Dear Readers,

This edition of the Review is devoted to a seminar entitled ‘Is there a role for the military in peacebuilding?’, which was held on October 17th 2006, with the participation of people from NGO, Government and military backgrounds. It begins with the background papers circulated before the seminar and continues with a summary of the live presentations and subsequent discussions written by our reporter Anne Rogers.

Is there a role for the military in peacebuilding?

by Andrew Rigby, Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies, Coventry University, UK

Introduction

We are all aware of the manner in which military force has come to be used for ‘humanitarian’ purposes in recent years, as a consequence of which aid and conflict transformation agencies working in post-settlement contexts have found themselves having to develop appropriate working relationships with their new partners – the military forces representing regional and international governmental organisations such as NATO and the UN. Indeed, the influential report Responsibility to Protect which seeks to present a rationale for armed humanitarian intervention based on traditional just war thinking concludes its observations regarding ‘human protection operations’ with the recommendation that ‘there must be maximum coordination between military and civilian authorities and organisations’.

If military intervention is to be contemplated, the need for a post-intervention strategy is also of paramount importance. Military intervention is one instrument in a broader spectrum of tools designed to prevent conflicts and humanitarian emergencies from arising, intensifying, spreading, persisting or recurring. The objective of such a strategy must be to help ensure that the conditions that prompted the military intervention do not repeat themselves or simply resurface. ... the consolidation of peace in the aftermath of conflict requires more than purely diplomatic and military action ... an integrated peace building effort is needed to address the various factors which have caused or are threatening a conflict.

In this paper I offer a few reflections on the possible roles to be played by ‘third party’ military forces in post-war peace-building processes. The hypothetical scenario that informs these observations is of

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2 Responsibility to protect, p.39.
a ‘third party’ military force intervening in an intra-state conflict situation in order to enforce a ceasefire and create the conditions necessary for peacebuilding processes.3

Deep values and the world-as-it-is

Before offering my observations on the potential role of the military in peace-building processes, I want to try and contextualise them with regard to my own stance vis-à-vis the military. I am an unreconstructed pacifist, using the term in its Anglo-American sense of someone who opposes all war. My commitment to pacifism is a core element in my identity. That said, as a peace studies academic with an interest in post-war reconstruction and reconciliation processes, I am required to deal with the world-as-it-is, and that world is one where the military continues to exist as an institution prepared to pursue its traditional function of inflicting physical violence and death on those defined as enemies by the state or other authority to whom the military owe allegiance. In recent years in the UK and elsewhere we have found that the military are laying claim to a broader role – sowing the seeds of sustainable peace in the aftermath of war. I remain deeply sceptical at some ‘gut level’ that what are essentially institutions for coercion and violence can have any role whatsoever in the promotion of peace. Be that as it may, at the more superficial level of the intellect I recognise that it is important to try and identify the lessons to be learned with regard to the involvement of military forces in ‘post-conflict’ peacebuilding on the principle that if it is going to take place, we should seek to learn the lessons in order to generate guidelines for best practice.

Peacebuilding, sustainable peace and human security

Peacebuilding is a generic term referring to all those activities and initiatives that are intended to create the conditions necessary for a sustainable peace in the aftermath of violent and destructive conflict. The achievement of such a durable and self-regenerating peaceful condition is only possible where the citizens enjoy a degree of human security such that the possibility of a reversion to organised and large scale violence is minimised. In other words, sustainable peace at the societal level is dependent on the experience of heightened levels of individual (and hence communal) freedom from want and fear such that the post-war peace grows ever-deeper, from the surface level of a ceasefire to deeper forms of co-existence and mutuality between the different sectors of society.

Enhancing human security – the dimensions of a ‘good peace’

If we want to explore those factors that can contribute to the enhancement of human security as the necessary pre-condition for a durable peace, we need to identify the main components of what we might call a good peace – a sustainable peace process that deepens over time. Such a broad project is directly comparable to nation-building, and as such involves not only laying the foundations of new institutions but also entails efforts to promote attitudinal and cultural changes. Amongst such challenges we can identify the following.

1. The existence of an effective ceasefire.
   Here a key role can be fulfilled by an intervening military force, establishing the minimal conditions of physical security necessary for longer-term peace-building initiatives to take root.

2. Functioning administrative system.
   It is vital that the means be developed for the delivery of basic amenities and a level of ‘law and order’ sufficient to enhance people’s sense of physical and psychological security.

3 In presenting these reflections I am focusing on those military interventions that enjoy a credible degree of legitimacy. I am not referring to cases like the invasion and subsequent occupation of Iraq, which was and remains illegitimate.
3. **Nonviolent conflict management.**
A major challenge is the creation of institutions of government at central and local levels that can manage conflict non-violently without recourse to large-scale violence.

4. **The development of a working economy.**
There should be a particular focus on inclusivity and employment generation.

5. **Promotion of a culture of inclusivity.**
The capacity to handle conflict non-violently will be enhanced to the degree that post-settlement initiatives are seen as inclusive and as such can engender the active support of significant peace constituencies who can maintain and mobilise popular sentiment in favour of the peace.

6. **Dealing with the past.**
The emergence of new forms of co-existence such that former enemies begin to acknowledge each other as fellow-citizens (a new civic culture) can be encouraged by the utilisation of culturally appropriate means of helping people individually and collectively to become reconciled to their past loss and associated pain. The processes and the institutions by which this is pursued will invariably depend not only on the culture of the particular society but also on the power-relationships between the parties to the peace settlement.

7. **Reconciliation initiatives.**
A sustainable peace/security will not come through institution-building and economic development alone. Too often it seems that third parties work with a model of ‘peace through prosperity’. Such an approach ignores the fact that ceasefires might bring an end to the fighting, they do not bring an end to the conflict. Therefore it is vital that in all spheres of life efforts are made to create the space necessary for dialogue to take place across the boundaries of divided communities, such that the seeds of new forms of co-existence can be sown.

**The risks of military involvement in peacebuilding**

I am aware that what has been presented above might seem like a seven-point plan for peace-building. Unfortunately the real world is not so simple, and at this stage I want to make a few cautionary observations directed towards those who think they can convert a military intervention aimed at a form of pacification (the top-down imposition of order by coercive means) into a constructive dimension of a longer-term and broader peace-building project to create a sustainable peace.

1. There is no standard template for peace-building, there is no ‘one-size-fits-all’. Each initiative needs to be crafted in the fullest awareness of the specificity of the context and of the dynamics of the conflict. What might have worked in Northern Ireland is not necessarily appropriate for the Balkans or elsewhere! Any agency contemplating intervention in a conflict zone must first of all perform a very thorough conflict analysis.

2. Any intervention, whether it be by military or non-military means and however ‘humanitarian’ in impulse it might be, must be informed by the awareness that outsiders cannot make peace for other people. Reconciliation can take place only when communities take responsibility for their relationships with each other. All outsiders can reasonably hope to achieve by their intervention is to contribute to the empowerment of indigenous peace constituencies.

3. Any agency intervening in a conflict zone, by military or non-military means, can hardly avoid becoming a party to the conflict. The belief that a military force can enter a conflict zone for peace-keeping purposes and remain as some kind of neutral referee is not supported by the available historical evidence.
4. The most critical factor affecting the speed and the manner by which an intervening force comes to be seen as partisan is their perceived degree of legitimacy. This in turn is influenced by a number of variables.

a) The decision to intervene is taken according to due process and as a last resort, in accordance with the normal precepts of just war theory relating to *jus ad bellum*.

b) There are no substantial grounds for suspecting any ulterior motive for the intervention beyond humanitarian concern and a belief in ‘the responsibility to protect’, as evidenced amongst other things by the degree of consistency regarding such decisions. *(Why intervene in Kosovo and not in Palestine?)*

c) There is reliable evidence that the intervention is welcomed by the majority of the indigenous population.

d) During the period of intervention the personnel behave in a manner that generates legitimacy, as evidenced primarily by a non-discriminatory respect for basic human rights and a system of holding to account those who abuse such rights.

5. To the extent that intervening forces are viewed as partisan and integral to the conflict, they undermine the legitimacy and the efficacy of those civilian humanitarian agencies that intervened ‘on the coat-tails’ of the military, such that they too can become ‘legitimate targets’ for violent sanctions.

**Concluding observations**

1. **The need to distinguish between combat and policing**

The basic aim of any intervening military force is to create the necessary conditions of physical security such that reconstruction and reconciliation processes can take place. However, there are two dimensions to this role, and they do not rest easily alongside each other. On the one hand there is the use of coercive force to protect threatened populations and enforce a ceasefire. Then there is the policing function of establishing and maintaining a degree of public order (and the avoidance of civil chaos) such that some variant of normal social life can begin to grow. These two roles – the war-fighting and the policing – require different approaches and different mentalities. Whereas overwhelming force might be necessary in combat, it can be counter-productive in policing – sending the tanks in to disperse a mob is not the way to maintain law and order in the long-term. Moreover, it is unrealistic to expect combat troops who have risked life and limb on the battlefield to take on a post-ceasefire policing function, to shift from being instruments of deadly violence to being protectors of public order within the community. Combat troops are not accustomed to treating those they encounter with dignity. Yet we know that unless locals are treated with respect, then the intervening force will lose legitimacy. We also know that you cannot police without the support of local communities. Without that support the only way to maintain a kind of order is by coercive domination, which leads to further erosion of legitimacy and a corresponding corrosion of the morality of the troops themselves who increasingly take on the role of occupiers.

2. **The efficacy of an unarmed interventionary force has been under-estimated.**

In discussing these issues with one of my students from Sudan, he reported on the experience of African Union troops in the Darfur region, equipped with small-arms, in front of whom people were still being killed. Given that a ceasefire can hold only so long as the parties remain committed to it, could not an unarmed interventionary ‘force’ be just as effective as an armed one in monitoring a ceasefire?

3. **Responsibility of military to educate politicians and publics**

Given the questionable contribution that any military intervention can make to the peace-building processes necessary for the achievement of a sustainable peace, beyond establishing the base...
conditions of physical security for such processes to proceed, the military have a responsibility to educate politicians and publics about the limitations and the dangers of military intervention – there can be no military solution to a political problem.

4. The need to think in the long-term
If and when intervention does take place, the military should prioritise from the very start the need to work for their own redundancy in relation to the intervention. If they fail to think in the long-term, seeking to manage each crisis in public order as it occurs, failing to train and hand over responsibility to indigenous civilians, they risk becoming an occupying pacification force, ‘freezing’ the situation at a stage which remains unsustainable without their continued presence, thereby becoming an obstacle to deeper peace-building processes.

5. The dangers of a culture of militarism
Any military intervention contributes to a ‘culture of militarism’, a belief that reliance on military force and violence is a legitimate means of pursuing interests. This is one of the paradoxes at the heart of military involvement in peacebuilding. As such it is perhaps important to be reminded that the threats to human security stem not so much from conflict but from the violence involved in the pursuance of conflict. The fact that some of us, on occasions, recognise the ‘responsibility to protect’ threatened populations, and recognise that military force can have a role to play in such a project, should not mask the more fundamental imperative to develop nonviolent means of transforming destructive conflicts along constructive channels in all walks of life and at whatever level they occur.

6. Peace-building is not a job for the military
In one of my postgraduate classes I reviewed some of the points made in this presentation. One of the students, a West African military officer, after looking at the listing of the elements of a ‘good peace’ declared, ‘Other than enforcing and monitoring a ceasefire – the rest ... that is not a job for the military!’

Getting to No

by Michael Randle, Department of Peace Studies, Bradford University

Is there a role for the military in peacebuilding? To address the question it is first necessary to clarify terms. It is usual to distinguish between peacekeeping, peace enforcement, and peace building.

Peacekeeping as originally conceived operated by the consent of the parties involved. The first major peacekeeping mission undertaken by the UN was the deployment of the UN Emergency Force in Egypt (UNEF) in 1957 in the aftermath of the attack on that country by British, French and Israeli forces to retake the Suez canal for Britain. The deployment was authorised under Article 6 of the UN Charter which deals with the peaceful resolution of conflicts, and though the forces were armed they were under instruction to use their weapons only in self defence. It relied essentially for its effectiveness on the willingness of the parties to observe the ceasefire, and their desire to avoid being identified as the one to have broken it, and possibly having to face sanctions as a result. That kind of peacekeeping role probably could be undertaken by an organised civilian force. Indeed in April 1956, at the start of the Suez crisis, a British MP, Henry Usborne, wrote a letter to the Manchester Guardian proposing the recruitment of 10,000 volunteers to patrol a two kilometre demilitarised zone on either side of the Israeli-Egyptian border.¹

In *peace-enforcement* operations, the peacekeepers are authorised to use their weapons not just in self-defence but in other circumstances, notably defending civilians under attack or engaging armed groups that are breaking the ceasefire, and sometimes more broadly to protect public security. The missions are authorised under Chapter 7 of the UN Charter which deals with action with respect to threats to the peace, breaches of the peace, and acts of aggression. Following the failure of UN peacekeepers to prevent the massacres in Rwanda in 1994 and Srebrenica in 1995, there has been a decisive shift within the UN towards giving peacekeepers this enforcement role.

Enforcement is not something unarmed peacekeepers themselves, or for that matter military peacekeepers authorised to use their weapons only in self-defence, can carry out, though coercive non-military pressure could be exerted in conjunction with their deployment through international sanctions or internal civil resistance. In Darfur, where the 7000 African Union forces operate under this restriction on the use of force, the UN imposed some very limited sanctions in April of this year against four Sudanese nationals accused of war crimes, including two rebel leaders, a former air force chief and a Janjaweed militia leader. To that degree there is some enforcement, and further sanctions against the Khartoum government could well be imposed if it does not take action to disarm the Janjaweed. There is also the latent threat of war crimes trials at the Hague, and a dossier of evidence has been passed to the ICC. The uncomfortable fact is, however, that none of this has prevented appalling massacres and deprivation in Darfur with an estimated 200,000 deaths. Millions too have also fled from their destroyed villages.

*Peacebuilding* refers to the process of putting Humpty Dumpty together again – rebuilding the economic, social and institutional structures necessary for a country to function in a way that provides for at least a modicum of security and well being for its citizens. This task has to be carried out primarily by the citizens of the country concerned in accordance with their own values and traditions. Outside agencies can play only an enabling and supportive role if this is to be genuine peacebuilding rather than pacification and the imposition of a possibly inappropriate political and social structure. Civilian agencies are better placed than the military to engage directly with the population and take their direction from them – which is not to say this is always what happens. However, the military can provide security and have the organisation and equipment to carry out some of the physical tasks that may be necessary to get a country moving again after a destructive conflict.

To sum up: The military have to date been the chief agency for peacekeeping in the original sense of the term, that is a mission based on the consent of the parties concerned and with authority to use its weapons used only in self-defence. The question here is not so much whether the military have a role as whether the role currently played chiefly by them could be taken over by civilian peacekeepers. Quite possibly it could be, though it would depend on the recruitment and training of volunteers for such missions and building up the institutions and infrastructure to sustain them. Moreover, there remains the question of how much of a handicap not having weapons for self defence might prove to be. There would have to be a clear understanding, for instance, what action would be taken if peacekeepers were kidnapped.

Regarding enforcement, unarmed peacekeepers could not carry this out. Here the question is whether they could provide by their presence and authority a reasonable measure of protection to the civilian population, and whether sanctions and internal civil resistance could prove sufficiently powerful coercive instruments when enforcement was required.

Finally, peacebuilding is essentially a civilian operation, though the military can aid in construction and rescue work – as they often do for instance in the case of natural disasters like earthquakes – and provide protection. I take it, however, that in this seminar we are not just talking about peacebuilding in this restricted sense, but about the whole process of moving from a conflict, or immediate post-conflict situation, to one in which the society can provide its citizens with at least a modicum of security and well being.

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2 The figures are from an on-line BBC news briefing on Sudan's Darfur Conflict dated 3 October 2006.
3 My colleague Howard Clark after seeing an earlier draft of this paper commented that the civilians in so-called peace operations often do more harm than the military!
It is legitimate to question the credentials and intentions of some UN and non-UN operations, but it would be perverse to suggest that in no case have they contributed to stability and facilitated the peacebuilding process. Nevertheless it is important to keep open, and continually revisit the question of whether peacemaking/peacebuilding could be done in a different, nonviolent way. Do we have to accept ‘the world as it is’ - or can we create the conditions and institutions that would enable us in addressing the question posed by the title of the seminar to get from Yes to No?

Before considering that, we should remind ourselves of the extent of military involvement in peacekeeping, or putative peacekeeping missions. Military forces (as of March 2005) were deployed in UN peacekeeping operations in 17 countries, concentrated in Africa, but including Europe (Cyprus and Kosovo), Asia (including East Timor in the Asia/Pacific region), the Middle East, and Latin America. Since 1945, there have been 60 such missions, many of them undoubtedly contributing to the stability of the areas where they were deployed. In addition, there are currently twenty five non-UN multilateral operations in being which have, or claim to have a peacekeeping purpose. Of these, sixteen have military and observer functions, and seven purely civilian police and civilian functions.

We should note too that the distinction between peacekeeping and peace enforcement has become increasingly blurred since the end of the Cold War and particularly so since the start of the present century. Or to put the matter another way, it is now generally taken for granted that peacekeeping missions will involve an element of enforcement in most – though not in all – cases. This would appear to narrow the opportunity to deploy unarmed peacekeepers.

Important milestones in this shift of emphasis were the Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations chaired by Lakhdar Brahimi (2000), the report in 2001 of the Canadian-sponsored International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, The Responsibility to Protect, the report in 2004 of the High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change entitled A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility, Kofi Annan’s report in 2004, In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All, and, crucially, the UN Summit Meeting in September 2005 which endorsed the concept of the responsibility to protect. Among the conclusions and recommendations of the summit were the need to mount operations with adequate capacity to counter hostilities and fulfil effectively their mandates, support for the efforts of the EU and other regional entities to develop capacities for rapid deployment and standby arrangements, and a reaffirmation of the commitment to the protection of children in situations of armed conflict.

One result of this shift has been that size of the UN military deployments for peacekeeping has increased exponentially since the turn of the century. Bruce Jones, coordinator of the Center on International Cooperation, notes in a Preface to the Annual Review of Global Peace Operations 2006 that in 1998 the UN deployed 14,000 peacekeepers worldwide, whereas by this year it deployed 90,000. These figures include civilian participants, but though the proportion of these has been increasing, the deployments are still overwhelmingly military in character. Thus as of April of last year, according to figures published by the UN, the seventeen UN peacekeeping operations deployed 67,132 military and police personnel, 4,511 international civilians and 8,444 local civilians. Jones cites another telling figure, namely that the UN is now the second largest mover of military personnel in the world after the US.

At the same time, as noted earlier, the scope of the missions has progressively broadened to include in many cases the protection of civilians, aid and reconstruction workers, and to engage in combat those

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4 See the Background Note on Peacekeeping Operations (DPI/1634/Rev.46) published by the UN Department of Public Information, April 2005.
7 I have not managed to find the figures which show that the proportion of civilians in UN operations has increased, but am assured by my colleague Tom Woodhouse that this is the case.
8 UN Background Note on Peacekeeping Operations (DPI/1634/Rev.46), cited above.
9 See the Bruce Jones Preface to the Annual Review of Global Peace Operations 2006, p.x
who breach a ceasefire agreement. Since 1999 ten peace operations, both UN and non-UN, have been authorised under Chapter 7 ‘to protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence, often qualified by the phrase ‘within capabilities and areas of deployment’10. And even where there is no specific authorisation to protect civilians under attack there is usually an assumption that this is part of a mission’s duties.

The logic behind this shift is compelling: no-one would want to see a repeat of the situation in Srebrenica where Dutch forces in the UN mission stood by while the Serb militia rounded up the men and took them away in trucks to be shot and buried in mass graves, or of Rwanda where in April 1994 Belgian and French forces in the UN mission, UNAMIR, also did nothing as the Hutu militia, Interahamwe, began a systematic slaughter of Tutsis and moderate Hutus.

One argument in favour of increased military deployments in UN peacekeeping operations and tougher rules of engagement is that larger forces with clear and well publicised rules of engagement are more likely to deter attack than an inadequate one with an uncertain mandate. Ian Johnstone, notes that in the four major crises that ‘bookended’ the period between 2000 and 2005 – Sierra Leone (2000), East Timor (2000), the Democratic Republic of Congo (2005) and Haiti (2005), the Security Council Mandate under Chapter 7 gave the UN missions some enforcement authority ‘but with enough ambiguity to leave room for different interpretations as to when force should be used’. In all cases too they started with a less than forceful approach and then escalated as the crises expanded.11

There is evidence too that the peacekeeping missions over the last decade and a half have made a real difference. A report produced by the Human Security Centre at the University of British Colombia in 2005 concluded that ‘contrary to widespread belief, civil wars, genocides and international crises have all declined sharply’ since the end of the Cold War and they attribute this mainly to peacekeeping operations, particularly those undertaken by the UN.12

So if peacekeeping is working, why seek to change it? As the saying goes – ‘If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it’.

I take as my starting point that military action should always be a choice of last resort. Even where there seems to be no alternative to it, it frequently entails a tragic loss of civilian life and, hardly less tragically, the violent death of young men and women conscripted by law or economic circumstances into state-run or rebel armies. For instance when the Sierra Leone government, UNAMSIL, and UK forces engaged the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) militia in Sierra Leone in 2000, they can hardly have avoided killing child soldiers who had been kidnapped and forced to fight.

Enforcement in some situations can deteriorate into a prolonged and perhaps unwinnable war. Afghanistan points to the danger. True the initial US/UK invasion had nothing to do with peacekeeping. However, the deployment of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) under Nato command, though not itself a UN operation, was endorsed by two Security Council resolutions and now claims to be a peacekeeping and peacebuilding mission.13 Similarly, although the Iraq invasion was carried out in breach of international law after the US and Britain abandoned their attempt to obtain the endorsement of the Security Council, the deployment of the multinational force (MNF-I) was subsequently endorsed by the Council.14 Afghanistan and Iraq also point to the reality of an emerging new imperialism with US bases in these countries stationed there for an indefinite period.

In so far, then, as peacekeeping can be ‘civilianized’ whilst remaining effective, it should be. One way of moving in that direction would be by a continuing expansion of the civilian element in the missions and/or more unofficial type peacekeeping by those committed to a nonviolent approach. There is a growing interest in the role civilians can play as evinced by the training programmes for civilian

13 UNSC Res.7248 (Dec 2001) and UNSC Res 1623 (Sept 2005)
14 UNSC Res 1511 (October 2003) and UNSC Res 1546 (June 2004)
peacemakers being undertaken by the EU, the OSCE and individual governments. In Britain, this work is being undertaken at non-governmental level (but with official blessing) by Peaceworkers UK, now part of International Alert. Civilian peaceworkers are, in principle at least, better placed than the military to work and interact with people at the community level in conflict transformation and other peacebuilding tasks. It is necessary to note, however, that, at least during the 1990s civilians in UN operations were not mainly called upon to use conflict transformation skills or to be interveners in conflict, but to undertake tasks such as electoral supervision, civilian policing, administrative and technical support and human rights monitoring.\textsuperscript{15}

There are other reasons to review the direction in which peacekeeping is moving. Johnstone considers some of the problems and dilemmas involved in his chapter cited earlier.\textsuperscript{16} The UN is facing difficulties in finding sufficient numbers of trained military people to maintain the expanded level of operations. As the UN High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change commented in its report in 2004 ‘[T]he total global supply of available peacekeepers is running dangerously low. Just to do an adequate job of keeping the peace in existing conflicts would require almost doubling the number of peacekeepers around the world. The developed States have particular responsibilities to do more to transform their armies into units suitable for deployment to peace operations. And if we are to meet the challenges ahead, more States will have to place contingents on stand-by for UN purposes.’\textsuperscript{17}

The danger where there is a shortfall in the numbers required is that a mission without adequate numbers or resources is likely to raise expectations which it cannot fulfil. The usual qualifying phrase ‘within the limits of the mission’s capabilities’ is unlikely to be very effective in lowering them.

A second dilemma mentioned by Johnstone is that a qualified mandate could draw people to the areas where peacekeepers are deployed. This, he argues ‘can quickly overwhelm the capacity of a mission and expose it to manipulation by those who want either to see the operation fail or invite robust action from the peacekeepers in the hope that it will work to their advantage’. A third dilemma is that protective action in one area can lead to reprisals against civilians in another, a pattern, Johnstone notes, that one sees in the Democratic Republic of Congo. A fourth dilemma arises over whether or not to take pre-emptive action. To do so is to risk the charge of escalating the violence. Failure to do so may mean that civilians needlessly lose their lives.

Yet another problem, not mentioned by Johnstone, is that it can be difficult in a war zone to decide whether civilians are being deliberately targeted or are the victims of ‘collateral damage’ – the unintended if sometimes inevitable killing of civilians in military engagements. However, any moral distinction between putative collateral damage and outright massacre diminishes to zero point where there is a reckless and disproportionate use of force or where there is a secondary objective of demoralising the civilian population. All too often in modern warfare, one or both sides in a conflict are guilty of such wanton disregard of civilian life – for instance the wholesale destruction of Fallujah by ‘coalition forces’ in Iraq in 2004 on the one side and suicide attacks by Sunni militias on US forces or government army recruiting centres in built up areas, or attacks on Shia Mosques on the other. Similarly in the recent war in the Lebanon, Israel wrought huge destruction in towns and villages on the grounds that Hizbollah was operating from them while Hizbollah for its part fired rockets at random into Israel. Attempting to protect civilians in the fog of war could therefore lead to peacekeeping forces against their wishes being drawn into, or manipulated into, becoming participants in the conflict.

None of these caveats and difficulties, however, negates the responsibility to protect or the need to find practical ways of doing so where possible. They do indicate that it may not always be possible and that care has to be taken not to make matters worse through escalating or prolonging violent conflict.


\textsuperscript{16} Johnson, Annual Review p.7

\textsuperscript{17} From the 2004 report of the High Level Panel on High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change entitled A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility. Executive Summary, p.5.
What then of alternatives that might reduce, and perhaps in the longer run eliminate reliance on military forces in peacekeeping?

In considering this it is important to emphasize that peace building, or even peacekeeping, does not begin at the moment of crisis when a decision has to be made about sending in UN or other forces. Such interventions, are sometimes necessary to deal with immediate critical situations, but the underlying causes, whether local or global, need also to be addressed. Thus halting the flood of arms into Africa may be more important in preventing war and massacre than any peacekeeping mission. Similarly, taking action to halt and eventually reverse climate change is vital to reduce the tensions caused by environmental disasters and pressure on resources. (The creeping southward desertification in the Sudan was one of the causes of the crisis in Darfur as nomadic Arab tribes moved South and West.) A radical re-orientation of defence in the most powerful countries so that they relied mainly on nonviolent civilian-based defence for their home security would free up vast resources for constructive purposes and bring sweeping cut-backs in the defence industry. Such a shift is not at present on the cards politically but this does not mean it is intrinsically unreasonable. Given the successes of civil resistance of recent decades it merits renewed serious debate.  

It is important also to recognize that often what is needed from outside is practical help and – where it is requested – advice to grassroots movements inside a country which are seeking to end a dictatorship, or an ongoing civil war, or to promote radical social change. Civil resistance on the one hand and community building on the other represent ways of doing so, and thereby possibly forestalling the need for outside intervention. Radical confrontational action of this kind can also be combined with programmes of conflict transformation which attempt to restore trust between divided communities. The term ‘conflict transformation’ here rather than the more traditional ‘conflict resolution’ indicates a recognition that some conflicts have to be fought out and won but that there can be creative nonviolent ways of conducting them.

The question remains whether in the crisis situations which are bound to arise from time to time despite whatever conflict transformation or constructive work is undertaken, a purely civilian peacekeeping force could be effective in all the situations which peacekeeping forces encounter. In particular, could an unarmed force provide the kind of protection that is envisaged by the notion of a responsibility to protect?

The intuitive answer is no. If armed UN peacekeepers were powerless to prevent the slaughter in Rwanda and Bosnia because they were hampered from using their weapons, what chance would an unarmed peaceforce have? However, before dismissing the notion out of hand, one should note the difference, practically and psychologically, between deploying an armed force with an uncertain mandate and a peaceforce whose members have no weapons but are prepared a) to work among the people at the community level and b) if necessary to put their lives on the line to halt violence and abuses.

Unarmed civilian groups have achieved some remarkable successes in protecting vulnerable individuals and groups. In India the Shanti Sena – ‘peace army’ – set up on the inspiration and advice of Gandhi, sent volunteers into the city of Ahmedabad in September 1969 where at least 2000 people had been killed, and thousands more had fled from their homes in the course of Hindu-Muslim riots. Over the next four months they helped clear rubble, held meetings with local people to persuade them to invite back the people who had fled, and carried out a programme of relief and rehabilitation. (Nevertheless it took the deployment of the Indian army to put an end to the riots.) Shanti Sena worked in a similar way when communal riots broke out in the town of Bhivandi. 

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In January 1962 the World Peace Brigade was established at a meeting in Beirut. Its purpose, as set out in its founding statement was to organise, train and keep available a Brigade for nonviolent action in situations of actual or potential conflict, and to join with people in their nonviolent struggle for self-determination and social reconstruction. Of its actions over the next three or four years, the one that had most political impact was a planned nonviolent march in 1962 from Dar es Salaam in Tanzania to the border with Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) to coincide with a general strike there calling for an end to the Central African Federation. The march and strike did not in fact take place as the British government finally agreed to elections in Zambia which in turn led to the demise of the federation.

The experience of Peace Brigades International, however, is more relevant to the question of whether unarmed peacekeepers could provide protection to individuals and communities under threat. Since its formation in 1981, it has sent groups of civilians to accompany human rights workers, trade unionists and others at risk from death squads, government troops or militias in various countries. Currently it has projects in Colombia, Guatemala, Indonesia and Mexico and is starting a project in Nepal, and a joint project with other organisations in Chiapas, Mexico.

The Nonviolent Peaceforce, launched in 2002 also does accompaniment work, and has ambitious plans to build up a force of 2000 active members and 4000 reserves (plus 5000 supporters) over the next six years for deployment in conflict situations. It now has teams working in five cities in Sri Lanka. Other initiatives of this kind include the Balkans Peace Team which sent small transnational teams to work with local anti-war and non-violence groups in Croatia during the war with Serbia, Witness for Peace which organised a border monitoring programme in Nicaragua starting in 1981, and the International Solidarity Movement, a Palestinian-led movement dating from 2001 which is committed to resisting the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land using nonviolent direct action methods and principles.

Clearly, grassroots peacekeeping forces do not as yet have the numbers or infrastructure to provide a workable alternative to the mixed military/civilian peacekeeping of the UN or bodies like the EU and the African Union. Given that fact, my own view is that in crisis situations such as Darfur where civilians are daily being killed by the Sudanese government forces, by government-backed Janjaweed militia, and now by rival anti-government rebels, the African Union peaceforce should not only be supported but be given the additional help they have requested – mainly more funding and better supplies and transport. Help of this kind, and perhaps overflights of the area, may be more helpful than sending in UN troops from outside Africa, and certainly preferable to an invasion of the country. But what is needed above all is to restart the political process by opening up negotiations with those resistance groups who did not sign up to the ceasefire deal in Abuja, Nigeria in May of this year.

Whether unarmed peacekeeping could ever entirely obviate the need for military involvement must remain an open question. Certainly that is not a possibility in the near future. But it does already have a place and in combination with other forms of nonviolent intervention, and radical nonviolent action could point to a more creative way of keeping the peace.

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22 See Alex de Waal, ‘We could have had peace in Darfur for another $100m’, The Guardian, 29 Sept 2006, p.35. De Waal is a specialist on the area who was advisor to the African Union in the mediation in Abuja, Nigeria, last May between rebel forces and the Sudanese government. He argues that the real failure in Darfur was a political one, and that the ceasefire deal which was accepted by only one of the three main rebel groups could probably have included the others with more tact, patience and funding.
‘Carry Gentle Peace’: an analysis of modern post conflict dynamics

by Dr Deborah Goodwin, Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst

The views expressed in this paper are purely those of the author, and in no way represent the views of the Ministry of Defence, or any other organisation, individual or agency.

Expectations concerning the role of our armed forces have grown in the last couple of decades, with an increasing reliance on the ability of the soldier to act in a war-fighting capacity, peace support, a humanitarian role and, occasionally, in major human crises. These roles may not occur in discrete and individual operating environments but even within a single deployment, where the need to shift roles can necessitate procedural and behavioural changes within hours, or even minutes. This paper seeks to explore the dilemmas of the demands being placed on troops in modern mutable operations other than war, how they are expected to behave and act, and how they are being prepared for these multiple tasks.

Complex peacekeeping

Military operations other than war [OOTW] involve working in peace-making environments, post conflict, or even within a hot conflict where peace enforcement or suchlike is being attempted. Chapter VI of the UN Charter allows for the intervention of United Nations forces in the pacific resolution of both inter- and intra- state conflicts; recent deployments have demanded a more aggressive form of peacekeeping in order to be effective or even sustainable. The deployment of an UN peacekeeping force to the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2003, a force of over 5000 personnel and led by the French military in the early stages, was necessarily different in the manner in which the working mandate was constructed.

Whilst the UN Security Council resolutions stressed the requirements to monitor ceasefire agreements, to work with parties to obtain the release of prisoners of war, to facilitate humanitarian assistance, and to liaise with all factions (all of which require effective negotiation skills to be successful) the military was also given a prerogative to shoot to kill if necessary.1 Circumstances proved that attempting peacekeeping in an on-going civil war necessitates the option of full-blown aggression on the part of the peacekeeper, if appropriate. Another example of this approach was the UN mandate for Liberia issued in August 2003.2 A lack of ultimate force as an option for the military peacekeeper in an obviously hostile environment could result in loss of life at most, frustration at least (as was witnessed in the unsatisfactory mandate given to UNPROFOR troops in the Balkans, 1992/93). However, a prevalent military force option in any negotiation situation can lead to scant regard for lengthy discussion or the use of de-escalation tactics, or even a lack of confidence in negotiation as an effective conflict resolution tactic in the eyes of the military.3 When a Mission Mandate gives a greater licence to respond aggressively there may be a tendency to escalate tensions rather than a procedural necessity to sustain other forms of dispute resolution as a matter of primacy. Also in such circumstances peacekeepers tend to lose their neutrality status (a core of the early UN perception of peacekeeping), abandon the ‘non use of force’ tenet, and often are deployed without the prior consent of all parties in theatre. This is indicative of a dramatic shift in traditional peacekeeping intervention premises, and results in the need for a different response in the peacekeeper deployed in an aggressive role. So, even within peacekeeping operations per se there has increasingly developed a multiplicity of response depending on the Mission mandate, the nature of the conflict, and the

1 See UN Security Council Resolution of 1291 24/2/00 and Resolution 1445 4/12/02
2 See UN resolution
3 Detailed discussion of the nature of military negotiation can be found in Goodwin, Deborah The Military and Negotiation (London:Frank Cass, 2005)
operating procedures for the deployed force. The individual peacekeeper is required to conduct aggressive responses on some operations, and on others the more traditional forms of peacekeeping with an emphasis on conciliation and nation building.

As the Brahimi report states:

...When the United Nations does send its forces to uphold the peace, they must be prepared to confront the lingering forces of war and violence with the ability and determination to defeat them...no amount of good intentions can substitute for the fundamental ability to project credible force if complex peacekeeping, in particular, is to succeed.4

Ideally, military forces deployed in such circumstances would have the mandate to defend themselves as well as assist the home nation, to have been trained sufficiently and effectively, to know and understand the cultural context within which they are working, and to have all necessary resources in order to succeed. There would be consensus on timescales, inter-agency co-operation and unity, effective troop deployment and a clear chain of command in theatre. These operations would also receive sufficient funding and political support from contributing nations, where a willingness to respond to crises supersedes diplomatic machinations.

The reality can be very different.

The culture of violence is endemic in many modern societies, as witnessed in the ravaged nation of Rwanda, the slaughter in the Sudan, the Congo, Liberia and Sierra Leone, and the volatility of areas such as Afghanistan, Chechyna, Kashmir and Iraq. The UN and other security ‘providers’ have attempted traditional resolution techniques with varied degrees of success. Diplomacy, ceasefire monitoring, observer missions, peacekeeping, peace enforcement and preventative deployment have produced mixed results. Modern intervention appears to require different techniques and approaches.

**Acting differently**

Traditional responses are limited in scope and viability, therefore, and in accordance with the comment of Kofi Annan, “…it has made us review our responsibilities and question our most basic assumptions about the very nature of war and the very high price of peace in the post cold war era.”5

In light of this, several different approaches can be proposed as refinements to the more traditional responses attempted to solve modern human security issues, both before and after conflict. These are:

- Conflict prevention measures
- Coercive diplomacy
- The pool of operatives
- The implementation of the modern ‘soldier/diplomat’

**Conflict prevention measures**

In many recent interventions a response has occurred at the hot stages of a conflict or when a crisis has taken place that is causing, or has caused, all-out warfare, for example in Sierra Leone or the Balkans. It can be argued that too much effort is spent at the tumultuous stages of a conflict, when settlement is at its hardest to achieve, and not enough in pre-emptive resolution tactics or dialogue in the more latent stages of a conflict. This is mainly due to the laborious effort it takes to achieve consensus of thought and action amongst those parties involved in providing support and remedy, but

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5 Address at University of California, Berkeley, 20 April 1988
also due to a reluctance to pre-empt the potential for conflict and violence at earlier opportunities. The life cycle of a conflict, be it long or short lived, clearly reveals the capacity for sustainable conflict prevention at all stages of the dynamic.

At the very least the development of lines of communication and sustainable dialogue can, and should, be undertaken at the earliest opportunity. Some might argue that this is a fanciful notion and that, for political reasons, such overt communication with reviled states or individuals would not be countenanced by most nation states. Maybe so, but what can be, and is, countenanced is discreet dialogue, often held in camera, that allows for the possibility of de-escalation using minimum coercion. In this age of action and reaction we have lost sight of the viability of negotiation and persuasive communication; it takes longer and requires foresight and dedication, and these are values that do not mirror the speedy pace of life in the modern world. But its effectiveness has been evidenced: the discreet use of diplomacy by Robert Kennedy in 1962 had a considerable effect in de-escalating the Cuban Missile Crisis, and the recent unseen negotiations with Libya have resulted in the international recognition of a once pariah state. Yet it does beg the question as to who conducts and sustains preventative measures. A first inclination is to defer to the United Nations, but it can be argued that in its current organisational form there are no true conflict prevention initiatives in any sustainable and consistent manner. An emphasis on compliance directives, or penalising ‘wrong-doers’ in some way, does not get to the heart of preventing escalation of a situation, or the creation of a possible durable resolution. The situation in Darfur in 2004 has again revealed both nation states and the UN being slow to act; threats of an oil embargo, which would have been damaging, appear to have been shelved. Debate rages about the composition of any deployed military force, with half-hearted attempts at decision-making over this more traditional form of conflict prevention/resolution. Earlier negotiations, some of which appear to involve the infamous janjaweed, dissolved and all parties have been slow to resurrect the dialogue. None of the five proposals offered by UK Prime Minister Blair in October 2004 are new initiatives; they tend to revolve around conventional proposals such as abiding by UN resolutions, and allowing more geographically specific troops into the region. As time drags on and violence escalates, the potential for de-escalation at a ‘lower’ stage of the conflict fades dramatically.

**Coercive diplomacy**

It can be argued that a more aggressive form of diplomacy would be more efficient in the modern world order. The concept, and reality, of coercive diplomacy implies a dynamic replete with escalatory response, and even threat moves. But it falls short of overt military aggression by
sustaining communication links and dialogue even at the most contentious stages. Coercion implies the lower reliance on co-operative moves, or even ‘win-win’ tenets, is more risky in diplomatic terms, and might provoke either stalemate or repulsion. In the risk adverse world that we currently inhabit it is not a popular choice. However, a degree of persuasive diplomatic force at the earlier, or even the post conflict stages, might prove effective in certain on-going dilemmas. Just as various national military working within a multinational peacekeeping force are likely to have different Rules of Engagement within the operation as a whole, then an option for a scale of de-escalatory diplomatic conflict resolution tactics would appear relevant and beneficial.6

The pool of post conflict operatives

The reconstruction phase of a conflict naturally necessitates the involvement of many players in theatre as crisis response workers. Experience has also shown that it can be difficult to organise and focus such a diverse group, especially when there is no clear common strategic aim, or if that aim is not appropriate or viable for all operatives in theatre. For example, the polarity of views between military and non-governmental organisational actors can be marked, and raises questions about the exact roles and objectives of these parties in theatre. Evolving military doctrine in the United States and many NATO countries encompasses an objective to play an active part in the post conflict stage, and not to just ‘defeat the enemy’ in a more traditional sense. This has led to friction between the military, the police, and humanitarian workers in certain theatres of operation (for example in Afghanistan) since traditional areas of responsibility are becoming blurred and indistinct.7

At the very least these frictions can result in misunderstandings or wounded pride, but at worst can cause problems and issues for those that need to be helped. Save the Children cites a case where the delivery of aid by the US led coalition in Afghanistan’s Zabul province was accompanied by leaflets calling upon civilians to provide intelligence information, or face losing the aid in future. Following protests from humanitarian agencies the leaflets were withdrawn.8

How might it be possible for post conflict support workers, ranging from the military through to one man and a truck of donated supplies, to work together in a mutually cohesive manner? An initial, and rather simplistic, response is a change in mindset. Human nature is such that organisations can become extremely insular in both outlook and objective terms, and can lose the ability to see the ‘bigger picture’, preferring to focus on their own needs and concerns. Whilst this is understandable, and even effective, in non-conflict deployments, group cohesion and a concept of ‘common partnership’ proves beneficial in the complicated environment of post conflict reconstruction. Being tough on the problem, and not on the people, focuses attention on the essence of the dilemma to be ameliorated, even if it costs a degree of self-pride or forces interagency rivalry to take a back seat. Of course, every operative has an individual mission and drive, but unless there is an early recognition of the part that every player has to play in the greater ‘good’, then implicit frictions rapidly become explicit and necessarily destructive. Respect and trust that each organisation has its area of expertise and understanding, which can be ‘pooled’ to inform and provide best practice in the field, is another essential realisation. A drive to act in theatre, rather than appraise judiciously (albeit briefly in crisis situations) can lead to poor communication, poor understanding, and poor responses lacking in co-ordination and effectiveness. This is regrettable when all parties are driven by the core motivation to help, rebuild and sustain.

A way to form a healthy post conflict working environment is to use modern communications, as well as traditional meetings and negotiation, to discover who is in theatre (not always obvious or overt), who needs what, who will be the provider, and who will monitor, assess and make secure. Regular

6 See Jentleson, Bruce W. Coercive prevention: normative, political and policy dilemmas in Peaceworks 35 (Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace, October 2000) for further ideas on coercive diplomacy.
7 See the Save the Children report Provincial Reconstruction Teams and Humanitarian-Military Relations in Afghanistan 2004
8 ibid p40
communications both at the ground level and at a wider operational level can help to maintain focus, provide mutually useful information about each agency and for each agency, and help to control the flood of requests and responses required. It also limits the ‘us and them’ factor by raising understanding and recognising discreet areas of responsibility. The hosting and logistical requirements of arranging such communications in theatre can be decided upon in each specific deployment, with the main agencies alternating in taking the lead and initiative in information sharing and communicating. To state what seems an obvious constructive working environment initiative might appear simplistic, but in current circumstances parties jostling for position at the post conflict stage can supersede any integrated response, and reduce effectiveness for all agencies. Even better would be the formation of a ‘code of conduct and responsibility’ to aid all agencies in delineating response, prior to active involvement in any post conflict reconstruction initiatives. This ought to be formed at a strategic level, akin to the concept of writing a broad based mandate for agencies that would be non-context specific, but provide general guidance for all parties once deployed. In essence, this would be an inter-agency Charter that all would construct and devise, and that would provide guidelines on main responsibilities and roles. Once in theatre, then the fundamentals would be already established, but then allow for a flexibility of response and delivery of context specific initiatives. The formation of such a Charter would take time to define, and a high degree of effort to produce in the international arena, but is likely to prove an effective tool on active operations.

Security

The deaths of five MSF workers in Afghanistan in June 2004, and the spate of hostage taking of civilian construction workers and humanitarian workers in Iraq in the same year, pose a significant threat to the ability to bring aid to the civil community. Unlike the military or police, these workers are not armed or have any real way to defend themselves and their missions, and the impact of such acts has resulted in the withdrawal of active involvement in on-going operations by organisations such as MSF and the UN. The post conflict reconstruction community faces a serious dilemma: if the tactic of targeting such ‘soft’ targets persists, then how might support to the home nation be best effected, without the presence of vital agencies? One argument might be that, despite the dislike of the humanitarian agencies of military involvement in humanitarian work, in volatile circumstances the military might be the only agency able to provide effective response. This is due to the fact that the military would have the capability to defend themselves, they are armed, and they can act in a more aggressive manner. Whilst a post conflict dynamic remains inherently violent, but an imperative for human assistance exists, then military delivery of such appears the only option. NGOs stress that they do not want to arm themselves, and that they wish to remain distinct from the military on operations in order to carry out their own work in an effective manner. They tend to dislike the military getting involved in any kind of humanitarian assistance. This is understandable, but in the dangerous working circumstances described, the elective departure of such organisations from theatre leaves a vacuum that has to be filled by someone else. Often the only ‘someone else’ left is the military. Therefore to complain that the military should not get involved in humanitarian work is not to see ‘the bigger picture’ in this instance, i.e. getting the help to the people who continue to suffer during episodes of violent response. If humanitarian agencies are forced to leave theatre due a deplorable threat to their operatives, then their remote guidance for the military in the continued delivery of aid would be beneficial and supportive. In quieter post conflict environments, then such work remains the main responsibility of humanitarian aid organisations; however, in volatile countries where workers are placed at unnecessary extreme risk, the military has a capability to fulfil some of the aid responsibilities still required. Humanitarian workers have not been targeted just because they are believed to be allied to the military (it has already been stated that they seek to remain remote from the military on many occasions), but due to more fundamental antagonisms and cultural hatreds, especially as evidenced in Iraq. The seizure of Margaret Hassan, the head of CARE, in Iraq in October 2004 exemplifies this. In such circumstances it is important that humanitarian organisations ask themselves a question: given that it is very sensible not to risk civilian aid workers in such circumstances, does it remain reasonable to dislike aid distribution and support being undertaken by another agency in a period of volatility and during the necessary absence of established aid agencies, in order for a degree of aid relief to be continued? This is a logistical and ethical dilemma for all parties involved.
The implementation of the modern ‘Soldier/diplomat’

Where the military remain in theatre in the post-conflict phase, the necessary re-construction work requires a different working response from traditional war fighting imperatives. Many recent conflicts have necessitated sustained military involvement, and the forces most successful at assistance within a shattered infrastructure are those that possess a range of resolution techniques, particularly negotiation and liaison skills.9

Acute consciousness of the all-pervading mission-demands will dictate how a military negotiator is likely to respond in a tactical level negotiation (in the field). At all stages of a negotiation the soldier will be aware of the mission brief, and the mission brief might result in inflexibility in ultimate decision-making for that soldier. When another party is encountered, one of the first objectives will be to ascertain the extent to which that party is a threat to the mission. Soldiers are likely to ask themselves if another’s actions hinder the prosecution of their own orders. The answer to this question is likely to be ‘yes’ in most encounters; for example, people at a roadblock are unlikely to commence a negotiation in a highly co-operative manner. As a soldier explores the situation through conversation, information concerning the armed tactical stance of the other party will be sought constantly also. Even though a soldier will engage in co-operative negotiation when it is deemed appropriate, it is likely that should that negotiation compromise the overall mission brief, then other options might be exercised.

A military tactical level negotiation in a peacekeeping or volatile context is laced with obvious aggressive intent, and this makes for a specific type of bargaining situation. The potential for armed response, by either side and at any point in a negotiation, can make for a dangerous and provocative negotiating context. This is why peacekeepers are soldiers or police, rather than civilians who would be unused to such aggressive and dangerous contexts. That is not to say that a military negotiator has to be a tough and aggressive negotiator necessarily, but they do have to be aware of their driving concerns on operation, and the possibility of violence.

There is a consensus of opinion that the presence of an international military force in a peacekeeping context tends to enhance the bargaining positions of any relief operators, be they civilian negotiators or military negotiators.10 It can give a ‘negotiating from a position of strength’ stance, specifically military strength, but can only be effective if the military strength is used when necessary.11 As Michael Williams states, the presence of the military “...helps a mission to retain its legitimacy and credibility.”12 Liaison and verification become important tasks in the military role in such an operation, but tempered with the recognition that any peacekeeping military force cannot completely dissociate itself from its traditional combat role, as and when required, and its emphasis on upholding the mission itself.13

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9 For a full analysis of military negotiation refer to Goodwin, Deborah The Military and Negotiation (London: Frank Cass, 2005)
10 To win without fighting is the acme of skill. Sun Tzu translated and edited by Samuel B Griffith, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963). The involvement of the military in any situation is a deliberate act to ensure physical safety and security, in a way in which civilians cannot.
11 authorial emphasis.
13 “At the ’tactical’ level, the consent line is certainly wiggly. If a bunch of Serbs, Croats or Muslims opened fire on a UN military vehicle, or, later, an aid convoy, the British could—and often did—shoot back...In the course of the Bosnian war the British UN troops probably killed several hundred local fighters.” C. Bellamy, Knights in White Armour (London: Random House, 1996) p154
Conclusion

The modern post conflict environment is complex and replete with frustrations, volatility, and uncertainty. Often security issues require the presence of a strong military and police contingent that might run counter to agencies whose raison d’être is more pacific and altruistic. However, all require one another in terms of support, knowledge and implementation of a common good. As has been discussed, there may be a need to define interagency organisation, communication and roles in a more concrete manner, prior to any deployments. However, this will require tremendous initiatives and detailed discussions within the international community.

Until or unless such support can be granted from the strategic level then to ‘carry gentle peace’ in present conflicts is a heavy, if not dangerous, burden for all concerned.

Unfortunately, it will often also demand the ultimate price from many of its willing bearers.

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Seminar report

This seminar was attended by 20 people and facilitated by Catharine Barnes and Alan Pleydell. Alan reminded participants of the relevance of its subject matter to the work of Adam Curle, the founder of CCTS, whose funeral would take place the following day.

The seminar began with brief presentations from three speakers: Andrew Rigby, director of the Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies at Coventry University, Michael Randle, Visiting Research Fellow at the Department of Peace Studies, Bradford University and Deborah Goodwin, a specialist in negotiation at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. Papers by the speakers had been circulated in advance, and are reproduced above1.

Military role in peacebuilding

Andrew Rigby began his presentation by acknowledging both his pacifist roots and his desire to overcome the prejudice that he realised he felt towards the military. He had been surprised, when giving a paper at the NATO Defence College in Rome recently, by the degree to which the military’s views on the limitations on their involvement in peacebuilding matched his own.

In summary, Andrew feels that the military do have a valid role, but that it is limited to establishing the physical security necessary for reconstruction and reconciliation to be possible – in other words, to ensuring an effective ceasefire. He stressed that he did not consider that military interventions were valid if the peacebuilding forces were parties to the original conflict, nor if they did not carry a reasonable level of legitimacy among the people of the affected country. (On this basis, he ruled out of his discussion the invasion and subsequent occupation of Iraq.) Even with these provisos, he felt that it was difficult for an intervening military force to avoid becoming part of the conflict.

Andrew’s paper itemises the factors that contribute to a lasting and self-sustaining peace, and he reviewed them in his talk. They include: a functioning administrative and legal system; mechanisms for managing conflict non-violently; a working economy, offering employment and financial security; the promotion of a culture of inclusivity and coexistence among previously warring factions, and proper acknowledgement of past wrongs. He described all these as civilian activities, that can be assisted by outside peacebuilding agencies but that must be locally rooted. In particular, he doubted that combat and policing could be effectively delivered by the same people: “You can’t expect a soldier who has been risking his life to be transformed into a sensitive community police officer”. He regarded the military’s strength as its coercive force. Policing, on the other hand, needs to be carried out with the minimum of coercion.

The increasing use of military force for ‘humanitarian’ purposes, encapsulated in the Responsibility to Protect report2, encourages the close co-ordination of military and civilian authorities at all stages of an intervention. Andrew reflected on the dangers that such a

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1 Three other documents were recommended as background reading: ‘A call NOT to Arms’ (see http://iarpv.blogspot.com/archive/2005/12/19/collaboration-among-military-forces-and-non-governmental-org.html); ‘Negotiation in a violent context: the new age of the soldier-diplomat’ by Deborah Goodwin, which was circulated to seminar participants and can be found as a chapter in Faure, G.O and Robin, Thierry [eds] La Negotiation-regards sur sa diversite [Paris: EPU Publibook Universite, 2005] p113 on, and CCTS Review issue 30, “Pacification or Peacebuilding” which can be found at http://www.c-r.org/ccts/ccts30/index.htm

2 ICISS, The Responsibility to Protect, Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, 2001
relationship can bring to humanitarian and peacebuilding groups, in particular that they are perceived as part of the military operation and judged alongside it, and that they are regarded as partisan, and lose their legitimacy.

**Getting to ‘no’**

While agreeing that the military currently plays a role in peacebuilding, Michael Randle set himself the objective in his paper of looking for ways in which that role could be minimised. His desire, as a life-long campaigner against war, was to be able to answer “No” to the question posed by the seminar title.

He examined separately the three distinct roles of peacekeeping, ‘peace enforcement’ and peacebuilding:

- **Peacekeeping**, as initially conceived in UN operations post World War II, involved monitoring a ceasefire or patrolling a border area, with the consent of the previously warring parties, and with peacekeepers authorised to use weapons only in self-defence. Michael suggested that this could be done by a suitably trained and organised civilian force, arguably better than by the military, if only there was the political will to create such a force and enough people willing to be part of it.

- **Peace enforcement**, without the consent of the warring parties, is harder to achieve non-militarily because it is impossible to enforce without coercion. Nevertheless, Michael argued that fuller use could be made of non-military coercion in the form of international sanctions, threats of war crime trials and internal civil resistance.

- **Peacebuilding**, the work of reconstruction and reconciliation, is, Michael agreed with Andrew, a job for civil society in the affected country or region, although outside civilian bodies could usefully assist as long as they were acting in a sensitive and supporting, rather than prescriptive, role.

The massacres in Rwanda and Srebrenica took place while peacekeeping forces looked on, unable to act because of their rules of engagement. As a result, most peacekeeping forces now have a mandate that encompasses peace enforcement. On the face of it, this would seem to reduce the possibility of keeping the peace non-militarily. Nevertheless Michael could see a number of good reasons for continuing to look for alternatives. These included:

- The lack of sufficient military personnel to maintain peacekeeping forces everywhere they are needed. Attempting to fulfil a peacekeeping mandate with inadequate numbers is a risky business.

- The risk inherent in every use of military force in a peacekeeping role of being dragged into a war.

- The problems involved in the creation of ‘safe areas’ by peacekeeping forces. They can result in population movements into those areas that overwhelm the capacity of the troops, or destabilise the country. They can also provoke retaliation on civilians elsewhere.

The Shanti Sena, Peace Brigades International and the Nonviolent Peaceforce have all demonstrated the effectiveness, at least in some circumstances, of unarmed civilians in protecting individuals and communities from violence, and Michael would like to see more effort applied to increasing the scale of this type of work.
‘Carry gentle peace’

Deborah Goodwin warned against over-generalising when talking about ‘the military’ per se. Different national armies act in very different ways; and even within the same army, it is important to distinguish (for example) between the young men and women ‘on the ground’ and the operational commanders. Because of these differences, it can be particularly difficult for international peacekeeping forces to have clear and cohesive rules of engagement that are understood and implemented uniformly by all the forces involved. The terms of engagement are also necessarily more cumbersome to negotiate and modify when more than one country’s politicians, as well as their senior military personnel, are involved. This also greatly impacts on mission mandates and national views on when and how the military is both to engage and disengage.

While she agreed with Andrew that ideally it would be better if the military did not have to act in a policing role, cost and resource constraints mean that in practice they generally do. In the UK, at least, the difficulty is recognised, and there is now a good deal of personnel training in negotiating skills, conflict resolution techniques and inter-agency liaison, with the objective of producing ‘soldier/diplomats’. (When Deborah started teaching at Sandhurst 13 years ago, there was no such training – a deficiency that the officers themselves complained about when they were working in peacekeeping roles. She addressed this by introducing and developing negotiation training for all Officer Cadets from 1994 onwards.) She noted that, even with this additional training, the UK military’s approach to peacekeeping emphasises that their role is to establish peace and then hand over to civilian agencies to a much greater extent than is done in some other countries and missions.

Deborah pointed out that it is politicians who decide whether or not there should be military action in the first place and that the military were in this sense politically neutral. Nevertheless, she acknowledged that soldiers performing a peacekeeping role in a foreign country cannot act in a wholly neutral manner, because they are working to achieve politically determined objectives that are directed from elsewhere. But impartiality is a tenet that is advised and observed wherever possible.

An increasing amount of her work, not mentioned in her paper, is in the EU and involves the joint training of military, police, lawyers, civil administrators and NGOs in practical conflict resolution and negotiating skills. She was enthusiastic about this opportunity for people from all agencies to get to know each other, and to have a safe environment in which to work through common dilemmas prior to deployment and in the complicated and volatile post conflict phase as is discussed in her paper. Her paper also discusses the dilemma of a vacuum being created by humanitarian agencies when they are forced to leave conflict areas for very valid reasons, and the debate as to whether this is when the military should become more proactive post-conflict supporters for the wider community. She also discusses a proposal for pre-deployment formal terms of reference being created between agencies and the cogency of pre-arranged understandings between parties in the post conflict environment.

3 It is important to note that in this seminar, as well as in her paper, the views expressed by Deborah are personal, and in no way reflect or represent the views of the Ministry of Defence.

4 For more detail see Deborah Goodwin ‘The Military and Negotiation’ [London: Routledge, 2005]


6 for example, for the current EUFOR deployment in the Balkans, Op ALTHEA. See http://www.euforbih.org/forum/001/p13a/tefp13a.htm
These presentations were followed by a brief interlude of discussion in small ‘buzz-groups’ and a plenary discussion session. During the afternoon, participants divided into three groups to focus on key issues that arose from these preliminary discussions, and then returned to a closing plenary report-back session. Plenary and group discussions are summarised together below. As always in CCTS seminars, the focus and purpose of the discussion was on sharing views rather than on looking for ‘solutions’.

**The use and limitations of violence /coercive force in peace operations**

One participant voiced the fundamental problem in the use of violence to quell violence: that by accepting its necessity we are accepting the pre-eminence of violence as a form of power. Thus military super-states, notably the USA, see themselves as the world’s enforcers and nothing is done to counter their activities. More locally, the UK government expects the IRA and the UDA (who regard themselves as ‘military’) to renounce violence forever, enforcing the change within their own ranks without violence. But they do not make such requirements of themselves. We **must** look for alternatives if we are to reduce global violence.

The very acceptance of widespread military involvement can lead to the proliferation of violence, as the resultant growth of the arms industry ensures that weapons for new conflicts are readily available. It also validates the use of the threat of violence inherent in the growing dependence on private armies – for example to guard international businesses or humanitarian aid workers.

It was recognised that conflict is often left to escalate to a point where it is hard to envisage a non-military intervention, for example in Zimbabwe. Intervention was seen as least likely when there was nothing in it for the outsider (valuable natural resources, for example, or a strategic military location), although of course the very presence of such incentives was likely to scupper all chance of the intervention being perceived as legitimate by local people. Sometimes the pictures and stories in the media can shame governments into intervening. The UN was set up to create the political will to intervene, but it often seems ineffective.

Both Andrew and Michael had made it clear in their presentations that they did not condone the role of the military in Iraq or Afghanistan, and there appeared to be wide agreement with their stance. Perceptions are important. Interventions that are flawed in their motivation or their implementation (or both) build up such a level of distrust that self-interest can be assumed even when it is not real. (And one participant felt that self-interested intervention was sometimes better than no intervention at all.)

Perhaps unsurprisingly, most participants agreed that the role of the military in peacekeeping should be limited, along the lines suggested by Andrew, to establishing a ceasefire. At the same time, at least one was willing to admit that dialogue and negotiation also had limitations.

When soldiers enter a country in order to ‘enforce peace’, civilian deaths are more or less inevitable. A number of participants felt that you could not expect local populations to accept those same soldiers as peacebuilders once the shooting had stopped. Some felt that any military presence would be alienating in those circumstances. Others argued that if a civilian population was suffering regular attacks from local militias, a well-organised external military force might feel very welcome. In any case, it can be difficult or impossible to separate roles completely in the sort of ‘three block wars’ in which fighting, humanitarian aid and peacebuilding are all happening simultaneously in closely adjacent areas.
One participant commented that any real, lasting peace depends on the presence of democratic processes in civil society. She wondered to what extent the military, being undemocratic, hierarchic and male-dominated, could promote democratic processes. Another felt that it was possible to promote an objective without fulfilling it yourself, and also took issue with the universal desire for democracy. It was acknowledged, too, that the presence of female US soldiers in Afghanistan increased anti-American feeling there, and assisted the Taliban.

Beyond the establishment of a ceasefire, many participants struggled to find other useful military contributions. It was suggested, though perhaps with little enthusiasm, that they may have a role in training and reforming the local military ‘to be the sole purveyors of deadly force’. In Somalia, local militias have been absorbed into the national army with some success. This gives them some education and life structure, so that when they are demobilised into the community they have a better chance of reintegrating. The British army has apparently done something similar in other parts of Africa. Another initiative in Burundi was described, in which civilians were responsible for demobilising, disarming and reintegrating militias by negotiating employment or training opportunities in exchange for the surrender of weapons. There is a particular problem with child soldiers, who find it very hard to be accepted by, and to reintegrate with, the local community.

One of the reasons that local armies break down in conflict areas is that they stop being paid. An important element of peacebuilding is the (re)establishment of an economy in which people can survive non-criminally and non-violently.

**Interfaces between militaries, external civilian peacebuilders and local populations**

While the type of joint training of military personnel, NGOs, police etc described by Deborah might be beneficial in promoting greater understanding between those undertaking these different roles and allowing them to work together more effectively, not everyone was comfortable with working so closely with the military. It was also pointed out that external training was only part of the equation: effort was also needed within the conflict area to promote understanding between warring groups.

The interface between the police and the military was seen as particularly complex, in the UK as well as abroad. It was felt that the military are often brought in too quickly, particularly in relation to terrorism, when the police, even if armed, would be able to do a better, more low-key job.

The relationship between the media (both local and international) and peacekeeping troops is an important factor in how those troops are perceived. The “embedding” of reporters in recent conflicts was cited as an indication of the importance the military, and the governments they serve, attach to media coverage.

A number of hidden or unacknowledged interfaces were also discussed. Among the most negative is that between foreign troops and women in the local population. More positive are the hidden interfaces that sometimes exist between conflicting parties – for example between Protestant paramilitaries and the IRA in Northern Ireland – even when the public rhetoric is that there can be no communication. Similarly, police and military peacekeepers may have covert communication with representatives of warring groups.
The role of civilian peacekeepers

Nonviolent Peace Force is looking to build up a force of 4-5,000 reserves for deployment in conflict situations (which sounds like a lot until you compare it with the numbers of soldiers that might be available). What is really needed, it was suggested, is a register of peaceworkers. The difficulty would be in obtaining funding to create it. Some participants suggested that there could be a bigger role for people of retirement age. Retired medics have a very effective network, and the FCO have a database of ex-policemen on whose services they regularly call. The FCO also coordinates the work of election monitors and civilian response teams (for example, as was done after the tsunami) as part of their contribution to the OSCE - though it was felt that more could be done, particularly before violence erupts.

 Civilians have a useful role in institution-building: one that is often overlooked. Election monitors could make more of a difference if they were in place not just for the voting itself, but also during the entire election process, if the funding and political will could be found. Civilian assistance with the reconstruction of sound judicial and administrative processes would also be useful.

Why, then, are civilians not more widely used? Some participants felt that lack of finances prevented the development of civilian peace forces. However, it was noted that politicians can always find money for fighting wars - it is a matter of priorities. There was some feeling that, for whatever reason, there was little will to intervene early, when civilians might be most effective. By the time the political will to intervene was there, a military 'solution' was seen as the only answer.

There was some discussion about the balance of risks when fielding unarmed peacekeepers in violent or potentially violent areas. Opinions varied according to whether the peacekeepers were local or not. It was pointed out that civilians are ‘baled out’ by the SAS if they get into trouble – though this in itself goes against the spirit of what an unarmed group is trying to achieve. Local civilian action was, in any case, seen as preferable. One of Adam Curle’s contributions to Conflict Transformation was to focus on the capacity of ordinary people, acting in their own countries, to change power relations and build peace. This way of viewing power enabled the inclusion of large sections of society that are often marginalised, such as old people and women (who are not infrequently the unacknowledged victims of violence).

Too often, only the power-holders are involved in peacebuilding. This is especially true of peace deals brokered by international governments, such as the Dayton Agreement. Ordinary people, who are more likely to have a vested interest in peace, are ruled out because they cannot ‘deliver the guns’. The facilitative model of peace negotiation (as against ‘power mediation’), more commonly found among civilians and NGO peace workers, in which needs and capacities are explored, and a broader range of views are represented, is much more likely to be successful in delivering lasting peace.

A number of examples of successful civilian action were given. In Mali, a peace agreement between the government and the leaders of the armed militias could not be implemented without local community negotiations, because the militias had become so fragmented that the leaders could not deliver the peace. Members of an unarmed peacekeeping force (made up of both local and New Zealand personnel) deployed in Bouganville, Papua New Guinea, were taken in and ‘looked after’ by local people just because they were unarmed, and as a result were able to act as intermediaries in negotiating a peace agreement.

There was some discussion about what gives outsiders the legitimacy to intervene to build peace. Some participants felt that trust was a fundamental requirement. Others disagreed. The
UDA, for example, say that they will never trust the IRA, but many of them acknowledge the need to find a way of co-existing peacefully. The source of funding was also seen as a significant factor. Local funding is best, because external funding can be perceived as colonial or self-interested. There is always a danger, too, of organisations setting themselves up opportunistically, in the hope of receiving funding, so it is important for external actors to ensure that they are working with well-established, bona fide local groups.

Third party interventions in civilian peacekeeping are most likely to be acceptable in a support role, and if they are considered legitimate by the local actors. It was felt that the stronger the internal peace process, the more likely it was that external actors could make an effective contribution, because their role would be determined and given legitimacy by the local process. The OSCE, for example, achieves most when it is working ‘with the grain’ of local opinion.

What happens when the grain doesn’t want to be worked with? Some groups will have a vested interest in war, and it can take time for attitudes to change. Too often, it was felt, we assume that if civilian action isn’t working, a military solution is bound to be successful. Experience shows us that this is not true. And that should make us look harder and longer for non-violent alternatives.

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