Permanent Mission dealing with military matters were submitted to Van Veen or Koestal prior to being sent to The Hague. Conversely, they showed their messages to Minderhoud or Cohen before they went to Biegman.¹⁵⁷

Despite the grip which the diplomats and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had over Van Veen and Koestal's coded traffic, they sometimes regarded the two soldiers' communications with envy. The Defence organization made far greater use of the telephone than did the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which may have had a lively telephone culture at the very top but otherwise still relied very much upon

¹⁵⁰ Interview E.A.W. Koestal, 24/05/00; Eyal, *Europe*, p. 47; 'Croatian radio reports 11 deaths', *The Independent*, 14/12/91; T. Engelen, 'servische president heeft zich ernstig verkekend' ('serbian president has badly miscalculated'), *NRC Handelsblad*, 30/12/91.

¹⁵¹ Interview R.P.H. van Veen, 16/08/00.

¹⁵² Interview R.P.H. van Veen, 16/08/00.

¹⁵³ Interviews E.A.W. Koestal 24/05/00; C. Minderhoud, 02/06/00; and R.P.H. van Veen, 16/08/00.

¹⁵⁴ Interview R.P.H. van Veen, 16/08/00.

¹⁵⁵ Interview R.P.H. van Veen, 16/08/00.

¹⁵⁶ Interview R.P.H. van Veen, 16/08/00.

¹⁵⁷ Interviews E.A.W. Koestal, 24/05/00 and R.P.H. van Veen, 16/08/00.

the coded telegram.¹⁵⁸ The desired information from the milad and his deputy did arrive eventually at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 'but perhaps rather later than you would have wished for'.¹⁵⁹

Moreover, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs tended to think that the Ministry of Defence used the milad or Dutch staff working in the DPKO to broach requests to the Dutch government when the Ministry of Defence wanted to station people in a particular place as part of a peacekeeping operation.¹⁶⁰ Van Veen does not deny that such a 'proactive approach' was taken. For example, if he heard that mine clearance was needed somewhere and he knew that the Dutch experts in that field had just returned from Cambodia, he would sound out the Defence Staff as to whether he should or should not 'put out feelers' in that respect. If the answer was affirmative, a 'negotiating game' about wishes and possibilities would begin with the DPKO without the Ministry of Foreign Affairs being involved. Only once an informal request came from the UN Secretariat would Van Veen take it to Biegan and tell him that he had already been discussing the idea. However, this proactive route was usually confined to smaller contributions: those involving larger units would be discussed at a higher level much earlier. 'Of course,' says Van Veen, 'it's not as if I was walking around the UN Secretariat with a battalion in my back pocket to see if there was anything exciting I could do with those men.'¹⁶¹ His deputy, Koestal, also regarded this state of affairs as defensible. 'I don't accept that what we were doing was untraceable. In the early stages you can call the world and his wife and make agreements, but the important things always have to be recorded... We sent everything important in our coded messages.'¹⁶²

Far removed from New York, in the region of the former Yugoslavia, the Netherlands had an embassy in Belgrade. Because it had been the local representative for Luxembourg's EU Presidency during the first half of 1991, it was ideally prepared for the developments after the end of June that year. But for the next six months, the heavy Dutch involvement in the Yugoslav issue during its own EU Presidency would create a heavy workload for the embassy. In early November 1991, ambassador Jan Fietelaars complained that he did not have enough time for 'frequent, considered, verified and yet still short reports' about the political developments in Yugoslavia. He had to spend too much time keeping up with current developments. At the same time he complained that he could hardly reflect at all upon what was happening in Croatia and the other republics because the news about these regions that reached him in Belgrade was heavily filtered.¹⁶³ Nevertheless, his reports were one of the most important sources of information from the region and therefore contributed to the views of the Eastern Europe Bureau at the Ministry.¹⁶⁴ At the end of May 1992, as part of the UN sanctions regime, diplomatic relations with the Belgrade government were downgraded to *chargé d'affaires* level. Of course, this restricted access by the Dutch embassy in Belgrade, headed at the time by R.J.H. Engels, to the leading figures in Yugoslavia.

From the beginning of 1993, a diplomat was stationed at the Dutch consulate in Zagreb. The first appointee stayed there less than six months. After that the position of *chargé d'affaires* in Zagreb was held by Kees Nederlof for a year. In December 1993 the Dutch government decided to open an embassy in the Croatian capital, despite the distance the government wished to keep from the country, mainly because of the Croat involvement in the war in Bosnia.¹⁶⁵ The embassy opened on 15 April 1994. The Dutch ambassador in Budapest, Hans Sondaal, had already presented his credentials to President Tudjman on 7 December the previous year, upon which he was officially accredited to

¹⁵⁸ Interviews M.R.O. Baron Bentinck, 12/04/00 and H.A.C. van der Zwan, 12/04/00; Bais, *Mijnenveld*, p. 29.

¹⁵⁹ Interview H.A.C. van der Zwan, 12/04/00.

¹⁶⁰ Interviews H.A.C. van der Zwan, 12/04/00 and C. Minderhoud, 02/06/00.

¹⁶¹ Interview R.P.H. van Veen, 16/08/00.

¹⁶² Interview E.A.W. Koestal, 24/05/00. Cf. interview C. Minderhoud, 02/06/00: 'There were a number of things on paper. When you needed clear, businesslike instructions. But a great many things were not.'

¹⁶³ ABZ, DIE/ARA/01233. EC/Yugoslavia, November 1991, Fietelaars 406 to Van den Broek, 03/11/91.

¹⁶⁴ Interview P. Bas Backer, 22/05/00.

¹⁶⁵ 'Nieuwe ambassades' ('New embassies'), *Het Parool*, 18/12/93. For the Dutch government keeping its distance from the regime in Croatia, see ABZ, DEU/ARA/05252, *passim*.

Zagreb.¹⁶⁶ The actual work at the embassy continued to be done by Nederlof, until he was succeeded as *chargé d'affaires* by Joop Scheffers – until then Deputy Head of the Directorate of UN Political Affairs (DPV) and previously the second man at the Belgrade embassy.¹⁶⁷

The recognition of Bosnia-Herzegovina by the Netherlands and the other EC nations in spring 1992 did not intensify diplomatic contacts straight away. At the time, the Netherlands had offered to formalize relations, but received no response from the Bosnian government.¹⁶⁸ As a result, the Netherlands, like the other EC countries, lacked any diplomatic reporting from Sarajevo in 1992. On the occasion of the CSCE ministerial meeting in Stockholm on 15 December 1992, Dutch Ambassador-at-Large Christiaan Kröner and Bosnian Minister of Foreign Affairs Haris Siladjic exchanged letters formally establishing diplomatic relations between their two countries. Present at the ceremony was the Bosnian ambassador to Belgium, Nedžad Hadžimusić, who shortly afterwards would also be accredited to the Netherlands.¹⁶⁹ At the beginning of January 1993, the ambassador of Denmark – the holder at the time of the EC Presidency – became the first representative of a European Community member state to present his credentials in the Bosnian capital.

On 15 December 1992, the Netherlands and Bosnia-Herzegovina decided to establish diplomatic relations at ambassadorial level. For the time being this led only to the accreditation of the Bosnian *chargé d'affaires* in Brussels to the Dutch government. The Netherlands maintained its side of the relationship from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in The Hague. The appointment of a Dutch ambassador or *chargé d'affaires* to Sarajevo was delayed because the security situation in the city and its lack of accessibility would make it impossible to function effectively. In summer 1994, the Eastern Europe Bureau considered that Dutch involvement in the reconstruction of Sarajevo justified the Netherlands following the example already set by France, the United Kingdom, the United States, Germany, Italy, Austria, Croatia, the Vatican, Belgium, Denmark, Sweden, Iran and Turkey appointing an ambassador, or at least a *chargé d'affaires*, to Sarajevo. Political reporting from the Bosnian capital would usefully complement that coming from Belgrade and Zagreb, as well as from Baron van Pallandt, the ambassador to Albania who was based in The Hague.¹⁷⁰ However, a Dutch diplomatic mission would not actually open in Sarajevo until March 1996.¹⁷¹

The lack of the Netherlands' own direct diplomatic reporting from Sarajevo meant that the Permanent Representative of Bosnia-Herzegovina to the United Nations, Muhamed Sacirbey, who had a very good working relationship with Biegan and was a frequent guest at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, would become an important source of information for the Dutch ministry.¹⁷²

9. The ECMM and the Yugoslavia Conference

Reports from the European Community Monitoring Mission for Yugoslavia (ECMM) were also of great importance, particularly during the first year of the war: for a long time, it was the only source of direct information from Croatia apart from US intelligence. Dutch Military Intelligence Service (MID) reports were also sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but initially their usefulness was considered very limited since the information they contained had often already been gleaned from open sources.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁶ For a report of this, see ABZ, DEU/ARA/05252. Nederlof to Kooijmans, 07/12/93, no. ZAG-93.19.

¹⁶⁷ For his experiences in the Croatian capital, see Scheffers, *Ambassadeur*.

¹⁶⁸ ABZ, DIE2001/00023. Memorandum from DEU to AP et al., 02/12/92, no. DEU-295/92.

¹⁶⁹ ABZ, DEU/ARA/05293. Van den Broek, 17/12/92, circ 839.

¹⁷⁰ ABZ, DEU/ARA/05293. Memorandum from DEU/OE to Deputy DGPZ, 29/07/94, no. deu-609; Memorandum from DEU to PLVS, 11/08/94, no. 644/94.

¹⁷¹ ABZ, DIE/2001/00023. Memorandum from Deputy DEU to AP et al., 27/11/95, no. DEU-995/95. At first, only a *chargé d'affaires* worked there. An ambassador was appointed in June 1996.

¹⁷² Interviews N. Biegan, 03/07/00; O. Hattinga van 't Sant, 18/07/00; F.A.M. Majoor, 19/04/00; C. Minderhoud, 02/06/00; P. Bas Backer, 22/05/00; J.L. Sandee, 12/06/00; H. Hazewinkel, 17/04/00; J.M. Vos, 24/06/99; and H.A.C. van der Zwan, 12/04/00.

¹⁷³ Interview J.L. Sandee, 12/06/00.

Foreign diplomatic representatives in the Netherlands also played a limited role in shaping Dutch opinions and policy with regard to Yugoslavia. Virtually all the policy officials involved concede that there was frequent contact only with the United States diplomats accredited to The Hague, and to a lesser extent with staff of the British embassy.¹⁷⁴

When the Yugoslavia Conference was formed in early September 1991 under the chairmanship of Lord Carrington, Dr C. Barkman was appointed as one of its vice-chairmen and L.A. Kleinjan was seconded from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Carrington's Secretariat.

Maarten Lak headed a small Yugoslavia Conference Secretariat within the Ministry, which coordinated all internal matters related to it. His room was located in an office next to the Europe Directorate (DEU), but fell directly under the control of the Director General of Political Affairs (DGPZ). Lak reported directly to the Director General or to the Ambassador-at-Large, but also had to make sure that he kept the Europe Directorate fully informed.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁴ Interviews O. Hattinga van 't Sant, 18/07/00; H. Hazewinkel, 17/04/00; F.A.M. Majoor, 19/04/00; A.M. van der Togt, 04/05/00; H.A.C. van der Zwan, 12/04/00.

¹⁷⁵ ABZ, DAV, 921.353.22, memorandum from DGPZ to Head of DEU and Lak, 11/09/91, no. 211/91.