

Multidimensional and Integrated Peace Operations

Trends and Challenges Seminar in Geneva, 11 May 2007

Seminar proceedings
by Emily J. Munro

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Preface[1]

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway in partnership with the Geneva Centre for Security Policy organized the third in a series of regional seminars on trends and challenges related to UN multidimensional and integrated peace operations in Geneva on 11 May. The seminar focused particularly on the progress made towards implementing integrated missions to date and provided the opportunity for interaction between UN actors and humanitarian organizations, necessary because there is often contested ground between military, political and humanitarian actors in these operations. It also addressed issues relating to how the need for a more closely integrated approach to UN peace operations can be reconciled with the need to safeguard the independence and impartiality of humanitarian efforts.

The seminar brought together high-level participants from UN agencies, humanitarian organizations, development organizations, academic research institutes and non-governmental institutions based in both Geneva and Rome. The meeting was also able to draw on the insights from a number of former and current UN officials tasked with managing the role as a multi-hatted Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General, in missions as diverse as Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Sudan, Afghanistan, East Timor, Nepal, Haiti and Liberia. In addition a number of participants from relevant institutions including development, military and police establishments elsewhere in Europe actively participated[2].

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[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 Geneva for their engaging presentations and discussions, and for providing helpful feedback on the draft of this report. The author is also grateful to the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Norwegian Minister of Defence Mrs. Anne-Grete Strøm-Erichsen, Ambassador Wegger Chr. Strømmen and Ambassador Fred Tanner for their active participation and insightful comments. My appreciation also goes to Thierry Tardy for providing his most constructive suggestions. Last, but certainly not least, many thanks go to Anja T. Kaspersen and Magnus Aasbrenn for their excellent feedback on the draft of this report and for managing an important initiative, of which this seminar was but one component.

Executive Summary

The 'state of the art' of integrated missions has moved forward a great deal over the past years, but there remains a need for greater clarification in a number of critical areas. The Geneva meeting on integrated missions provided an opportunity to discuss how the integration agenda can and should be reconciled with the need to safeguard the independency and impartiality of humanitarian assistance.

Participants generally agreed that demand for integration reflects a genuine need but stressed that integration cannot come at any cost. It was also stressed that there should be better links between strategic and operational dimensions and between headquarters and field dimensions. Integration is not, and should not become, a bureaucratic exercise to align resources but an exercise in developing greater coherence on deliverables, something that will have to be done specifically for each mission. There are no fixed templates. The intensity of integration and timing will vary from mission to mission, and within a mission area, and depend on exact circumstances, needs and desired impact. It must be remembered that the ultimate aim for all actors involved is to establish the conditions for departure and the return of a country to sustainable peace.

Humanitarian space remains an essential aspect of a mission and must be respected. Consultation and communication between the mission and humanitarian actors was seen as a key aspect to strengthen the overall impact as well as identifying complementarities therein.

The UN Peacebuilding Commission and its Peacebuilding Support Office was also discussed and guarded optimism was expressed at the role they could play in addressing the gaps in responses to post-conflict countries and encouraging integration.

Participants stressed throughout the discussions the need for focussing on the development of local absorption capacities and of adopting a long-term approach. Planning and the integration of many aspects at an early stage, from encouraging local ownership to international and local staff training

needs, were emphasized. A set of concrete recommendations deriving from the discussions are presented at the end of this report.

1. Introduction

The meeting was opened by H. E. Anne-Grete Strøm-Erichsen, Norwegian Minister of Defence. She emphasized in her remarks the importance of unity of purpose; that is of ensuring that the different levels, field and headquarters, operate on the same page but also that respect for each other's roles permeate throughout an operation. She went on to remind participants of the increased complexity of post-conflict environments and the need to react to these exigencies with coherent multilateral responses. She set the tone and focus of the meeting by stating that the aim of further integration should be reconciled with respect for humanitarian imperatives. Progress in the field of integration requires greater awareness of the need for and understanding of long-term planning and objectives.

In her remarks, she reminded participants of the advent of the concept of integrated missions within the UN reform agenda and of the increase in volume and complexity of UN peace operations over the last two decades. She made a number of key observations that resonated throughout the day's discussions:

- The challenges of a post-conflict environment require mutually reinforcing contributions from a wide range of sectors and actors.
- No one situation is the same, nor is the situation ever static and requires constant and regular adaptation. There is not enough focus by the UN, donors and other actors on the impact of involvement, nor on critical areas that require attention and/or reconfiguration
- Integration can play a critical role in easing the interface between peacekeeping, peacebuilding, and restoring national capacities.
- Integration can also play an important role to strengthen the protection of civilians, while still safeguarding the humanitarian principles for humanitarian action.

She closed by drawing an example of international military health professionals providing medical services to local civilian populations. On the surface this is a laudable act, but upon closer analysis it is an activity that may run counter to efforts by local actors, non-governmental

organizations (NGOs) and the humanitarian agencies that support and develop long-term capacities in this area. She noted that through extensive collaboration with all relevant actors, use of military health services can be put to use in missions through very distinct circumstances with the aim of supporting local capacities and producing sustainable results. The Minister thereby demonstrated that finding the areas of common interest and making practical linkages can be found and produce credible results.

Following the Minister's remarks, discussions centred on a number of topics that drew lessons-learned from missions and from the headquarters experiences of the participants to this meeting. Collectively participants had a rich experience in all aspects of integrated missions. This report is a synthesis of the discussions held. The meeting was run under Chatham House rules.

2. Background: The Imperative of Integration?

The number and complexity of UN peacekeeping operations has increased exponentially in recent years. Thus, the introduction by the United Nations of the concept of integrated missions should be seen in this context as an important development in the evolution of international peacekeeping interventions.[3] This idea recognizes the complexity of the tasks at hand and the need to involve a host of actors across sectors that previously may have worked at cross purposes in the field. Rather than seeing a continuum from war to peacekeeping to peacebuilding, the 'lines' between these 'stages' have become blurred necessitating the involvement of a multitude of actors from different sectors. The integrated mission approach addresses both the substantive means by which these situations are addressed by the UN and the structural adaptations that need to be adopted to respond effectively. The challenge lies in leveraging the UN's moral authorities, resources and experience in peace operations while at the same time allowing for flexibility in the design of integrated strategies and encouraging the participation of diverse actors in this exercise.

There have been several practical applications of the integrated missions' concept over past years, the earliest cases with Kosovo and Sierra Leone. Given such experiences, important clarifications on the concept of integrated missions have taken place. The concept has been refined since the first Note of Guidance on Relations Between Representatives of the Secretary-General, Resident Coordinators and Humanitarian Coordinators (October 2000), most recently by a second Note from the Secretary-General, Guidance on Integrated Missions (January 2006), which has clarified the roles of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG), Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General (DSRSG), Resident Coordinator (RC) and Humanitarian Coordinator (HC).

An integrated mission was defined in the 2005 Report on Integrated Mission as

[3] *Ibid.*

…"*an independent instrument with which the UN seeks to help countries in the transition from war to lasting peace, or address a similarly complex situation that requires a system-wide UN response, through subsuming various actors and approaches within an overall political-strategic crisis management framework.*"[4]

In other words, an integrated mission requires the UN to develop an overarching strategic vision of each peace operation and to gather all the appropriate tools available across the UN system to achieve those goals. As the 2006 Note of Guidance states an "integrated mission is based on a common strategic plan and a shared understanding of the priorities…" and the "UN system seeks to maximize its contribution towards countries emerging from conflict by engaging its different capabilities in a coherent and mutually supportive manner."

Despite refinement of the integrated mission concept serious gaps remain, however, the understanding of what an integration mission is and who it is that will be integrated and at what stage. Although, the necessity of some type of integration has been recognized given the multidimensional nature of peace operations, a comprehensive and common understanding of what defines an integration mission does not exist.

The UN operation in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), MONUC, represents the apex of integration, in what has been probably one of the most distinct and serious challenges to date: peacebuilding in a country that is extremely large, has little infrastructure, and in which there remains areas of extreme instability and violence (especially in the vast provinces of Eastern Congo). MONUC rose to a force level of 18,000 troops, 1,000 police and administered a humanitarian, human rights and electoral assistance mission that cost some $1.2 billion per year. The premise of the mission is that military and political strategies alone, however coordinated, are insufficient: the UN must build a viable, legitimate state, deliver humanitarian relief and development aid, and ensure that government authority and service delivery extends through the vast country.

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[4] *Ibid.*

In case of large peacekeeping operations as it was the case in the DRC, Sudan or Afghanistan, civilian and humanitarian actors will be under greater pressure to 'integrate.' Furthermore, over the last years, actors from across the UN system and outside, such as national agencies, regional organizations and NGOs, all deepened their cooperation in UN missions as the link between security and development became recognized. This has led to both important advances in terms of cooperative frameworks, such as the integrated mission concept, but also to inherent difficulties as the political and the humanitarian spheres are drawn together.

3. Common Interests and Effective and Efficient Implementation

Although the conference participants recognized the strides made between the publication of the 2005 Report on Integrated Missions and today, there was an awareness that much progress still needs to be made. As solutions for certain problems are found and implemented, new problems arise. Integration does not represent an end state and the work for solutions to new challenges continues. For some, fundamental questions need to be revisited, such as: what is the optimum level of effort that should be applied to the search of strategic and operational coherence?

There was some consensus that integration, to be effective, can only go so far. It was remarked that the stage of diminishing returns could be approaching or in some situations has already been reached.

a) Humanitarian Dilemmas

The need for the humanitarian community to preserve their 'space' to deliver aid regardless of military or political considerations remains a key challenge in the debate surrounding integrated missions. The discussion on humanitarian space and integrated mission naturally formed one of the key aspects of the day's proceedings. Attitudes towards these issues were less contested than participants expected and some understanding seemed to have been reached over the last couple of years, partially overcoming earlier tensions. In this context, it was argued that there is still a risk of isolating these communities as other sectors integrate.

There remains a healthy degree of scepticism towards what some see as a tendency towards deeper and structured integration but all in all the necessity to work together has been accepted. It was noted that creating humanitarian space is a pre-requisite for a successful mission. There was also an acknowledgement that the humanitarian imperatives were not incentives not to integrate, but rather to guide the overall process of integration, by setting standards, checks and balances to ensure optimal impact.

Prescribing an unrealistic curtailment on the involvement of these actors in humanitarian tasks would not be helpful but guidelines and clear communication protocols and consultation can be adopted within missions.

Structure and lines of command were key elements of the discussion on humanitarian relief in integrated missions. Following the October 2000 Note of Guidance, in February 2006 the second Note of Guidance further clarified the relationship between and roles of the SRSG, DSRSG, RC and HC. Concern was raised during the discussion, that given the demand on the DSRSG responsible also wearing the hats of RC/HC, this person can only devote a limited amount of his/her time to any given issue at any given time considering the immense task of safeguarding humanitarian space, directing the differing roles of OCHA and the development agencies in situ, managing the transition from humanitarian relief to recovery and from recovery to development and capacity building, whilst cooperating and coordinating more traditional UN peacekeeping activities. The concept of a multi-hatted DSRSG is a good one, yet the implementation still left too much to the individual capacities of one person, without sufficient back support from the UN system at whole. A key best practice from the field has been the development of an integrated RC/HC/RR office charged with supporting the DSRSG in his/her job, drawing from the competencies of all actors involved on the ground linking the different reform initiatives and efforts at pooling funding, resources, work plans and objectives together.

Another point that was raised was the need for strong supporting structures for all the 'hats' of the DSRSG, either in the form of a 'cabinet' structure or separate back-offices charged with managing the depth and diversity of the different agendas involved in support of the DSRSG strategic management of the overall process. Another weakness is the lack of strategic coordination and support structure (between the ERC, UNDG overseeing the RC/RR function and DPKO/DPA) at HQ level adding to the complexities of the multi-hatted function of the DSRSG. It was also emphasized that OCHA's presence outside the integrated structure has proven to be a good model in being an impartial and independent

coordinator of humanitarian assistance while still supporting and advising the work of the Humanitarian Coordinator inside the mission.

There are inherent tensions between the need for a centralized authority with a plan for integration (at the very top levels of the mission, through the SRSG and the two 'multiple hatted' DSRSGs) and the need to balance the strong authoritative presence of the UN with the equally strong imperative for 'local ownership' of the peacebuilding process. This raises the question whether structural integration helps or hinders the search for strategic coherence.

Some speakers were concerned that – although there are today conceptual and substantial understandings and policies of integrated missions – the administrative structures and procedures have not evolved sufficiently to deal with integrated missions. The necessary evolution of administrative support and procedural flexibility is hampered also by member states that have passed resolutions requiring any assets used by UN agencies to be paid by these agencies. Similarly, on an operational level, it does not make sense that in the case of the DRC, for instance, the SRSG has zero financial authority over mission projects whereas the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) representative is authorized to sign for financial commitments up to 500,000 US$ without further controls.

It was stressed that the roles of civilian and military actors must be seen as complementary and based on full respect of distinct areas of competence. Therefore the nexus between, and need for, identifying common objectives between the humanitarian community and the peacekeeping forces with regard to supporting the humanitarian delivery of assistance (as an 'enabling capacity') merits more discussion. By way of example, in the DRC, Humanitarian Coordinator worked closely with the Force Commander to develop suitable and sufficient guidelines defining the parameters, role, opportunities and limits of such support.

In this context, it was stressed that military means, if managed well, can serve as a useful tool to create and protect humanitarian space rather than impinging it. For instance, the deployment of Mobile Operating Base in the

DRC has on the basis of a joint plan been able to reduce the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) in the district of Katanga from 230,000 to 24,000 in a period of eight months.

Other examples of joint action between the military or political community within a mission and the humanitarian community outside the mission were also given. One such example included the joint reporting on human rights violations to the national government on a regular basis by the humanitarian community and the international military presence. This provides the government with a clear message rather than multiple perhaps conflicting reports. The result has been greater impact.

In the context of the discussion on humanitarian space, the military's involvement in quick impact projects (QIPs) was again debated. Although it was agreed that quick impact projects should not compromise the work of the humanitarian organizations, it was recognized that in reality this is not always the case and better communication and consultation must take place before such projects are undertaken by the military. Some participants recognized that there are some clear areas where QIPs can be effective to fill a short-term gap where humanitarian organizations are unwilling to work, such as in the provision of medical assistance to service personnel, although examples of harm done by humanitarian projects by the military were drawn – demonstrating that the tension surely remains. The idea that a joint funding pool for quick impact projects, managed by the DSRSG/HC/RC, as a tool to limit unwanted consequences and ensure better quality-control control was introduced.

b) 'Form Follows Function'

The planning mantra – 'form follows function' – emphasized in the 2005 Report with regard to integrated missions planning remains as relevant as ever. The elements and priorities of an integrated mission will vary depending on specific circumstances; therefore, the substantive needs must determine the form in which a mission is established and not be based on ready-made organigrammes or templates. There is a tendency today to first identify the units and people before defining the purpose and

strategy for action. Although this seems obvious it continues to be a problem as the machineries involved continue to operate on the basis of ready made templates. Integration is not first an exercise in defining a bureaucracy; it is fundamentally about deliverability, maximising capabilities and impact.

Equally, integration does not need to occur to the same degree across missions. As one participant noted, excellent cooperation can take place between UN agencies when a mission is not 'integrated.' In fact, it is only worthwhile to create an integrated mission if there is a critical mass of multiple tasks with a broad mandate. In case of the UN Mission in Nepal (UNMIN), established by Resolution 1740 in January 2007, the concerned UN Departments disagreed over the question of integration. The Department of Political Affairs (DPA) was to be in the lead, but DPKO provided the bulk of the operation. DPKO asked for the mission to be a standard integrated mission with all regular components, but the Secretary General decided that UNMIN should not be an integrated mission, because the tasks required were limited. What model of operation ultimately would be the right one for UNMIN remains to be seen.

A shared strategic view within the UN systems of what it is that needs to be achieved in the country should be established – this view must be flexible and holistic. Following this, the requirements along a spectrum of integration for different sectors can be determined. Some sectors will require full integration, while other sectors can operate in parallel with formal lines of communication and ad hoc cooperation. The level of and intensity of integration will ultimately depend on the needs. This is also true over the course of a mission, at certain times a sector will require deeper integration while others less so. It is thus important to better manage transitions and re-configurations of the mission over time to adapt to the shifting needs on the ground. This inherent contradiction within the 'form follows function' dictum demonstrates that changes in form must keep up with advances in function.

Similarly, although there is a will to move integration further in the field in some missions there is the absence of a support system and administrative

measures within the UN to back this integration. This is a particularly relevant lesson for headquarters and members states that ostensibly control these processes.

c) Integrated Missions and Headquarters - Field Interactions

Integration at the field level and at headquarters has not kept up at the same pace. The bottom up or 'form follows function' premise has been followed but because the necessity to integrate is often seen first at the field level, department headquarters have had to play catch-up with respect to integration. This was stated by the Minister in her opening remarks: "We need a more unified UN presence in the field, which, in turn, cannot be achieved without a more integrated approach at headquarters."

Specific thematic capacities such as for example security sector reform (SSR) are often found across the larger UN system, involving a variety of departments, programmes and agencies.[5]

This is not to mention the capacities available in other international organizations, regional organizations and international NGOs (and this is only to speak of international, not in-country capacities). These capacities often will meet at the country-level first and foremost; integrate on a case-by-case basis while leaving out the headquarters level. As international staff rotates frequently, expertise and lesson-learned are sometimes lost. For example, there is no common approach towards SSR at the headquarters level. Nor is there a proper integration of humanitarian and human rights aspects of a UN operation at the headquarters level. Participants stressed the need for a common capacity to collect, analyse and disseminate best practices on issues relating to when, how and whom to integrate in a mission.

Participants also stressed that there is a clear need to de-centralize the planning process, combined with delegating necessary authority to

[5] The UN Peacebuilding Capacity Inventory (2006) illustrates this point.

implement the in-situ planning parameters. Interaction between the field and headquarters is not always easy and there is sometimes mistrust between the two. The UN's shift from a UN *that is* to a UN *that does* and a UN that has become a 'field-based' organization is not reflected in the current working methods of the UN. Far too much is too UN HQ centric. The reform process at the UN and on-going reconfigurations of departments, in particular the recent split of DPKO, has hindered some of these aspects to progress, but careful optimism was expressed that if managed well (learning from the hard-earned lessons of the 90s where the separation of operational planning and support and service provisions had disastrous results on the ground) these changes could in the medium to long-term lead to improvements.

d) Multidimensional mandates and integrated mission frameworks.

Reconciling the divergent mandates of peace forces, whose mission is to bring security to war-torn areas, and humanitarian relief entities whose focus is on the protection of civilians and the unfettered delivery of relief; operationally, there have been tensions when the military has sought to provide some relief in the context of 'hearts and minds' approaches to local communities that undermine the work of humanitarian organizations and NGOs.

A sound mandate for a mission is of critical importance. The mandate determines the key functions and responsibilities of a mission. In the first instance, mandates need to be written with enough time for proper reflection and supported by a clear understanding of needs. Weak mandates invite manipulation that will work at a cross-purpose for the success of the mission. Repeatedly, speakers referred to disconnects between the political context wherein mandates are drafted in New York and the operational conditions of mandate implementation.

Integration of new elements does not imply the necessity to merge mandates as differences will exist. Clearly, inconsistencies will need to be resolved but differences among organizations mandates within a mission can be reconciled on the ground. A speaker pointed out, however, that UN

specialised agencies tend to dig deeply into their mandates as a reflex for preserving their independence and 'corporate culture.'

Lastly, the courage must exist to review and re-define a mission's mandate. As has been demonstrated, circumstances and priorities change and the mandate must be able to change with these. Therefore, mandates must be adaptable and flexible. This is linked to the allocation of financial resources, as the situation on the ground develops some issues will gain importance and others will be resolved and require less or no more resources. The importance of an adaptable approach in terms of mandates and resource allocation should be recognized.

e) Communications and Public Information

Managing expectations and communicating successes – and failures – need to be handled more effectively. Integrated missions often lack an integrated communication and media policy, strategy or practical ability to engage the public opinion within the country. Better communication within the international community inside a country is also crucial to offset what can be misperceptions of roles and misguided expectations. As attention by the media does not last long, the opportunities that this attention brings need to be capitalised upon rather than missing an opportunity that could become a liability.

f) Training for Integrated Missions

Training of mission staff who will work in an integrated mission was identified as an issue that required further thought. A focus on joint training and planning exercises – for example, involving all relevant actors – can be a useful method for making integrated missions more effective. Training for chiefs of staff and similar positions would also be useful in view of future integrated mission management arrangements. Furthermore, there is a need to strengthen the focus on UN systemic issues in the training curricula to better understand the larger integration paradigm.

g) The Potential Role of the UN Peacebuilding Commission

The integration discussion that has taken place both prior to, during and after the establishment of the Peaacebuilding Commission is a key aspect of the Commission itself, as its mandate states its purpose is to "propose integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery." Its efforts must thus continue to ensure that they do not duplicate existing functions and rather make it a priority to assess the larger 'integrated agenda.'

It was noted that the main added value of the PBC and PBSO will be at the strategic level, in identifying gaps and working in close partnership with other national and international actors to build a political consensus to address these critical gaps. But the Commission and Support Office can also contribute in a number of other ways by: focusing on the identification of indicators of success and failure in order to better react to signs of relapse; defining qualitative and quantitative markers for smooth re-configurations and eventually handover and withdrawal; encouraging greater coherence, flexibility and longevity in funding commitments and lastly; the PBC can use its inter-governmental character to forge a deeper partnership and commitment and accountability for delivery and impact to specific post-conflict countries, including within the UN system at large (General Assembly, ECOSOC)

h) Security Sector Reform and the UN

A detailed analysis of integrated missions must adopt a sector-specific approach to analyse the need for integration in specific settings and sectors.[6] The UN has substantial capacities, for instance, in post-conflict SSR but independent analysis has found that the lack of a system-wide

[6] This was an aspect mentioned also when discussing the role crime prevention and of policing, whereby the neglect of certain areas of policing, such as the intelligence sector, can have a negative impact at the field level.

approach to this topic has led to negative effects at the field level[7]. With the exception of a Presidential statement of the Security Council on 20 February 2007 there is, for the time being, no authoritative UN concept of SSR. Different UN entities will define SSR differently so that for example, justice is sometimes but not always included in the definition of SSR. Therefore, functions of various units and UN entities will sometimes overlap. With a more clear definition from the UN a better functional division of labour at the field level can occur. Efforts are being made to address this, a task force is under development and progress has been made to coordinate more effectively SSR capacities within the UN.

Coordination and integration are key issues in SSR. In Liberia, for instance, 16 different police entities needed to be included in police reform efforts, coupled with additional challenges of demobilizing child soldiers, reintegrating and professionalizing the military and securing the very porous borders in the region. The police reform and security sector reform efforts require coordination with a wide range of other actors, including those working on justice sector reform, gender and child advocacy programmes and military operations.

In the DRC, SSR has been recognized as a priority for stabilisation, strengthening the national human rights record and sustainable peace: the national army and militias continue to cause humanitarian suffering and displacements through violence and rampage. The humanitarian actors and MONUC eventually agreed to jointly address the SSR and stability through encouraging armed groups to disarm (DDR), assisting in the separation of children associated with armed groups and organizing UN cluster protection meetings at regional and provincial levels.

[7] Heiner Hänggi and Vincenza Scherrer, Recent Experience of UN Integrated Missions in Security Sector Reform (SSR): Review and Recommendations, Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), Geneva, 2007.

4. Cross-cutting Themes

Throughout the one-day conference participants raised a number of themes that influence the integrated mission concept at different levels and are therefore presented here as cross-cutting themes: cultural and organizational interoperability, integration and local ownership and planning for long-term sustainable peace. These issues are not only relevant at one juncture but should be revisited at various times when managing an integrated mission.

a) Cultural and organizational interoperability

The importance of culture was touched upon several times throughout the discussions. Culture was used both to describe the need to have a culturally sensitive approach towards the conflict and the local structures and people, as well as the need for improved interoperability, respect and understanding of different organizational cultures. Be they among the military, civilian, humanitarian and police communities or between the field and headquarters level. All actors, internal and external have pre-conceived perceptions of roles and responsibilities and these must be mitigated by a commonly agreed strategic objectives, priorities and policies to overcome prejudices to achieve shared objectives.

National culture and approaches to fostering security and peace must be taken into account from the early planning, design and start-up of a mission.

Similarly, re-enforcing local capacities in the planning stage of a mission, enabling relevant local actors to engage and take ownership is also important. Fostering local ownership and taking into account local absorption capacity and priorities when designing national programmes merits more focus. It also calls for greater awareness of the impact of any form of intervention on the host country.

b) Integration and Local Ownership

The ultimate objective of all peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions is to establish conditions for sustainable peace. In so doing, how to ensure a successful handover to local authorities, how to stimulate ownership at the local level, and how to attune international programming objectives and processes with local realities – should be kept at the forefront of any form of integrated planning. Partnership and cooperation between international and national actors and international capacity-building activities should occur from the beginning and be gradually deepened and re-configured throughout the mission.

Establishing clear and formal lines of communication between the UN mission and the national government is important. This can result in key aspects of the national governments' strategies in support of peace being better integrated into the international community's responses. Again, it is important that this process occur early on during the planning of the mission. Oftentimes it was noted, hierarchy precludes early engagement with local authorities. Recent efforts by the PBC to approach the development of a peacebuilding strategy as a partnership between the UN and the national government were noted in this respect. This principle is also instituted (if insufficiently implemented) in the Peacebuilding Fund, the financial instrument of the PBC, by which funding and disbursement decisions are decentralized and taken at the country-level when possible.

All forms of cooperation with local authorities in a post-conflict setting have inherent difficulties. In cases, for example, when the government in power had been responsible for abuses of power during the conflict or when elements of the government, army or police are still perpetuating a climate of fear and intimidation and undermining the path to peace – the role of the UN at the one hand tasked to 'support and/or assist' the incumbent government, and the other hand charged with enforcing a positive change involving the respect for and compliance with international law. In addition, it is important to recognize the collective knowledge, role and impact of local civil society actors.

Lastly, hiring local staff to work in UN missions has both positive and negative effects that are well known and these should be addressed in a more systematic manner. The risk of creating two parallel public services within a country, one of which will depart, with the international community attracting the first rung of candidates, should be avoided and a balance struck. The example was drawn from Haiti, where the ministry and mission have agreed on a degree of cross-fertilization.

c) Building peace

Planning from the very early stages of a mission for the long-term was stressed by participants throughout the discussion. Timor Leste was one recent example of a country that was at risk of relapsing to conflict following the successful completion of a UN mission. Sustained funding and clear benchmarks for success, beyond the holding of elections, are key aspects in this respect.

Electoral ripeness

The electoral process should not be viewed as a benchmark in itself nor an exit strategy. The transition and planning from an emergency or crisis situation to supporting long-term human development needs to be well thought out. Elections are not punctuations in this transition that mark an end state. In addition, there will not be one point at which elections are right in every context, the timing for elections will vary depending on multiple factors in the specific country. It was agreed that the UN must stay long enough; although exact ideas on the key indicators and benchmarks for exit were recognized as vital to any guide any form of constructive engagement, they were beyond the scope of the discussions.

Funding modalities

It is important to rethink the link between needs assessments, effects-based planning and how to create conditions conducive to sustainable development. Moreover, issues pertinent to maintaining and attracting long term investment and job generation were inexorably linked to the debate on how to sustain peace. The Peacebuilding Commission has recognized this most recently by identifying youth employment strategies

and job creation as one of its key focus areas while working with Sierra Leone.

A consistent flow of funding beyond the early stages of a conflict was cited in the discussions as often being a problem. Funding for projects aimed at the medium to long term recovery becomes increasingly difficult to come by as attention is diverted elsewhere. The Peacebuilding Fund, launched in October 2006, was cited as a highly decentralized mechanism designed specifically to address the sustainability gap between conflict and recovery. As it is such a new mechanism analysis on effectiveness is premature. Funding pools that conduct joint analysis to determine existing capacities and needs and then disperse funds were regarded as valuable tools. Lastly, there is a need to be both realistic of funding but also flexible to evolving needs.

5. Recommendations

- Designing the course of the operation so that there is less of a palpable UN 'exit' (for example, after elections are held) and more of a seamless transition from emergency, crisis-oriented deployments to backstop peace agreement to longer term human development and human security assistance programs for weak states.

- Integrated missions need to be flexibly conceived over time as the mission evolves to better respond to the realities on the ground and the reconfiguration of mission mandates.

- Sound planning of a mission is of the utmost importance and ample time needs to be given to drafting a well thought-out mandate based on both needs and desired effects. For this to take place however, there is a need to develop better methods to measure indicators and benchmarks on the basis of which to evaluate. Mandates and objectives can and should be reviewed and updated throughout the missions.

- Similarly, needs assessments and mission evaluations should take this into account and should be carried out with a broad perspective that includes interests of actors inside and outside the UN family. The same actors should be held accountable in the implementation phases of the mission.

- Member states need to address the notorious disconnect between the political context wherein mandates are drafted in New York and the operational conditions of mandate implementation. An integrated approach by governments (and within governments – a so-called 'whole-of-government' approach) will positively influence how the UN itself handles integration. Mandates reflect these disconnects.

- The Peacebuilding Commission and its Support Office should be encouraged in developing their role as a strategic planning focal point that identifies long-term peacebuilding priorities and international

programming objectives in partnership with all relevant actors, UN entities and national governments.

- Develop more effective and integrated communication strategies (one common public information office) catering to the complexity of the tasks at hand. This involves developing better impact assessments, public opinion measurement tools and strategies on dissemination of mandates, objectives, political agenda, engagement with the local media and general awareness campaign.

- To operate on a level-playing field, training curricula should also be attuned to the specific modalities of an integrated mission.

- Integration should occur in the field and at headquarters. The dispersion of capacities at the headquarters level, for example security sector reform, across the UN system and lack of a common UN approach run counter to efforts of integration in the field.

- The decision to further integrate should be taken following a careful analysis of the costs and benefits. The inherent benefits should outweigh the financial and transaction costs of coordination and structural integration.

- The authority of the SRSG needs to be further strengthened, both in terms of budgetary responsibility, flexibility and also influence over the broad UN family within a country.

- The Force Commander should work out together with the Humanitarian Coordinator, guidelines and consultation mechanisms, on issues pertinent to the protection of civilians and the delivery of humanitarian assistance and general perception-building exercises in local communities.

- Common funding pools for quick impact projects should be established, with the built-in ability to approve projects in a timely manner and a control process.

Local Capacities

- Cooperation with the local population needs to begin when a mission arrives in the country. The international presence is only temporary and planning for the inevitable departure needs to start at an early stage. For example, training of local actors in various sectors is an important component of any mission.

- The equally strong imperatives of local ownership of the peacebuilding process and the need to have an integrated and authoritative UN presence need to be balanced. In this context, increased structural integration should not come at the expense of strategic coherence.

- Codes of conduct for the hiring of nationals must be in operation in missions. A two-tier civil service must be avoided where nationals are first hired by the international organization and second only by the national government and other local actors.

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