

Executive Summary – Brussels 5 October 2007¹

The Norwegian Ministry of Defence organized the sixth in a series of regional seminars on trends and challenges related to UN multidimensional and integrated peace operations in Brussels 5 October 2007². The one-day seminar *Multidimensional and Integrated Peace Operations: Trends and Challenges – Common challenges, different institutional frameworks: The UN, EU and NATO* was held at the Residence Palace in Brussels on 5 October 2007.

The purpose of the Brussels seminar was to discuss the perspectives and approaches to multidimensional and integrated peace operations of the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU) and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO).

The seminar was divided into five panels for discussion of various angles on the overarching topic. The first panel focused on strategic and operational trends and challenges to multidimensional and integrated peace operations. The next three panels discussed concepts and challenges to (respectively) the UN, the EU and NATO's approach to multidimensional and integrated peace operations. The fifth panel summarized the discussions and presented suggestions for how to proceed in order to achieve integrated operations.

The seminar gathered a range of stakeholders from the three organisations. Additionally, the African Union (AU), Inter-governmental organizations (IGO), Non Governmental Organisations (NGO) and humanitarian organisations as well as academics and representatives from donor countries participated. In total, around 170 people attended the seminar. This report is based on notes taken at the seminar, and reflects the main discussions and findings throughout the day. Because the seminar was conducted under the Chatham House Rule³ in order to encourage openness, sharing of information and frank discussion, this report has been written with those considerations in mind.

During the seminar, the following were the main views expressed as to the different organisations' (UN, EU, NATO) view on the integrated approach to peacebuilding operations, followed by some brief reflections on the cooperation between them.

UN

¹ The views expressed in this publication are those of the author. They should not be interpreted as reflecting the views of the Norwegian Government. The text may not be printed in part or in full without the permission of the author.

² The author would like to extend a warm thank you to all participants at the seminar in Brussels for their engaging presentations and discussions. The author is also grateful to the Norwegian Ministry of Defence and the Deputy Minister of Defence Mr. Espen Barth Eide for his comments. Last, but certainly not least, many thanks go to Bård Bredrup Knudsen, Anja T. Kaspersen and Kristina L. Revheim for managing an important initiative, of which this seminar was but one component.

³ The Chatham House Rule reads as follows: 'When a meeting, or part thereof, is held under the Chatham House Rule, participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed.'

The UN Integrated Missions concept was acknowledged as the most advanced and best tested approach to the management of multidimensional and integrated peace support operations. Still there remains considerable potential for improvement in bringing this panoply together. This was also reflected in the main topics dealt with in the seminar panel: *planning, better delivery, humanitarian space and financing of operations*.⁴

Regarding *planning*, the organisation faces a dilemma between being able to attend to the broad range of concerns on the one hand, and being able to set priorities on the other. It was argued that integration in the field must be based on *joint planning* and an agreement on the *centre of gravity* of the operation.⁵ The *form shall follow function* approach, to provide better delivery, better use of resources and improve the efficiency, and to ensure greater political synergies, was reiterated.

On *humanitarian space*, several panellists held that the possibilities of remaining neutral in peacebuilding operations are disappearing, and referred to the situation in the Middle East and in Afghanistan. On the other hand, the situation in Africa, for instance, presents in many cases a different picture. Thus, it was argued, one might need to differentiate between regions when considering how to protect humanitarian space. The importance of distinguishing between crisis management and humanitarian management was broadly recognised.

The financial decision-making process in the UN is cumbersome and static. In order to achieve integrated missions it is necessary to give missions more power to adapt budgets to needs, it was argued. Others pointed out that, since security always comes first, delegating the budget to the mission may result in lower priority to the humanitarian and development sector.

EU

Like the UN, but unlike NATO, the EU perceives itself as an actor capable of providing the full panoply to an operation. The EU has access to a very wide range of instruments, including substantial funding for development assistance. However, the EU struggles with internal divisions along various lines, and several speakers indicated the need to harmonise the efforts of the Commission and the Council. In essence this division is more political than practical, and is often overcome in the field.

It should also be noted that the Council Secretariat has two new, though yet untested, bodies. The first is a civilian-military cell under the Military Staff to provide for strategic options and integrated planning. The second is the new Civilian Planning and Conduct

⁴ Not in order of priority

⁵ In the *Report on Integrated Missions: Practical Perspectives and Recommendations* (2005) *Center of gravity* is described as a missions specific concept that “.. refers to the decisive parameters that must be influenced to achieve the strategic goal that makes all the other efforts possible, and without which the mission is likely to fail.” .

Capability (CPCC), an operations headquarters for civilian ESDP operations led by a civilian operations commander.

There are divisions between the member states, and between them and the EU institutions. Indeed, several speakers held that the member states of the UN, the EU and NATO speak with different voices in different institutions. This indicates that integration at home, between different ministries and agencies in each state, is not optimally well-advanced.

NATO

NATO's focus and willingness to look at new ways of cooperating and coordinating with other actors and multilateral institutions have increased in recent years. It was agreed that NATO as such cannot provide the incentive and legitimacy for broader crisis management operations. The seminar clearly showed that there is broad recognition of the need for a comprehensive approach within the alliance as well as closer integration/cooperation with other relevant partners.

At present NATO is focusing on developing the Comprehensive Approach (CA) as an operational concept based on its Effect-based Approach to Operations (EBAO). Nonetheless, not unlike the UN, the organisation is experiencing practical problems concerning its implementation.

Even if the need for cooperation with others was the main focus regarding NATO in the seminar it was also recognised that the alliance needs stronger internal cohesion. The operation in Afghanistan has highlighted NATO's problems with fragmentation and lack of coordination as responsibility for different fields and tasks has been given to different member states.

COOPERATION BETWEEN THE ORGANISATIONS

NATO and especially the EU acknowledge the UN as a leading actor and recognise the legitimacy of UNSC resolutions. It was noted at the seminar, however, that NATO and EU member states are no longer key contributors to UN operations.

The United Nations, the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation have all intensified their work on developing operational concepts for multinational and multidimensional peace support operations. Even if substantial progress has been made by all three organisations, they also have a long way to go in developing internally coherent operational concepts. The three organisations may have an even longer way to go to develop models for cooperation amongst themselves.