



Multidimensional and Integrated Peace Operations:

Trends and Challenges

SEMINAR PROCEEDINGS
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Preface

The Norwegian and South African Ministries of Foreign Affairs held a two-day seminar on Multidimensional and Integrated Peace Operations at the Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg, 20–21 September 2007. The Institute for Security Studies (ISS) assisted in the organization of the conference and has drafted this report. The initiative forms part of a series of cross-sector seminars in which actors and stakeholders meet to discuss issues related to ongoing developments and implementation of UN Multidimensional and Integrated Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding Operations. This seminar provided the opportunity for the UN staff, civilian and military policy decision-makers, regional and local actors and civil society to exchange experiences about peace operations in the West Africa region, and to draw on Southern African inputs. Participants engaged in robust discussions and exchanged views on the concept, trends, challenges and lessons learnt from the African continent.

Many observers, including participants at this seminar, generally acknowledge that there is a need for strategic change in approach to peace operations, including peacekeeping, peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction due to the transformation of conflicts, particularly in Africa. During the insightful deliberations, participants noted that most conflict situations are characterised by the involvement of various actors, many with varied mandates, interests and often competing approaches. All these factors contribute towards complicating matters on the ground. It is important to note, however, that reference to the “actors” does not necessarily, or only, refer to the traditional sides involved in a conflict, but encapsulates the range of actors, inclusive of potential spoilers.

The United Nations, the international community and other stakeholders in Africa appreciate the need for strategic change and a coordinated approach and response to many complex conflicts, especially those in Africa. The adoption of multidimensional mandates by the UN Security Council demonstrates this towards peace operations. Thus, there is realization that most peace missions sent to conflict situations will increasingly be integrated and multidimensional.

This report is organized in the same order as the conference sessions. The first part focuses on the discussion relating to the concept of ‘integration’ and its implications for missions in Africa. The second part looks at the politico-security framework relating to Multidimensional Integrated Peace Operations (MIPO). The third part deals with the peacekeeping-peacebuilding interface using practical experiences of integrated mission in West Africa, especially in Sierra Leone and Liberia. The fourth part focuses on programs and partnerships, specifically looking at the issues relating to humanitarian issues, development and human rights aspects of MIPO. The fifth part deals with the regional and integrated missions, focusing on perspectives from Southern, East and West Africa. Finally, the report provides recommendations that could be considered for a possible development of a doctrine relating to integrated missions.

Executive Summary

The Norwegian and South African Ministries of Foreign Affairs¹ held a two-day seminar on Multidimensional and Integrated Peace Operations (MIPO) in Johannesburg, from the 20 – 21 September 2007. This seminar provided the opportunity for the UN staff, civilian and military policy decision-makers, regional and local actors and civil society to exchange experiences about peace operations in the West-Africa region, and to draw on Southern African inputs².

Many observers, including participants at this seminar, generally acknowledge that there is a need for strategic change in approach to peace operations, including peacekeeping, peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction due to the transformation of conflicts, particularly in Africa. The adoption of multidimensional mandates by the UN Security Council demonstrates this towards peace operations. Thus, there is realization that most peace missions sent to conflict situations will increasingly be integrated and multidimensional.

Participants sought clarity on the concept of ‘integration’. Of concern was the need to determine how the concept, as understood within the MIPO framework, is different from the previous understandings (especially those in Africa). Although there is no single definition for integrated missions, the working definition used within UN system was found to be useful, referring to integrated missions as complex peace operations whose guiding principle is to link different organizations into coherent support structures.

There was general agreement that the development, planning and implementation of MIPO framework by the UN and the international community must be informed and draw leverage from existing AU frameworks, including drawing in and on regional economic communities, such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Some of the pertinent lessons, which emerged from the Missions such as the UN Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL) and the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) experiences, reflect that the focus should not only be on military or security issues but also on social and political dimensions.

Significantly, integrated missions must ensure that there is clarity of roles between the various UN agencies. The need for coordination of programmes, activities and the development of effective partnerships between various actors is at the centre of ‘integration’ and integrated missions.

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

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Participants contributed to the discussion by raising issues that inform the varied experiences and challenges facing integration in Africa. Ultimately, these issues will inform and contribute towards the possible development of a coherent doctrine on multidimensional and integrated peace operations. In view of this, participants raised a number of crucial points and perspectives regarding the way forward. The following serve as recommendations:

- ***Ensuring interoperability.*** There is a need to have synergy from the conceptualization of the mission, planning, drawing of mandates, implementation, processes, systems, budgets, training etc.
- ***The need for coordination between various actors and activities.***
- ***The need to balance the need for quick impact of the Mission and the issue of sustainability of the outcome and consolidation of peace at the local level.***
- ***The inclusion or incorporation of social aspects and developmental issues*** into the understanding and concept of MIPO.
- ***Resource mobilization, alignment and utilization.*** As a result, it was emphasized that integrated funding processes for MIPO must be established.
- ***Integration must take place at various levels, including strategic, tactical and operational.*** Furthermore, it should be noted that integration can either be partial or full.
- The need to take into account the ***reception of the intervention by local communities.***
- ***Power relations between those who have resources and those who do not have*** must be taken into account.
- ***The need to address regional contexts or idiosyncrasies that may further impact on MIPO or even exacerbate causes of conflict.***
- ***The development of interlocking systems between the UN and African Union in order to enhance capacity development.***
- ***The development of early warning systems*** to ensure that integrated missions are not just reactive but proactive processes.
- ***Humanitarian considerations and assistance must be at the center integrated peace operations.***
- ***Flexibility in planning, design and implementation of a Mission is central.*** Thus, the need to ensure the principle of “**form follows function**”.
- ***The role and importance of taking gender issues and relations.***

- *The need to ensure strategic assessment and evaluation processes to determine the impact and develop best practices.*

1. Conceptual issues

Participants sought clarity on the concept of ‘integration’. They raised specific concerns and questions about the meaning and application of integration: what does integration refer to? Actors? Processes, structures and/or systems? Or, does it include all of these elements?

Importantly, it was recognized that integration is not a new concept and that it has been applied in an African context; indeed its emergence and application in its current form could be traced to the UN peace mission in Sierra Leone. Of concern was the need to determine how the concept, as understood within the Multidimensional Integrated Peace Operations (MIPO) framework, is different from the previous understandings (especially those in Africa). Consequently, there is a need to ensure the inclusion of African and regional perspectives, including experiences and expertise, in the conceptualization, planning and implementation of MIPO.

Although there is no single definition for integrated missions, a working definition was provided during the seminar. In general, the working definition used within UN systems refer to integrated missions as complex peace operations whose guiding principle is to link different organizations into coherent support structures. This definition is informed by best practices characterized by the need to align different mandates, use of different tools, and synchronization of forms, budgets, rules and administration. Importantly, integrated missions are informed by how different objectives from varying organizations are merged.

Participants questioned the role and engagement of Africa with the MIPO processes. Specifically, concerns were raised regarding the linkages between UN MIPO framework and the African Union (AU) and its various policies and structures, for example Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD). Other concerns related to how and when integrated missions were going to be implemented?

An important issue raised in relation to the focus of MIPO was that it appeared to still emphasize the military and security side (peacekeeping) and less the political and social aspects of resolving the conflict (post-conflict reconstruction). The latter were often the determining factors for the success of conflict transformation.

There was general agreement that the development, planning and implementation of MIPO framework by the UN and the international community must be informed and draw leverage from existing AU frameworks, including drawing in and on regional economic communities, such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). It also needs to take into

account regional complexities and idiosyncrasies, particularly the fact that African conflicts span national borders.

2. Politico-Security Framework

The issue of ‘bringing politics back’ into the discussion on conflict prevention and management and the relevance of the political process in post-conflict situations was a central theme of this session. Politics (especially the distribution of power) is a key contributor to the causes of conflict. The non-resolution of political issues is often a cause for the return of countries to conflict. But politics here is not limited to internal conflict zone actors, but is also a key part of the interaction of external actors who enter these zones for various reasons, that is, many international actors often simultaneously pursue their own national interests.

National ownership of peacebuilding processes also informed the discussions. Here it was noted that local buy-in into peace operations is needed, and their leadership and ownership of peace processes can be compromised by the lack of capacity. There is a simultaneous need for timely interventions and international peacekeeping exits. An example of how capacity-building and development were tackled and how capacity can be enhanced at a regional level is demonstrated by the case of ECOWAS (see discussion below). Effort was directed at increasing the institutional capacity of ECOWAS and at mobilizing the regional bloc for peace-keeping. The challenge, however, remains how to effectively integrate the existing ECOWAS framework into the UN MIPO framework, thus ensuring that there is an interface between the various processes.

3. The interface between Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding: Lessons from West Africa

The interface between peacekeeping and peacebuilding is central to multidimensional integrated missions. This discussion, through a focus on the UN Missions in Sierra Leone and Liberia, provided case studies of the implementation of MIPO, especially the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone, UNAMSIL, which was later replaced by the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone, UNIOSIL, and the United Nations Mission in Liberia, UNMIL.

Both missions, characterized by cooperation between the UN and the regional bloc, underwent a revision of the mission, resulting in a change of mandate, the development of partnerships, coordination and hence a clear case of an interface between peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

Some of the pertinent lessons, which emerged from the UNIOSIL and UNMIL experiences, reflect that the focus should not only be on military or security issues but also on social and political dimensions. Notably, the two missions were further characterized by clear objectives of rebuilding state institutions and authority, infrastructure development, youth employment

projects, justice reforms, gender mainstreaming, rule of law and capacity-building; all forming an integrated peacebuilding strategy. Furthermore, the experiences of Sierra Leone and Liberia highlighted the importance of having coordination and cooperation among various UN agencies and structures.

Significantly, integrated missions must ensure that there is clarity of roles between the various UN agencies. A mission must take care of the political issues, human rights, security reforms and reintegration. But should the mission bring their own expertise or should they avoid duplicating roles by drawing on the UN Agencies dealing with these issues that are already operative in the country? What are the ramifications for these UN agencies that were there before the mission and would remain long after the mission has gone?

The case of UNIOSIL is further noteworthy in that it reflects how a successful transition from peacekeeping to post-conflict reconstruction is possible. The success is underpinned by the adoption of transition strategies and programmes aimed at facilitating the draw-down of peacekeeping operations and the setting-up of peacebuilding structures. As such, designing an integrated strategy and approach is seen as critical for the consolidation of the peace process and should be a hallmark of the MIPO.

4. Programmes and Partnerships: Humanitarian issues, Development and Human Rights

Humanitarian activities and the need to protect civilians are key to international efforts to intervene in conflict situations. These issues remain pertinent during the post-conflict reconstruction period. However, the presence of many actors, including humanitarian groups, human rights and other developmental actors in a conflict or post-conflict situation can complicate matters on the ground. Often, this leads to competing or parallel programmes, lack of cooperation and coordination. The need for coordination of programmes, activities and the development of effective partnerships between various actors is at the centre of 'integration' and integrated missions. In order to ensure that integration works, it is critical that there is clarification and determination of roles, responsibilities and the need to respect mandates. This will ensure that there is cooperation and coordination between humanitarian activities and operations of the peace mission.

This section summarises the discussions on integration of programmes and development of partnerships by various humanitarian and human rights actors in conflict situations.

- ***There is no single mode of partnership or integrated mission.*** Rather, partnerships and participation often vary based on the interests of actors. One of the critical challenges of developing effective partnerships is the fact that various actors, including donors, have their own agendas and interests that may be contrary to the common goals.

- ***Cooperation between various humanitarian actors, UN agencies and the local authorities provides opportunities to assist in the consolidation of peace.*** However, there is a need to address causes of the conflict and to ensure that there is no relapse.
- ***Building good relationship with government and locals is crucial.*** This will further ensure that there is local ownership of the process.
- ***Resource mobilization, alignment and their utilization to contribute towards capacity-building efforts are critical.*** This will ensure that resources and expertise are shared and targeted toward capacity development, which is necessary to consolidate peace.
- ***Partnering with civil society is crucial, especially in the area of human rights development.*** Civil society groups often have important advantages, such as the reach, capacity and sometimes better resources. This is seen as critical particularly for the development of any country emerging from post-conflict situation.
- ***Development is seen as an important basis for democracy.*** Development must focus on all levels, including the political, economic and social levels. As such, there is a need to support the national government to increase its capacity to respond to challenges during the post-crisis phase.

Although the development of partnerships has obvious benefits and provides opportunities, there are, however, inherent challenges presented by partnerships. These include:

- *How to achieve the same level of participation and commitment from all actors, including from government, the mission, agencies, civil society and donors.* This raises the question whether the development of structural partnerships is desirable and practical, or if it is better to encourage the emergence of informal partnerships.
- Another important challenge is whether integrated missions work better in post-crisis situations, or not.
- *The development of common guidelines focusing on training of various mission components, especially the police, military and the security operating outside the UN framework, remains a key challenge to the development of effective partnerships.*
- *Lack of information and the poor flow of information among all actors* is a source of concern.
- *The role of donors in shaping the humanitarian agenda, policies and priorities is a concern.* One of the critical issues for integration is to determine who is shaping the priorities and whether these are informed by the realities on the ground.
- *Coordination remains one of the biggest challenges facing integrated missions.* Missions are often characterized by the failure to share information between the mission itself and various agencies. Also, the issue of what to prioritize between establishing a government of national unity or the protection of civilians. In order to address the issue of coordination, it is proposed that a feature of UN reforms must ensure that the UN changes

from being a Headquarters-focused into a field-oriented body. Such a change will ensure that the UN becomes better responsive to local needs or realities.

5. Regional Security and Integrated Missions: Regional Experiences

The experiences of setting up and the execution of missions in Southern, East and West Africa have yielded important lessons. Lessons learnt from these experiences are critical to inform processes towards regional security and for integrated missions generally. One of the most important lessons is that planning for a mission is critical. Planning must entail the formulation of a clear but realistic mandate, seeking and aiming for local support, and the need to ensure cooperation and coordination of military and non-military activities.

Another important lesson learnt is that limited or restricted mission constructs contain within it the seeds for return to conflict. Any conceptualization of MIPO must have a broad scope and aim for a long-term engagement in the conflict area. The case of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) seems to reflect the dangers of a limited mission construct. In this instance, the cut-off point for the mission was on the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) and Security Sector Reform (SSR) processes, rather than ensuring that there is total governance reform and the establishment of viable governance. The case of the Eastern DRC, serves as an example of the negative implications that arise when the cut-off point of a mission is only limited at the SSR. The result has been that the Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo (FARDC) brigades were created, trained and deployed in the Eastern DRC. However, without proper government infrastructure, services and resources, these better trained and equipped brigades were left to fend for themselves. There was no government capacity to generate and collect revenue and these soldiers, because they were not receiving their salaries, resorted to attacks on villages for sustenance.

Equally important is the need to effectively utilize regional security mechanisms and the AU regional brigades as part of UN integrated missions. Although the issue remains of capabilities and capacities of regional mechanisms, especially as they relate to logistical and training deficits, participants thought that regional organizations, rather than individual countries, should be the troop contributors. The deployment of integrated regional forces will contribute towards regional security and the integration process generally.

- ***Southern Africa Experiences***

The Southern African Development Community (SADC), as a regional body, has not participated in an integrated mission, but individual SADC countries have been deploying troops to conflict regions. One of the best examples of an integrated mission where SADC members are

participating is the UN Mission in the DRC, MONUC. Significantly, the experiences of these individual deployments and how they relate to MONUC objectives exhibit peculiar challenges faced by integrated missions. Currently, there is no coordination or cooperation between bilateral agreements signed between individual states and the MONUC processes. Parallel training and other competing programmes conducted by various actors, related to the DDR and SSR processes, characterizes these deployments.

Therefore, the MONUC experience highlights the need to ensure that the concept of MIPO forms part of the policy and doctrine of peace operations. Equally important is the need to ensure that training and preparations for deployment are done at regional and national levels.

- ***East African Experiences***

The experiences in East Africa with regional security and integration missions have led to the desire to implement MIPO principles in peace operations. The ongoing conflicts in Sudan and Somalia highlight the need for and importance of integration. Indeed, the implementation of a hybrid force in Darfur, Sudan, when it happens will be a first for Africa and will provide invaluable lessons on integration and integrated missions. The establishment of the EASBRIG, forming part of the African Standby Force (ASF), will further draw on the experiences of integrated peace operations elsewhere. It is hoped that the planning for peace operations, training and preparations for deployment, management of the EASBRIG, and civil-military aspects will all be informed by the principles of MIPO.

- ***West Africa Experiences***

West Africa, as a region, has by far the most experience with regional security and peace operations. This is as a result of the active role played by ECOWAS in dealing with regional conflicts in the region starting in the early 1990s. The outbreak of intra-state conflicts led to the establishment of the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) as a non-standby peacekeeping force. Its first operation was in Liberia in 1990.

The early experiences of ECOWAS through ECOMOG in peace operations were, however, characterised by various challenges. Among the critical challenges were the lack of political control over the force commander (who was generally accountable to the country of origin), ambiguous mandates, lack of effective public communication strategy, inadequate financial and logistical support, early pullout leading to relapse back into conflict, lack of recognition and support from the UN.

In view of these challenges, ECOWAS embarked on a review process. This process culminated in the signing of a Protocol focusing on conflict prevention, management, resolution,

peacekeeping and security issues arising in West Africa. As a result, new institutions and organs, such as the Council of the Wise, Mediation and Security Council and other Technical Committees, were established. Furthermore, there was a focus on improving the capacity within the ECOWAS Commission to handle political, peace and security issues. Another important structure that came into being was the establishment of an Early Warning System in West Africa.

Training was also improved as a result of the review process. This resulted in the establishment of three Centres of Excellence (at tactical, operational and strategic level) where training is based on UN standards. Significantly, the new training is not donor-driven but subject to approval by ECOWAS. In spite of these developments, certain challenges remain. These relate to the lack of political will from some member states, poor mobilization of financial resources and contributions, and a logistics deficit.

Participants contributed to the discussion by raising issues that inform the varied experiences and challenges facing integration in Africa. This is a summary of the discussion:

- ***Lack of coordination*** presents the biggest challenge. An example is the lack of coordination relating to SSR and DDR, arising from the involvement of many donors and actors in the process but they focus on specific programmes and activities. This has resulted in the duplication of processes, parallel structures and, often, competition. Most of these activities are not necessarily informed by the needs on the ground.
- ***Varying training methods and lack of interoperability*** remains one of the critical challenges facing peace operations. It was noted that the main issue with training is that there is not single policy or doctrine guiding training needs despite the progress made within the framework of the ASF. As a result, many actors are informed by their differing doctrines when preparing and planning for deployment.
- ***Credibility and legitimacy of missions*** to local communities remains a key challenge.
- Another critical challenge facing integration in Africa relates to ***how the AU is going to operationalize the ASF and the peace and security architecture on the continent***. A related issue is how the RECs are to effectively contribute to regional peace and security, when there is a problem of overlapping membership.

6. The Way Forward: Towards a doctrine?

The purpose of this section is to reflect on the issues arising from the various regional experiences, informed by emerging trends, challenges and lessons learnt. Ultimately, these issues will inform and contribute towards the possible development of a coherent doctrine on multidimensional and integrated peace operations. In view of this, participants raised a number of crucial points and perspectives regarding the way forward.

This is a summary of the discussion points. First, questions and concerns were raised relating to the MIPO concept. These focused on the following key areas:

- Is there a common understanding of multidimensional and integrated peace operations?
- How do we ensure the enhancement of what already exists on the ground?
- How do we operationalize cooperation between the UN, AU and regional blocs?
- What is to be integrated? What are the types of integration? And, at what level should integration take place?
- When does the process of integration start?
- What is meant by partnership? What form should partnerships take? Who is to be partnered?
- Is integration better suited for post-crisis situations?

Secondly, although participants did not seek to provide a single definition and conceptualization of integration or MIPO, there was, however, broad agreement that the content of the concept must be informed by the practical experiences and that the concept must be coherent and inclusive.

As a result, a number of factors were highlighted as critical in order to enhance and inform the concept of MIPO. The following serve as recommendations:

- **Ensuring interoperability.** There is a need to have synergy from the conceptualization of the mission, planning, drawing of mandates, implementation, processes, systems, budgets, etc. All MIPO aspects must be brought into sync with each other or be harmonized.
- **The need for coordination between various actors and activities.** This will ensure the avoidance of developing parallel and often competing structures and processes during post-conflict period.
- **The need to balance the need for quick impact of the Mission and the issue of sustainability of the outcome and consolidation of peace at the local level.**
- **The inclusion or incorporation of social aspects and developmental issues** into the understanding and concept of MIPO.
- **Resource mobilization, alignment and utilization** are seen as critical. It must be determined what mechanisms are put in place to structure the process involving resources. As a result, it was emphasized that integrated funding processes for MIPO must be established. Currently, UN budget processes are applied differently despite the complexities of mandates, resulting in the difficulty of implementing mandates.
- **Integration must take place at various levels, including strategic, tactical and operational.** Furthermore, it should be noted that integration can either be partial or full.

- **Conflict and post-conflict situations are not linear**, thus the need to engage a conflict situation at a very early stage in the process.
- The need to recognize that peace operations or missions are not mechanical, but there is a need to take into account the **reception of the intervention by local communities**.
- **Power relations between those who have resources and those who do not have**. Notably, to take into account the role of those with resources, their interests and what benefits they derive from the situation.
- **Governance, ownership and management issues** are crucial. It is important to determine the extent to which there is transfer of authority to locals to ensure local ownership.
- **The need to address regional contexts or idiosyncrasies that may further impact on MIPO or even exacerbate causes of conflict**. There is a need to enhance and utilize local expertise or knowledge.
- **The development of interlocking systems between the UN and AU in order to enhance capacity development**. As such, the development of UN-RECs relationships and the building of partnerships are encouraged.
- **Capacity-building of state and non-state actors** is crucial towards ensuring successful integrated peace operations. Capacity development needs to take place at all levels, including local, national, regional and international levels.
- **Training must be based on similar modules focusing on strategic, tactical, and operational needs**. The benefit of having common training is that it will ensure that there is interoperability within forces, command and other role deployed in integrated peace operations. Common standards will ensure that integration is part of policy and doctrine development.
- **The development of early warning and conflict analysis systems** to ensure that integrated missions are not just reactive but proactive processes.
- **Sharing lessons learnt and development of best practices** between various sectors and regions is important.
- **Humanitarian considerations and assistance must be at the centre integrated peace operations**. However, other issues such as developmental issues must also be taken into account.
- **Flexibility in planning, design and implementation of a mission is central**. Thus, the need to ensure the principle of “**form follows function**”.
- **The role and importance of taking gender issues and relations** as factors in integrated peace operations.
- **The need to ensure strategic assessment and evaluation processes to determine the impact and develop best practices**.

7. Concluding remarks

The primary objective of the conference was to provide a platform and forum where participants could share their experiences and perspectives on the trends, challenges and lessons learnt based on the practical experiences with integrated peace operations in Africa. To a large extent, the conference reached this broad objective. What remains is to take these perspectives, experiences, and recommendations to develop a coherent but practical doctrine on multidimensional and integrated peace operations generally.