

Strengthening UN Peace Operations

Modalities and Opportunities for Regionalized Contributions

Summary of Challenges Annual Forum 2013

The Forum took place at a crucial juncture in the issues facing peacekeeping. While the continuing threat of international terrorism remains a serious challenge for the world, the interventions of the '9/11' era, and the scale of demands generated in their aftermath on the military and other resources of the engaged nations, are dissipating. At the same time the UN has faced the challenge of more demanding mandates associated with the Protection of Civilians (POC), in environments where they have come under increasing 'asymmetric' attack. Missions have entailed multidimensional features associated with dealing with weak or non-existent state structures or agencies, demanding a broadly integrated approach, with matching capabilities. Exacerbating the pressure on weakened state structures and undermining the effectiveness of peacekeeping has been the growing scope of transnational crime, which is often a significant factor in the corruption of, or pressure on, host nation institutions. Coupled with this, many nations have struggled with the consequences of budget pressures in the wake of the global financial crisis, which has necessitated cutbacks in defence and related areas that have challenged their ability to support peacekeeping missions.

Peacekeeping missions have increasingly required the ability to generate deployable civilian assets, policing, and technical enablers that can act as 'force multipliers' in the context of potentially overextended military resources. Acceptance of the need for capabilities to provide all sources information units for building situation awareness and to master the information demands of a mission have led to the introduction of personnel and assets that are drawn from Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) resources that would previously have proven too sensitive to deploy. This has included Remotely Piloted Systems (RPS) and it was notable that a RPS capability was deployed into the DRC for the first time in a UN peacekeeping mission during the very week of the Forum. Mobility is another key force multiplier and commonly the most

The Challenges Annual Forum 2013

The Challenges Annual Forum 2013 was held in Buenos Aires. It was hosted on 5-6 December 2013 by the Ministry of Defence of Argentina in cooperation with the Armed Forces Joint Staff and CAECOPAZ.

The Forum addressed how regional capacities can best support and strengthen UN peace operations.

Participants discussed the conditions and capacities to enhance the effectiveness of regionalized contributions.



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crucial mobility asset is rotary wing aviation but also, and increasingly, serviceable all-terrain vehicles that meet force protection standards to deal with IED threats. Other areas of need are combat services support functions such as military engineers, medical services and signalers and physical capabilities such as night vision goggles (NVG) and night flying capacity.

Added to the new threats and challenges that have emerged in peacekeeping there remain the perpetual objectives of rapid deployment to address situations that require immediate response, including where an existing mission may experience a spike in threat levels or taskings. To meet the challenges of contemporary peacekeeping there is an increasing need for the UN to seek the broadest possible base of contributors, particularly in rapid response options, and to work towards flexibility within existing mission constructs to respond to evolving crises that emerge in the same region or sub-region. Given the clearly identified capabilities that are required in complex peacekeeping, the contributions that the UN seeks cannot be just about rounding up numbers of troops,

A regionalized approach [to peacekeeping] broadens the base of contributors giving small countries the opportunity to participate

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police or civilians. It is just as much about having properly trained and equipped force elements that are as close to interoperable as can be achieved. In this respect the UN is committed to pursuing enhanced professional standards among contributed military, police and civilian personnel.

In seeking to broaden the base of potential TCC, PCC and civilian contributors, the UN has had successful recent experiences with regional organizations and combined force contributions

from within regions or sub-regions. The Forum considered examples of these, including the experiences of the host country Argentina and Latin American colleagues in the MINUSTAH mission, UNFICYP, and in particular the cooperation Argentina has generated with Chile, the Irish/Swedish effort in Liberia and the Irish/Finnish contingent in UNIFIL. Also considered was relevant experience in Africa, including the evolutions of MONUSCO in the DRC where the new 'Intervention Brigade' concept is being tested. This brings together many of the issues of current peacekeeping, with its mandate language tasking the new brigade with carrying out offensive operations, either unilaterally or jointly with the Congolese armed forces, 'in a robust, highly mobile and versatile manner' to disrupt the activities of those groups. The troops for this force are being contributed by Malawi, Tanzania and South Africa in an ad hoc arrangement. Work is progressing on the strengthening of strategic partnerships between the UN and the broader AU focusing on the operational readiness of the African Standby Force and a rapid

response capability. The Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping has also engaged more actively with the EU and was recently in Moscow discussing the possibilities of using the Collective Security Treaty Organisation force of around 3,300 troop strength, formed in 2009. The UN is emphasizing in this engagement the special needs arising from POC task support, unity of command, discipline arrangements and tables of equipment reflective of current peacekeeping needs. It was noted that, notwithstanding some notable successes in ad hoc arrangements, such as INTERFET and RAMSI, the absence of mature standby and cooperative security arrangements in the Middle East and the Asia Pacific is a significant impediment to achieving the standards, readiness, collective training, interoperability and availability of forces that are demanded for current complex peacekeeping missions.

It was noted that further useful evolutions had occurred in relation to the European Battle Group, but that in both that case and the recently formed Cruz del Sur force, there had not yet been operational experience of the use of these constructs. It was suggested that the UN needed to engage more closely and proactively to establish the circumstances and mechanisms for the timely use of these forces. It seemed that, particularly in the case of the Cruz del Sur, there was a high degree of readiness, flexibility and political will to deploy this force in support of UN operations, with no pre-existing caveats. The European Battle Group would seem to have more impediments, including its designated 6,000 km operational perimeter. The problems the UN has experienced in Mali in rapid deployment and the current average of six months time frame from Security Council authorizations to deployment are not sustainable for extreme emergencies. It was pleasing to note that West African nations were looking to establish a regional rapid response capacity to be operational from mid-2015 and discussions proceeding amongst the Nordic nations were also encouraging.

Looking in more detail at the MINUSTAH experience with reference to lessons as to enhancing operational readiness, the common doctrine, training and cultural familiarity amongst the Latin American contingents was extremely beneficial. Underpinning the common training is the strong link that has been established with DPKO, the Integrated Training Service (ITS) and the International Association of Peacekeeping Training Centres (IAPTC). With supplementary enabling support provided by the US, and home country logistic support close by, the familiarity of the Latin American contingents with the Haitian setting, enhanced POC effectiveness. There were also many bilateral and multilateral agreements between and amongst many of the contingents, but it was conceded that a stronger 'corporate framework' for cooperation and coordination of security forces in Latin America would greatly improve responsiveness. It was indicated that there was still significant work to be done to generate a rapid deployment force in the region with the requisite readiness state.

The other area where much more work needed to be done was in addressing gender representation within regional military forces.

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A positive in this respect was the deployment of a female Formed Police Unit (FPU), so vital given the issue of sexual and gender based violence in Haiti. The Irish and Scandinavian experience was also an illustration that the ability of the forces to work together was underpinned by a detailed Memorandum of Understanding and a Military Technical Agreement, as well as many measures to ensure integration. This was also against a background of adherence to common NATO standards and shared experience in the SHIRBRIG framework. The ability to conveniently organise combined training for European contingents to UNFICYP in Cyprus showed the benefit of regional proximity but this was also a factor of the longstanding and steady nature of the mission. The drive towards network centric operations is resulting in an even greater need to harmonise technical capabilities and practices amongst regional states who are interested in developing a combined peacekeeping relationship. Increasingly operational capability is about dominating the electromagnetic spectrum, comprehensive sensory coverage, integrated and secure networks and systems. If the systems that deliver these outcomes are not compatible amongst collaborating contributors to peacekeeping then interoperability will be much harder to achieve.

The progress towards genuinely and effectively dealing with gender issues within the UN was noted, along with its importance for mission success and the need to maintain the effort. Up to 20% of UN programmatic work is now gender focused. The nature of the challenge was particularly emphasized by the UN Police Division where 90.5% of PCC assigned personnel are male. The Division has set itself the goal of achieving a 20% level of female representation by 2014 and all member nations should be encouraged to help meet this target, including within their own national forces. There are obvious roles for which women have been used in policing such as child protection and sexual and gender based violence, but the Division seeks to ensure women are represented in all aspects of its operations and in leadership roles. The added bonus from an operational perspective is the encouragement and inspiration of the role models these women provide, and the ability to enhance human information operations, situational awareness and community relations. This can be particularly important in enabling a force to avoid the risks at times posed by contact between male force members and females in certain cultural contexts. In helping to negotiate and build peace in an operation there are also many positive opportunities for using women. In Afghanistan, contingents obtained precisely such benefit from female engagement teams, combined with the effect having female officers in responsible positions generated.

It was emphasized that a key underpinning for harmonizing regionalized contributions to peacekeeping and enhancing operational readiness should be the further developing of doctrine, guidance and training material. The lessons learned from the last 20 years of complex and robust peacekeeping have been distilled into products such as the UN Principles and Guidelines for Peacekeeping in 2008, the two volume UN Infantry Battalion Manual released in 2012, many guidance publications and

the Force HQ booklet, launched in 2013. Soon to be added to this will be 11 new manuals covering a number of force capability and mission task areas, which should be ready by December 2014. UN materials provide an international best practice reference and a common basis for cooperation among TCC and PCC. Certainly in the Latin American case UN materials have been assiduously incorporated into courses and training and have assisted in harmonizing training with other regional forces. This stands as an excellent example of how to build interoperability and collaboration also in regions where there is no security architecture or cooperation is less formalized. This would be particularly useful for the Middle East and the Asia Pacific. The Challenges Forum project on comparative policies, principles and guidelines for peace operations, which seeks to explore possible harmonization of guidance for peace operations amongst countries and contributors was also highlighted. The project collects, maps and analyses international, regional and partner countries' official policies, principles and guidelines for peace operations, identifying gaps, overlaps and makes recommendations on areas that need further attention.

One area of special need in the context of multidimensional peacekeeping is the ability to mobilize and deploy the requisite civilian capacities. There is a clear need for there to be a more systematic effort in developing a pool of deployable civilian expertise. There is also an associated need to further develop the training and guidance material for such civilians. It was highlighted that there has been an extensive body of experience and lessons learned in this area that has been accumulated in missions, both UN and other organizations, which need to be more effectively captured and incorporated into UN materials.

While experience with fielding individual police officers (IPOs) and more recently FPU, has grown there still remain many challenges in this area. The lack of guidance and training materials to match what is available in the military sphere is apparent and must be addressed. The UN Police Division is developing a Strategic Guidance Framework for International Police Peacekeeping (SGF) in cooperation with UN Member States and including the Challenges Partnership. When finalized, the policy will be a key enabler for the global community of police peacekeepers to function effectively and efficiently in carrying out their mandate. One of many advantages with the establishment of an SGF for UN police is that with a common understanding among all PCCs of what exactly is required for UN police, the appropriate type and level of skills and expertise should be more easily recruited. There are currently 16,000 police officers mandated for deployment on expeditionary missions worldwide, evenly divided amongst IPO and FPU. The problem, as it has always been, is that national policing capacities are normally fully engaged with domestic demands and no real spare capacity exists for deployment, unless it is in the area of border police, who are not well suited to community policing and investigation. At present the UN has been able to fill 12,888 of the 16,000 mandated positions. Highlighting the need for more capacity is that in addition to UN police deployments there are the significant

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numbers deployed under the EU umbrella and as part of national contributions to other operations, such as the one in Afghanistan. The demand for police has grown to include a number of UN Department of Political Affairs (DPA) missions, supporting countries feeling the need to strengthen institutions or deal with situations creating pressure for a state.

These situations include the increasing challenge of transnational crime, for example in the ECOWAS region, where the 'Praia Plan' is experimenting with the combined efforts of the UN Serious Crime Unit and Interpol. Another example of where transnational crime undermines the objectives of an international stabilisation effort is in Afghanistan, where the production of opium not only supports international crime, but is corrosive of good governance through corruption, undermines rule of law and generates revenue for insurgents. It was suggested that given the fact that opium production is a key source of sustenance for Afghan farmers highlights the need for integrated policing/law enforcement as well as socio/economic development strategies to address the root causes to the problem. The question remains how to generate not least the policing capacity to meet this ever growing demand on missions.

Clearly the major issue confronting contemporary peacekeeping is posed by the presence now, in 94% of UN mandates for missions, of POC language and requirements. This in turn has spurred discussion about the merits, limits and definition of 'robust peacekeeping'. The POC mandates pose questions around defining 'civilians' and working through related concepts of 'justice' and 'human rights' in host environments where laws and culture can differ greatly. There is a paucity of UN and national doctrinal and training materials that address these POC issues which needs to be filled. Additionally there are often challenges of determining the appropriateness and choice of using military or police assets in public security tasks, often dependent on threat levels in a given environment. Where the military must take the lead in a high threat environment it is necessary that Tactics, Techniques and Procedures (TTP) be developed for police and military to work together, so that law enforcement outcomes are catered for in activities. An example would be a police patrol protected by appropriate military forces so that this joint capacity could deliver both security and law enforcement outcomes. Similarly intelligence/information operations need to be synchronized with serious crimes investigations to ensure evidence is not contaminated and investigations are not compromised. Often in these environments it needs to be understood that the measure of effectiveness is successful prosecutions and the measure of success is the promotion of the establishment of an indigenous rule of law capability.

As the Challenges Forum Patron, Jean-Marie Guehenno, noted the old formula on peacekeeping articulated by Lakhdar Brahimi that 'there can be no peacekeeping where there is no peace to keep' is in many ways redundant in the face of contemporary operational environments. In some cases in a mission with a POC mandate the host nation state apparatus may in fact be the source of the threat to civilians, which may either be

deliberate policy (open or covert) or the result of 'rogue' security elements. This challenges traditional peacekeeping concepts of working in a consensual framework and Mr Guehenno noted that an initial consensual framework can break down or lose meaning where a variety of non-state actors may be operating outside negotiated settlements. This then leads to the challenge of delineating use of force and rules of engagement regimes. Often the circumstances of POC can be confusing in determining and separating the source of threats, ensuring that targeting is restrained, precise and effective. There is a need in a mission containing POC authorization and language to define the circumstances when intervention is warranted, where atrocities and violence against civilians clearly demands intervention. There is no doubt that a highly capable force is a credible force and by that fact can act as a deterrent to violence, and so POC mandates must be supported by the necessary military, police and associated forces and enablers. While Mr Guehenno noted that peacekeeping is not counter insurgency, he nevertheless noted that there

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were many shared characteristics. Appropriate strategies for counter insurgency, are often summarized by reference to a focus that equates to 20% on security issues and 80% on the social, economic and political dimensions. Contemporary peacekeeping requires a similar proportional focus. In particular the dilution of the power of dysfunctional states requires a concerted effort on the building and remediation of state institutions and structures.

In meeting the diverse needs of multidimensional peacekeeping drawing on the resources that can be tapped through the Chapter VIII mechanism of the UN Charter is increasingly coming to the fore. As regions become more involved the incentive of directly affected national interests can be useful in mobilizing the necessary capabilities but, as Mr Guehenno noted, this carries the challenge that these interests could drive partiality. Also, while regional contributions can facilitate the better structuring of global responses, this will lose some attraction if the focus is only on home regions with loyalty, as it were, to that region to the exclusion of providing support to other parts of the world where there is a compelling need. Nations in this respect need to have a broader conception of national interest as threats to peace have become more global in their economic and security effects. Mr Guehenno cited the example of the two attacks, linked to the Lebanon based Hezbollah group, in the Forum host city Buenos Aires in 1992 and 1994 respectively, where a total of 114 people were killed and many hundreds wounded. Global solidarity is needed in the face of global threats. In particular ungoverned spaces cannot be allowed to proliferate as this also will have global consequences.

It was observed that we appear to have moved beyond the debate in many ways of whether intervention is 'legitimate' for UN peacekeeping, in the case of dire crises involving large scale civilian casualties, but there is a level of international 'fatigue' following a lengthy and costly involvement in Afghanistan. It will take time to move beyond this fatigue and work within budgetary pressures, but sharing the burden across regional organizations and collaborations offers a way forward to manage these constraints. Certainly we cannot adopt a more robust approach to peacekeeping in such interventionary situations without matching the mandate and objectives with the appropriate resources and a realistic appreciation of what robust peacekeeping requires.

One means by which the UN and regional contributors can help develop the necessary conceptual framework to meet these needs, which will then drive capability solutions, is engaging in a thorough process of scenario based analysis. This could delineate what a full constellation of circumstances, drawing on field experiences, might look like, and help formulate the appropriate responses. Regional organizations or collaborations could facilitate this work, particularly combining the efforts of peacekeeping centers and related establishments in this endeavor. To meet the needs that will emerge from this analysis the UN needs to be less 'individual state' centric in its approach and more regionally focused, in proactively assisting in, and harnessing the potential of regionalized contributions. This broader regional engagement is often in the interests of the states themselves as we have seen how global threats emerge from ungoverned spaces and how the descent of states into chaos breeds regional instability, has resulted in piracy, facilitates transnational crime and triggers refugee flows. While keeping the UN as the supreme source of authority, accepting the challenge of greater regionalized contributions to peacekeeping could well be said to be the exemplar of the hortatory adage "think globally and act locally".

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The Challenges Forum is a strategic and dynamic platform for constructive dialogue among policymakers, practitioners and academics on key issues and developments in peace operations. The aim is to shape the debate by promoting awareness of emerging issues and identifying key challenges facing military, police and civilian peace operations. It is a global network of partner organizations from all continents of the world.

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